

LOCAL

Now you can check out telescopes from the Rancho Mirage Library & Observatory

City News Service

Published 11:52 a.m. PT April 18, 2022

Residents can check out telescopes — much like they would a book — starting Monday at the Rancho Mirage Library & Observatory.

Joining more than 400 other libraries nationwide, Rancho Mirage is the first library in Riverside County to offer portable, user-friendly telescopes to patrons through the Library Telescope Program. With more than 30 telescopes available, some will be allocated to local educators to share with their students.

The Orion Starblast 4.5” Astro Reflector tabletop telescopes are available at the Rancho Mirage Library & Observatory, with a gear bag that includes a red light flashlight, a constellation guide, a simplified telescope user manual and spare batteries.

To check out the 13-pound telescopes, patrons must be 18 or older with a library card and review the telescope loan policy. Once ready to check one out, the library clerk will give a brief overview of telescope’s components and demonstrate how to carry it correctly.

But be careful not to damage it. Replacement costs for a telescope total \$450, which includes items like the telescope, eyepiece, case/equipment bag, red flashlight, constellation guide and modification hardware. Costs will be charged to the patron’s account if items are damaged, lost, stolen or not returned in seven days after the seven-day check-out period.

The program was made possible through a grant by the Smaby Family Foundation.