



# St. Charles County Government

Department of Parks and Recreation  
Bettie Yahn-Kramer, Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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*Photo of Comet PANSTARRS courtesy of ASEM member Eddie Agha, taken on March 12, 2013, with his Nikon D300S 220mm f/5.6, 3 Seconds @ ISO 1000*

## **The St. Charles County Parks Department Offers Public Viewings of Comet PANSTARRS**

**St. Charles County, Missouri** - Over the next couple of weeks, spectators are invited to visit the Astronomy Viewing Area at Broemmelsiek Park, located at 1615 Schwede Rd. (off Highway DD/Winghaven Blvd., south of O'Fallon) to get a glimpse of Comet PANSTARRS as it dances across the western nighttime sky. Beginning at dusk on Friday, March 15, 22, 29, and April 5, members of the Astronomical Society of Eastern Missouri (ASEM) will be hosting public viewings of Comet PANSTARRS through binoculars and telescopes between 7:30 - 8:15 p.m. Witnessing a comet with the unaided eye is extremely rare and only occurs once every five to 10 years.

“With the assistance of the Astronomical Society of Eastern Missouri, Comet PANSTARRS cosmic presence is very visible at Broemmelsiek Park’s Astronomy Viewing Area,” said Parks Director Bettie Yahn-Kramer.

ASEM members describe Comet PANSTARRS, also referred to as comet 2011 L4, as being a cosmic icy dirtball that is only visible to the naked eye for short periods of time during late evening twilight. Discovered in June 2011, PANSTARRS bears the name of the telescopic survey that discovered it, "Panoramic Survey Telescope and Rapid Response System," which sits atop the Haleakala volcano in Hawaii.

Weather permitting, anyone interested in attending the rare Comet PANSTARRS viewing is welcome; no reservations are required. For directions, please visit [www.stccparks.org](http://www.stccparks.org), or contact the St. Charles County Parks Department at 636.949.7535.

For more information about Comet PANSTARRS, visit [www.asemonline.org](http://www.asemonline.org).

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