



There is a technological marvel nestled in the West Virginia mountains; the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope (GBT). Rising from the valley floor to a height of 485 feet, weighing nearly 17 million pounds and sporting a reflector that is 2.3 acres in area, the GBT is used by astronomers from around the world to investigate cosmic questions such as: How did life form? What are stars made of? How old is the Universe?

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) is a national research center devoted to radio astronomy, NRAO operates the GBT, and a beautiful new Science Center. We are open year-round to share the wonder of astronomy and scientific research with your young investigators. In addition to free guided tours of the site, Science Center educators offer a variety of programs and activities for young people, including:

Radio Astronomer for a Day

Students working in research teams investigate cosmic objects with the Observatory's 40 foot diameter radio telescope. During an overnight stay, students learn how to operate the telescope and complete inquiry-based projects, becoming, in fact, radio astronomers. The goal of the program is to provide students with an authentic research experience, so students don't need a lot of prior content knowledge to be successful. We'll fill in the gaps with sessions in the science center, which contains interactive exhibits, a Star Lab planetarium, computer lab, and auditorium. All of our educational activities, including tours of the Observatory are free.

StarLab

View the night sky anytime in our StarLab Planetarium! We can plan a show that meets your science objectives.

Be An Interference Detective.

Radio Astronomers battle radio pollution in order to detect faint signals from black holes and galaxies billions of light years away. Help us detect sources of interference so that astronomers can get better data!

Astronomy/Space Scout Badge Activities

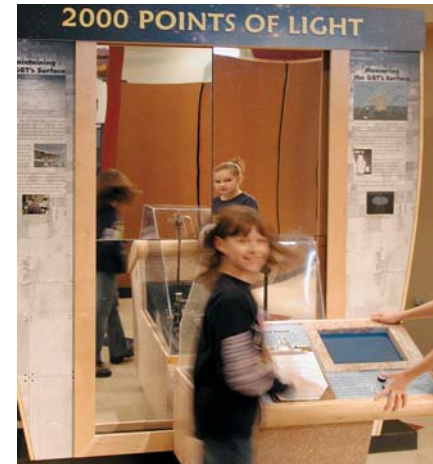
We offer a complete overnight program of activities that will result in fulfillment of most of the requirements for space related badge for boy and girl scout groups.

Exhibit Hall Concept Quest

Our hands-on exhibits provide an effective way to teach the young and old about the science of astronomy and the work of radio astronomers in particular. Our scavenger hunt helps focus students' attention on concepts while they "play."

Special events

Monthly star parties, behind-the-scenes tours, and Friday Film nights round out the offerings at the Science Center. Ask for details!



Contact Us

For group arrangements, directions and additional information, you may call sites and visit noted websites or call the NRAO tour director for more assistance.

Group contact information at the NRAO:

Tour Director
National Radio Astronomy
Observatory

PO Box 2
 Green Bank, WV 24944

(304) 456-2164

<http://www.gb.nrao.edu/epo>

crose@nrao.edu



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES at NRAO



Stay awhile! Take advantage of Numerous Nearby Attractions



The Green Bank Science Center.

Make the Green Bank Science Center your home-base and add additional attractions to the itinerary. Youth and school groups visiting the Green Bank Science Center may utilize the NRAO Bunk House. The new 60 unit dormitory is affordable and comfortable. Kids bring their own linens or sleeping bags. The cost per person is approximately \$5.00/night. Chaperones stay in separate but attached bedrooms. Meal options are also available. Bus driver accommodations may be arranged on-site or nearby.

We'll help you organize forays to area attractions and other educational destinations. Just let us know what you'd like to do. Here are some suggestions!



NRAO bunk house for overnight student guests.

HISTORY

Pearl S. Buck Birthplace Museum

Open May – October; Mon- Sat. 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
304-653-4430 Hillsboro, WV
www.pearlsbuckbirthplace.com



Most famous for "The Good Earth", Pearl S. Buck was the first woman to receive both the Nobel & Pulitzer prizes for literature. Take a peak inside this historical home site where the prize-winning author was born. A guide will escort guests through the restored home. Group reservations necessary. \$\$

Cass Scenic Railroad State Park

Open Memorial Day weekend through October.
Call for seasonal schedules
800-CALL-WVA Cass, WV
www.cassrailroad.com

This once working railroad transports guests back in time to an era when steam-driven locomotives were an essential part of life. Trips are filled with unparalleled views of vast wilderness. Fall foliage tours are especially beautiful. Group reservations suggested \$\$



Droop Mountain Battlefield State Park

Open year round
304-653-4254 near Hillsboro, WV
www.droopmountainbattlefield.com



A stop along the Civil War Discovery Trail, Droop Mountain is the site of West Virginia's last significant Civil War battle. This historical site is open during daylight hours and offers a museum, hiking trails, picnic areas, lookout tower and children's play area. Groups can visit on their own or a guide may be available with advance arrangements.

NATURE

Beartown State Park

Open daily April – October and other times of the year, with advance arrangements.
304-653-4254 near Hillsboro, WV
www.beartownstatepark.com



Beartown is noted for its unusual rock formations, which are dominated by massive boulders of Pottsville Sandstone formed 300 million years ago. A boardwalk with narrative signs provides easy access through the deep, narrow crevasses of this unique ecological area. Groups can visit on their own or a guide may be available with advance arrangements.

**Cranberry Mountain Nature Center
Cranberry Glades Botanical Area**

Open April-November
304-653-4826 near Hillsboro, WV
www.fs.fed.us/r9/mnf/sp/naturecenter.html

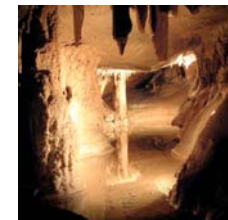
At the Nature Center, an exhibit hall and audio visual programs provide interpretation of forest ecosystems and local history. Programs on native WV birds of prey and reptiles are also offered. The Cranberry Glades is a natural bog area more commonly found in northern parts of this country or Canada. Because of the wetland conditions, unusual plant life grows in bogs including carnivorous or insect-eating plants. Self-guided strolls along the boardwalk are available year-round. Special programs and guided tours can be arranged.



Seneca Caverns

Open year-round.
1-800-239-7647
<http://www.senecacaverns.com>

The largest limestone caverns system in West Virginia is open for tours and field trips all year long. \$\$



RECREATION

Snowshoe Mountain Resort

Four season resort.
Winter season: December-March (call in advance)
877-441-4FUN Snowshoe, WV
group sales 877-536-9757
www.snowshoemtn.com



Groups of all types enjoy the wide range of activities offered at this year round resort, particularly in the winter season. With an average of 200 inches of natural snow annually and 100 % snowmaking capacity, Snowshoe Mountain Resort offers the best ski conditions in the mid-Atlantic and southern region. Group rates available. Inquire about year round recreational opportunities. \$\$

Durbin Greenbrier Valley Railroad

Open seasonally
877-686-7245 Durbin WV
www.mountainrail.com

For railroad enthusiasts, the DGVRR offers a wide range of excursion options, even a 'Three trains in one day' extravaganza. The New Tygart Flyer, the Cheat Mountain Salamander and the Durbin Rocket each offer a unique train experience. Travel along three pristine rivers, through vast West Virginia wilderness or trek across steep mountain grade. Call or check website for complete schedule information. \$\$

