

Thanks to a grant from the Arkansas Space Consortium, the Central Arkansas Library System is increasing the number of telescopes available for library-goers to borrow. KUAR's Sarah Kellogg has more.

TelescopeProgramWrap

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The library system had a collection of 16 telescopes when the program started in 2016. That broke down to about one telescope per library branch.

Nathan James, the deputy executive director of technology and collection innovation for CALS, says the demand far outweighed the supply.

JamesTelescope**:15****“...those telescopes ”**

“Within about a year, they had been checked out about 299 times. We had, at some times over 100 people waiting in line for them. It was way more popular than we ever anticipated and people really enjoyed those telescopes,” James said.

The library system, which has teamed up with the Central Arkansas Astronomical Society since the inception of the program, now has 30 telescopes at its disposal.

The new telescopes are Orion StarBlast telescopes that can magnify up to 56 times. CALS says these telescopes are useful for observing brighter planets like Saturn and Jupiter as well as the moon.

Library members can check out these telescopes and take them home for use for up to two weeks at a time.

James believes this program is another way the library can offer a learning experience that is different than reading a book

Sarah Kellogg, KUAR News.