

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

March 2014

LOOKING UP

March 6, Thursday

NCSF Annual Banquet
Fox and Hounds Restaurant
No General Meeting

March 20, Thursday

Board Meeting
7:30 p.m.
Home of Jeff Setzer

March 28, Friday

Messier Marathon
Members Night
6:00 p.m.
Harrington Beach State Park

March 29, Saturday

Messier Marathon
Members Night
6:00 p.m.
Harrington Beach State Park

March 30, Sunday

Messier Marathon
Members Night
6:00 p.m.
Harrington Beach State Park

April 3, Thursday

General Meeting
7:00 p.m. - Astronomy 101
7:30 p.m. - Main Program
Business Meeting to follow

April 4-5, Thursday & Friday

NCRAL 2014
www.ncsf.info/ncral2014.htm
Country Inn & Suites
Port Washington

A Call for Photos...by Kevin Bert

The Regional convention is a few short weeks away and I hope many of our members have made plans to attend. There are many activities taking place over those two days but there is one aspect of the convention that I would like to highlight and promote. It has become apparent that a number of Northern Cross members have an interest in imaging astronomical objects and you will have an opportunity to display some of your photos and get special recognition. For many years, astrophoto contests have been a part of most astronomical conventions. This convention has categories that are primarily subject based allowing you flexibility on the method or equipment you use. There will be the traditional solar system and deep sky categories along with some new options. Telescope users that prefer to record their observation with a sketch have a chance to participate. The public outreach category can be entered with the bare minimum of equipment so there is something for everyone. Each category has stated examples and a brief explanation.

Categories:

Solar System

Examples: Lunar, Solar, Planetary and Eclipses.

The primary subject must be a solar system object, (with the exception of comets). Other examples that qualify include occultations, conjunction of planets in a star field, etc.

Deep Sky

Examples: Star Clusters, Galaxies, Milky Way, Nebula, Star Fields and Constellations.

The primary subject must be a deep sky object but multiple subjects may be contained in some star field shots. Examples include Lagoon & Trifid, Galaxy groups, etc.

Atmospheric & Comets

Examples: Meteors, Aurora, and Comets.

This category gives people an opportunity to show what a camera and tripod can do. However, the full arsenal of methods is open for usage on comet shots.

Collage

Examples: Comet Changes, Lunar Phases or Features, mixture of Deep Sky images.

The objective is to show changes in one subject or show multiple subjects.

Between 3 and 10 images can be displayed in one of two ways. ONE large matted board with multiple openings, or ONE large print. The largest image contained in the collage should not exceed 8x10. Overall display limit is 16" x 20". Only one form needs to be filled out.

Public Outreach

Examples: Observatories, Telescopes, Star Parties, Club Meetings, Sidewalk Astronomy.

To encourage any person with a simple camera to capture and produce a single image that conveys the theme of public outreach. Basic processing may be used to enhance features or otherwise improve the image. Only 4x6 prints will be accepted in this category. Please do not frame your image(s). Clear project covers will be provided for prints so they can be pinned or taped on a display board. Only basic information is required on your form.

Sketching

Examples: The entire range of astronomical subjects is available.

Only original black and white sketches representing actual observations will be considered. Subjects can be depicted in a negative (black on white paper) or positive (white on black paper). Sketches to be submitted can be matted or be mounted with a stiff backing for display and should not exceed 11x14. Select the Sketching side of the form to provide details.

Guidelines

Photo methods can include a handheld camera, camera/tripod, piggyback, and scopes at first focus or at projection. All methods are available to use in each photo category.

Photo entries in all but the Public Outreach category are free to guide, stack images, and receive unlimited processing.

There are no limitations as to the image capturing format, camera, lens or telescope.

Contest Rules:

(Note: special restrictions and conditions apply under some categories description)

1. All entrants must belong to the Astronomical League through a club or as a member at large and be a registered member of the NCRAL Convention.

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February Meeting Minutes

by Kevin Bert

The February business meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation was held at the Unitarian Church North. Vice President Joyce Jentges opened the meeting at 7:55 pm and welcomed 21 members and guests.

She then asked for standard reports.

Treasurer Gene DuPree reported that there was \$14,545.01 in the checking, \$1,109.07 in the observatory account. He encouraged all to get their membership dues turned in.

Secretary Kevin Bert said the final membership roster had no changes. After contacting, the Astronomical League there is a good chance that a representative from the League would be attending our regional convention this spring with League Sales items.

Joyce reminded the members that the deadline to sign up for the March 6th banquet is February 20th. The Fox & Hounds restaurant is once again the destination.

NCRAL conference chairperson Mickey Kazmierski drummed up support with a brief presentation on the upcoming April 4th and 5th event. The close proximity makes this a great opportunity to attend a big convention and not break the bank. All the latest details can be found on the club's website.

Under new business

Edward Croke reports that a light pollution ordinance is working its way to the town of

Belgium. It was suggested that our club get involved to help promote it. Joyce expressed an interest to get more information. There is also talk of extra lighting going on buildings and a proposed communication tower at Harrington Beach. Observatory Director Dan Bert will look into the lighting issues.

For upcoming events, Joyce points to the popular Sheboygan Swap & Sell now set for March 15th. The next public viewing event will be on February 8th at Pike Lake with their Ski and Stars event.

With no further business, Joyce closed the meeting at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Kevin Bert

“Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey”

Cosmos premieres simultaneously across 10 U.S. networks on Sunday, March 9 at 9 p.m. In the U.S., the series will debut on Fox, National Geographic Channel, FX, FXX, FXM, Fox Sports 1, Fox Sports 2, Nat Geo Wild, Nat Geo Mundo and Fox Life. Internationally, the series debut will be available on a total of 220 channels in 181 countries.

Cosmos is hosted by renowned astrophysicist Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson. As with the legendary original series, the new COSMOS is the saga of how we discovered the laws of nature and found our coordinates in space and time. The series brings to life never-before-told stories of



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2. The entrant is the sole creator and owner of the sketch, image or images. Entries are to be no more than two years old. (April 2012)

3. Entrants are limited to one (1) entry per category. Six entries total.

4. Sketching entries should be the original medium. No digitized reproductions.

5. Conventional film or digital recording means are both acceptable for non-sketching entries.

6. All photo entries must be submitted and displayed as a print.

7. Matting, frames, or backings are required to hang photo entries or make them self-standing up to 16x20" max.

(See Public Outreach exception)

8. Do not label or mark your entries in any way that will identify you to the voting registrants. Anonymity is preferred. When displayed, numbers will accompany all images for identification.

9. A completed NCRAL Astrophoto/Sketching Contest entry form must accompany EACH entry. See the downloadable form on the club website.

Selection of winners in each category will be made by the submitted ballots of registered attendees and the number of awards given in a category will be determined by the number of entries. I hope to see your best photos on display to share with other attendees.

Things to See in the March Sky...by Don Miles

Uranus: Closely trails the setting Sun early in the month, and as the month progresses, will be on the opposite side of the Sun from us, so soon will not be visible. It's currently at (mag 5.9), and so close to the Sun that it isn't very impressive now. By late April, Uranus will appear in the morning sky as we continue to work our way around the "front side" of the Sun (in respect to Uranus).

Jupiter, Mars, & Saturn: Jupiter is at (mag -2.5), and up already at sunset It will transit around (9pm/sunset), remains in the constellation Gemini, and sets by about (4:45/2:45am). Mars is next to rise, and will be about (10:30/8:15pm). It transits by (4am/2:45), and the views will continue to get better as we approach opposition (which happens on April 8th). Mars is in the constellation Virgo. Saturn (mag 0.4) is next to rise, and will so by about (12:30am/10:30pm), and is in the constel-

lation Libra. It transits around (6/4am), but will remain a well placed evening object throughout the summer and into fall.

Venus & Mercury: Venus rises about (5:15/4:45am), and shines at a brilliant (mag -4.4). It slips a little closer to the Sun as March passes, but will then remain stationary at about that distance for the rest of the summer. Mercury starts the month rising about an hour before the Sun, but slips to only rising about a half hour before sunrise by months end.

Moon:

March 1st: New Moon

March 8th: First Quarter

March 16th: Full Moon

March 23rd: Last Quarter

March 30th: New Moon



Special Events:

Daylight Savings Time begins the 9th, so keep in mind that you may need to add an hour to times listed on printed calendars & charts.

There are no large meteor showers to speak of, but maybe you've got a touch of cabin fever, and are itching to start off your observing year trying something a little bit different...Maybe try the Messier Marathon? The best weekend for it will be the 29/30th, but another option would be the 1st/2nd. These are the weekends closest to the new moon, but late-month may be a little less frigid. A quick Google search will give you a wealth of info about it, or you could look at the Spectrum archives of the February/March newsletters for club articles written about it. Good Luck if you give it a try.

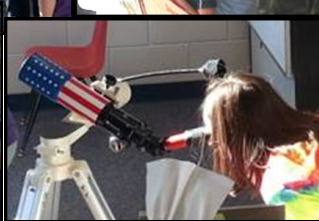
What has the NCSF Coronado been up to... *Outreach!*

By Teddy Kroll

A month ago I took out the Club's Coronado for space week at Thorson Elementary in Cedarburg.

The weather was NOT cooperating so finally after a month of waiting I decided to setup inside the classroom. Outside ambient temperature was a balmy -7 degrees and very sunny.

75 kids participated in the viewing thru the Coronado and my sons' William Optics 66mm Patriot with Criterion white light filter. Sunspots 11967, 11968, 11970, 11973 were clearly visible. It was a great day. The kids loved it and asked a lot of questions.



February Events

Harrington Beach Ski & Hike February 1

Reported by Charlotte DuPree

February 1, Harrington Beach, Ski and Hike. In January we shoveled 6 inches of snow, to get down to the observatory. For February we shoveled 12 inches of snow. There were two visitors waiting for us when we arrived. We got the scope running because we had a nice clear sky. A shadow transit on Jupiter, Orion nebula, M35, M1, double cluster, were the objects we looked at. After an hour the clouds appeared. Eleven more visitors were disappointed that they could not look through the big scope.

Harrington Beach Ski & Hike February 8

Reported by Charlotte DuPree

February 8, Pike Lake State forest, Candle light ski and hike. When we arrived Al Steinberg was already set-up, and we hoped the snow would go away. About a half hour later Al spotted the Moon through the clouds, so he had a target to watch. Eventually the clouds thinned just enough that Al found Jupiter, and Gene put out the 8 inch and he was following the Moon. We had a steady line of visitors all evening.

Club Members,

Our event draws near folks. Your NCRAL 2014 Committee has worked hard, while having fun, making this event enjoyable, informative and affordable. The conference is a short drive to Pt. Washington. Let's have a good showing from the NCSF, help us give the North Central States astronomy clubs a "Wisconsin Welcome". His conference promises to be quite a show, something for everyone! Tours, activities, speakers, door prizes, vendors, food, smiles, laughs all in a comfortable atmosphere filled with...well, people just like you!



Observatory NEWS

By Observatory Director Dan Bert

HBSP will be putting in a new Law Enforcement Building near the current location of the Maintenance Shop and a new accessible cabin is slated to begin construction this spring. Both structures will have some exterior lighting. Both Robin Miller on the park staff and the parks superintendent Carolyn Morgen understand our concerns and will definitely work with our club to minimize the impact of any lighting that will be added. There will also be a radio tower installed at the park to boost Law Enforcement communications in that area of the county. That tower will be under the 200 foot mark, so it is not required, nor expected, to have any lighting.

HBSP wants to make visitors to the park more aware of our group and highlight the observatory. They have secured from the friends group part of the funding to make and install 8 interpretive signs around our observatory. These signs will include basic astronomy info that visitors to the park can read to learn about the facility and the night sky. The park is asking for help from the NCSF to provide the information that would be shown on these signs. If you would be interested in helping with the signs please contact me. Thanks.

2014 Membership Dues

The Final Dues Notice accompanies this Newsletter. If you have not paid your 2014 Membership Dues, simply follow the instructions on the notice and return to Treasurer, Gene DuPree. *If you have already paid your dues, then disregard the notice.*

RELATED INFO

Star Parties

NCRAL 2014

April 4 & 5th
Country Inn & Suites
Port Washington

Wisconsin Observers Weekend

Hartman Creek State Park
www.new-star.org
May 29 - June 1st

Northwoods Starfest

August 22-24th
Hobbs Observatory
Fall Creek, WI
www.cvastro.org

Other Star Party Dates Coming Soon!

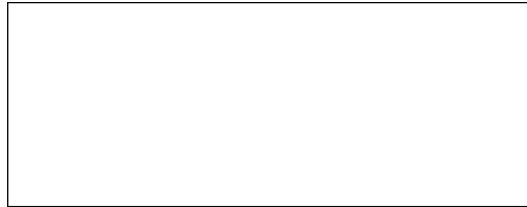
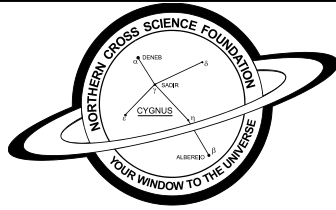
Jim & Gwen Plunkett

OBSERVATORY



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COSMOS - Continued from Pg 2

the heroic quest for knowledge, transporting viewers to new worlds and across the universe for a vision of the cosmos on the grandest – and the smallest – scale. The series invents new modes of scientific storytelling to reveal the grandeur of the universe and re-invent celebrated elements of the original series, including the Cosmic Calendar and the Ship of the Imagination. The most profound scientific concepts are presented with stunning clarity, uniting skepticism and wonder, and weaving rigorous science with the emotional and spiritual into a transcendent experience.



7th Annual Swap 'N' Sell

Sponsored by Sheboygan Astronomical Society
Saturday, March 15, 2014
Aviation Heritage Center
Sheboygan Airport
N6191 Resource Drive, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Now is the time to mark your calendars and spread the word about our 7th annual Swap-n-Sell event. Got some astronomical stuff (scopes, eyepieces, books, etc.) laying around and you want to get rid of it?

Here's your chance! Bring unwanted astronomy items to sell or swap with other amateur astronomers!


This is a great opportunity to meet and greet fellow amateur astronomers.

Astronomy Presentations:

Jeff Setzer: Adventures at Yerkes (time to be announced)
Presentation will be held in the Aviation Heritage Museum room.

Brat Fry will be held during the event

Sponsored by
Sheboygan Astronomical Society



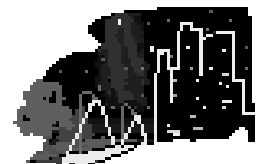
Terms are cash, check or swap.
The Sheboygan Astronomical Society is not responsible or will not be held liable for any dealings which do or do not occur.

SPECTRUM

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The NCSF supports the International Dark sky association.



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This Issue, along with back issues of SPECTRUM, can be found on the NCSF Web Site.
<http://www.ncsf.info>

Monthly Meeting Information

7:00 p.m. Astronomy 101
7:30 Main Program
Unitarian Church North
13800 N. Port Wash. Rd.
Mequon, WI 53097