

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

April 2023

Aurora Drama - NCSF members Rick and Susan Sell took this image of the Northern Lights display from a back road north of Germantown on March 23. The photo was taken with a Nikon Z6 and a 35mm lens set at f/1.8 for three seconds at ISO 1600.

Author Jonathan Ward Space To Discuss Columbia Disaster

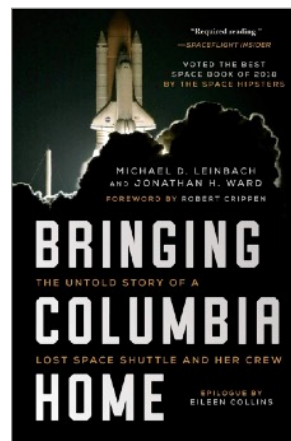
On February 1, 2003 the Space Shuttle Columbia disintegrated during re-entry over the skies of east Texas. NASA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and more than 200 other organizations leapt into action to find the remains of Columbia wreckage and its crew.

April Program

It was the largest land search-and-recovery operation in US history, as 25,000 people walked every square foot of Columbia's 250-by-10-mile debris field to search for pieces of wreckage that would identify the cause of the accident.

Author [Jonathan Ward](#) spent several years interviewing people, ranging from the NASA administrator, engineers who reconstructed the wreckage, to the everyday Texans who volunteered their time and talents in the search.

Written with Space Shuttle Launch Director [Mike Leinbach](#), the book *Bringing Columbia Home* has become the definitive account of the Columbia accident and is in development as a major motion picture.



March Board Meeting Minutes

- The previous month's board meeting had been canceled due to inclement weather.
- Members in attendance included Steve Sweeney, Jeff Setzer, Joyce Jentges, Gene Dupree and Mike Borchert.
- Gene's treasury report for 2022: \$12,938.99 in the general fund, \$219.92 paid to WE Energies, \$25 paid to State of Wisconsin, \$1,025 paid to Acuity insurance, \$280 paid to

the Astronomical League, \$50 paid to the IDA, \$24 paid for stamps, \$221.33 paid for flowers for Rick Kazmierski and Ernie Mastroianni, \$16.08 paid for the Christmas party, \$162.24 and \$139.95 paid for observatory. Funds received were \$470 from the NCRAL convention, and \$640 for the Kaz memorial. Dues generated \$2,417 and \$1,363 in excess funds. Jeff

See page 2

Coming Up

April 6: Full Moon
April 19: New Moon
April 27: First Quarter

Thursday, April 6, 6 pm
General Meeting
[Jackson Community Center](#)
N165 W20330 Hickory Lane
Jackson, WI 5303

May 5 and 6
[NCRAL Convention](#)
[Grand Bear Resort](#),
Utica IL See page 4 of the
[Northern Lights](#),
the quarterly NCRAL
newsletter

Public Viewing
May 26 and 27
Harrington Beach, 8-11 pm
May 27
Pike Lake, 8-11 pm

Thursday, June 1, 6pm
General Meeting
[Jackson Community Center](#)
Members talk about their
favorite astronomy gadget,
book, place, anything.

More events on next page

Public Viewing Nights for 2023



Tracking the Stars - The roof of the Plunkett Observatory was open for a recent public observing night at Harrington Beach State Park. A short time-exposure shows the motion of the Panarusky telescope as a telescope operator moves it to different targets.
Ernie Mastroianni photo

- May 26 & 27, Harrington Beach State Park, 8-11 pm
- May 27, Pike Lake, 8-11 pm
- June 3, Solar Viewing at Pike Lake Discovery Day, 1-4
- June 23, Solar viewing, Pike Lake Fish Fry 4-7:30 pm
- July 15, Pike Lake, 8-11 pm
- July 21 & 22, Harrington Beach, 8-11 pm
- August 12, Pike Lake, Public, 8-11 pm
- August 25 only, Harrington Beach, 8-11 pm
- August 26, Ice Age Center, 7-11 pm
- September 9, Family Night, Pike Lake Beach area, 6-9
- September 8 & 9, Harrington Beach, 8-11 pm
- September 9, Pike Lake, 8-11 pm
- September 16, Pike Lake, 8-11 pm
- October 20 & 21, Harrington Beach, 8-11 pm
- October 21, Pike Lake, 8-11 pm

Regional and National Newsletters

You can download the NCRAL newsletter at this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/242vzbud>

Or sign up to have it emailed:

<https://tinyurl.com/NCRAL>.

Download *The Reflector*, the national newsletter here:

<https://www.astroleague.org/reflector>

March Board Meeting Minutes

From page 1 reported \$1,283.34 in our PayPal account and transferred \$1,000 to the general account.

- The 2024 NCRAL convention will take place May 17 and 18 in Green Bay.
- The list of paid club members is 52. There are 18 members who have not yet renewed. Jeff will send an email blast to remind them. The board will re-visit the active roster list at April's meeting and then finalize it for inclusion into the ALCOR list for forwarding.
- The subject of a QR code was opened for discussion. Jeff reminded everyone that there is a trial code. Discussion then centered around the possibility of having multiple QR codes at the various club events and outings, with the possibility of tracking and following up on the responses we get from the inquires the QR codes would garner. No motions were offered. Discussion is ongoing.
- An Air Table discussion followed from the QR code possibilities. Jeff mentioned that he and Kevin Bert were the only personnel officially able to update, or add data to Air Table, the club still uses a free option version.

Other members of the board do have access. Air Table is the primary controlled-access recording tool for club membership, and the members data,

Last Chance to Pay Dues
18 members have not yet renewed. The board will re-visit the active roster list at April's meeting and then finalize it for inclusion. Renew via Paypal or credit card at this link:

<https://ncsf.info/ncsf-online-dues-payment/>

such as email address, membership on the board, phone numbers and training on the scopes/access to the observatory. There were no motions, discussion is ongoing.

- Social media and club membership/ activities/involvement/ outreach were discussed. The discussion included younger generational membership growth. What value the club added that non-members could get online or elsewhere was brought up. Motivation for club members to get active in club

outreach projects was mentioned. And, the cost in dollars, time, effort was discussed. No motions were presented and the discussion is ongoing.

- Would like to announce to the club on the General Slack channel AND the newsletter, that June's meeting will be a presentation of member's favorite podcast, gadget, website, anything astronomical, and will consider topics outside the realm, maybe a list of relevant movies. Please reach out to Mike Borchert via email gmborchert@gmail.com to be put on the list. We are thinking about a 5-15-minute presentation to be put on personally at the meeting. Remember, we do have computer and screen and WIFI at the meetings, but in-person demonstrations are welcome. If we do not have enough time for all of the presentations, we'll consider a re-run at a later meeting.
- The motion to take the HBSP up on their offer to change the light at the outhouse to a switched one was made and passed by the board. Dan Bert will be notified.
- These minutes are submitted for review by the Secretary. Please reply for corrections. - *Mike Borchert*

Northern Lights in the Northern Kettle Moraine

Charlotte DuPree captured this spectacular Aurora display on March 23 from the Kettle Moraine State Forest near New Prospect, Wis. She used her Samsung S10 phone, handheld, for this five-second exposure.



Swap-N-Sell 2023

The annual Swap-N-Sell event was held on March 11 at the Sheboygan Aviation Center. Sponsored by the Sheboygan Astronomical Society, it's a great place to buy, sell and trade astronomy gear of all kinds.
-Jeff Setzer photos



Rick Dusenbery (center) examines Mark Zellner's 8" Dob. The scope is still for sale. The exterior of the Sheboygan Aviation Center, and the view from the podium during Jeff Setzer's Messier presentation.



Clockwise from above left:
An overview of the gear tables. Gene DuPree and Joyce Jentges with various items. Charlotte DuPree examines a video camera. An attendee admires a 12.5 inch Portaball telescope, designed by the late Peter Smitka of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society.



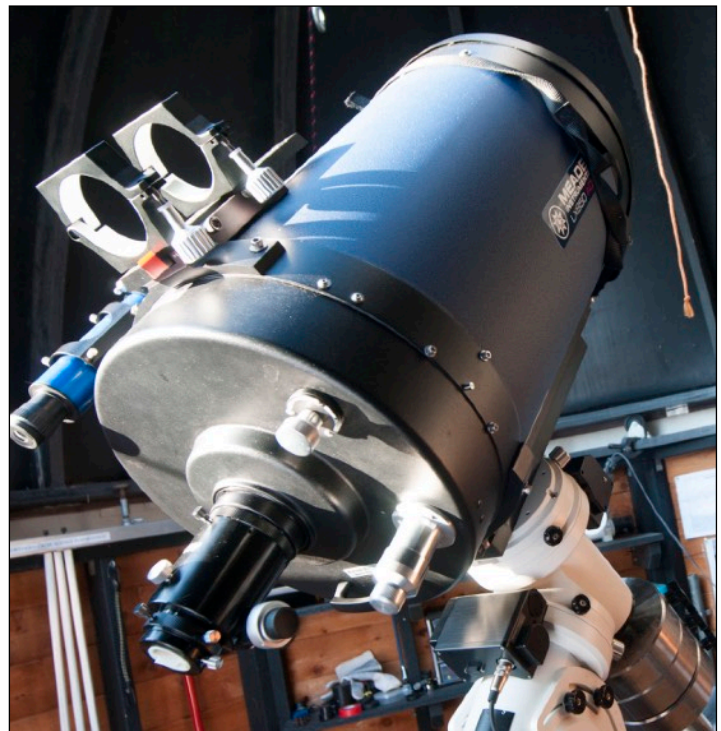
Astronomy Gear from Rick Kazmierski's Estate for Sale

Available for purchase are astrophotography telescopes and related gear for sale from Rick Kazmierski's estate. Please contact Charlotte or Gene DuPree at 262-675-0941 if you are interested. A list of his equipment will also be available to see at Thursday's meeting. Among the items for sale are as follows:

- A Stellarvue 70mm refractor, fully multi-coated APO triplet objective, focal length: 420mm at f/6.
- A William Optics Zenithstar refractor, with a fully multi-coated 105 triplet APO objective with a focal length of 735mm at f/7.
- A 14" Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain with an equatorial mount.
- A Meade LX200 with alt-az mount, a wedge, and full-aperture glass solar filter.

Rick also owned several astrocameras which are also for sale. We can take pictures of the boxes if anyone is interested.

- Charlotte and Gene DuPree



From top: Rick Kazmierski works with his William Optics Zenithstar refractor with a Stellarvue guide scope during last year's small scope star party at Harrington Beach. His 14" Meade telescope is seen at his home observatory. The Astro-Physics mount on which it sits is not for sale. This rendition of the star cluster NGC457, also known as the Owl Cluster, was one of the last photos he made.

A Busy Winter for Public Outreach

February 4: Ice Age Visitor Center. The sky was cloudy from the start. We heard on the West Bend radio station that they had urged visitors to see the Green Comet at our event, so we made it a point to go out there anyway. We gave business cards to a dozen or more people and told them of our summer schedule.

February 11: Pike Lake Ski & Hike. This year they had two time slots, and you had to have a voucher to get into the parking lot. We arrived around 4:45 and had to wait in the line. We wanted to set up before the 5:18 sunset. We spotted Venus at 5:30 and Jupiter shortly after, with two moons on each side. Since it was not dark yet, the visitors were wondering what we were doing out there.

Mark Zellner was first to arrive, followed by Gene and Charlotte DuPree, Al Steinberg, Cary Kaczik and Steve Sweeney. About a thousand people were estimated to be there and about

maybe a third of them looked through the scopes. Object seen were M35, M42, also Mars, Pleiades, and the Christmas Tree cluster. Gene was able to find the Green Comet using digital setting circles. It was one of the best nights in years for this event.

March 4: Catholic Ecology Center. We were asked to present program at the center in Neosho. The sky was cloudy when we began at 6:30. Charlotte and Steve gave a talk about telescopes what we see in the sky. Making planispheres was the nights' activity in place of stargazing. The parish priest gave a talk about physics and the connection of all things. The sky cleared, but with a 95% moon only the brighter objects could be seen. It was about three days after the Jupiter and Venus conjunction, but they were lost in the trees, but we did see the Orion nebula and the Pleiades. - Gene and Charlotte DuPree

Board of Directors, 2023**President - Jeff Setzer**

1418 Trillium CT
West Bend, WI 53095
262-338-8614
astrosetz@hotmail.com

**Vice President -
Joyce Jentges**

336 N Main Street, Apt.3
Cedar Grove, WI 53013
262 483- 4270
joycejentges@hotmail.com

Treasurer - Gene DuPree

6219 Jay St.
West Bend, WI 53095
262-675-0941
grdupree@charter.net

**Secretary and ALCOR -
Mike Borchert**

3656 Willow Creek Rd.
Colgate, WI 53017
262-628-4098
gmborchert@gmail.com

Kevin Bert

2292 Ridgewood Road
Grafton, WI 53024
(262) 674-0610
kevin.bert@hotmail.com

Steve Sweeney

N5962 County Road PS
Hartford, WI 53027
(262) 422-1091
sweeneysfarm@gmail.com

Don Woelz

4892 Lois Lane
West Bend WI 53095
(414) 732-7705
woelzd@charter.net



NCSF is a member of the [North-Central Region of the Astronomical League](#).



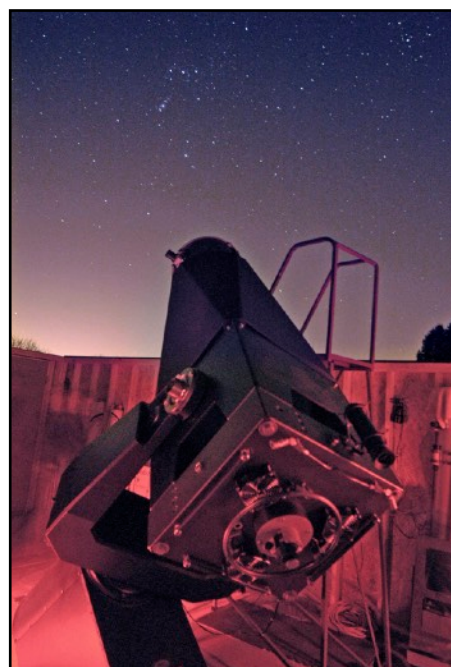
NCSF supports the [International Dark Sky Association](#)

Imaging Report



*The moon, Venus and Jupiter put on a dramatic display in late February and early March, changing positions every night in the western twilight. **Above:** On February 22, Jupiter and its moons hovered near the crescent moon lit by earthshine. **Right:** On March 1, Jupiter and Venus, separated by just a half-degree, sparkled bright in the west. The scene was so dramatic that Milwaukee-area police forces received dozens of calls from citizens who wondered about the nature of the bright lights hovering in the twilight.*

- Ernie Mastroianni photos



Spectrum newsletter

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<https://ncsf.info>

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Slack: ncsfastro.slack.com

Editor: Ernie Mastroianni
5821 N. Santa Monica
Whitefish Bay, Wis 53217
ernie.mastroianni@gmail.com