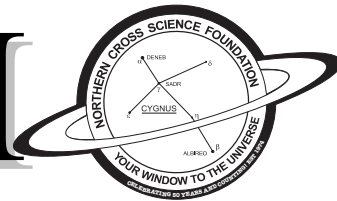


SPECTRUM



Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

March 2025

NCRAL Annual Convention Coming Up in April

Dave Minerath, Editor

The North Central Region of the Astronomical League (NCRAL) 2025 Convention is being held April 25-26 (Friday/Saturday) at the Minneapolis Marriott Southwest in Minnetonka, MN. This year's conference title is "First Light—New Frontiers, New People."

Friday's activities features a tour of the [Eagle Lake Observatory](#), a Star-B-Q at the observatory, and evening observing, weather permitting.



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Meeting Notes, February 6, 2025

Don Woelz, NCSF Secretary

Jeff Setzer, NCSF President, opened the February 2025 Member Meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation at 6:30 pm on Thursday, January 2, 2025, at the Jackson Community Center with 21 members and 2 visitors in attendance.

Jeff also presented the program for the evening titled "First Telescope? Learn how to use it."

His program introduced the listeners to information about types of telescopes and mounts, as well many of the accessories used by amateur astronomers.

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March Events

The March meeting is the annual dinner at the Water Street Brewery, 1251 Gateway Drive, Grafton. Preregistration was required and due Feb. 24.

March 15-16th annual Swap-N-Sell in Sheboygan Falls.

<https://www.shebastro.org/events-calendar.html>



*NCRAL Convention
Continued from p. 1*

Saturday is the NCRAL business meeting, a full day of speakers, vendor display, and door prizes, followed by a banquet dinner included with your registration.

Attendance to the convention gets you discounted admission to the Bell Museum Planetarium all weekend through Sunday, April 27th. The convention website is <https://ncral2025.org> which also has further convention information and the registration webpage.

Mark Weber has an interesting discussion chain on Slack talking about taking the Amtrak Borealis train (<https://www.amtrak.com/borealis-train>) to the convention. Some of the discussion has been about where to board the train, and the affordability (\$86 round trip from Mark's experience) but your cost may vary.



2024 Volunteer Hours at the Observatory

By Dan Bert

Looking back at this past year, a total of 11 public viewing nights & 1 small group events were held at the observatory. All together 19 different members logged a combined total of 186 volunteer hours towards public outreach at the park welcoming almost 500 recorded visitors. A big thank you to all who helped with an event in the past year.

Also want to give a huge thank you to Gene DuPree and Steve Schowalter for all of their efforts and over 300 hours put into observatory repairs to help keep the home of the Panarusky telescope solid well into the next 50 years.

Looking forward to the 2025 viewing season, clear skies! 🪐

The most remarkable discovery in all of astronomy is that the stars are made of atoms of the same kind as those on the earth. -Richard Feynman



ASTROCON 2025
BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK UTAH | JUNE 25-28
DARK SKIES ROCK!



ASTROCON registration is open! The event is being held at Ruby's Inn, near the entrance to Bryce Canyon National Park. The website is

<https://astrocon2025.org> for all the details...and there are a lot of details! 🪐

*February Meeting Minutes
From p. 1*

These included the use of red lighting to protect night vision, books and apps for identifying and finding night sky objects, finders, eyepieces, and more.

After the program, some announcements were made:

- The March 6 member meeting is our annual banquet. It will be held at the Water Street Brewery, 1251 Gateway Drive, Grafton, WI. Members will be receiving further information by email.
- Jim Hahn is presenting a program about eclipses at the Mequon Nature Preserve on Monday, March 3 at 6:30 pm.
- Members are participating in an event on February 7 at Pike Lake State Park. 🪐

Astronomy Day 2025

Dave Minerath, Editor

Astronomy Day is coming up! The website (<https://astronomyday.astroleague.org>) lists two days for Astronomy Day this year: May 3rd and September 27th. The most recent “What Up With the Astronomical League” has the spring day as May 12 which is a Monday, so I believe that the website is more accurate as the days on the website are Saturdays.

Astronomy Day started in 1973 by Doug Berger, then president of the Astronomical Association of Northern California. The idea was to bring astronomy to the public, instead of trying to get the public to come to the observatories which may be considerable distance. The idea took off and now Astronomy Day is celebrated at hundreds of locations across the country and around the world. 🪐



Outreach News

Jim Hahn will be conducting an eclipse outreach program at the Mequon Nature Preserve on Monday, March 3 at 6:30 pm. He will be placing emphasis on the upcoming March 13-14 total lunar eclipse.

The program is free, but registration is required.

<https://mequonnaturepreserve.org/get-involved/events>

Jim Macak posted in Slack a short article from the [Ozaukee County News Graphic](#) from Feb. 18 about the Orion StarBlast 4.5" tabletop telescope donated to the Grafton library. Thanks Jim for highlighting the article! 🪐

In the Sky This Month



[freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com)

5 – Moon near Uranus in the constellation Aries (0156 GMT)

5 – Moon near the Pleiades in the constellation Taurus (1232 GMT)

8 – Mercury at greatest elongation east

9 – Moon near Mars

13-14 – Full Moon, Micromoon, Total Lunar Eclipse

18-21 – Venus will be visible in the morning and evening

20 – March equinox

29 – New Moon

Further reading:

<https://starwalk.space/en/news/astronomy-calendar-2025#astronomical-events-in-march-2025> 🪐

Astronomical League Reflector Magazine-March Issue Digital Only

Per the February 2025 issue of the “What’s Up with the Astronomical League,” the March 2025 issue is being published in digital format only while the magazine transitions to a new printing company. The printed publication will return with the June 2025 issue. 🪐

**HAVE YOU SEEN
THE STARS TONIGHT?**

**TEXAS STAR PARTY, INC.'S
TSP 2025 STAR PARTY**

"The Premier Amateur Astronomy Event"

Prude Guest Ranch, Fort Davis, Texas

April 20 to 27, 2025

For additional information visit our website
<https://texasstarparty.org> or contact tsp@texasstarparty.org

Book your TSP 2025 attendance online at <https://texasstarparty.org/book/>

This Month in Astronomy History

1915 – The National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics (NACA) was established. At the time, the United States was lagging the rest of the world in aeronautics. The 12-member volunteer committee, on an initial budget of only \$5000 (a lot of money in 1915), took only a decade to lead the U.S back into the forefront of aeronautics. The NACA would be awarded its first Collier Trophy in 1929 for its achievements in aeronautics. The NACA would earn this award a total of five times in its 43-year history. The NACA would be absorbed into NASA in 1958.



The NACA receives its first Collier Trophy in 1929.

Photo Credit: NACA



1963 – Saturn 1 SA-4 launched from Kennedy Space Center as a test flight of the Saturn 1 booster. Part way through the flight, one of the engines was purposely disabled to test re-routing fuel to the other engines. The test was successful, and the Saturn 1 booster went on to serve as a test bed aiding in the development of the Saturn V.

1997 – The comet Halle-Bopp makes its closest approach to Earth. It was so bright it was visible from Earth for about 18 months.

<https://appel.nasa.gov/2015/03/20/this-month-in-nasa-history-the-naca-took-flight/>

<https://lowell.edu/this-week-in-astronomy-history-march-22-28/>

<https://www.nasa.gov/image-article/this-week-nasa-history-saturn-i-sa-4-launches-march-28-1963/> 🪐



Halle-Bopp comet. Photo Credit: NASA

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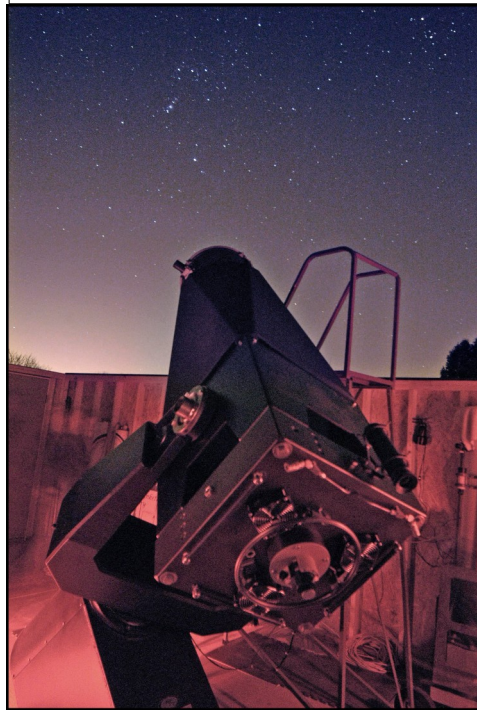
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Image Credit:
<https://brazosvalleyastronomyclub.org>



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