

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

August 2011

LOOKING UP

August 4, Thursday

General Meeting

7:00 p.m. - Astronomy 101

7:30 p.m. - Main Program

Business Meeting to follow

August 5 Saturday

Public Viewing

7:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach

August 6, Saturday

Public Viewing

7:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach

August 10, Wednesday

Sidewalk Astronomy

7:00 p.m.

Bayshore Town Center

August 17, Wednesday

Lac Lawrann

8:00 p.m.

August 18, Thursday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Home of Joyce Jentges

August 20, Saturday

Small Scope Star Party

7:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach

September 3, Saturday

Public Viewing

8:00 p.m.

Ice Age Center

Small Scope Star Party - 8/20/11..(Mark Your Calendar!) *by Kevin Bert*



A special night is once again being set aside for you and others to gaze through some amazing little instruments. It may be the simple 60mm refractor or other types of aperture-

challenged telescopes, but all are welcome at the third "Small Scope Star Party," (SSSP), on Saturday August 20th at Harrington Beach State Park. No feelings of aperture inadequacy here as you might at other star parties. Feel right at home and have a chance to learn from other members as advice and telescope views run freely.

A starting time of 7:00 pm. will allow a bit of sun viewing and time to look at and enjoy the variety of scopes before it gets dark. Saturn and its wonderful rings will start the evenings viewing. It is located next to the close double star Gamma Virginis. It will be dark enough for deep sky viewing after 9:00 as the summer triangle rides high in the sky. Jupiter rises by 11:00 and should be viewable after midnight along with the last quarter moon.

You are in no way obligated to bring a telescope but we are looking for members to bring as many small scopes as possible. I know some of you have two or more lurking in attics, closets and basements. Brush off the dust and bring them along! I hope to see the parking lot full of them either set up for viewing or just for display. The night will be treated very much like a members night. Scaled up enough to call it a party, scaled down, (in aperture), enough to appreciate the

joy, (and sometimes frustration), of small scopes. This year the event will invite campers at the park to attend. Members should use the parking lot to set up and the observatory will remain closed to focus on the small scope theme.

In taking a queue from the Northwood Starfest's "Midnight Snack," we will open up the observatory and have an 11:00 pm snack. Members can assist by bringing food and beverages if you wish. If it turns out to be a night to look at your scope instead of through it because of clouds, please still bring your scope so those in attendance can still appreciate it.

SSSP RULES

Like other classy events, a few ground rules need to be set up. This is to insure that no bloated aperture light buckets ruin the setting. This is strictly a visual equipment event. Please don't set up a bunch of photographic accessories.

- 1) No telescopes over 6.0-Inch in aperture are permitted to be set up.
- 2) Larger scopes, stopped down do not qualify.
- 3) Telescopes of the Reflector, Refractor or Catadioptric persuasions are all acceptable.
- 4) No binoculars please.
- 5) No photon amplification equipment allowed. Visual use only!
- 6) Items for sell or trade are permitted.

Top Ten List: *Things you may hear at a Star Party...by Kevin Bert*

No.10 But if I center spot the mirror for collimation I will be losing $\frac{1}{4}$ of my aperture.

No.9 I found this bargain gathering dust at a garage sale back in '81 for \$10. \$200 in upgrades and 30 years later I have it collecting more dust in my garage.

No.8 The mount is so shaky that every time I switch the eyepiece to a higher power I lose the object.

No.7 The scope never worked the same after I temporarily mounted the lawn sprinkler on top of the tripod last year.

No.6 And here my son always thought that the Barlow was a breaker bar to tighten the tripod base.

No.5 You think you had problems? Let me tell you what happened when I unexpectedly set up my scope on top of an (cont'd on pg. 4)

July Meeting Minutes

By Kevin Bert

The July business meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation was held at the Unitarian Church North in Mequon. President Joyce Jentges opened the meeting at 8:30 and welcomed over 23 members and guests. She then asked for standard reports.

Treasurer Gene Dupree reported \$6,984.47 in the checking account.

Secretary Kevin Bert said he had no membership roster changes to report. Kevin took a minute to recognize Joyce Jentges for her completion of the requirements to the Astronomical League's Outreach Award. She was given the certificate and pin for the accomplishment. Joyce explained some of the details of the program and that it was only the first of three steps to complete the entire program.

Under old business Kevin Bert gave an update on the binocular parallelogram mounts. He reports that all of the aluminum stock had been received and most of it has been sawed into individual components. Lathe work has begun on the two main details as this will be the most time consuming.

Joyce said that Don Miles has drawn up some basic drawings of the Observing

Mound project for Harrington Beach. Details of the size and shape are still in the early stages and will be worked through at future board meetings.

Joyce noted that the July 6th sidewalk astronomy event at Bayshore Town Square was finally a success after rescheduling a number of times due to bad weather. Members were there in force to show a good sized crowd of people views through telescopes.

Under new business, Joyce continued on with a list of upcoming NCSF events. July 8 & 9 are Public Viewing Nights at Harrington Beach with an 8:00 pm start for Friday and 3:00 pm start for Saturday to allow for an extended look at the sun with the Coronado solar telescope. Kevin Bert said that he would be hosting the July 23 Sun-Day on Saturday event. It starts at 2:00 pm with a demonstration on how to use the Club's Coronado telescope. July 31 – August 5 is the Nebraska Star Party. Members should register soon for the Northwoods Starfest on August 26-28.

It was noted that Friday would be the last Space Shuttle launch.

With no further business, Joyce closed the meeting at 9:10 pm.

Jim and Gwen Plunkett Observatory



Observatory Director:
Dan Bert: 262-375-2239

Astro Humor

Q: What is the farthest you can see on a clear day?

A: 93 Million miles...(From here to the Sun.

Q. How many Astronomers does it take to change a light bulb?

A. None. Astronomers aren't afraid of the dark.

Things to See In the August 2011 Night Sky By Don Miles

Mercury & Venus: This month Mercury (mag 1.4) will spend most of the month on the front side of the Sun, so won't be visible, but will start to separate itself on the leading side to then be a morning object at the very end of the month. On the morning of Saturday the 27th, look below and to the left of the crescent moon (~7.5 degrees for a reference) about 45 minutes before the Sun rises for your chance to see it this month. It will reach its greatest distance on the leading side of the Sun (greatest western elongation) on September 3rd, and will work its way around the back side of the Sun until late October. Venus will be on the back side of the Sun for the next two months, so won't be visible until mid-October when it becomes an evening object for the rest of the year.

Saturn & Pluto: Look for Saturn (mag. 0.9) still in the constellation Virgo highest in the sky as the sun is setting. It is still about 2 degrees below and to the left of the fairly bright double-star Porrima, and will continue to slowly move to the lower left. Pluto is still in the constellation Sagittarius, and will also continue to sink into the southern sky as will the rest of the summer constellations as summer fades. If you haven't

tried spotting it, give it a try. A 10 or 12 inch scope is recommended to even get a glimpse, and make sure you have detailed charts to give you the best chance of success.

Neptune & Uranus: Neptune (mag 7.8) still straddles the border of the constellation Aquarius & Capricorn, and will slowly move lower and to the right as the month progresses. It's best seen about 4am. Uranus (mag 5.8) rises about an hour after Neptune, and is just to the East of the lower "fish" in Pisces.

Jupiter & Mars: Jupiter (mag -2.6) rises at about midnight early in the month, and by about 10pm by months end. Look above and slightly to the right of the "tail" of Cetus. Mars (mag 1.4) rises about 2:30am in the constellation Taurus, but will drift eastward thru most of the constellation Gemini by months end.

Moon:

August 6th: First Quarter

August 13th: Full Moon

August 21st: Last Quarter

August 29th: New Moon



"Special Events"

There is only one major meteor shower this month, and that would be the Perseids. They peak (60/hr) the night of Saturday the 13th, but unfortunately, the full moon is the next night. You would probably only be able to see the brighter ones, but if you can get away to a darker site, and use a tree or building to block the direct light of the moon, you may be able to see some of the more faint ones. Look northeast after midnight to see the oncoming meteors. They're known to move across the sky pretty fast, and also for leaving "smoke" trails.

August General Meeting

101 Class...*presented by Kevin Bert*

"Heavens-Above Website"

"August 101 Class is about the Heavens-Above Website. You sometimes hear that the International Space Station will pass overhead in the early evening. You can investigate how this and other orbiting satellites can be predicted for passing over your location." *Kevin Bert*

Constellation of the Month:

SCUTUM

Main Program... *by Joyce Jentges*

This Month's Main Program is entitled

"Galaxies for Beginners"

Come and join us as presenter Joyce Jentges takes you on a galactic exploration to discover more information about these fuzzy snowballs we search for in the sky.



July Events

Wednesday, July 6

Finally, the weather cooperated for a Bayshore event! We had a large and steady crowd all night, with the Moon and Saturn delighting everyone. Thanks to Rebecca Setzer, Don Miles, Terry Litts, Robert Radke for helping out. We even had a former Milwaukee Astronomical Society president (Steve Diesso) participate with a telescope.

Friday July 8

Leaders were Gene DuPree and Joyce Jentges. Other members present were Tony Marek, Richard Sauve, Fred Klein, Justin Modra, Meg Modra and new members Stephan Searcy and Jessica Thomason. Skies were partly cloudy. But, between the clouds we looked at 57-13-51 and a few other objects to include the Moon and Saturn. We had over 50 visitors.

Saturday July 9

Saturday started out with Solar viewing in the afternoon with partly cloudy skies turning to mostly cloudy. For evening viewing we were able to spot the moon occasionally between the clouds. We had around a dozen visitors for the day.

Through a friend of Charlotte's and the Milwaukee Lunar Reclamation Society Inc., we had the honor of a Toronto Television Film Crew. They wanted to see the Moon with a telescope which is for a documentary on how different people and cultures see the Moon differently. They spent a couple of hours taping and asking questions.

Saturday, July 23

Sun-Day on Saturday participants were greeted with mostly clear skies for this annual event. The Sun displayed a magnificent prominence through the Coronado while sunspots were hard to come by. Temperature was in the mid 80's and extended time in the sun was very hot. A few members even took a dip in the pool to cool off. Six telescopes were set up and the binocular parallelogram components were on display and talked about. The prototype did not get a chance for evening viewing as clouds and haze rolled in from the west causing the party to break up early. Fifteen members and guests attended the event and I would like to thank all of them for stopping in and for those that brought snacks or a dish.

American Science & Surplus Event July 8

Vivian Hoette of Yerkes Observatory called me up and asked if we could help support a telescope and astronomy event at the American Science & Surplus store in Milwaukee. Becca and I helped with the event, along with a few current and former Milwaukee Astronomical Society members I was able to recruit. There were probably around 50 people there for the telescope workshop put on by the store, all of who stayed for the evening observing. Jean Creighton, director of UWM's planetarium was also there giving people constellation tours. If we do this again and we get enough advance notice I will invite NCSF members to participate if they'd like. There was a lot of information handed out about NCSF as well as Milwaukee Astronomical Society.

CURRENT CLACK

New Member

NCSF Welcomes New Club Members

Stephan Searcy

Jessica Thomason

Leaders for Public Viewing

August 5

Public Viewing

Leaders Needed

August 6

Public Viewing

Kevin & Dan Bert

August 10

Sidewalk Astronomy

Jeff Setzer

August 17

LacLawrann

300 Schmidt Rd, West Bend

Jeff & Becca Setzer

September 3

Ice Age Center

N1765 Hwy G, Campbellsport

Gene & Charlotte DuPree

Star Parties

Northwoods Starfest

August 26 - 28

www.cvastro.org

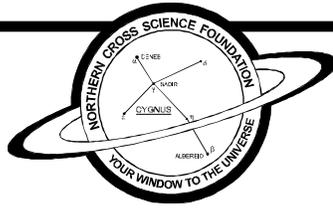
Prairie Skies

September 22 - 25

Kankakee, IL

www.prairieskies.org

SPECTRUM
5327 Cascade Drive
West Bend, WI 53095



2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President—Joyce Jentges
102 N. Montgomery St. Apt #1
Port Washington, WI 53074
262-483-4270
joycejentges@hotmail.com

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

Secretary - Kevin Bert
2292 Ridgewood Road
Grafton, WI 53024
262-375-2239
kevin.bert@hotmail.com

Treasurer - Gene DuPree
6219 Jay St.
Myra, WI 53095
262-675-0941
grdupree@charter.net

Rick Kazmierski
262-305-1895

Don Miles
262-675-2796

Tony Marek
414-354-6076

Newsletter Editor & Publisher

Rick & Mickey Kazmierski
262 305-1895/ rickkaz@charter.net

ant hill!

No.4 If you stand on one foot, lean over and squint to view you might be able to see the flamingo nebula.

No.3 I started a top 10 list of galaxies and can't seem to get farther than three.

No.2 Here, hold my beer and I will show you how to break loose the lock nut on that rusty European mount.

No.1 I thought I found the ring nebula until I realized that the lens was fogged with dew.

Lac Lawrann Astronomy Public Viewing

August 17, Wednesday 8:00 p.m.

by Mickey Kazmierski

"Lac Lawrann Conservancy is a 136-acre nature preserve. It is a vast expanse of water, sky, wetlands, native hardwood forest, red pine plantation, tall grass prairie and glacial landscapes. The Conservancy serves as a refuge to over 300 species of plants, over 200 species of birds, and a wide variety of mammals as well as reptiles and amphibians." Lac Lawrann has become a personal passion for me. Volunteering for it's in-school Storytime teaching, involved in taking groups of children out onto the Conservancy trails and discovering with the children the whereabouts of frog and turtle, or seeing a blue heron nesting or flying overhead. The excitement is in the child's eyes, opening wide as they discover nature. LLC sharing any one of the exciting everyday discoveries in it's public outreach; just as NCSF is passionate about it's own public outreach. Now these two fold into one, Earth and the Universe. Come early and check out the beautiful trails and ponds, stay for the great astronomical viewing and crafts for adults and children, planisphere's I'm told. Bring your telescopes and join in!

Our club has a "Discussion Group on Google"
See our website: <http://www.ncsf.info/> for details.

SPECTRUM

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The NCSF supports the International Dark sky association.



Send inquiries to:
SPECTRUM
5327 Cascade Drive
West Bend, WI 53095

This Issue, along with back Issues of SPECTRUM, can be found on the NCSF Web Site.

<http://www.ncsf.info>

Monthly Meeting Location
Unitarian Church North
13800 N. Port Wash. Rd.
Mequon, WI 53097