

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

December 2004

LOOKING UP

December 2 Thursday

Monthly Meeting & Holiday Party

Please bring a goodie to share

7:30 p.m.

Due to the holiday party, there will not be an

Astronomy 101 or Main program

Unitarian Church North

December 7

Buying Your First Telescope Seminar

7:00 p.m.

UCN—Lower Level

December 16 Thursday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Home of Jeff Setzer

January 6 Thursday

Monthly Meeting

6:30 p.m. 101 Class

7:30 Main Program

UCN—Lower Level

January 20 Thursday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Location TBA

2004 -The Year In Review

By Joyce Jentges

January - The Astronomy 101 class was a telescope clinic where members would help other members and the public with telescope problems. This was followed up by a show and tell of Christmas goodies.

February - NCSF dinner was attended by about 18 members and held at Klug's Creekside Inn. February 14th was the annual Candlelight ski and Hike at Pike Lake. The skies were crystal clear, but it was COLD!!! We did have quite a few people who came to look through our scopes. Later on, we gathered around the campfire to warm our icy toes and hands.

March - On the 12th about 26 members went to UWM to see a planetarium show. Some of the members stopped to watch a Science Bag lecture on glass which was very entertaining.

The March 20th Messier Marathon was attempted by a few diehard members, but abandoned because of cloudy and windy weather.

The solar telescope making class began. 8 members have signed up for the class.

April - Astronomy Day on April 23 & 24 included Rob Powell's 1,000 yard model of the solar system. On the 23rd, about 125-150 people joined us at Harrington Beach. There were 11-13 members present with telescopes. This was a successful night. On the 24th however, the weather was nasty. It was called off at 5 p.m. due to overcast/rainy conditions.

At the end of April, 2 of our members went to the NCRAL convention which was in Iowa.

May - The public viewing night on the 21st was rained out. The month of May turned out to be a rainy month.

June - Rob Powell represented the NCSF at

Camp Anokijig in Plymouth for an evening of observing. There were 40 children and 20 adults.

On June 8th, members of the NCSF gathered in at least 3 locations to observe the transit of Venus. About 2 dozen people witnessed the transit from Concordia College, and just over a dozen were at New Port Shores on the lakefront in Port Washington. Twenty eight people gathered at Upper Lake Park in Port Washington to view the transit. It was great to witness such a rare event. In the days after the event, several of our members got pictures in the paper or on TV. and Vince Condella had a few nice things to say about our club.

W.O.W. and Pre-W.O.W. were held from June 14-20th. 11 members went to Hartman Creek State Park for this weekend campout sponsored by Newstar. We had several great nights of stargazing during Pre-W.O.W. and W.O.W. One night we had pretty bad storms, but it got better from there. On Saturday, several of us went to the Strawberry Festival in Waupaca, and later we went to the ice cream social. Saturday night, the viewing was spectacular. We were able to see several daytime planets, with the help of Rick Poulin's telescope. Thanks Rick!!

July - In July, 7 of us went to the Nebraska Star Party. For some, like me, this was the first time going to this particular star party. I had been told horror stories about the weather and the heat, but they were always followed up by one line....but you gotta go!!! There were several days of stifling heat, upwards of

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November Meeting Minutes By Kevin Bert

The November business meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation was held at the Unitarian Church North in Mequon. President Jeff Setzer opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. to 35 members and guests.

Jeff welcomed all in attendance and asked for standard reports.

Secretary Kevin Bert and Treasurer Rob Powell had nothing to report.

Jeff Setzer informed the membership that a new 6-inch telescope had been donated to the Foundations loaner scope fleet. An old Criterion Newtonian was in excellent shape considering its age. He proceeded to show it to the membership and expressed a heartfelt thanks to Mr. Dave Schleif for this wonderful gift.

Jeff reminded the membership that three board members would be giving up their positions at the end of the year. Brad Plaumann was stepping down and Rob Powell and Mandy Matthews terms will expire. Jeff briefly covered their duties and opened the floor

for nominations to replace them. Joyce Jentges nominated Rob Powell for another term, Gwen Plunkett seconded the choice and Rob said that he was willing to serve if elected. Scott Nehring nominated Al Steinberg, Nick Nichols seconded and Al said sure. Charlotte DuPree nominated Gene DuPree, Joyce Jentges seconded and Gene said he would like to try it. Joyce Jentges nominated Kip Kaplan, a group of people seconded and Kip said that he would. With no other names brought up Jeff closed nominations until the December meeting where others could be considered and on the ballot prior to elections.

Jeff said that the latest club newsletters would be on the clubs web site prior to that month's monthly meeting.

Joyce Jentges told the members that T-shirts and sweatshirts were in and that members that put in an order should see her after the meeting to pick them up.

Under new business Gene DuPree proposed that we attend the Harrington Beach ski event in addition to the one at Pike Lake. Even if they are held on the same date Nick Nichols thought that the club is large enough to attend both. Willing parties could go to the one that was closer to home. The general consensus was in favor.

Jeff listened to reports from the recent lunar eclipse and followed with upcoming events. The members night at Kevin Bert's home on Saturday and the two telescope purchasing programs for beginners on November 17th and December 7th.

With no further business, Jeff closed the business meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Bert, secretary

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103 degrees, but it got cooler after that. We did have a bad storm come in one night, which showed just how bad the weather there can be. I guess we really did hit a favorable year for weather, despite the heat and storm. We had 3 nights of completely clear skies, and one night of partly cloudy skies. But now I know why everyone says you have to go to Nebraska. One night, the Milky Way was so bright, it was casting shadows on my white telescope tube. We were seeing 7th magnitude stars naked eye. I also did my first 2 all nighters in Nebraska!

Several members manned the booth at the Ozaukee County Fair, which is a tradition of the Northern Cross. Solar viewing went over very well. We were set up right in the midst of street lights, so night time viewing was pretty hard. None the less, several scopes were set

on a few objects for people to look at.

August - The Astronomy 101 class was a talk about Micrometeorites, by Kevin Bert. He detailed a method to collect particles of micrometeorites during the August Perseid meteor shower, and asked for several participants to help with the collection.

Sunday on Saturday was held at Kevin Bert's house on August 28. Weather was rainy with no clearing in site. 7 of the solar Dobsonians were brought for a group picture. Members enjoyed good food and good conversation as they waited to see if the weather would clear.

Some of our members went to the Northwoods Starfest near Eau Claire on August 13 – 15th. Friday night and Saturday night were both clear. Despite some bad dew, a few of our members were out observing until 3:30 a.m. Jeff Setzer presented a talk on

collimation, and he got to put his skills to good use, as he helped several attendees collimate their scopes.

September - Members placed orders for t-shirts and sweatshirts through InfiniTees, a company that we became acquainted with in Nebraska. Approximately 50 shirts and sweatshirts were purchased, which tells me that this order was over due.

8 of our members went to Astrofest near Kankakee Illinois in mid-September. It was an enjoyable time, despite the fact that skies were partly cloudy. We checked out the new site, and agreed that next year there were some changes that could be made to make it more enjoyable. But overall, members had a great time, and bought some neat stuff.

October - Members met for the first time at Unitarian Church North for our

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From the Editor By Joyce Jentges

I hope that you have been taking advantage of the mild weather to get out and do some observing. Hopefully you got out to see the aurora's we had in early November.

I enjoyed reliving this past year, as I was writing the 2004—Year In Review. This is a tradition with the club that is usually done in the December newsletter. Probably the hardest part was relying on my brain to remember details that I didn't keep track of during the year.

Being that we are having our holiday party at the December meeting, there will not be an Astronomy 101 program, or Main Program. We will conduct our business meeting at 7:30, and then socialize while we partake of Christmas goodies.

See the Current Clack column on this page for information about how you can donate either your time, or resources to help us with a few ongoing projects at this time. As always, your donations of time and money are always appreciated.

Get your snow boots and winter outerwear out! You will need them as we

have 2 winter Candlelight Ski and Hikes that we have been invited to. One is January 8th at Harrington Beach, and the other one is on February 5th, also at Harrington Beach. At this time I do not have a date for the Candlelight Ski and Hike at Pike Lake that we normally do participate in. We will be there weather permitting.

I would like to make a correction at this time. In the November newsletter, when I mentioned the new dues schedule for 2005, I had reported that the fee for an additional family member was \$8.00. The fee is actually \$6.00.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish each and every one of you a Blessed Christmas and Prosperous New Year. If you've been good, maybe Santa will fill your stockings with all kinds of good astronomical goodies! Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Our second InfiniTees order is being shipped. I will have it in time for the December meeting. We will not order any more merchandise until spring.

Wanted:

A podium to be used for our general meetings at UNC. A podium with storage space and shelves would be useful for storing electronic equipment. If anybody would be willing to make one or knows of one that could be donated, please see a board member at the December meeting.

Also needed is a large white board, to be used for programs and meetings. If you would like to make a financial donation toward the purchase of this, see Rob Powell.

Calling all Scrapbookers!!!

If you love to scrapbook, we have a project for you! Board members will be going through some of the archives of NCSF history soon, and are in need of someone to work on a history scrapbook for the club. We are not looking for fancy scrapbooks, just one that would tell the basic history of our organization. This would be made up of photos and news clippings from past years. If you have ever wanted to learn more about the foundations of this group, this would be a great way to do it! See Joyce Jentges if you are interested.

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first general meeting at this new site. This site will give us plenty of room to expand.

October 8 – 10th, 3 members attended F.O.G., at Hartman Creek State Park in Waupaca. We met several other astronomers up there at a group campsite that had been arranged by Jeff Setzer. Skies were very good, and it was very nice to get one last observing run in.

In mid-October 5 of our members went to the Twin Lakes Star Party in Kentucky. Despite overcast skies, they had a good time, even though the scopes didn't get much action.

A lunar eclipse on October 27th looked like it would be clouded out, but as evening approached, skies cleared. Some members met at Harrington Beach to watch the eclipse. We had several families come and view the eclipse with us. Skies stayed clear until just after totality. Kevin Bert was able to pick out some Messier objects with his big binoculars. We had a great time, despite the cold weather.

November - 8-10 members took an opportunity to meet at Harrington Beach on a cold Saturday night, to take advantage of mild weather. It was cold, but those attending got good looks at some spectacular fall/

winter objects such as the Orion Nebula, M31, and of course, Saturn.

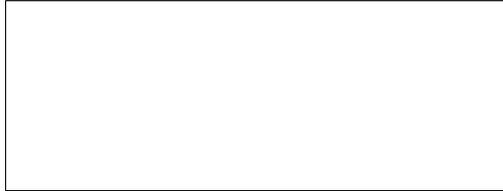
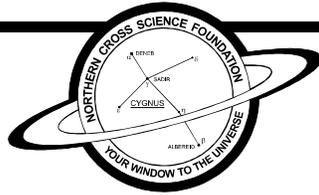
November 7th, astronomers around the United States were treated to an intense auroral display that lasted several days. We enjoyed seeing the red, green and white curtains. The pictures on the internet have been phenomenal!

On November 17th, Jeff Setzer hosted a presentation on Buying Your First Telescope. Although we did not get many people to come, those that did were interested in buying and took home some good information. Another presentation will take place on Dec. 7th.

December - On December 2nd, members

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will meet for the annual holiday party and general meeting. The only club business that will be conducted this night is the election of 3 members to the Board of Directors. Outgoing board members are Brad Plaumann, Mandy Matthies and Rob Powell.

Ongoing

Throughout this year, Jeff Setzer has been talking with the park rangers at Harrington Beach regarding our observatory. We have received the go ahead, although, we are currently waiting for exact plans to be drawn for the observatory. Those plans will be submitted to the State for final approval. The plans we had submitted, which are for a smaller observatory have been submitted already, and we have not heard anything bad about them, except that the State wants to see plans for the exact building. Plans are in the works for a fundraising campaign which will be spearheaded by Rob Powell.

Our roster has grown to over 80 members. We are seeing at least 30 members at every meeting, which is great as far as participation is concerned. This is positive growth. It is a great way to wrap up an action packed year. On behalf of the board of directors, I would like to thank each one of you who has showed up to help at a star party, or has helped our club in some way. The Northern Cross Science Foundation has become a wonderful educational tool for the community of Southeastern Wisconsin. We could not do this without the volunteers from our club that show up to help educate the public.

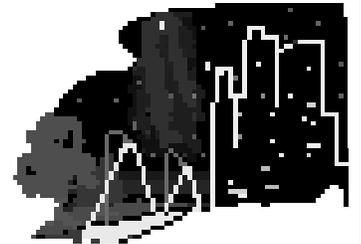


SPECTRUM

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<http://www.ncsf.info>