

# SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

February 2011

## LOOKING UP

**February 3, Thursday**

**Annual Banquet**

Fox & Hounds Restaurant  
Hubertus, WI

**February 5, Saturday**

**Candlelight Ski & Hike**

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Harrington Beach

**February 12, Saturday**

**Candlelight Ski & Hike**

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Pike Lake, WI

**February 17, Thursday**

**Board Meeting**

7:30 p.m.  
Home of Joyce Jentges

**March 3, Thursday**

**General Meeting**

Programs to be announced

**March 4 & 5, Fri. & Sat.**

**Messier Marathon**

Dusk  
Harrington Beach

## SpaceX Dragon Spacecraft...*Media Release (SpaceX)*

On December 8, 2010, SpaceX became the first commercial company in history to re-enter a spacecraft from low-Earth orbit.

SpaceX launched its Dragon spacecraft into low-Earth orbit atop a Falcon 9 rocket at 10:43 AM EST from Launch Complex 40 at the Air Force Station at Cape Canaveral.



Dragon Spacecraft successful re-entry 12/8/11.

The Dragon spacecraft orbited the Earth at speeds greater than 17,000 miles per hour, reentered the Earth's atmosphere, and landed on target in the Pacific Ocean, 500 miles off of the coast of Southern California, shortly after 2:00 PM EST.

This marks the first time a commercial

company has successfully recovered a spacecraft reentering from low-Earth orbit. It is a feat performed by only six nations or government agencies: the United States, Russia, China, Japan, India, and the European Space Agency.

SpaceX is developing a family of launch vehicles and spacecraft that will increase reliability and performance of space transportation, while ultimately reducing costs by a factor of ten. With the Falcon 1 and Falcon 9 rockets, SpaceX has a diverse manifest of launches to deliver commercial satellites to orbit.

This was the first flight under NASA's COTS program to develop commercial supply services to the International Space Station. After the Space Shuttle retires, SpaceX will fly at least 12 missions to carry cargo to and from the International Space Station as part of the Commercial Resupply Services contract for NASA. The Falcon 9 rocket and Dragon spacecraft were designed to one day carry astronauts; both the COTS and CRS missions will yield valuable flight experience toward this goal.

***For more information:***

<http://www.spacex.com/press.php?page=20101208>

## NCSF 2011 Public Viewing Nights...*by President Joyce Jentges*

In this newsletter you will find a list of our public viewing nights for the year. You may notice that we don't have quite as many dates listed as we did last year. The reason for this is because at times it can be difficult to find people to man the observatory. When the Board met recently we decided to just have the observatory open two nights a month (May - October) for the public at our observatory. That should more than satisfy our agreement with the park. Keep in mind that their may be slight additions or changes to this schedule as the year progresses. For the most up to date information, please consult your most recent newsletter, or check our

website at [www.ncsf.info](http://www.ncsf.info).

I am pleased at the turn out for this year's annual banquet. As of January 20th, we had 29 people who had registered for the banquet. It is always fun and the food is excellent.

For the February 12th Pike Lake event, I would like to encourage any of you who are available to attend that event to show up and help out with telescopes. They always get a huge crowd, and the lines to look through the telescopes can be quite long.

*Keep looking up.*

## January Meeting Minutes

By Kevin Bert

The January 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 pm. and welcomed over 25 members and guests. She then asked for standard reports.

Treasurer Gene Dupree reported a balance of \$894.13 in the Observatory account and \$7251.81 in the general fund.

Secretary Kevin Bert noted the latest member to join, Nick Kazmierski who is the grandson of our newsletter editor Rick Kazmierski. The Astronomical League regional convention will be held in Green Bay on April 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>. Cost is \$65.00 per individual and includes a dinner. Details can be found at the web site [npmas.org](http://npmas.org).

Under new business, Joyce Jentges told the membership that the board decided to continue with plans for having the February banquet at the Fox & Hounds in Hubertus. A correction in the banquet form unfortunately needs to be made. The Drunken Shrimp is being replaced with Settlers Stew, so be sure to make a change in your selection if it effects you.

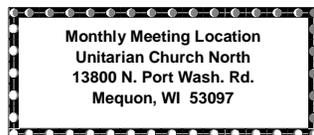
Next year planning for the banquet will be considered earlier to better evaluate other options brought up at last months meeting.

Under upcoming events, Joyce covered the public viewing opportunities for January and February. Members with telescopes were encouraged to help out because of traditionally large crowds at the Harrington Beach and Pike Lake events.

The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Swap 'N' Sell event is set on March 19<sup>th</sup> at the Aviation Heritage Center at the Sheboygan Airport. It runs from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and will include prizes and speakers. Food is available onsite.

A recent article about the Northern Cross was seen in the West Bend Post. For the most part it was very good but a number of errors detracted from the final product. I am sure all you "astrologers" can overlook it this time.

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



## Jim and Gwen Plunkett Observatory



Observatory Director:  
Dan Bert: 262-375-2239

### Star Party Astro Nuggets

- 8 oz. corn puffs (Old Dutch)
- 1-1/2 sticks butter (not margarine)
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 3/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda

Place corn puffs into a large roaster. In a large kettle, mix together butter, brown sugar and syrup. Boil for 2 minutes. Mix in baking soda, the mixture will foam.

Pour the mixture over the puffs and stir to coat.

Bake at 250deg. for 45 minutes, stirring every fifteen minutes. Pour on wax paper to cool.

Enjoy! Submitted by Kathy Bert

## Things to See In the February 2011 Night Sky By Don Miles

**Neptune, Jupiter & Uranus:** This group still trails the sun, and Neptune is the first to set right behind the sun, and is lost in the glare. The pair of Jupiter (mag -2.2) and Uranus (mag 5.9) are best viewed around 7:30pm when the sky is darker, but before they get too low in the western sky. The pair will set about 9:30pm early in the month, but by about 8pm later in the month. Jupiter starts the month almost 4 degrees above and to the left of much dimmer Uranus, but will move eastward and increase that separation to about 8 degrees by months end.

**Saturn:** Look for Saturn (mag. 0.6) rising in the East in the constellation Virgo at about 9:30pm, and will give the best views when it's highest in the sky, which is about 4:30am. The rings will continue to "flatten out" from our perspective until about mid summer, when they will again open up more and more thru the end of the year. Even at their flattest orientation this year, you'll still be able to see the space between them and Saturn.

**Venus & Mercury:** Look for brilliant Venus (mag. -4.3) to continue to rise ahead of the Sun a little after 4am in the extreme

western section of constellation Sagittarius. By months end, Venus will have moved all the way across Sagittarius to end up on the far eastern side. Mercury spends this month behind the Sun, but will then trail the Sun next month as an evening object.

**Mars:** Is still directly on the "back" side of the Sun, so is not feasible to observe, and won't be until about mid June.

### Moon:

- February 2nd: New Moon
- February 11th: First Quarter
- February 18th: Full Moon
- February 24th: Last Quarter



### Special Events:

There is nothing noteworthy as far as conjunctions or meteor showers this month. But...spring is not far off (believe it or not), and March is the time of the year for the \*\*\*Messier Marathon\*\*\*!



If you haven't heard of it before, it's been called by some as the "opening ceremony" to the observing season. It's a "race" to find all of the objects on the list of Charles Messier in one night. It's "quantity" observing, not "quality" observing. A quick "Google" search or even looking thru old Feb/March newsletters will give you more information than you ever cared to know about it. If you already know all about it, and have done it before (successfully or unsuccessfully), here's your reminder to print out those Virgo Cluster maps, or fix anything you may have hastily put away last fall when the snow started flying. Good Luck.

## February Meeting

As is tradition, the General Meeting in February is replaced by our Annual Banquet. This year's Banquet is again being held at the Fox & Hounds Restaurant, 1298 Friess Lake Rd, Hubertus. All those having registered will enjoy an evening of socializing with other members of the Club, not to mention a quality dinner at a very reasonable price. Hope to see you there!

Regular meetings will resume in March.



## January Events

Saturday, January 8

Charlotte Dupree reported that the Harrington Beach Friend's Candlelight Ski and Hike was held under clear skies with moderate temperature. An estimated 100 visitors looked at Jupiter, Moon, and Orion nebula

Saturday, January 22

The Horicon Marsh Event was the Friends first try doing a candlelight ski and hike. We were set up near the start of the trail, which was almost 1 1/2 miles. By the estimate system used in the state, the attendance was 450 to 500. (No way!) Thanks to Don Miles for his help, we had over 100 people stop by to see what we were looking at. We stayed mostly on Jupiter, M35, and the Orion nebula, with some side tracking to other objects. *Charlotte DuPree*

## CURRENT CLACK

### New Members

NCSF Welcomes New Club Members

Eric & Joan Sanders

### Leaders for Public Viewing

February 5

#### **Candlelight Ski & Hike**

Harrington Beach

Gene and Charlotte DuPree

February 12

#### **Candlelight Ski & Hike**

Pike Lake

Gene and Charlotte DuPree

### Star Parties

#### **NCRAL Convention**

April 29 & 30

Green Bay, WI

[www.npmas.org](http://www.npmas.org)

#### **Wisconsin Observers Weekend**

June 30—July 3

Hartman Creek State Park, WB

[www.new-star.org](http://www.new-star.org)

#### **Northwoods Starfest**

August 26 - 28

[www.cvastro.org](http://www.cvastro.org)

#### **Prairie Skies**

September 22 - 25

Kankakee, IL

[www.prairieskies.org](http://www.prairieskies.org)



## 4th Annual Swap 'N' Sell



Sponsored by Sheboygan Astronomical Society

Saturday, March 19th, 2011

Aviation Heritage Center

Sheboygan Airport

N6191 Resource Drive, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Now is the time to mark your calendars and spread the word about our 4th 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.

### Special Events

Astronomy Presentations:

11:00 a.m. Jeff Setzer: Telescope Collimation Workshop

12:00 p.m. Michael Bakich, Senior Editor of Astronomy Magazine: A-B-C's of Observing

1:00 p.m. Rick Kazmierski: Basic Astrophotography Using a DSLR

*Presentations will be held in the Aviation Heritage Museum room.*

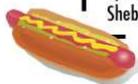
Astronomy FM Radio will be at the Aviation Heritage Center, and will be recording interviews and news from the show for future airdates.

WI Astronomy will give away over \$900 in prizes.

The grand prize is a \$189.00 Wood Wonders standard one drawer eye piece case.

**Food will be available**

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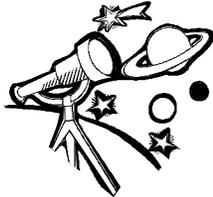
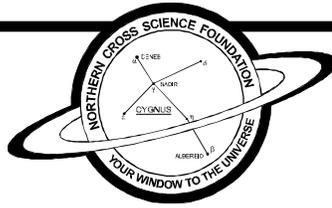
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