

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

February 2012

LOOKING UP

February 2, Thursday

Annual Banquet

Fox & Hounds Restaurant
Hubertus, WI

February 4, Saturday

Candlelight Ski & Hike

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

February 11, Saturday

Candlelight Ski & Hike

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

February 16, Saturday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.
Home of Jeff Setzer

March 1, Thursday

General Meeting

7:00 p.m.
Program to be announced

March 24 & 25, Fri. & Sat.

Messier Marathon

Dusk
Harrington Beach

Ten things you might not know about ...SPACE

Chicago Tribune Article 1/15/2012

1 Where does Earth's atmosphere end and outer space begin? NASA defines an astronaut as someone who has flown 50 miles above sea level. But some international groups prefer to define space as the area beyond the Karman Line, which is about 62 miles above sea level.

2 Living in space can cause subtle changes in the human body. For example, some astronauts find that their tastes in food change. "One of my favorite foods on the ground is shrimp, and up here I can't stand it," said International Space Station astronaut Peggy Whitson.

3 Speaking of food and space, South Korean researchers spent more than \$1 million on kimchi that astronaut Yi So-Yeon took to the International Space Station in 2008. Scientists had to develop a special version of the pickled cabbage dish to address fears that it would offend crew members from other countries with its smell or that it would start "bubbling out of control" in space conditions.

4 Neil Armstrong misspoke when he uttered the first words on the moon in 1969. He was supposed to announce, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." But he left out the "a," producing a sentence that didn't really make sense. (Without the "a," "man" would mean the same thing as "mankind.") But, of course, everyone knew what he meant.

5 Sitting in the Centaurus constellation about 20 light years from Earth is star BPM 37093, also named Lucy. The white dwarf is one huge diamond, scientists say, that weighs in at 10 billion-trillion-trillion carats and is about the size of our moon.

6 In 1993, a meteoroid destroyed the European Space Agency's communication satellite Olympus. Don't think Hollywood explosion. Scientists suspect it was damaged by a few pebbles, and in trying to regain control, so much fuel was lost the satellite was rendered useless. While space shuttles, space stations and satellites have received

minor damage from flying space rocks, the Olympus is the only satellite to be rendered useless.

7 Before "The Big Bang Theory" was a TV show, it was an explanation for the development of the universe, and much of the credit (for the theory, not the TV show) goes to a former Chicagoan. Edwin Hubble set the Illinois high jump record while at Wheaton High School, won a Rhodes scholarship, and earned a doctorate at the University of Chicago. But the ultimate honor — the Nobel Prize — eluded him because some Nobel officials didn't think astronomy fit into the physics category.

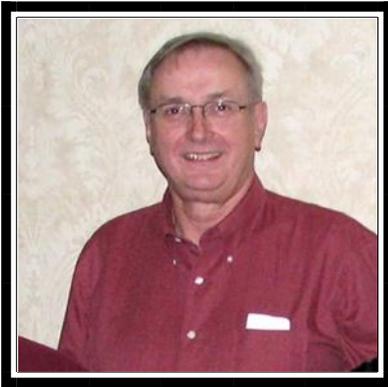
8 The word "jovial" comes from Jove, another name for the god (and the planet) Jupiter. The god was considered jolly, so those who are similarly good-natured are jovial. But in space terms, a "Jovian planet" is not at all jolly — it's a planet that, like Jupiter, is composed primarily of gases rather than solid matter.

9 When you point out the Big Dipper to your child, be careful not to call it a constellation. It's an asterism, or a collection of stars within a constellation or in multiple constellations that form another shape. Another famous asterism is Orion's Belt. There are 88 official constellations, including Orion, Gemini, the zodiac signs and Ursa Major, which includes the Big Dipper.

10 The ashes of more than 100 humans have been launched into space, including those of "Star Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry and hippie icon Timothy Leary. But the first human ashes to leave the solar system are expected to be those of Clyde Tombaugh. The remains of the astronomer who discovered Pluto are aboard the New Horizons spacecraft, scheduled to fly past Pluto in 2015 and take photographs, then depart our solar system.

Written by Mark Jacob, deputy metro editor at the Tribune and Stephan Benzkofer the Tribune's weekend editor.

In Memory of Anthony (Tony) Marek 1944-2012 ...by Mickey Kazmierski



Memorial Services were held Thursday, January 5 at the Schmidt & Bartelt Funeral home for our NCSF friend, Tony Marek. The family, knowing Tony's great love of Astronomy, requested NCSF members to bring their telescopes for viewing outside

during visitation hours. Many gathered to look through the scopes, ask questions and talk about Tony and his love for astronomy and birding. Our sincere appreciation to Don Miles, Gene and Charlotte DuPree, Carol Nelson, Jeff and Becca Setzer and Joyce Jentges for granting the family's wishes.

As a long time member, Tony was involved throughout our club's activities. Tony was recently nominated on to the NCSF's Board of Directors. He also served on the committee when the NCSF hosted the 2008 NCRAL Annual Convention. Tony was generous with his time and telescope in our Public Outreach effort at Bay Shore Town Center and at Harrington Beach. A regular attendee at the general monthly meeting, Tony could always be

counted as one of those familiar smiling faces at the surrounding Star Parties like Northwoods and WOW. There Tony would join others with the same excitement, admiring each others personal scope set-up's, discuss star -charted plans, regular checks on what the weather would be, hoping for those beautiful clear skies, whether the ISS (International Space Station) would be viewable, or any endless possibilities for the night's event. Tony shared freely his own astronomical experiences, was who he was wherever he was. He never said anything that wasn't thought out, informative, kind and soft spoken. Tony Marek was our friend and we shall miss him. We'll look for you in the stars Tony!

Things to See In the February 2012 Night Sky By Don Miles

Mercury & Neptune: Mercury (mag -0.8) may be seen towards the end of the month at sunset, as it will have lagged behind the Sun enough to escape the glare. In early March, Mercury will have reached its greatest easterly distance for a while, and will begin to drift back towards the Sun again on its way around the front side of the Sun this time. Neptune is optically too close to the Sun to be comfortably seen this month, but will re-appear as a morning object in April.

Venus, Jupiter, & Uranus: All trail the Sun, and they're best viewed right after the Sun sets. Venus (mag -4.1) is now much brighter than bright Jupiter (mag -2.4), and it's very easy to find as it's the brightest "star" in the western evening sky. Venus sets about 8:30pm *early in the month*, and by about 9:30 *later in the month* (8:30 / 9:30pm). It will start the month at the western edge of the constellation Pisces, and will move eastward until, by the end of the month, it is directly above the "knot" of the two strings that tie the fish together. Uranus (mag 5.9) sets about (9:30 / 7:30pm), and also remains pretty stationary for February. Look just east of the lower "fish" in Pisces for a "star" with a blue-green color to it. If you haven't been able to spot Uranus by itself, Venus will pass above Uranus by less than 1/4 degree the night of the 9th. Next month (March 13th), as Venus continues racing eastward, it will pass about 3 degrees above Jupiter (mag 2-3). Jupiter is at it's highest as the sun sets and will set about (*midnight / 10:30*). It will continue to set earlier & earlier as winter turns to spring. It is still in the constellation Pisces.

Mars: Rises around (8:30pm / sunset) in the constellation Leo below the hind feet, and after being stationary for a little bit, will start to drift to the West towards Regulus thru the month. It's around (mag -0.6) early in the month, and will brighten to (mag -1.2) by the end of the month as we get closer to each other on our laps around the Sun. Along with getting brighter, Mars is still growing in apparent size from it's current size of 12" (arc-seconds) in diameter to 14" which will be closest March 4th. The best views are about (2:30am / 12:30am) when it's highest in the sky.

Saturn: Rises around (11:30 / 9:30pm), and is at (mag. 0.5). The rings continue to be at an excellent angle to see detail in the rings. Saturn stays mostly stationary this month, but will drift westward starting in March. The best views will be right before sunrise as it's highest in the sky.

Moon:

February 7th: Full Moon

February 14th: Last Quarter

February 21st: New Moon

February 29th: First Quarter

Special Events:

There is only one meteor shower to speak of this month, and those are the Delta Leonids. They "peak" the evening of the 25th, with a whopping 5/hr. The moon won't be an issue, and the ones you do see will be slower than most other showers as these are traveling at about 15 miles/sec. The debris trail is fairly wide, so

you may notice *sub-peak bursts* of activity a week before the 25th, but will drop off soon after. Look in the direction of Leo after midnight for your best chance of an enjoyable show.

5th Annual Swap-n-Sell!

Saturday, March 10, 2012

Sheboygan Aviation Heritage Center

Sheboygan Airport:

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

ASTRONOMY PRESENTATIONS:

10:00 - Jeff Setzer Sir Patrick Moore - "Most Famous Amateur Astronomer You've Barely Heard Of"

11:00 - Michael Bakich from Astronomy Magazine - "A Big Announcement!"

12:00 - Randy Griffin

"Where in the Universe?"

1:00 - Ty Westbrook

The Leviathan of Parsons Town - "Irish Astronomy in the Victorian Age."

For your dining pleasure, the SAS will be hosting An on site brat fry!

WI Astronomy (www.wiastro.com) will be providing \$500 in door prizes, To include a signed copy of Michael Bakich's new book!

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. Social hour will begin at 6 p.m. with dinner to follow at 7 p.m. 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. Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Regular meetings will resume in March.



The January Meeting

The NCSF Telescope Workshop was held at the January General Meeting and was well attended. The general public was invited to bring in their telescopes. Jeff Setzer gave an outstanding Seminar on how telescopes work, understanding their optics and their proper care. In addition, trouble-shooting techniques were discussed, but most importantly, how to get those new telescopes to work!

Club members then went outside after the meeting to help our guests with their telescopes for hands on assistance and helpful instruction. It was a joy to see the budding interest of those younger astronomers.

January Events 2012

NCSF - Telescope Setup Workshop January 5

Reported by Justin Modra

We had quite a few people show up at the January General Meeting's "Telescope Setup Workshop". "I assisted this Grandpa and Granddaughter with the assembly of their Celestron Reflector. I asked them if I could take a photo for our newsletter and they were happy to comply."



Candlelight Ski & Hike January 7

Reported by Charlotte DuPree

The Harrington Beach Ski and Hike had clear skies for this night, and about 80 visitors. Al Steinberg, Tyler Ross, Rick Sauve set up scopes in the parking lot. The big scope was on Jupiter, Uranus and some open clusters.

Horicon Marsh January 21

Reported by Charlotte DuPree

The Horicon Marsh Candlelight hike had mostly cloudy skies with a few large sucker holes. We had the scopes on Jupiter, M42, M45, Double Cluster, and Venus until it set. Last count Gene estimated 150 visitors. Thanks to Tyler Ross for joining us with his Celeste 5 inch scope.

Liz Herzmann, the Natural Resources Educator at Horicon Marsh, expressed her appreciation for our participation in their event and asked if we would tentatively put us on our calendar for January 19th, 2013?

RELATED INFO

New Members

NCSF Welcomes New Club Member

Arthur Smith

Leaders for Public Viewing

February 4

Candlelight Ski & Hike

Harrington Beach

Gene and Charlotte Dupree

February 11

Candlelight Ski & Hike

Horicon Marsh

Gene and Charlotte Dupree

STAR PARTIES - 2012

NCRAL/ALCon2012

July 4 - 7th

Chicago, IL

www.alcon2012.astroleague.org

Wisconsin Observers Weekend

July 19 - 22nd

Hartman Creek State Park

www.new-star.org

Northwoods Starfest

August 17-19th

Hobbs Observatory

Fall Creek, WI

www.cvastro.org

Prairie Skies Star Party

September 13 - 16th

Kankakee, IL

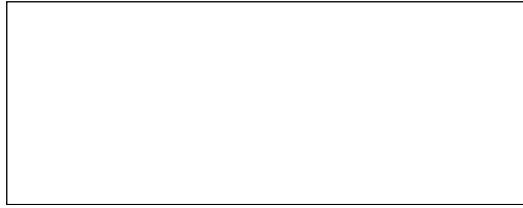
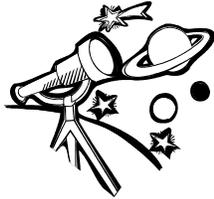
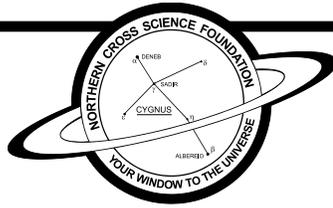
www.prairieskies.org

Reminder

If you inadvertently forgot to submit your 2012 dues, Treasurer Gene DuPree will gladly accept your 2012 Dues Invoice now. The form can be printed from our Clubs website at www.ncsf.info.

Instructions are included.

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Early Aztec Calendar Making

Jim and Gwen Plunkett Observatory



Observatory Director
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Our club has a *Discussion Group* on Google:
<http://www.ncsf.info/>

SPECTRUM

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The NCSF supports the International Dark sky association.



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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
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