

# SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

June 2007

## LOOKING UP

June 3 Sunday

Solar and Public Viewing  
6:00—11:00 p.m.

June 4

NCRAL Planning Meeting  
7:00 p.m.  
Home of Jeff Setzer

June 7 Thursday

General Meeting

### No Astronomy 101

7:30 p.m. Business Meeting

June 11-13 Monday—Wednesday

Pre-WOW

June 14-17 Thursday—Sunday

Wisconsin Observers Wknd  
Hartman Creek State Park

June 22 Friday

Public Viewing Night  
9:00 p.m.  
Harrington Beach State Park

June 23 Saturday

Public Viewing Night  
6:00 p.m.  
Harrington Beach State Park

July 5 Thursday

General Meeting  
7:00 p.m. Astronomy 101  
7:30 p.m. Business Meeting

July 20 & 21st Fri. & Sat.

Public Viewing Night  
8:00 p.m.  
Harrington Beach State Park

July 21st

Observatory Dedication  
4-6 p.m.

## Once In A Lifetime

By Jeff Setzer

You may have heard the saying "good things come in threes." I'm not sure how universal a truth that is, but I can tell you that the next three years will be banner years in NCSF history. This year, next year and the year after that, there are three major events -- events that will happen only once in our lifetime -- that provide an opportunity for us to educate and celebrate at the same time.

The first major event is in two months! Yes, the observatory dedication at Harrington Beach is upon us. If you haven't already done so, mark your calendars for Saturday, July 21. The ceremony will start at 4:00pm. If you plan to be there, please let me know. My contact information is on the back of this newsletter. I would like to see as many members as possible on this auspicious occasion.

NCRAL 2008 continues to gather steam. Becca Sher's committee has secured the one and only Jack Horkheimer, TV's "Star Hustler / Star Gazer," as the dinner speaker. This is a fantastic development and to my knowledge Jack Horkheimer has never spoken to a regional convention anywhere. The NCRAL 2008 com-

mittee is doing a bang-up job on this event and we should be very proud of how they are taking the "bull by the horns" on this event.

The year 2009 has been designated as the International Year of Astronomy (IYA2009). This is a global initiative sponsored and organized by the International Astronomical Union and the United Nations. According to the IYA2009 website, this will be "a global celebration of astronomy and its contributions to society and culture, highlighted by the 400th anniversary of the first use of an astronomical telescope by Galileo Galilei. The aim of the Year is to stimulate worldwide interest, especially among young people, in astronomy and science under the central theme 'The Universe, Yours to Discover'. IYA2009 events and activities will promote a greater appreciation of the inspirational aspects of astronomy that embody an invaluable shared resource for all nations." I know Sky & Telescope devoted their editorial to IYA2009 and I believe the NCSF should play a part in our local community.

Watch this newsletter and our website ([www.ncsf.info](http://www.ncsf.info)) for updates!

## Sunday on Saturday

By Kevin Bert

As we settle into those long, hot summer days available nighttime viewing dramatically decreases. Too often we only associate telescope viewing with a nighttime activity. At least once a year I attempt to change that pattern and offer a non-public daytime activity of telescope viewing. Our nearest star, the sun, has a lot to offer and can be seen in modest equipment. Sun-Day on Saturday on June 9<sup>th</sup> is a member's event that combines leisurely sun viewing with a picnic

type atmosphere. Like any members event all members are invited, and family members as well. Arrive anytime after 2:00 pm. and stay as long as you like. Other optional non-astronomy activities are possible, including swimming if it is a hot day or getting exercise by walking the inter-urban bike trail if it is cool. If you intend to be there at 6:00 pm. please bring a dish to pass. I will provide soft drinks and hot sandwiches. Viewing will continue after dark if there is interest.

## May Meeting Minutes

By Kevin Bert

The May business meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation was held at the Unitarian Church North in Mequon. President Jeff Setzer opened the meeting at 8:40 p.m. to 27 members and guests and thanked them all for attending. He then asked for standard reports.

Treasurer Gene DuPree had nothing to report.

Secretary Kevin Bert said that remaining membership cards would be mailed next month.

Under old business, Kevin said some areas on the Panarusky were showing some rust. It might be related to the initial primer that was applied. The situation will be monitored. Kevin noted no follow up response from OMI and our Cassegrain secondary mirror.

Rebecca Sher amazed everyone at the meeting when she announced that

Jack Horkheimer had agreed to be keynote speaker at the 2008 NCRAL meeting. The club website has all the details on all the speakers.

Observatory Director Dan Bert reminded leaders that they need to have an assistant signed up for public viewing nights at the Observatory.

Under new business, Jeff Setzer informed the club that there has been a problem on the DNR's end when it comes to naming rights of the Observatory. The Park superintendent was hopefully going to straighten things out.

Jeff announced that NCSF apparel is now available online at Café Press. See our website for a link.

Rob Powell explained about an opportunity to do sidewalk astronomy at Bayshore shopping mall on May 19<sup>th</sup> so as to coincide with a national and world-wide effort to bring astronomy to the people. The interest was favorable and members would be contacted.

Joyce Jentges had asked for help in entertaining 30-40 children from the school she works at to set up at Kohler Andre Park on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. June 23<sup>rd</sup> is a backup night. Contact her for details.

With no further new business, Jeff closed the business meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Bert, secretary

## International Sidewalk Astronomy Night

By Rob Powell

On Saturday, May 19th, 2007, Bayshore Town Center Events Planner MP Theriault welcomed NCSF in its celebration of the 1st International Sidewalk Astronomy Night (ISAN). Members Mark Hirschmann, Tony Marek, Rob Powell, and Bob Radtke set up a variety of telescopes. Jeff Setzer and Becca Sher presided over the literature table, chatted with the scores of attendees, and took some great photos of the event. NCSF members Jim and Julia Eastham stopped by to enjoy the reverie and the fine display of optics. Bayshore management estimated passers-by attendance of about 100 people.

ISAN organizers reported easily surpassing their 1,000-telescope goal, and expect to raise their goal for next year's observance to 10,000 telescopes around the globe. Rain required rapid relocation from the wide sidewalk outside the Discovery Channel Store into the adjacent mall Rotunda. Inside, we set up a great

sampling of instrumentation. Bob set up his Meade ETX 125, Mark brought his 4.5" Bushnell (Astroscan equivalent), Tony set up his 10" Schmidt-Newtonian (equatorial), and Rob set up his 13" truss Dobsonian and 20x100 binoculars. Visitors were impressed with the wide variety of telescopes and surprised when they learned that NCSF was only one of many amateur astronomy clubs in southeastern Wisconsin. The most common question posed to me was one I had never been asked before: "How far can your telescope see?"

Quite literally, the future is bright for NCSF and sidewalk astronomy. Bayshore Town Center would like us to return to their sidewalks this summer, and they're also interested in hosting an urban-skies star party atop their Lydell Avenue garage - with the rooftop lights doused!

Thanks to all who participated. Even with the rain, the first ISAN in Milwaukee was a success.

Photo's courtesy of Becca Sher.



## Astronomy 101 and Main Program

By Kevin Bert

There is no Astronomy 101 class this month.

Anyone who has turned a telescope to the Moon is immediately aware of the great number of craters that cover its surface. Many other bodies of the Solar System retain the ancient scars from this process. The Earth is no exception. Most of the evidence has been eroded away over time. The origin of craters then is of interest both from a historical standpoint and from the standpoint of it possibly happening again some time in the future. Over the years a debate on how these craters were formed has raged. Years ago many believed that most were produced by volcanic activity. Today it is

believed that nearly all were the result of impacts of meteors or asteroids. At the June meeting Kevin Bert will present "An Impact Crater Demonstration." The goal is to reproduce this phenomena but at a scaled down, manageable level. After all, trying to throw around a large object at 50 miles/second would be unwise and impractical. All in attendance will participate in this hands-on program so you can gain a better understanding of craters and come away with a new perspective and appreciation the next time you gaze at the moon through a telescope.

## Star Party Help Needed

By Joyce Jentges

I will be hosting a night of stargazing at the school I work at. I could use a couple of volunteers to assist me as I'm expecting a group of 40-60 people to show up. The date for this is June 23rd at Kohler Andre State Park in Sheboygan. If you are interested in participating, please plan on being at the children's play area on

the south side of the park (East of the campground) by 9:00 p.m. We had a great time last year, even though they came too early. This year I have made it very clear to them that they need to come later and stay later. I do know that we also have a public viewing night the same evening, but we do have enough members with

## CURRENT CLACK

**Mark your calendars: The official observatory dedication will be July 21st.**

Longtime member Carl Edquist recently suffered a stroke. He is recovering at home. Please pray for a speedy recovery.

June 16th members night at the observatory—for those of you who aren't going to WOW in Mid June.

Please note: the deadline for submission of items for the newsletter is the 20th of the month. Please get your items to me no later than June 20th.

**For Sale:** Orion SkyWizard-3 digital setting circle computer. This is the module only - no cables or encoders. \$150 or best offer. Contact Rob Powell 262.894.9756

telescopes that we can divide our resources. Please contact me at 262-268-6831 if you are interested.



## Things To See In The June 2007 Sky

By Don Miles

**Venus:** Still the brightest "star" in the West at sunset, and will form an almost equally spaced straight line of (3) "stars" with the bright "head" stars of the Gemini constellation at the beginning of the month. Venus will be the "star" to the most left of the three. Watch for Venus to gradually move up and to the left as the month advances to eventually be 2/3 of a degree below Saturn by month's end.

**Mercury:** Still visible low and to the right of Venus at sunset, but will fade as it passes between the Sun and Earth as the month progresses.

**Saturn:** Yellow-orange "star" to the right of the sickle of LEO. Will be much fainter

than Venus as they appear to pass.

**Jupiter:** Rises about sunset and stays up all night. Look for it above and to the left of Antares (the heart of SCORPIUS), and will move even closer by month's end.

**Mars:** Rises in early morning in PISCES and is getting higher and brighter than last month.

**Uranus:** Rises after midnight, and is fairly high by about 3:00am mid-month. Look for it in Southern Aquarius with a finder chart and steadily held binoculars.

**Moon:**

June 8<sup>th</sup>: Last Quarter

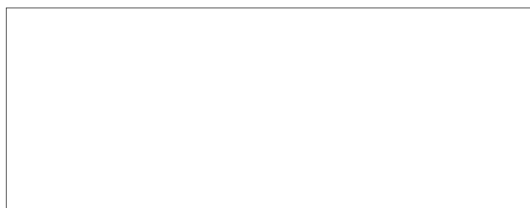
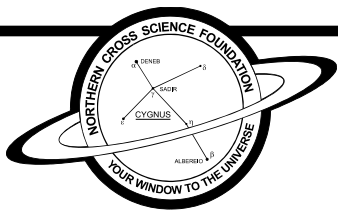
June 14<sup>th</sup>: New Moon

June 22<sup>nd</sup>: First Quarter

June 30<sup>th</sup>: Full Moon

\*\* Watch for the crescent moon to form a line that extends from Saturn, and Venus to the moon on the 17<sup>th</sup>, and then between Saturn and Venus on the 18<sup>th</sup>, then passes near Regulus (the bottom star of the "question marked shape in Leo) on the 19<sup>th</sup> on its way across the sky.

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

## Odds 'N Ends By Joyce Jentges

The May members night on May 12th was fun. There were 9 members, 1 MAS member and 2 guests. Georgine and Rick Poulin hosted the members night at the Gwen and Jim Plunkett Observatory. The rhubarb cake Georgine made was a hit!

While I wasn't given an official notice of the turnout for the May 18th public viewing night, the log book shows that about 20—25 people came out. The public viewing night on May 19th was essentially rained out, however, 3 members of the Watertown Astronomical Society came out in the rain.

Rob Powell submitted this for those of you who are thinking ahead to 2008: As if camaraderie and Kevin's meteor crater simulations aren't enough to get you to come to the June meeting, NCSF expects to have the 2008 Astronomy calendar available for purchase. \$10 each. 12 gorgeous photos, plus tips on how to buy a telescope!

Public Viewing Night Leaders:

June 22nd—open

June 23rd—Gene and Charlotte DuPree

July 20th—open

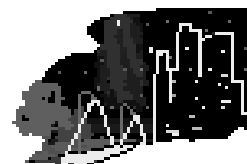
July 21st—Rob Powell

## SPECTRUM

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The NCSF supports the International Dark sky association.



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<http://www.ncsf.info>



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