

# SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

March 2007

## LOOKING UP

March 1 Thursday

General Meeting

**No Astronomy 101**

7:30 p.m. Business Meeting

March 3 Saturday

Lunar Eclipse

March 5 Monday

NCRAL Planning Meeting

7:00 p.m.

Jeff Setzer's home

March 10 Saturday

Observatory Training Sess.

7:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach S. Park

March 16 & 17 Friday & Sat.

Messier Marathon

Dusk

Harrington Beach S. Park

March 31 Saturday

Superfest

8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Amateur Electronic Supply

April 5 Thursday

General Meeting

**7:00 p.m. Astronomy 101**

7:30 p.m. Business Meeting

April 19 Thursday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Home of Jeff Setzer

April 20 & 21 Fri. and Sat.

Spring Astronomy Day

TBA

Harrington Beach S. Park

## 2006—The Year in Review (Part 2)

By Joyce Jentges

July - On the 8<sup>th</sup>, Kevin Bert hosted his Sun-Day on Saturday. The sun could be seen for a while, but then the clouds came, followed by rain. Public Viewing nights were on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of July, and skies were clear. We did have some guests that came out both nights. Members were out on both the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, as we were given a wrong date for the haunted hike. Skies weren't great, but it did clear for a while, and a few guests came out both nights. Work began on installation of the Panarusky telescope.

August - A public viewing was held on the 18<sup>th</sup>, but skies were cloudy. Clouds prevailed for the 19<sup>th</sup>, but broke about 10 p.m. There were no guests. A brat fry was held at the Piggly Wiggly in West Bend on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Skies were overcast and hazy, which helped to keep the crowd away. We only made a little over \$100.00. That same evening members were at the Ice Age Center for a public viewing night and had cloudy skies for most of the night. About 13 members attended Northwoods Starfest in Fall Creek. Skies were clear on Saturday night for a good night of viewing. The base of the Panarusky telescope was installed in its new home at Harrington Beach State Park.

September - There were 4 members who went to the Community Campfire at Pike Lake on September 16<sup>th</sup>. We had a crowd of about 40-50 people in light polluted skies. A September 23<sup>rd</sup> brat fry brought rain early, then skies cleared and guests were able to see a few objects

from the parking lot of the Ansay Welcome Center. There was another brat fry on September 30<sup>th</sup> at the Saukville Piggly Wiggly and this one faired much better. We brought in about \$237.00. That evening we were at HBSP for a public viewing night, and had about 30 guests show up.

October - A public viewing night was held on the 27<sup>th</sup>, with a small crowd on hand. We got a look at Comet Swan. The annual Haunted Hike was on the 28<sup>th</sup> and as usual was had a great audience for this one.

November - A fascinating event happened on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Despite clouds, we were able to see some of the transit of Mercury. A group of members set up at HBSP for this event, and attracted a small crowd. Installation of the Panarusky telescope was pretty much complete by this time.

December - In December the annual Christmas party was held with a nice crowd attending. Kevin Bert and Don Miles were both re-elected to the Board of Directors.



Photo courtesy of Robert Radtke

# How I Got Started In Astronomy

By Bob Mason

I lived on a farm in east central Ohio, about 25 miles east of Canton. In 1935 when I was eight my grandfather gave me an old surveyor's transit, it was only a 40mm lens, but at that time to me it was like having the Hubble. Our farm was a half mile off the road, and at that time the electric lines had not reached that part of the country. We did not have electric until 1940, so in those days it was a dark sky at night. In those days the older people knew the entire sky, and the constellations. My great grandmother and my grandmother planted their garden by the stars and the moon, so I learned the sky at an early age.

I attended a one room school my first eight years of school. As we walked to and from school we could see the sky change day by day, we made up a kind of game, to see who would be first to see the new star coming up that day. Venus when it would change from morning star to the evening star. I don't think we knew that it was Venus at that time. But we did know that the planets moved across the sky.

About that time a man that my grandfather had known, years before, showed at the farm driving his old 1929 international truck, with his horse named Ben and all he owned on board. The only name that I ever knew him by was his last name, Bowser. We became great friends. He had left home, at 14, in the 1880's to go out west to work on ranches. Later he joined the Navy and became a blacksmith. When he left the Navy, he went back to the ranch. Then as he got older he decided to come home and live on our farm and work for my grandfather. This is a little long but, you need some background, as we go along.

When Bowser saw that I had this telescope, he said that I needed a mount for it. We went to work to build one. My job was to plane the top of a fence post in the front yard to make it as level as possible. It took me a week with a block plane and a small level. Bowser built a mount that could be polar aligned, it worked great. It was a lot easier than trying to hold the scope on the post to

study the sky.

When I was twelve my grandfather was getting ill, and I had to help Bowser take over and operate the farm, I had little time to be an astronomer.

Then in Feb. 1944, I joined the U. S. Navy, and became one of the original Navy Seabees, in WW II, I was 17.

When we were on our way to New Guinea, it was the first of July 1944, and this day the temp. was 121 degrees F. The Pacific Ocean was totally calm, not a ripple in it, the only movement was the ship's wake. That night was the most beautiful sky I have ever seen, it was totally dark, no moon, and at that time the ships sailed without lights, not even the marker lights. We were at the Equator, we had to go south around the Solomon Islands because the Japs still held Rabaul in the northern Solomon islands {people do not realize how large the Pacific Ocean is, the Space Station takes 90 minutes to orbit the Earth once, 25 of those minutes are spent crossing the Pacific Ocean}.

To get back to this night and the sky, the atmosphere was totally steady, it must have been heated all the way up from the temp of the day, although it cools off very little at night. The stars were very bright, and so clear that the stars all most looked round. It was like being in a giant dome, and the stars were just as bright at the horizon as they were at the zenith. I climbed to the top of the mast where the look out was, from there I could see the entire horizon. From up there some of the stars reflected in the sea, the stars seemed so close, that if I raised my arm I would be able to move them out of place. I have never seen a night like that again, not even in the south west.

When Yuri Gagarin, orbited the Earth the first time and he was being interviewed by the press, he was asked how he knew where the Earth was when he was in the dark he said "where the stars stop" I knew what he met.

One other strange time about astronomy came up. We were invading

Samar in the Philippines; I got separated from our group, found my self alone. I ran into six Marines that were lost too, I joined them. We came to some coconut palms by the sea and sat leaning by the trees, as always the talk turned to home. There was a full moon and the time was about 1am, as I looked up at the moon I said "well we have the moon anyway, at that, one of the Marines said "You mean to tell me, that is the same moon that I see in Brooklyn" I said it sure is. And that started a class in astronomy 101, in middle of the madness.

After the war we were stationed on Guam, I was 19, and from there we were sent to work with the physicists and engineers to set up the nuclear bomb test at Enewetak and bikini atolls. There I met three engineers and a physicist Paul, Bob and Art. This work got me interested in quantum mechanics to try to understand what we were really doing and how this all worked. They had worked with Fermi at Los Alamos to develop the bomb. Later Paul became the director of the Argonne Nat. Lab. In Illinois, Bob became director of nuclear physics at Argonne, Art went to work for a company that worked with NASA when we went to the moon. Over the years because I knew these guys I was able to get into and see things other wise I would not been able to do.

In the summer of 46-47 we went to Antarctica to work on building some of McMurdo Base, the Navy and Science base at the edge of the Ross ice shelf.

I have been from McMurdo about 1000 miles from the South Pole, to Point Barrow, Alaska about 700 miles from the North Pole

After I was home in the 1950's I purchased an 80mm refractor from a company in La Canada Calif. They made very good scopes, I use that scope for a lot of years.

In 1986 I purchased my Meade 10in . SCT, when the ETX came out I purchased one, a spotter model. When we travel in our motor home I take them along.

*( Astronomy continued on page 3)*

## Things To See In the March Sky

By Don Miles

**Venus:** Brightest "star" in the West-Southwest (PISCES) at sunset.

**Saturn:** Yellow-orange "star" to the right of the sickle of LEO. Rises in the east as the sky gets dark, and stays up all night. Even small telescope users can see Saturn's rings and moons, and watch the rings get a little more "open" over the course of the month.

**Jupiter:** Rises about midnight. Look for it above and to the left of Antares in SCORPIUS.

**Mars:** Rises only about 1-3/4 hours before sunrise thru the month. Look for it in CAPRICORNUS.

*(Astronomy continued from page 2)*

At different times when I have been out with the scope and people have seen me I have put on a show of the sky for them.

One evening on our trip to the Canadian Maritimes, in Nova Scotia in a place called Peggy Cove, where we parked for three days. We had a picnic on the beach at the Atlantic Ocean {we where traveling with 16 other motor

**Moon:**

March 1<sup>st</sup>: Moon very near Saturn (~1/2 degree) 1 hour after sunset. (Moon itself is about 1/2 degree wide).

March 3<sup>rd</sup>: Total eclipse of the moon is in progress as it rises (~5:17pm). Total eclipse ends at 5:58pm, and Partial eclipse ends at 7:12pm.

March 11<sup>th</sup>: Last Quarter

March 18<sup>th</sup>: New Moon

March 25<sup>th</sup>: First Quarter



homes} none of the people with us had looked through an astronomical telescope. The people who owned the campground had never seen a telescope, and they ask if they could call the people of the village to come and see. It is a small place only 75- 80 people, and a great time was had by all, looking at Mars, the moon, and other things, and eating hot dogs. On this trip we went all the way to Labrador, and Newfoundland,

## CURRENT CLACK

Registration for WOW (Wisconsin Observers Weekend) is supposed to be available as of February 22nd. There is no link to a registration form yet. It will be held June 14-17, 2007 at Hartman Creek State Park, near Waupaca.

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 March 20th.

After I retired, four other guys and myself, started to teach a class called backyard astronomy at Rock Valley College, and in some schools in Rockford when they where studying astronomy.

In Aug., Sept., and Oct., 2003 we volunteered to go to Chaco National Park to work in the astronomy program, and be campground host.

That's about all we have done so far.

## From The Editor

By Joyce Jentges

The candlelight hike at Harrington Beach State Park on February 3rd turned out to be a pretty cold night. Windchills were at -25 below 0. Gene and Charlotte DuPree set up our schedule for the year inside the Ansay Welcome Center. There were only 3 families who came for the hike.

The following weekend (February 10th) was the annual Ski and Stars at Pike Lake State Park. There were an estimated 200-300 people who attended. Charlotte DuPree reports "It clouded over very quickly after we got there, but almost all of the people who looked in our scopes were able to see Saturn through the clouds. Orion was out for the first hour or so. I found the Owl quite

easily after Gene told me where to look." They were the only 2 members who attended, and she noted that it would have been nice to have a few more members there the help with the crowds.

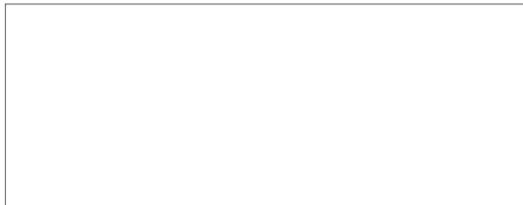
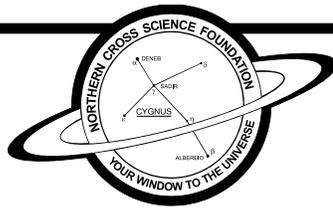
In place of the February meeting, 18 members gathered at the Park View Grill in Saukville for the annual banquet. It was a fun evening filled with good food and great conversation.

Very soon the Board of Directors will be looking for your help with public viewing nights. As you can see Astronomy Days (Friday and Saturday) are coming in April, and we will need your help.

For the March meeting there will be no Astronomy 101. The business meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. Jeff Setzer will present "Charles Messier and His List" as the main program. Considering that March is the time for Messier Marathon's this is a pretty timely subject.

I'm ready for some warmer weather observing! I hope you'll consider joining fellow members out at our observing site to attempt the Messier Marathon March 16th or 17th. See you there!

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**Monthly Meeting Location**  
Unitarian Church North  
13800 N. Port Wash. Rd.  
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## Star Party Astro Nuggets

By Kathy Bert

I have had several requests for the recipe for caramel corn puffs. Here are the ingredients and steps.

8 oz. Corn puffs ( Old Dutch )  
1 1/2 sticks butter.  
3/4 cup brown sugar.  
3/8 cup light corn syrup.  
3/4 tsp. baking soda.

Place corn puffs in a large roaster.  
In a large kettle, mix together butter, brown sugar, & syrup, and boil for 2 minutes.

Mix in baking soda, pour over puffs and stir to coat.

Bake at 250 Deg. for 45 minutes stirring every 15 minutes. Pour on wax paper to cool. Enjoy.



## SPECTRUM

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