

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

November 2009

LOOKING UP

November 5, Thursday

General Meeting

7:30 p.m. Business Meeting
Main Program to follow

November 19, Thursday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.
Home of Joyce Jentges

November 20, 21 & 22,

Fri. Sat. & Sun.

Holiday Folk Fair

State Fair Park
(See Main Article)

The 2009 NCSF Public Viewing Season has now come to an end. With 2009 being the International Year of Astronomy, it has been the most ambitious year for public outreach in Club history. The Board of Directors wishes to thank all members who gave of their time and energy this past season.



2009 International Year of Astronomy *By Jeff Setzer IYA 2009 Coordinator*



Although the weather wasn't very good for Galilean Nights, I understand that we did have people attend and were met with some limited viewing success over the weekend. Becca and I were down in Williams Bay that weekend helping with the events at Yerkes, which were well-attended and included a lecture by "Johannes Kelper" himself! We brought back a few more ideas for outreach that we'll share with everyone at the next meeting.

So here we are with 10 months of IYA2009 activities under our belt. It has been such a fantastic year for astronomy and the NCSF! By the time you read this, we'll have already had our final outdoor public astronomy events for the year -- the Great Pumpkin event at Bayshore Town Center and the Haunted Hike at Harrington Beach State Park. So are we done? Is that all? Not ... quite.

We have been honored with an invitation to exhibit at the famous Holiday Folk Fair at State Fair Park the weekend before Thanks-

giving. Friday, November 20 through Sunday, November 22 are the dates. We will have a table with astronomy handouts, telescopes on display, and other IYA2009 materials.

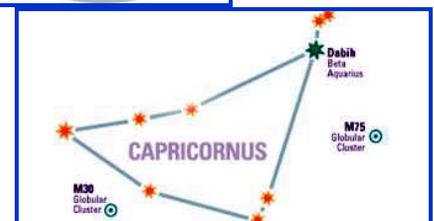
To staff this event, we are organizing 4-hour shifts. People can sign up for as many as they want, of course! There will be a web-based sign up linked on the NCSF website, or you can also call Gene and Charlotte DuPree to sign up via telephone.

At the time of this writing, it is also possible that we will have the opportunity to present a workshop on the Galileoscope on that Friday, which is Education Day at the Folk Fair, to help teachers and students make their own Galileoscopes (UW Madison's Space Place has considerable stock that may be available for this). If that ends up not being possible, we have another activity introduced to us at 100 Telescopes In The Park whereby planispheres can be made out of old compact discs. Either way, we will need people to man the information table independent of the folks who are doing the education seminars, so don't be shy if you're available during the day on Friday.

Here's to a successful conclusion to IYA2009!

Some Thanksgiving Fun Trivia

Cornucopia is the most common symbol of a harvest festival. A Horn shaped container, it is filled with abundance of the Earth's harvest. It is also known as the 'horn of plenty'. The traditional cornucopia was a curved goat's horn filled to brim with fruits and grains. According to Greek legend, Amalthea (a goat) broke one of her horns and offered it to Greek God Zeus as a sign of reverence. As a sign of gratitude, Zeus later set the goat's image in the sky also known as Constellation Capricorn!



October Meeting Minutes

By Kevin Bert

The October business meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation was held at the Unitarian Church North in Mequon. Vice President Jeff Setzer opened the meeting at 7:50 pm and welcomed over 19 members and guests. He welcomed all those in attendance and then asked for standard reports.

Treasurer Gene Dupree reported a balance of \$326.39 in the general fund and \$702.99 in the Observatory account.

Secretary Kevin Bert acknowledged new members Kristie & Mark Anderson and Christopher and Rosalie Tocco. There was no new Astronomical League information.

Kevin continued on with the status of the Eagle Scout project of in-ground observatory piers started by Boy Scout Trevor Metoxen. The only work remaining is to backfill the holes for the 4 inch thick concrete collars to finish leveling the area. The upcoming Saturday morning at 9:00 am will be a chance to finish the work. All members are welcome to help out.

Under old business, Jeff Setzer gave a follow up on "100 Telescopes in The

Park." He congratulated the NCSF for providing nearly 40% of the amateurs for what may have been the most successful of the IYA events. Friday presented rain for attendees but still some good work was done under the canopy tents. Saturday became clear and things went very well. Over 500 guests attended as the parking lot always seemed full. All age groups and levels of astronomical knowledge were represented. Many took advantage of the earlier telescope clinic to get help on using their own personal telescope. Nearby lights and excessive moisture in the air prevented viewing low in the sky but respectable results were seen higher in the sky on deep sky objects. The Moon and Jupiter/Transit shadow put on quite a show all evening. The total of 100 telescopes was reached later in the evening with some purchases of Galilean telescopes. All attendees enjoyed the evening's activities and many people from the public commented that they hope we would do the event again. A final goal of IYA is to have amateur groups build and strengthen new networks among the astronomical ranks.

It was noted that the Soref Planetarium will have a new show on Galileo and the history of the telescope.

Tom Schmidtkunz and Paul Gruener talked about their latest findings on the Adler Planetarium trip. They felt when activities slowed down in November it might be the best time to set a firm date. They reported that Amtrak round trips would be the most cost effective in comparison to a bus. A cost of about \$42.00 per member for a round trip would be normal. An additional fee for a taxi could be split between members from the Amtrak station to the planetarium. Saturday morning rides leave Amtrak at 6:15 and 8:00 am. Return trips leave at 5:08 and 8:05 pm. to give members some flexibility. If there is time, the website will be set up for members to vote their preference of dates. If not, the November meeting will finalize plans and explore specific activities at the planetarium.

Under new business, Jeff Setzer updated IYA's final activity called Galilean Nights on Oct. 22, 23 & 24. It is an event very much like the 100 hours of astronomy held earlier in the year with the emphasis on getting as many people as possible to look through a telescope and have a "Galilean experience" around the world. It is the final cornerstone project for IYA. Locally the
(cont'd on pg 3)

Things to See In the November Night Sky By Don Miles

Mercury: Early in the month Mercury (mag -0.3) will be too close to the sun to be seen, but will pass "behind" the sun throughout November. You may catch a glimpse right at months end as it emerges if you look a little above and to the left of the setting sun.

Jupiter & Neptune: Both will already be high in the southwestern sky as the sun sets throughout the month. Jupiter (mag. -2.4) will set by about 12:30am early in the month, and by about 11pm later in the month. Neptune (mag. 7.9) is still be above and to the left of Jupiter by about 6 degrees early in the month, but Jupiter will cut that distance in half by months end as it moves eastward. Neptune will look like a blue-gray "fuzzy star" in a scope at lower power.

Uranus: Will also be already be high in the southwestern sky as the sun sets throughout the month and will set by about 2:30am and by about 12:30 as the month progresses. Uranus (mag 5.8) is still in the constellation Pisces (below the right

"fish"), and will stay there for the month. Look for a blue-green "fuzzy star".

Mars: Rises in the eastern sky about 10:30pm early in the month and by about 9:30 later in the month, and is the highest in the sky at sunrise. Mars (mag. 0.2) is easy to find this month at it starts out at the center of the Beehive cluster in Cancer and moves eastward halfway to Regulus in Leo (the star at the bottom of the backwards question mark).

Saturn: Early in the month Saturn (mag 1.1) rises about 3am, and 1:30 by months end. Saturn remains mostly stationary this month at the "head" of Virgo.

Venus: Early in the month Venus rises ahead of the Sun at about 5am, while the Sun rises about 6:30. Venus (mag. -3.9) is still the brightest object in the eastern sky. Venus starts the month 4 degrees above Spica in Virgo, and will chase the sun eastward to end up between Scorpius & Libra.

Pluto: Sorry...If you missed it this year, you'll have to wait until next summer to get another chance.

Moon:
November 2nd: Full Moon
November 9th: Last Quarter
November 16th: New Moon
November 24th: First Quarter

Special Events:
Meteor Showers: The first showers are the Taurids, and the best time to watch for them will be the early morning hours of Tuesday the 10th. These will be very sparse (predicted peak rate of only 5/hr). These are very slow and are known for periodic fireballs. The second and much more active will be the Leonids. Watch for them in the early morning hours of Tuesday the 17th. Normal predicted peak rates are between 20 & 30 per hour, but this year we may be treated to higher numbers as we will be passing thru a "thicker" band of debris from the original comet (Temple-Tuttle) that left the particles in the first place.

November General Meeting

No 101 Class

Main Program

Film: The Universe - Secrets of the Sun

Take a guided tour of the surface of the Earth's life-giving Star through a computer generated graphics that re-create the solar flares and storms that rage on it's turbulent surface. Witness the Sun's birth at the dawn of the Solar System and it's death billions of years in the future.

Noteworthy:

—NCSFs' participation at the Holiday Folk Fair will be discussed at the meeting.

—President Joyce Jentges will address new security lighting at Harrington beach

—Our Annual Banquet in February will again be at the Fox and Hounds Restaurant in Hubertus. Gene and Charlotte DuPree will have dinner choices at the November Meeting.

CURRENT CLACK

New Members

NCSF welcomes New Club Member

Jay Thursius

Holiday Folk Fair

November 20, 21 & 22

To Volunteer Contact :
Gene and Charlotte DuPree
262 675-0488
Jeff Setzer
262 338-8614

October Events

Public Viewing

October 16th

Charlotte DuPree reported that viewing for the West Bend Library was clouded out. Even so, there were still six visitors by 7:00 p.m. Skies didn't clear and the event ended at 9:00 p.m.

Members Night

October 17th

October's Member Night was held at the home of Gene and Charlotte DuPree. Six visitors enjoyed clear skies and fellowship. The event ended around 11:00 P.M.

Galilean Nights

October 22nd & 23rd

Both nights were rained out!

October 24th

Kevin Bert reported partly cloudy skies and nine members entertained over 50 guests at this event. This group included two Girl Scout Troops. The skies ranged from overcast to mostly clear and the Moon and Jupiter were the main attractions. Kevin reported the visitors appreciated our efforts; enjoying telescope viewing and related discussions. Charlotte DuPree reported seeing an Aurora to the north.

Harrington Beach Security Lighting

A flurry of correspondence erupted this past month regarding new security lighting at Harrington State Park and its' impact on our viewing site. Ernie Mastroianni first reported that he and several other members were setup at Plunkett Pond on October 18th and noticed that "very powerful security lights" were recently installed at the Entrance Station. He reported viewing was significantly impacted by the glare of the lights. Later correspondence discussed the new flagpole lighting, which shines from the flagpole base directly skyward.

On October 23rd Club President Joyce Jentges paid a visit to Harrington Beach and spoke to the Park Superintendent. Andy had apparently viewed the new lights for the first time the night before and immediately had brought someone out to make an adjustment, fearing they might interfere with our viewing. Joyce reported that the lights are now lowered, but not completely horizontal to the ground. Additional tweaking may yet be needed. The light bulbs in the fixtures are State mandated and cannot be changed to a lower wattage. Andy said he would try to shut-down the lights when we are using the facility, but also needs to consider the needs of the campers. Joyce will talk more about these developments at the November Meeting

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

(cont'd from pg 2)

Jim and Gwen Plunkett Observatory will be the site of all our activities. The 23rd and 24th are at this point the only two dates for viewing scheduled. Kevin Bert reported that a leader and assistant are still needed for Friday the 23rd.

The Holiday Folk Fair on November 20 – 22 weekend at State Fair Park will be the final public activity to promote our club and the International Year of Astronomy. Gene and Charlotte Dupree will head up the event and are looking for members to help them out with displays and spending time at the booth. Contact Jeff Setzer at 262-338-8614 or Gene and Charlotte at 262-675-0488.

Jeff gave a rundown of the remaining upcoming events for October. He corrected last months Spectrum date on sidewalk astronomy at Bayshore to the 30th. He encouraged members to participate in these final public events as the year begins to wind down.

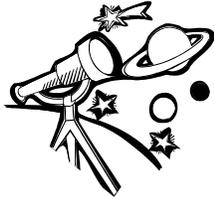
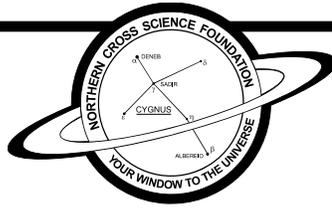
With no further new business, Jeff closed the business meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Jim and Gwen Plunkett Observatory



Observatory Director:
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Observatory Notes:

Our appreciation goes out for a terrific job by Scout Trevor Metoxen, Troop 837, and Club Members for the In-Ground Observatory Piers Project.



Our club has a "Discussion Group on Google"
 See our website: <http://www.ncsf.info/> for details.

SPECTRUM

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