

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

September 2007

LOOKING UP

September 1 Saturday

Public Viewing Night

8:45 p.m.

Ice Age Center, Dundee

September 6 Thursday

General Meeting

7:00 p.m. Astronomy 101

7:30 p.m. Business Meeting

September 8 Saturday

Members Night

8:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach State Park

September 14 Friday

Public Viewing Night

7:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach State Park

September 15 Saturday

Fall Astronomy Day

7:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach State Park

September 15 Saturday

Community Campfire

6:00—9:00 p.m.

Pike Lake State Park

September 20 Thursday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Home of Jeff Setzer

October 4 Thursday

General Meeting

7:00 p.m. Astronomy 101

7:30 p.m. Business Meeting

Leaders Needed For September/October Observing Nights

By Joyce Jentges

As we head into the next two months, we will wrap up a very successful season of public viewing nights with our new observatory. The observatory has definitely created a higher volume of traffic at the public viewing nights. With this in mind, I'm going to cut right to the chase here. Those of you who did the training to operate the observatory and Panarusky telescope, we really need you to step forward and be leaders for public viewing nights. Right now, we have no one signed up to be leaders for September 14 and 15, or October 19, 20 and 27.

In October, the annual Haunted Hike at Harrington Beach State Park is on the 27th. We really need to have a leader and assistant in the observatory, as well as other telescopes set up. Being that the parking lot at Puckett's Pond is used as overflow parking for the hike, we have a built in audience that night. It is not unusual to have at least 200 people looking through our telescopes this night.

Public Viewing Night Report From August 17

By Dan Bert

Besides a few passing clouds and increasing winds theskies remained mostly clear for this month's publicviewing on Aug. 17 at Harrington Beach. New member Richard Sauve, my Dad Kevin, Tony and Joyce were also present. Viewing began as soon as Jupiter was visible in the southwest. Early groups of a few waves of families with children were followed by a steady line of people waiting to look through the scopes. Viewing of the crescent Moon and Alberio were shown outside to calm the crowd waiting to view thru the Panarusky, which focused early on Jupiter. Other objects enjoyed by everyone included the Hercules cluster and Andromeda galaxy, the

And if even half of those people go to look through the Panarusky, well, you can see why it is important to have two people in the observatory that night.

I showed up the evening of the 17th without a telescope and helped Kevin Bert in the observatory. It was helpful to have a second person in there, to help move the ladder, position the scope, and just answer general questions from the public.

I believe as we go into fall, there will be several training nights for those who are interested in operating the Panarusky. Our observatory is a great asset to our public viewing night, but it can only be successful if we have people to man it. If you have questions about being a leader, please contact Kevin or Dan Bert.

check mark or Swan nebulae and Dumbbell. The Milky Way could be seen easily as the Moon got lower along with some bright meteors. The Space Station was also observed passing by quickly overhead. The new laser pointer purchased for use at the observatory worked well. Overall, we estimate at least 50 people showed up for observing, many remained there for a while to see multiple objects. Looking to September, leaders are needed for the Sept. 14 & 15 viewing nights, please let me know if you are interested.

August Meeting Minutes

By Kevin Bert

The August business meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation was held at the Unitarian Church North in Mequon. President Jeff Setzer opened the meeting at 8:30 p.m. to 24 members and guests and thanked them all for attending. He then asked for standard reports.

Treasurer Gene DuPree said things were well financially. He noted that 2008 calendars were available and that members should let him know if they would like one.

Secretary Kevin Bert had nothing to report on the Astronomical League.

Rebecca Sher told members that people are starting to sign up for the 2008 NCRAL convention. Monthly meetings will continue to organize the event. The club website has all the details on all the speakers and more.

September Things to See

By Don Miles

Venus: Rises low in the east about 1-1/2 hours before sunrise in the beginning of the month, and by the end of the month will rise by about 3:30. Venus will also reach its maximum brightness by the end of the month.

Jupiter: Look for the brightest point of light in the West just after the sun sets. When you find Jupiter, see if you can find Antares (the heart of SCORPIUS). It will be about (5) degrees below Jupiter. Vesta (the asteroid) is still near Jupiter, but much dimmer than last month. Use a finder chart to find it.

Mars: Rises early in the morning just east of the "V" shape of Taurus in the beginning of the month, and moves to the left between both horn tips as the month progresses.

Uranus & Neptune: Best viewed from

Kevin Bert reported in place of Observatory Director Dan Bert and said that the August 10 members night was in need of a leader and that the public viewing night on August 17 was in need of a leader and assistant. Any interested operators should sign up. Robert Powell had donated a Discovery store weather center and recently installed it in the observatory. Dan and I spent an evening to refine the polar alignment of the Panarusky. Hopefully this will eliminate the need for the 2-star alignment procedure. Don Miles had installed the keypad entry system to the observatory. Observatory Operators will be getting the code shortly. And lastly the donation jar had cracked. Unfortunately, it was not from an overabundance of money but because of some bolts being too tight. The club is on the lookout for an old mayonnaise jar to replace it. Rob Powell added that a 2" polarizing filter is now available in the observatory to tone down the very bright image of the moon through the Panarusky.

around midnight and later. Look for Uranus in Eastern Aquarius, and Neptune between in Eastern Capricornus. Use a finder chart and steadily held binoculars.

Saturn: Rises early in the morning just before the sun early in the month, but by about 3 hours by the end of the month. Saturn will appear very close to Regulus (the bottom star in the "backwards question mark" of Leo) for all of September.

Moon:

September 4th: Last Quarter

September 11th: New Moon

September 19th: First Quarter

September 26th: Full Moon

Under old business, Rob Powell reminded the membership that tomorrow night is another Bayshore shopping mall stargazing event. Contact Rob for a parking pass and details.

Under new business, Jeff Setzer listed the upcoming events. He reminded club members of the Ice Age Center viewing night on Saturday September 1st.

Gene DuPree reported that he has reserved the Hartman Creek group campsite #1 at Waupaca for October 12 & 13 for a Fall Star Party. \$5.00 per person and a state park sticker are required. Contact him to reserve a spot and for more details.

With no further new business, Jeff closed the business meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Bert, secretary

Note: One location for a free printable sky chart (and other current info) is telescope.com. Pick the "In The Sky" box on the right side of the page for info about the current month.



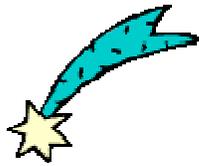
Astronomy 101 and Main Program

By Kevin Bert

The September 101 class is entitled "Jupiter and Mars," by Kevin Bert. One planet is slowly making an exit while another is working up to a grand entrance. See what these two planets have to offer. And no, Mars will not look as big as the full moon.

The featured constellation will be Hercules.

The main program will be a DVD titled Comet Collision.



Public Viewing Night Reports

By Joyce Jentges

Several members attended the public viewing night at the Ice Age Center in Dundee on September 1st. Gene and Charlotte DuPree, Carol Nelson, Kevin and Dan Bert and myself entertained the crowd at the Ice Age Center. Some of the objects viewed included the Andromeda Galaxy, The Owl Cluster (NGC 457), M13, the ring and dumbbell nebulas. We had a crowd of about 50-75 people that showed up, which is less than other

years, but still a decent amount considering it was Labor Day weekend.

The public viewing night on August 18th was rained out.

Hope to see you out at the public viewing nights for September.



CURRENT CLACK

Welcome Uldis Cinitis from Milwaukee

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 September 20th.

Preview of Bright Fall Objects

By Joyce Jentges

As we head into early fall, the summer constellations will soon give way to the constellations of fall. Already prominent in the East is Pegasus and Andromeda. Taurus and Orion will soon follow.

Next to Pegasus is the constellation of Andromeda, and it contains the famous Andromeda galaxy, otherwise known as M 31. This galaxy is 2.1 million light years away from us, yet is one of the closest galaxies to us. It is much like our own Milky Way galaxy.

My favorite object in Pegasus is a small globular cluster, M15. It is just off the star Enif and is a 6th magnitude globular that is 34,000 light years from us.

One sure sign of fall is the Pleiades rising in the East. Also known as the

Seven Sisters, This open cluster is one of the showpieces of the sky as it is a naked eye object. Most people can see six bright stars naked eye, but binoculars will reveal many many more than that. This is the first object I viewed with my six inch scope some 20 years ago, and I likened the view to diamonds in the sky. People have reportedly viewed the accompanying nebula with this cluster, but I have yet to see it.

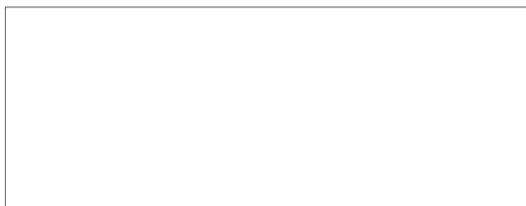
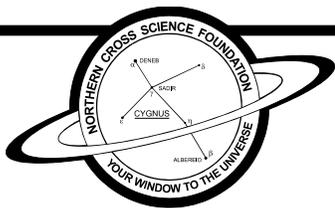
One of my most favorite objects is still visible in Fall; NGC 457, or the Owl Cluster is in Cassiopeia. This cute little cluster is one of the few things in the sky that looks like its name. There are two bright stars that make up the "eyes" of the cluster, and underneath that, you can make out the

shape of a body, and the outstretched wings of a bird. This is a hit at public viewing nights with kids and adults alike. In the "W" shape, this is just off of the second star from the right.

This is also the time of year when Perseus rises. The famous double cluster resides in this constellation, as does M 34 which is a pretty open cluster of about 6th magnitude. A much harder to view object is M 76, the little dumbbell. A telescope of at least 8 inches should show you this faint nebula, which is about 15,000 light years away.

Get out your star maps, and go check out these fine objects, it's a great time for some fall stargazing!

SPECTRUM
102 N Montgomery St # 1
Port Washington, WI
53074



2007 OFFICERS

President - Jeff Setzer
1418 Trillium CT
West Bend, WI 53095
262/338-8614
astrosetz@hotmail.com

**Vice President/Newsletter
Editor- Joyce Jentges**
102 N. Montgomery St. Apt #1
Port Washington, WI 53074
(920) 254-6705
joycejentges@hotmail.com

Secretary - Kevin Bert
2292 Ridgewood Road
Grafton, WI 53024
262/375-2239
kevin.bert@hotmail.com

Treasurer - Gene DuPree
6291 Jay Rd.
Myra, WI 53095
262-675-0941
grdupree@netwurx.net

Other Board Members:

Rob Powell
262-894-9756
Rick Poulin
920-474-3064
Don Miles
262-675-2796

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

Odds 'N Ends

By Joyce Jentges

Public Viewing Night Leaders:

September 14th—Open

September 15th—Open for Harrington Beach

September 15th (Community Campfire) DuPree's.

Don't forget to register for the NCRAL 2008 convention! It will be held at the Country Inn and Suites (convention center) on April 18 and 19, 2008. go to www.ncsf.info and click on the link for the NCRAL 2008 convention.

Comic from: website of Lake Country Astronomical Society <http://www.lcas-astronomy.org/>



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Send inquiries to:
SPECTRUM
102 N. Montgomery St. # 1
Port Washington, WI 53074

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