



May 1, 2024

It is once again time for our 34th annual Grand Canyon Star Party (GCSP) 2024. GCSP 2024 will take place June 1-8 and should be another great event. Outreach will be from 8 – 11 pm. You may remain after midnight to observe on your own if desired. We have quite a few volunteers registered. Please read all the attachments in the Welcome Package and complete where appropriate. The forms are available on the TAAA GCSP webpage identified at the bottom and you need to bring certain hardcopies with you. The more you can do in advance and print to bring with you, the better. Here is a summary of existing and new processes for this year. Rader's Welcome letter also outlines many of the procedures. T-Shirts will be available for purchase (cash only, no credit cards). Cost is \$15 (M-XL) and \$20 (2, 3, 4XL). Recommend bringing ample cash as the bank may not be available within the park. Remember, advanced registration closes May 24th. It is important to let us know if your plans change, either before GCSP or at the event by using the gensp@tucsonastronomy.org email address or phone #'s listed below.

Telescope Field

1. The telescope field will again be in the large parking lot behind the Visitor's Center (see attached map). Astronomers are allowed one piece of equipment per volunteer so we can accommodate the many volunteers we have. Keep extra equipment (tables, chairs, etc) to a minimum and your space as small as practical so we can accommodate everyone. Please be respectful of your neighbors. We will again have two Live Imaging areas, one at the usual location (area 1) at the entrance of the lot and one at the far end between the two exits of the lot (area 2). Imagers in the far end should aim any monitors away from the visual observers to minimize any extraneous light. If any questions of where to set up, contact Jim Knoll before setting up.
2. Please arrive in time for the 7 pm astronomer update meeting. **Arrive early on first night to turn in forms.** All vehicles must be removed by 7:45 pm to accommodate the inflow of guests, so please plan accordingly. Traffic is ONE-WAY entering at the southwest (nearest to Visitor Center) and departing at the two northern ends. Keep these areas clear. The lot will be closed to vehicles from 7:45-11:15 pm.
3. We will once again have Star Guides on the field to assist participants and astronomers during the observing portion. They will help participants move around the field and to telescopes that have a shorter line. They will also try to identify what telescopes are looking at to facilitate crowd movement. Star Guides will be in reflective vests and red lights and can help monitor your scope if you need a short break. We appreciate any volunteers to help with this important position (astronomy experience is NOT required, so great for any spouse that want to help). For any safety or non-astronomy issues, coordinate directly with one of the Rangers or have a Star Guide help with that coordination.
4. From 11:15 pm to midnight, the lot will be open for vehicles (**WITH HEADLIGHTS ON**) to load equipment and depart the field. Please disassemble your equipment on-site prior to driving your vehicle onto the lot to minimize the time the vehicle is on the lot. After midnight, the lot will be CLOSED again to routine vehicle traffic. You can always walk your equipment out to your vehicle if departing outside of

these times. If staying after midnight to continue observing or imaging, when ready to depart, disassemble equipment prior to bringing in vehicle and enter the lot with minimum lighting or walk your equipment out to your vehicle. Also, you should advise others around you of your intent. Telescopes may be left set up at the owner's risk and must be covered to remove temptation. Any small equipment that might grow legs should be removed nightly. Replace any nylon ropes as required when departing.

5. Hours and Contacts must be submitted using the provided form at the conclusion of your participation or within two weeks of the end of GCSP. BRING A HARDCOPY and complete daily. Provide them to one of the Rangers or event staff. This form is important to validate outreach efforts for the future of GCSP. Failure to submit will result in denial of future complimentary camping or registration.

6. All telescopes need to have at least one red light to facilitate visibility and visitor interaction. If you need a red light, we will have some available for purchase.

7. Although green lasers are indispensable for highlighting objects in the night sky, extreme care must be taken to ensure they are used safely. Do not point low on the horizon, never let them out of your control, and use the minimum wattage possible.

Campground

1. All rules (both NPS and those specific for astronomers) must be followed. Failure to do so will disqualify you for a complimentary campsite in the future. Please help us by abiding by the rules and respect your neighbors.

2. There will be a sandwich board identifying the Campground Director's site for camper check-in. Everyone must check in with the Campground Director or designated representative upon arrival. If the Campground Director is not at their site, you may call her (Mae Smith) at 520-850-7137.

3. We will have several social activities throughout the week and will be published in the campground and highlighted during the 7 pm meeting. We will have a tribute to Dean Ketelsen at the Sunday Pizza Party. Please share any stories you may have of Dean and the GCSP.

We appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedules to share astronomy with the public. GCSP 2024 will be a great success thanks to your passion for astronomy and sharing it with the public. If you have any questions, please contact one of the GCSP Planning Team members listed below.

Ranger Rader Lane (lead Ranger). Rader_lane@nps.gov

Jim Knoll (GCSP Director). gcsp@tucsonastronomy.org or jimknoll@tucsonastronomy.org (520) 241-3113

Mae Smith (Campground Director). gcsp@tucsonastronomy.org or ssmith@arizona.edu (520) 850-7137

Gary Wells (GCSP Registrar). gcsp-registrar@tucsonastronomy.org

TAAA GCSP Webpage: <https://tucsonastronomy.org/upcoming-events/grand-canyon-star-party/>

NPS GCSP Webpage: <https://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/grand-canyon-star-party.htm>

