

TAAA Desert Skies Bulletin

Observing Our

Desert Skies

Since

1954



September 2024

www.tucsonastronomy.org

Membership Meeting

September 6, 2024

TAAA's next general member meeting will be held on **Friday, September 6, 2024**. The Main Presentation will start at 6:30 P.M. This will be a hybrid meeting (both in person and on social media). TAAA members will receive a Zoom link should they wish to attend remotely. The public may attend in person at the **Steward Observatory Lecture Hall (Rm N210), 933 N Cherry Ave, Tucson** or stream from the TAAA [Facebook](#) page.

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Main Presentation at 6:30PM AZT

Title: My Deep-Sky Astrophotography Journey

Presentation: TAAA member David Stearn shares his journey into Deep-Sky Astrophotography, showcasing his transition from landscape and nature photography to capturing the wonders of the cosmos. This presentation is perfect for visual astronomers interested in exploring the world of imaging, as well as for seasoned astrophotographers looking to learn new techniques. David will cover his beginnings, his advanced astro rig, and his expertise in capturing deep-sky objects, sharing valuable insights on imaging capture techniques, workflow, and image processing.

Biography: David Stearn is an Amateur Deep Space Photographer. He holds a BS Degree in Marketing from Northern Illinois University and has been an amateur photographer for 20 years. With a background in landscape and nature photography, David has transitioned his skills and passions to astrophotography,

leveraging his skills to capture stunning deep-sky objects. He is excited to share his journey and techniques with the Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association. David's photo gallery can be found on [Astrobin](#).



The Triangulum Galaxy, also known as M33
Credit: David Stearn

August 2024

I am just back from a trip to Washington, D.C. sponsored by the National Park Service (NPS). It was a very active, extremely positive, and informative trip which proved to be a great opportunity to deepen and further develop TAAA's relationship with NPS.

As some of you are aware, Dean Ketelsen was posthumously awarded the Regional Excellence in Volunteerism Award of our NPS region for the 2024 year for his development of the Grand Canyon Star Party (GCSP). When a National 2024 winner was selected from among the Regional winners, **Dean was selected as the National Volunteer of the 2024 Year award winner for the entire U.S. National Park Service.** Since Dean acted as a representative of TAAA in forging a relationship between Grand Canyon National Park and TAAA to conduct GCSP, I was invited to attend the national ceremony to represent TAAA in receiving the National Volunteer Award on Dean's behalf.

I was in D.C. for several days. In addition to attending the actual Annual National Award Ceremony for all of NPS and receiving TAAA's copy of Dean's award, I was invited to a special meeting with all national volunteer award winners. The meeting was phenomenal. There were probably 20 to 25 people from all over the U.S. in attendance at the meeting representing a huge variety of NPS volunteer programs, as well as a very elite group of high-level employees in NPS who are responsible for developing and supervising all the volunteer programs in NPS throughout the United States. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the future of volunteer programs in NPS, and to get input from key volunteer leaders across the US regarding what has been working, what is proving successful, what might be needed, and how NPS volunteer programs can be supported, improved, strengthened, and further developed.

Out of the (probably) thousands of volunteer-focused meetings I have attended in my lifetime, I felt this was the most positive, effective, and productive meeting in which I

by Mae Smith

have ever participated. The entire experience of being engaged in participation in that meeting, as well as the separate award ceremony and lengthy reception (which, although long, seemed too short) afterward was filled with positive interactions with NPS leaders and an in-depth sense of support and enthusiasm for future cooperative work between the NPS systems and citizen volunteers.

An important fact that I learned in this volunteer-focused experience is that the Grand Canyon Star Party is THE LARGEST volunteer event in the entire National Park Service...yes, throughout the entire United States, GCSP is THE LARGEST NPS EVENT!!!!

Not only does this indicate the importance of GCSP to NPS, it also carries with it some other important perspectives focusing on special aspects of our experience. For example, we are the first event to be this size and the first to experience certain growth effects and ramifications. Thus, NPS is learning through us. While other successful programs represented in the discussions focused on keeping their programs going, how to grow those programs, how to move them to better balances of volunteer and NPS support, and management issues, the focus for GCSP was different. The GCSP is forcing NPS to look at what are the natural results and unexpected side effects/ramifications of growth and success, what is needed to support programs as they DO grow and develop, and how achieving success requires a different model of support, especially as the programs keep enduring for years and years. Also, we discussed how longer term programs, instead of half day or day programs which many of the volunteer program winners were, 8-day/night programs have different needs and considerations in their development and continued growth.

I was extremely delighted to find that NPS does not want "cookie-cutter" programs; that is all programs to be predesigned and to be the

same. Rather, NPS fully supports and desires individualized programs that match the needs and wants of the audiences. So, continued unique development of the GCSP fits in perfectly with the values and goals of NPS. And, I think from our discussions, NPS leaders have a much better than prior perspective of some of the effects of our growth and thus, of some of our current needs and issues that have developed as a result of such growth.

I am assured that we are definitely appreciated, highly valued, and viewed as a model program. I am equally assured that NPS will continue to work with us in helpful, caring ways to support the growth that we are experiencing. They are interested in and responsive to adaptations that support growth while retaining the true value of the event.

Some of you might also be interested to know that Dean's family members were also invited to attend the actual award ceremony and the reception afterwards. Just as TAAA received a copy of the award (which is to be placed on TAAA property at CAC), Dean's family received a copy of the award. Rader and I also had a very pleasant extended dinner with the six family members who attended the event. Their trip to DC seemed to be very enjoyable, and we were able to answer some of the questions that they had regarding Dean's roles in TAAA.

Also, all of us who had not spent time at the Department of Interior and observing the City of DC from the top of the Department of Interior (which is heralded as at least one of the best, if not the best, view in Washington) shared a very memorable new experience. We can very much thank Rader Lane for being a perfect Washington, D.C. host for us all and for his profound advocacy for TAAA.

Lastly, a bit of internal TAAA news: within the last month, two important TAAA positions were filled. As some of you know, Suzanne

The TAAA Board of Directors meets the second Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm. Members are welcome to attend Board meetings. If you would like to attend, you may email [Mae Smith](mailto:Mae.Smith@tucsonastronomy.org) to receive a Zoom link for that meeting. Please send your email to Mae the Monday prior to the meeting (by 5:00pm) and you will receive an email with the link on either Tuesday evening or Wednesday. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

Bailey, who was elected as a General Member of the TAAA Board in 2023, resigned from her Board position in June 2024. When a Board member vacates a TAAA Board position prior to the end of the elected term, the TAAA Constitution indicates that the Board may appoint a member to complete that term. At the July 2024 TAAA Board meeting, the Board appointed Stephen Ferris to complete that vacated position and he will serve on the Board through the end of May 2025.

Some of you are aware that the TAAA Board has been working on re-designing the former TAAA Assistant Treasurer position. The Assistant Treasurer is not a TAAA Board member, but rather is appointed by the TAAA President to work closely with the TAAA Treasurer. I worked with the TAAA Board and with NVRC to re-define the assistant treasurer position to meet current needs and to vet candidates. In July, I appointed TAAA member, Nelsey Toner, to serve as TAAA Assistant Treasurer.

Mae Smith, TAAA President
president@tucsonastronomy.org
(520 850-7137)

Other Elected Leader Contact Information:

Vice-President: Ed Foley
vice-president@tucsonastronomy.org

Secretary: Bob Reynolds
secretary@tucsonastronomy.org

Treasurer: Barbara Whitehead
treasurer@tucsonastronomy.org

BOD Members-At-Large:
Stephen Ferris, mal1@tucsonastronomy.org
David Rossetter, mal2@tucsonastronomy.org
John Kalas, mal3@tucsonastronomy.org

TAAA Board: taaabod@tucsonastronomy.org

Desert Skies Bulletin Editor - David Rossetter Ken Bertschy - Graphics Terri Lappin & Jim Knoll - Proofreading Gregg Ruppel - Image Editor

Photos from Mae's trip to the National Park Service's Annual National Award Ceremony.



Mae and Rader Lane, National Park Service Coordinator for the Grand Canyon Star Party with Dean Ketelson's National Volunteer of the Year Award (awarded posthumously). They are on the roof of the Department of Interior building.

Members of Dean Ketelson's family attending the ceremony.



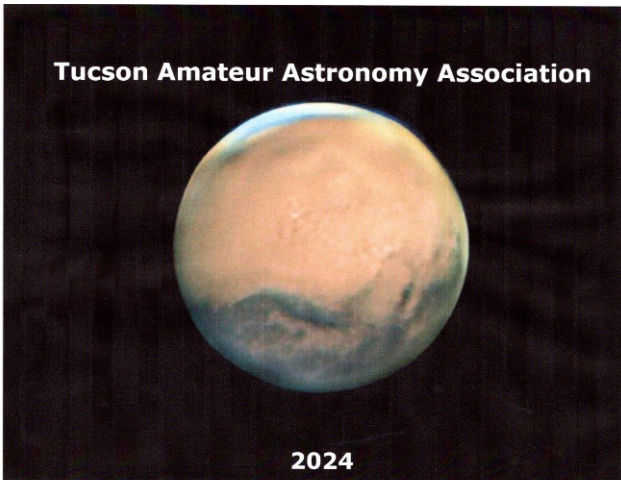
Photos courtesy of Rader Lane.

From the Editor

You may notice a couple of small articles in this issue about member astronomical activities outside of the TAAA. Other members want to read about these! Star parties, conventions, retreats, there are lots of wonderful opportunities for members to participate outside our club. I hope you will share your experiences.

I have been advertising the Desert Skies Bulletin needs and requirements through the club's online [forum](#). Each month I let folks know what I am looking for in the next bulletin and what the deadlines are. Just to review, in general I put out the request for articles on the 18th of the month. I want all submissions by the 24th. This gives me time to put everything together by the 26th when I send it to out to our proofreaders. I try to have it ready to send a pre-publish version to all the contributors by the 27th. This gives them time to make sure their submissions are as they want. Club publishing day is the 28th of each month (27th in February).

I look forward to your contributions! -[David Rossetter](#)



2025 TAAA Wall Calendar

We are looking for your images!

We are especially interested in images from the eclipse; both of the eclipse itself and of spectators who were with you during the event. Also of Comet 12P/Pons-Brooks. Any other images related to astronomy or club events are always welcome.

Please send your calendar images to: [Susan OConnor](mailto:SusanOConnor).

TAAA Ladies' Night Out

by Susan O'Connor

Ladies' Night Out is a social interest group for women members of the club. The group meets once a month at a restaurant for fellowship and conversation.

This month's meeting is:

Thursday, September 19, 6:30pm

Redbird Scratch Kitchen

6444 N Oracle Road
NE corner of Oracle and Orange Grove
Plaza del Oro Shopping Center

Preview the menu at: <https://www.redbirdrestaurants.com/>

RSVP Susan
520-780-0136

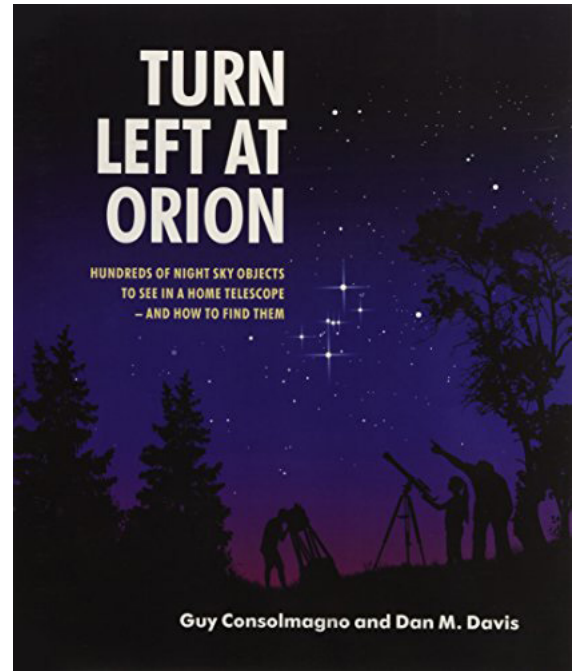
Book Of The Month Review

by Douglas Smith (TAAA Librarian)

Book: *Turn Left At Orion*

Authors: Guy Consolmagno and Dan Davis

This book is a very useful resource for the amateur astronomer with a small to medium telescope and/or binoculars. It walks you through all the various observing targets: Sun, Moon, planets, deep sky objects, etc. The authors do a good job describing the various objects in terms that amateurs can relate to. For each deep sky object a good, easy to understand description of how to find the object, along with finder charts, is presented. Perhaps the best feature of this book are the sketches of the objects. Unlike many other observing guides, which use images that don't match what you actually see, these sketches are exactly what you would see through an eyepiece. The book also contains a great deal of basic information about using a telescope, coordinate systems, etc. This book is good observing guide. Better than many others.



Turn Left At Orion can be found online for around \$10 to \$20.

TAAA Is Now On Instagram!

We will use our Instagram account to complement other social media outlets to advertise club events and share pictures and stories of club activities. If you are on Instagram, you can follow TAAA by searching for Tucson Astronomy on Instagram.

Please share the address (@tucsonastronomy) with your friends and family.

Jim Knoll: jimknoll@tucsonastronomy.org



Constellation Locating and Identification Workshop

Open for enrollment

Place: TIMPA **Date:** Thursday, September 26, 2024 **Time:** 6:00 PM until completed

Synopsis: This is another workshop in the practical astronomy workshop series. The students will be taught how to locate and identify the constellations without having to memorize the night sky. Each student will use the supplied equipment to locate several constellations. Students will learn how to use a planisphere and star atlas to locate constellations without memorizing the sky. This program provides the methodology for the observing requirements of the Astronomical League's Constellation Observing Program (Northern and Southern).

PLEASE NOTE: due to equipment limitations there is a strict limit of 20 students.

If interested: Contact Douglas Smith: 520-396-3233, [Email](#)

Star Hopping Workshop

Open for Enrollment

Place: TIMPA **Date:** Saturday, October 26, 2024 **Time:** 5:45 PM until completed

Synopsis: This is another workshop in the practical astronomy workshop series. The students will be taught the proper star hopping technique and equipment usage. Each student will use the supplied equipment to locate at least two targets (maybe more if time permits). By the end of the workshop the student will know what equipment to use and how to use it in order to locate targets using star hopping.

If interested: Contact Douglas Smith: 520-396-3233, [Email](#)

PLEASE NOTE: Due to equipment limitations there is a strict limit of 20 students.

Fundamentals of Astronomy Class

Open for Enrollment

Place: Armory Park Center, 220 S. 5th Ave, Tucson

Date: Three consecutive Saturdays: January 11, 2025, January 18, 2025, January 25, 2025

Time: 9 AM until 4 PM each day

Be aware these dates are tentative (waiting on city approval) so it is possible they might change.

Synopsis: This course is designed for anyone interested in learning the basic concepts in Amateur Astronomy. Topics covered (but not limited to) include the solar system, deep sky objects, stars, telescopes, eyepieces, mounts, star hopping, observation techniques, plus much more. The course is highly recommended for novice amateur astronomers and for anyone who may have just purchased a telescope for the first time. Taking this class will also aid the student in understanding the more advanced lectures often given during general membership meetings.

If interested: Contact Douglas Smith: 520-396-3233, [Email](#) or use sign-up sheet available at the September 2024 through January 2025 General Member meetings.

Members' Summer Adventures

Sabino Canyon Public Outreach - David Iadevaia

The US Forest Service approved my public outreach program at Sabino Canyon. A series of monthly talks about a topic in astronomy including an observing session will be presented. The first talk, about T CrB the Blaze Star, was held on 3 Aug. The second talk will be about the Moon on 14 Sept, which is also the NASA International Observe the Moon night. Pictured here is the trailer telescope that I built. It will be used in support of the monthly talks. During transport the OTA and counter weight shaft and weight are removed. A test drive with this configuration proved successful. Remounting the OTA and weight then doing a night sky test showed that the telescope acquired and tracked the specified objects flawlessly. Telescope controlled with ASI AIR Pro. Display of image will be on a 32 inch monitor (Not pictured)



Adirondack Astronomy Retreat 2024 David Rossetter



David and Wendee Levy started the Adirondack Astronomy Retreat (AAR) in 2005. The site was a summer science camp that David attended in the early 60s. Later, the State University of New York – Plattsburgh took over the sight for science education. It is now known as the Twin Valleys Outdoor Education Center located in the eastern Adirondack Mountains in far northern New York State.

Unlike large star parties (such as Texas Star Party) with thousands of your best friends, AAR is an intimate experience. Sessions average less than 30 attendees. We stay in cabins, eat and gather for lectures in the main building, and hang out together on the observing field sharing views all night. The food is good and attendees volunteer to give lectures on their expertise. Of course, David Levy lectures at each session. “We remember why we became amateur astronomers in the first place and recharge our astronomical batteries.” Wendee led the Retreat until the year before her passing. It is now capably run by the North Jersey Astronomical Group.



The skies are dark. The weather is variable but better than southern Arizona during Monsoon. I attended this year at the end of July hauling my 25-year-old 4” refractor on the airlines. The weather was mild (highs in the 80s and lows in the 50s) and skies pretty good. We had one terrific night, one fair night, two challenging nights, and two washouts. Washout evenings are still fun as we play music (several of us brought guitars) and watch movies. During the days some of us hike around the camp or up in the high Adirondacks.

All in all, my 15th AAR was a great success. Let me know ([email](#)) if you want more information on the event or if you are interested in attending next year. Check out the [web page](#) or [Facebook page](#).

Observing Sites

TIMPA

by TIMPA Planning Group

TIMPA (Tucson International Modelplex Park Association), TAAA's dark sky site west of the Tucson Mountains. Location: The TIMPA observing site is located a few miles beyond the Desert Museum (3250 N. Reservation Road, Tucson, AZ 85743).

TIMPA Star Party Dates this month:
August 30 - 31, September 27 - 28



The TIMPA Planning Group will be offering assistance with telescope usage and observing during the monthly TIMPA Star Parties. You are invited to bring your equipment and questions to TIMPA on Star Party dates for assistance. Be sure to register using the link below.

The TIMPA site is only partially improved. There are no inside buildings provided other than restrooms. TAAA provides very limited seating (members are welcome to bring folding chairs). Please note that members visiting the TIMPA site may encounter things commonly found in partially improved desert areas such as desert creatures and/or their remnants (such as gopher holes or ant hills), uneven terrain, weeds, and desert pollens. Members using the site are encouraged to bring red lights and to move cautiously taking appropriate safety measures. The site does not have potable water, so bring your own non-alcoholic drinks.

Reservations for the TIMPA Site are made on the TAAA website at [TIMPA DARK SITE RESERVATIONS](#).

Chiricahua Astronomy Complex

by Jim Knoll

Upcoming CAC Weekend Dates (Fri/Sat):

August 30-31 (New Moon Sep 2), September 27-28 (New Moon Oct 2)

Chiricahua Astronomy Complex (CAC) is the club's dark sky observing site, located in Cochise County approximately 100 miles southeast of the center of Tucson. If you would like to attend, you must make a reservation on the CAC Web page at [CAC Reservations](#).

Unless you are qualified to open and close the site, dates will be limited to those around the New Moon and are listed on the CAC web page. Hosted personnel are generally on site a few days before and after these dates. Those qualified to open & close the site can use it anytime but still need to reserve through the CAC Reservations process.



CAC Director: [Jim Knoll](#) [CAC on the Web](#)

Observing Sites Star Party Dates 2024

TIMPA

August 30 - 31
Sept. 27-28
November 1-2
Nov. 29-30
December 27-28

CAC

August 30-31 (New Moon Sep 2)
September 27-28 (New Moon Oct 2)
November 1-2 (New Moon 1)
November 29-30 (New Moon 30)
December 27-28 (New Moon 30)

by Bernie Stinger

Hooray, it's the start of the new Star Party / Outreach season

Thank you for volunteering your time and talents for our extremely important outreach mission. **Below is the Public/School Star Party list for September, 2024.** September is our first month in the 10-month outreach cycle, skipping July and August, and we have many of our previous star party locations and a couple of new ones!

Please let me know in return email if you are interested in volunteering for any of the events listed below. First come – first served. I will let you know in return if you are on it or that it was already filled. Some events go fast!

If you are new to Star Party outreach, let me know and we'll be sure to help you get started. It is important you sign up for star parties if you plan to attend, whether you bring a scope or help in other ways, so I can manage who from TAAA will be on-site and for you to be included in any reminder or weather emails.

The PUBLIC Astronomy Events are also listed on the TAAA (tucsonastronomy.org) and Night Sky Network (NSN) (nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov) calendars. Also, all PUBLIC star parties will be listed on the TAAA Facebook events page and will be updated based on weather, etc. in real-time. You can follow any of these events and get a notification when I update each event but this is only for PUBLIC star parties listed on Facebook.

The requests have been updated as of August 24th. **The first section, in RED, is a list of events where we still need volunteers.** If you can help out please contact me at: astronomy-events@tucsonastronomy.org

Thank you,
Bernie Stinger
TAAA Public/School/Non-Profit Star Party Manager

September Events still in need of Volunteers

Friday – September 13 -- TUMACACORI AZ
Tumacacori National Historical Park
1891 E Frontage Rd, Tumacacori, AZ
Age/Grade Level: All Ages.

Just Filled! No scopes needed.

Setup Time: 7:00 pm. **tart Time:** 7:30 pm
End Time: 9:30 pm.

Saturday – September 21 -- NORTHEAST
TUCSON

St. Francis in the Foothills Church
4625 E. River Road
Age/Grade Level: All Ages

Participants: 10+

2 Scopes Needed

Setup Time: 6:30 pm. **Start Time:** 7:00pm.
End Time: 9:00 pm.

September Events still in need of Volunteers - Continued

**Thursday – September 26 – – Mt. Lemmon
Ventana Vista Elementary
E Organization Ridge Rd – Whispering Pines
Girl Scout Camp, Mt. Lemmon
Age/Grade Level: 5th Grade
Participants: 100 There will be five
groups of 20 @ ½ hour each.
3 Scopes Needed
Setup Time: 6:30 pm. Start Time: 7:00pm.
End Time: 9:30 pm.**

**NEW Tuesday – September 24 — TUCSON
MOUNTAIN PARK – Off of Kinney Rd.
Tucson Mountain Sanctuary Community
Just off of Ajo Hwy & Kinney Rd
Age/Grade Level: All Ages
Participants: 25+
2 Scopes Needed
Setup Time: 7:00 pm. Start Time: 7:30pm.
End Time: 9:00 pm.**

September Events Filled—No Volunteers Needed

**Saturday – Sept. 7 –NORTHEAST TUCSON
Pima County Natural Resources Parks &
Recreation (NRPR) @ Agua Caliente Park
Agua Caliente Park is at 12325 E Roger Rd.
Age Group: All Ages
Estimated # Participants: 75 – 100
0 Scopes needed
Setup Time: 7:00 pm Start Time: 7:30 pm
End Time: 9:30 pm**

**Saturday – September 14 — ORACLE AZ
Oracle State Park
3820 E Wildlife Dr, Oracle AZ
Age/Grade Level: All Ages
Participants: 150
0 Scopes needed
Setup Time: 7:00 pm Start Time: 7:30 pm
End Time: 9:30 pm**

**Wednesday – September 25 –WEST TUCSON
Cooper Center for Environmental Learning
5403 W Trails End Rd
Age/Grade Level: Grade 5
Participants: 60
0 Scopes Needed
Setup Time: 6:30 pm Start Time: 7:00 pm
End Time: 8:30 pm**

**Friday – September 27 – SUNSITES, AZ
Sunsites Community Library
210 N. Ford St., Pearce, AZ
Age/Grade Level: All
Participants: 12 – 15
0 Scopes Needed
Setup Time: 7:00 pm Start Time:7:30 pm
End Time: 9:00 pm
Toolkit Requested: “Space Rocks” Inside
library meeting room from 7 to 9pm.**

**Friday – September 27 -- EAST TUCSON
Saguaro National Park EAST
3693 S Old Spanish Trail.
Age Group: All Ages
Estimated # Participants: 100+
0 Scopes needed
Setup Time: 6:30 pm Start Time: 7:00 pm
End Time: 9:00 pm**

**Monday – September 30 -- WEST TUCSON
Cooper Center for Environmental Learning
5403 W Trails End Rd
Age/Grade Level: Grade 4 & 5
Participants: 40
0 Scopes Needed
Setup Time: 6:30 pm. Start Time: 7:00
pm. End Time: 8:30 pm.**

TAAA Astronomy Equipment For Sale

TAAA has an assortment of astronomy related equipment for sale. This equipment is available for members only at this time.



Celestron 8" XLT with NexStar. Comes with a couple of eyepieces, barlow, red dot finder, instruction manuals.
\$1000



Skywatcher 10" Dobsonian. Comes with rack and pinion focuser (2" or 1.25"), 8x50 finder and 10" full aperture white light solar filter, instruction manual.
\$600



Meade ETX60 Refractor with Autostar, Extra keypad, instruction manual.
\$75

STEAL OF THE MONTH!
12" Dobsonian - NO IMAGE.
Very large, Homemade. Crosshair finder.
\$500

We also have an assortment of other items available at this time including: Finder rings, focusers, telescope rings of various sizes, mirror blanks of many sizes, a 6 inch Newtonian mirror set mounted in cells, several large mirrors and more.

To make inquiries about what is available or to express a desire to purchase one of items please contact: [Douglas Smith](#); 520-396-3233

TAAA Equipment Loaner Program

The TAAA has a terrific Equipment Loaner Program. This gives you access to fine telescopes including computerized Schmitt Cassegrains from Meade and Celestron, Dobsonians from Orion, mounts, tripods, and cases full of fine eyepieces. Check out the [full list](#) with descriptions and photos.

This equipment is for TAAA members to checkout and use. Email [Ralph Means](#) for information or to schedule time for pick up.

Special Interest Groups



Starry Messengers Special Interest Group

Opening Minds to the Universe

Do you like to share your interest in astronomy with others? Most of us do! You're probably already aware of the many star parties the TAAA holds for schools, churches, and other groups. We also have hands-on activities that some groups request. We have over 100 activities designed for about 4th grade and up to adults. These activities explain astronomical concepts but aren't terribly complex. Most can be completed in 5 minutes or less. You can be trained to be an Activity Guide, and you can partner with another Activity Guide if you prefer. We also run the TAAA Library Telescope Program throughout southern Arizona. There are now 14 scopes in the program with more to come. The first SMSIG meeting of the academic year will be held on **Monday, September 9th at 7PM**. This will be a Zoom meeting and we'll be discussing activities for the coming school year. An email announcement with the Zoom link will be sent to all TAAA members closer to the date.

Questions about the Starry Messengers SIG? Contact Terri Lappin [email](#) or call 520-977-1290.

Astronomy Fundamentals SIG

by Connor Justice

Come join us for a presentation from the fundamentals of amateur astronomy. Learn your way around the night sky to add to your observing enjoyment. Meetings are on the second Thursday of each month.

The next AFSIG meeting is on **Thursday, September 19, 6:30pm to 8:30pm**. Topics to be determined.

Contact [Connor Justice](#) for Zoom link and more information.

Access videos of previous meetings in the TAAA's [YouTube Channel](#) [AFSIG on the Web](#)

Astro-Imaging SIG

by Gregg Ruppel

The next AISIG meeting will be **Monday, September 16 at 7:00 pm** via ZOOM.

Topics:

Beginners' Corner - Ask A Question

Mono vs OSC: Facts and Fictions - Doug Summers

Image Sharing, Discussion

Email [Gregg Ruppel](#) for the ZOOM link or any other information. Gregg and the AISIG folks are very active on the [TAAA groups.io](#) forum. Check out all the helpful advice and amazing images there. For more information or instructions on how to join the forum, [check here](#).

Look for previous AISIG meetings on the [TAAA YouTube Channel](#).

Check out AISIG's new [Web Pages](#)! We've refreshed our landing page with current meeting info, fresh images and links for our Members Gallery, and are rolling out a new mentoring program.

Highlights from the Astro-Imaging SIG



Barnard's Loop

Samyang 135mm F/2 lens on my QHY600 camera.

[Astrobin](#)

Ed Beshore

M1

Taken with the Schulman telescope at the Mt. Lemmon Sky Center.

[Astrobin](#)





Allen Force
M1
[Astrobin](#)



Mike Mulcahy
Eta Carinae Nebula
[Astrobin](#)

M109

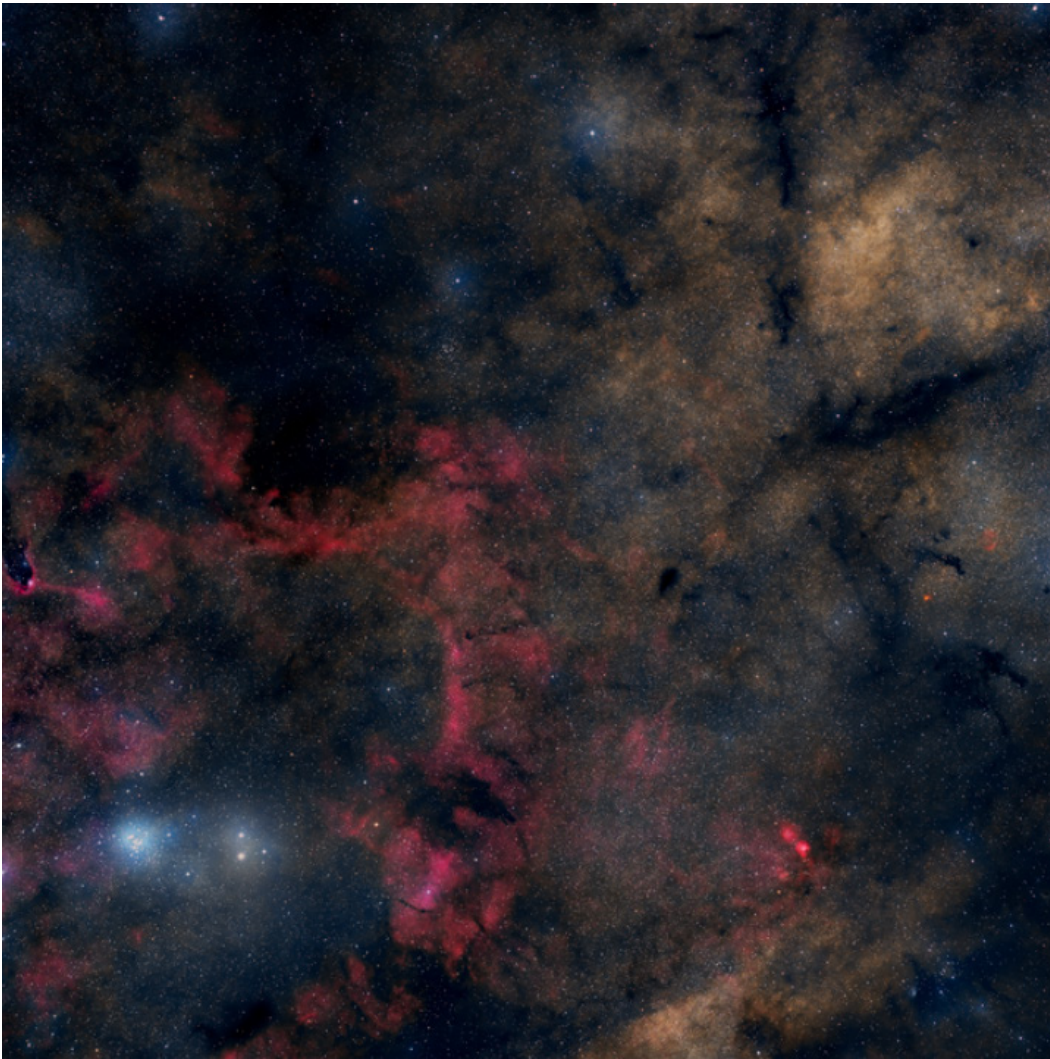
225 x 30sec RASA 8 exposures. ZWO2600mc pro camera, unguided on CEM70ec mount. No filters.

Tom Eby

NGC 6905 Planetary Nebula

Known as Blue Flash Nebula has a somewhat indeterminate distance, sources indicate between 2500-8000 LY. At mag 10.9 and just over 1-arcmin in size, it has a distinctly spongy structure with moderate ansae aligned with the longitudinal axis. RC 8" f/8 / CEM70ec mount OAG guided w PhD2 + 174mm mini / ZWO2600mc pro / 40 x 3min exposure / no filters.





Barnard 235
using Mono RGB data from
Telescope Live

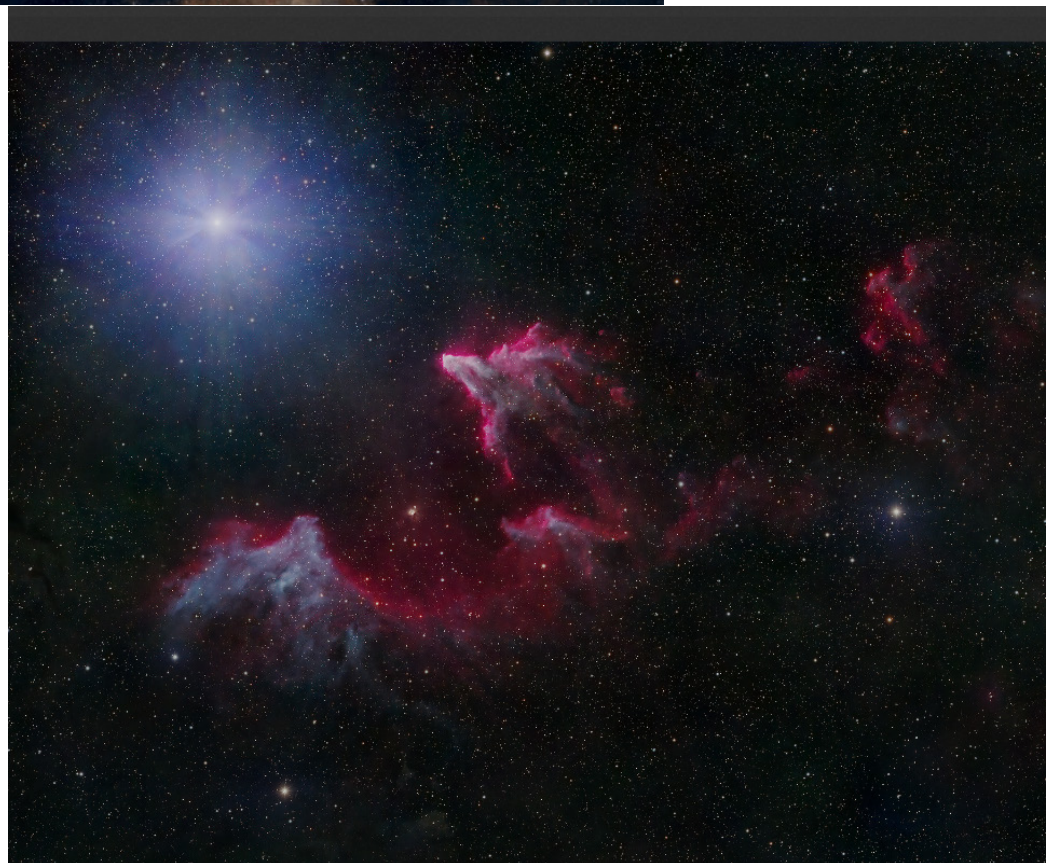
[Astrobin](#)

David Stearn

IC 63 and 59

The Ghost of Cassiopeia
processed using data from
the AAA Gateway Remote
Telescope.

[Astrobin](#)





Jeff Rothstein

Sh2-199, IC 1848
Soul Nebula, Sh2-199, IC 1848, taken with a 294MC PRO camera with a 105mm refractor riding on a Losmandy GM8 [Astrobin](#)

Randy Smith

IC 7023 Iris Nebula
First use of the new Antlia V-Pro LRGB filters, taken with my Skywatcher 200P newtonian with Starizona Nexus reducer/corrector with 2600 MM on my Skywatcher CQ350 mount. Just under 9 hours total integration. [Astrobin](#)





Perseids and Aurora

Base photo of long meteor trail on right taken at 12:12 am. The rest were meteors photographed between 11:00 PM and 4:00 am on Aug 11-12, 2024. Taken with Nikon 7500, 10 sec exposures, f/3.5, ISO 3200, 18 mm focal length (75 degree view).

Richard Spitzer

Sunspots

Solar photo with my Seestar. This was taken at 1x magnification and is one shot with minimal processing. A little brightness, contrast, and cropping in Photoshop.





M8 The Lagoon Nebula

Taken with: Astro-Tech AT152EDT triplet refractor @ f/6.4, 980mm FL; ZWO ASI 2600 MC DUO camera; total exposure 140 min. (28 x 5 min. subs).

Paul Lorenz

Galaxy NGC 55

Taken with: Astro-Tech AT152EDT @ f/6.4, 980 mm FL, ZWO ASI 2600 MC Pro camera; total exposure 150 min (30 x 5 min. subs).



What's Up list for September 2024 – October 2024

Fellow amateur astronomers, many of the Astronomical League observing programs can be done from our backyards. The following is a list of objects visible in September and October for the more common observing programs.

Constellation Hunter Program – Northern Sky

The following Northern Constellations are well placed during September and October: Aquarius, Aquila, Cepheus, Cygnus, Delphinus, Equuleus, Lacerta, Lyra, Pegasus, Sagitta, Vulpecula

Messier Observing Program - The following Messier objects are well placed for viewing during September and October (listed in ascending RA): M56, M55, M71, M27, M75, M29, M72, M73, M15, M2, M39, M30

Lunar and Binocular Observing Program

The following is a list of dates for lunar phases in September and October:

New Moon: September 3, October 2	10 days old: September 13, October 13
40 Hours waxing: September 3, October 2	Full (14 days old): September 18, October 17
72 hours waxing: September 6, October 6	Gibbous: September 24, October 24
4 days old: September 7, October 7	72 hours waning: September 29, October 29
7 days old: September 11, October 10	40 hours waning: Sep 1, Sep 30, Oct 30

Solar System Observing Program

The following planets are visible during September and October:

Mercury is an early morning object during September. During October Mercury is an early evening object.

Venus is an evening object during September and October. By the end of October it is setting a good two hours after sunset.

Mars is now a late evening object. On September 1 it rises around midnight. By October 31 it is rising around 10 PM.

Jupiter is a late evening object. On September 1 it rises around 11 PM. On October 31 it rises around 7 PM.

Saturn is well up at sunset during September and October. It transits around 12:30 AM on September 1 and around 8:00 PM on October 31.

Uranus is a late evening object during September and October. On September 1 it rises around 10 PM. On October 31 it rises around 5:30 PM.

Neptune is well placed for observation during September and October. It transits around 1 AM on September 1 and around 9 PM on October 31..

Urban Observing Program

The following **deep sky objects** are well placed for observing during September and October: Cr 399, NGC 6818, NGC 6826, M27, NGC 6910, NGC 6934, NGC 6940, NGC 7009, M15, M2, M39, NGC 7160

These **Double Stars** are well placed in September & October: Beta Cygni and Gamma Delphini

Public Astronomy Events



DEPARTMENT OF ASTRONOMY AND STEWARD OBSERVATORY

Public Evening Lecture Series Fall 2024

Public Evening Lectures will **begin at 7:30 p.m. in Steward Observatory Room N210.**

All of the lectures and the use of the telescope are free of charge and open to the general public.

For more information, check out the [Web Page](#).

You can watch each lecture live on [ZOOM](#). To stream recordings of previous lectures, [click here](#).

Sep. 13	Dr. Wen-Fai Fong Northwestern University	<i>Striking Gold in the Universe</i> Marc Aaronson Prize Lecture
Sep. 23	Dr. Kevin Hainline Steward Observatory	<i>JWST: The First Two Years of Discoveries from the Dawn of Time</i>
Oct. 7	Prof. Andrew Woods UA College of Law	<i>An Introduction to Space Law</i>
Oct. 21	Dr. Vasileios Paschalidis Steward Observatory	<i>Paradoxes & Conundrums of Relativity</i>
Nov. 4	Christa DeCoursey Steward Observatory	<i>Discovering the Most Distant Supernovae Thus Far with JWST</i>
Nov. 18	Dr. Alfred McEwen Regents Professor Lunar & Planetary Lab	<i>Jupiter's Insanely Volcanically Active Moon Io</i>
Dec. 2	Dr. Dominika Itrich Steward Observatory	<i>Born in the Spotlight: the Mysterious Proplyds</i>



COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

LUNAR & PLANETARY LABORATORY

LPL Evening Lecture Series

All Lectures are at the Kuiper Space Sciences Building, Room 308 and Zoom from 7:00pm to 8:00pm. Check out the LPL Evening Lecture Series [Page](#).

Sep. 18	Dr. Jessica Barnes	<i>New insights from old lunar samples</i>
Oct 16	Dr. Jeffrey Andrews-Hanna	<i>Lunar time machine: Traveling back to the earliest days of our nearest neighbor</i>
Nov 20	Dr. Angela Marusiak	<i>What's shaking on the Moon?: What we can learn from earthquakes on the Moon.</i>

Skyward

By Dr. David H. Levy

July 2024

The 2024 Adirondack Astronomy Retreat

David H Levy

Come gentle night, come loving black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo, and when I shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun.

For the first time in the almost two years since my wife Wendee died in September 2022, at this year's Adirondack Astronomy Retreat, at last I felt that life was returning to my bones. We did not have the best weather, with only one clear night, but what a night! And what a summer experience.

The primary reason for this change of spirit happened on the AAR's first day. After spending the last year refurbishing Minerva, my primary telescope, Ed Baker, with assistance from Mark Zdiarski, arrived with this truly beautiful and magnificent little telescope that he had carefully refurbished with care and with love, and with which I completed six hours of visual comet hunting on the single clear night. I was so moved by my first look at this telescope that I interrupted the closing question of Ed Gunther's lecture to thank Ed Baker and offer to him the few Shakespearean lines that begin this article. The night prior was not clear but there were clear spots through which David Rossetter and I got a good first light on Jupiter. The first first light, in 1967, I could not see Jupiter, my favorite planet, but I did catch the Moon. It was satisfying to have, at last, a proper first light for Minerva.



Minerva version 2.0 - by David Levy

This little telescope is 57 years old. It arrived on May 18, 1967, the day after I was almost expelled from the Montreal Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. I have used it for each one of those 57 years.

The other reason is the people who gather each year. They are the most intelligent people I have ever known. Their only difficulty is that except for two, they are all in my generation or the one following. Those two, Sophie and Mark Scattolin, are just beginning their lives but they still have a sense of wonder about them, and about the night sky.

“In the fall,” Sophie writes, “I will be starting a master’s in environment and sustainable development at the Université de Montreal. My specialization within my program is biodiversity management, as I am quite passionate about conserving biodiversity. As for my plans after this program, I have none for now; I’m figuring it out as I go.” Sophie’s brother Marc also wrote. “I am involved in an honors project at Concordia University in Montreal. Ideally, I would get a job in natural language processing.” This field belongs to the challenging field of artificial intelligence. Sophie, please keep figuring it out as you go. It took me half a century to figure out my own professional field in relating my passion for the night sky to the richness of English literature. And Marc, may your work in AI bring this difficult field of study to a happier and more productive state.

There is a third reason for the healing magic of our retreats, and that is the Twin Valleys campsite itself. There are places on Earth that are tied for its beauty, and maybe some that are more spectacular. But for the tranquility and peace of the site that hosts our Adirondack Astronomy Retreat, there is no place as stunning. May it forever let us celebrate the stars.



The retreat site at Twin Valleys - by David Levy



Dr. David Levy is a long-time member and former President of the TAAA. He is a well know astronomy writer and discoverer of comets. He writes this monthly “Skyward” column for the Vail Voice and generously allows us to publish it here.