

# Saguaro Skies



Saguaro Astronomy Club, Phoenix, AZ

Volume 48, Issue 1  
January 2024

## The President's Corner

Happy New Year!

I admit, New Year's isn't my favorite holiday. I have always thought the celebration somewhat arbitrary. January 1<sup>st</sup>? Why January 1<sup>st</sup>? Well, grab your favorite search engine and you will find yourself thanking guys named Julius and Gregory. You will also find that many places saw the new year starting on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Even Great Britain and her colonies didn't change from that date until the sometime in the 1750's. Then of course we have the Lunar New Years' and Jewish New Year's at different times also. But we have to start somewhere so January 1<sup>st</sup> it is.

Speaking of starting again, SAC will be holding its first meeting of 2024 on January 26<sup>th</sup>. This reflects a return to meeting nights being held on Fridays closest to the full moon. The main meeting January 26<sup>th</sup> will have plenty to discuss regarding activities in 2024.

The meeting dates have been posted on the SAC webpage so check those out. Hope you see you in January and throughout the new year!

Happy Star Hunting,

Michael Poppre,  
SAC President



Photo by: Susan Trask



SAC on Facebook:  
**SAC has a Facebook moderator!**  
Mike Willmoth

## Quick Calendar

\* The next SAC **general meeting** will be on **Friday, Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>**.  
The guest speaker will be **Paul Knauth**, Emeritus Professor, ASU  
Topic will be: "Extreme Deep Sky Observing"

**Note: "In-Person" meeting only, No Zoom meeting access!**  
@ 3030 E Mission Ln, Phoenix, AZ (SE of State Route 51 and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street)

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©2019, By Former SAC President Fred Tretter

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Header image © 2000-2013 Stellarium  
Developers  
Scorpius setting in the southwest.



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# Editor Notes



Hi Folks,

*Best of the NGC* features this month NGC 4725, a galaxy in Coma Berenices.

*Such-A-Deal* has five old ads.

*SAC Bits & Pisces* has photos of the SAC Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> Holiday Party taken by Susan Trask.

*SAC History* has history bits from Fred Tretta.

*SAC Observing* has sky info for the month.

*SAC Outreach* has an article on the post covid pandemic state of astronomy outreach activities.

*SAC Sky* has info on the moon and planet locations this month for you all.

Enjoy.

Rick Rotramel, Editor >



< Left: SAC Webmaster, Terry Shay



Right: SAC ATM Leader, Paul Lind >

Photos: Susan Trask

## Call for **Best of the NGC** images, notes and sketches.

For **February**, NGC 4565, Sb, 12 36.3, +26 00, 10.3 mag, 15.5x1.9, superb edge-on, dust lane, in Coma Berenices.

\* This object will **complete** this feature.

For submitting images, send your file as an attachment in an email to the editor. Please send caption details of the image: Optics, camera, main software used, exposure, location and date taken.

Observation notes are sent in the email text area or as an attached file.

For scanned sketches, send a file with caption details: optics and eyepiece power used.

Email to: [r.rotramel@cox.net](mailto:r.rotramel@cox.net)

# Schedule of Events 2024

## SAC General Meetings

Jan. 26	Feb. 23	Mar. 22	April 26
May 18 *Saturday	June 21	July 19	Aug. 16
Sept. 13	Oct. 12 *Saturday	Nov 15	TBD Holiday Party

\* Saturday dates are at Thunderbird Park Public Star Parties, Glendale, AZ

**Meetings held at the Heritage Heights Clubhouse  
3030 E Mission Ln, Phoenix, AZ  
(SE of State Route 51 and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street)  
Meeting time: 7:00 PM**

View video recordings of the *past* Zoom meetings here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEKTf10gwebABZXwKbhe9oA>

## Grand Canyon Star Party North Rim, June 1st - 8th, 2024

For the Grand Canyon North Rim event:  
email **Steve Rottas**: [srottas@gmail.com](mailto:srottas@gmail.com)

## 2024 SAC Officers

President: Michael Poppre >



< Vice President: Steve Rottas

Secretary: Sandy Milward >



< Treasurer and  
Properties Director:  
Tom Curry

Photos: Susan Trask

# Best of the NGC:

## NGC 4725, Galaxy in Coma Berenices

By SAC Imagers, Observers & Sketchers

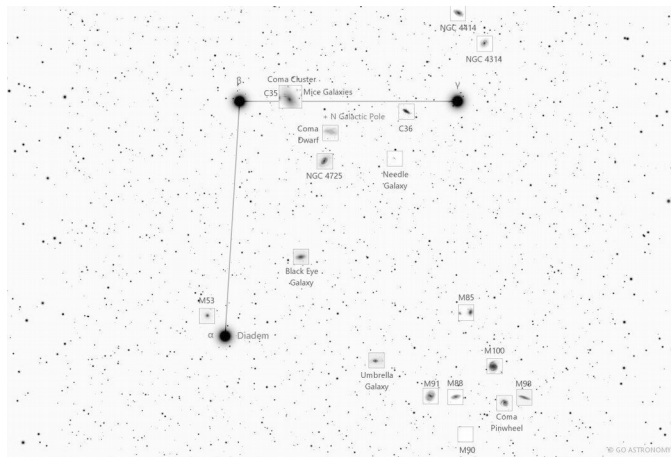



Image: Telescope Live

Coma Berenices Star Chart

<p><b>Observing Chart</b> D. M. Douglass - Tempe, AZ <a href="http://www.AZ-DaHut.net">http://www.AZ-DaHut.net</a></p> <p><b>Other Names:</b></p> <p>Observing Program: EVAC and Astronomical League and General Observations</p> <p><b>Telescope and Mount:</b> Celestron EdgeHD 8" SCT Mount: Celestron CGX-L (EQ)</p> <p>CGX-L Mount Control: TheSkyX Pro All slews by "closed loop" (Plate Solved) Mount Guiding: TheSkyX Pro Guide Camera: Starlight Express Lodestar X2</p> <p><b>Image Capture Information:</b> Mag (SBig): (2000/22.5) = 88 FOV = 32 x 24 Arc Min Filter: Lumicon Deep Sky ( UHC/LPR ) w/ Baader IR/UV Cut</p> <p>Total # of frames (subs): 06 Frame exposure time (min): 05 Total exposure time (min): 30 Camera: SBig ST-8300-M Camera controlled by: TheSkyX Pro Plate Solved by: TheSkyX Pro Preprocessing and stacking: CCDStack PostProcessing: Adobe Photoshop CS3</p> <p><b>Object Type: Galaxy</b> R.A. 12:50:27 DEC 25:30.0 Magnitude: 9.2 Size (Arc Min): 11 Constellation: Com</p> <p><b>Sky Brightness and Weather</b> Mags / sq ArcSec (v) 18.5 or Bortle Scale: 6 Moon Ill = 00% (Not Up Yet) 85 Deg F - Calm</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">NGC 4725</h2>	<p><b>Observed and Imaged</b> Date: May 13, 2017 Site: DaHut, Tempe, AZ Elevation at Site: 1200 ft Local Time: 20:00</p>
		





## Best of the NGC:

### NGC 4725, Galaxy in Coma Berenices

By SAC Imagers, Observers & Sketchers

#### SAC Observer Steve Coe, 1949 - 2018

**13" f/5.6**, Bright, large, much elongated, very bright middle at 100X. My old 17.5" would show a hint of barred spiral structure at 125X, but I have not had the chance to use the 13" on this object from an excellent site to see if the smaller scope will duplicate that feat.



#### SAC Observer/Imager Tom Curry --->

"I was using a Canon T7i DSLR attached to my 9.25" Celestron SCT. The exposure was at max ISO 25,600 for 90 seconds. In the lower right of the photo is the fainter galaxy NGC 4712."



#### SAC Observer/Sketcher Rick Rotramel

**16" f/4.4**, Bright, large, elongated spiral, a bright core, with faint diffuse arms, nice.



16" f/4.4, 200x





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## Such-A-Deal

Ads placed here are free to SAC members and friends. SAC is not responsible for the quality of the advertised items. If you wish to place an ad here to sell your telescope or astronomy related items, contact Rick Rotramel at: [r.rotramel@cox.net](mailto:r.rotramel@cox.net)

### Telescope Equipment For Sale

\* Ads on this page were submitted through the SAC Website

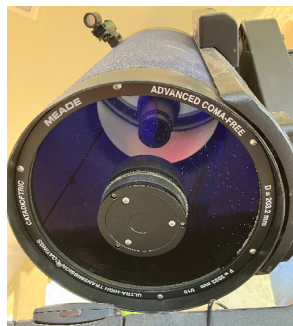
#### Meade 8" LS8-8ACF

- ACF (Advance Coma Free) optics with UHTC coatings (Ultra High Transmission Coatings)
- LightSwitch Technology: Once the scope is turned on, it permits the scope to automatically level itself and find north (Meade calls this Level/North Technology), then with the use of its internal ECLIPSE CCD camera and on board GPS, align itself to the night sky without any user intervention. The steps are simple, flip the switch. Once the scope is turned on, you're greeted by the "Astronomer Inside". The "Astronomer Inside" gives you a brief introduction to the LS 8, and informs you of each and every step of the way during the alignment process.
- Eyepieces: Meade 8.8mm and 24mm UWA Series 5000, 82° apparent field of view
- TeleVue Qwik Point Finderscope
- Tripod
- 602 736-9221
- I'm near 7 th St. and Thunderbird. Buyers pick up.
- **\$ Best Offer \$**

Email Contact - Click Link Below:

[mailto:lorraine.drobny@cox.net?subject=Meade 8" Telesco pe For Sale in SAC Newsletter](mailto:lorraine.drobny@cox.net?subject=Meade 8)

Lorraine Drobny  
602 736-9221



### Celestron C11 Telescope On Celestron CGE Mount

- Celestron C11 Optical Assembly
- Celestron CGE Mount
- Celestron WiFi Unit
- Celestron StarSense Unit
- I'm near 7 th St and Thunderbird. Buyers pick up.
- **\$ Best Offer \$**
- 602 736-9221
- Email Contact - Click Link Below:

[mailto:lorraine.drobny@cox.net?subject=Meade 8" Telesco pe For Sale in SAC Newsletter](mailto:lorraine.drobny@cox.net?subject=Meade 8)



### Orion 80mm ED Refractor with case

- Orion 80mm, f/7.5, F.L. 600mm Telescope
- With hard case
- **\$ Best Offer \$**

Lorraine Drobny  
602 736-9221  
[Lorraine.drobny@cox.net](mailto:lorraine.drobny@cox.net)



### Celestron Focus Motor, Meade Imager, Eyepieces & Misc. Attachments

- Focus Motor for SCT and EdgeHD Telescopes
- Several Eyepieces and Misc. attachments
- Meade Flip Mirror System, Model 644
- Meade Deep Sky Imager, Mono CCD Camera

**\$ Best Offer \$**

Lorraine Drobny  
602 736-9221  
[Lorraine.drobny@cox.net](mailto:lorraine.drobny@cox.net)





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## 10 inch Meade LX90

Advanced coma-free SCT with GPS and Audiostar GoTo. It tracks very nicely for visual, but not photography. Original owner and only a year old like new. All paperwork and accessories that came with it from Orion telescopes. I will throw in a Telrad, 2 inch star diagonal, 2 inch Crayford focuser and a 40mm Plossl eyepiece. It came with a 26mm Plossl. I'm keeping my 2 inch eyepieces because I'm not getting out of the hobby.

\$4500 invested and **REDUCED** to: **\$2500**  
Feel free to email Doug at:  
[dma6350@gmail.com](mailto:dma6350@gmail.com)



## Celestron C8-N on Celestron AVX mount

Celestron AVX computerized Go-To telescope mount with 8-inch Newtonian Telescope.

Telescope is upgraded with a low-profile Crayford focuser capable of 1.25 or 2" eyepieces, a 2-inch-eyepiece Field Flatteners for better photography, a Stellarview finding scope with diagonal and illuminated reticle eyepiece, an inexpensive but light-weight 80mm x 480mm guide scope with an Orion 1.25 x 2" extension tube (to bring things into focus), and an Orion Star Shoot Auto Guider Camera.

Comes with a laptop computer with astronomy software, a set of eyepieces including a Barlow lens, a 90° diagonal, an inexpensive mount for cell phone photography, a solar filter, a "head light", and hard-shell cases.

Reason I am selling? This is my field scope but I haven't had a vehicle capable of transporting this stuff since 2018. I now drive a Jeep Wrangler. I want to find this telescope a good home. Price is firm. (At this price I'm reluctant to sell it and I would jump on it like a duck on a June Bug.)

**~~\$1300~~ or Best Offer, Reduced to: \$1000, firm.**

Contact David Dillmore at 623-522-7357.







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## Such-A-Deal

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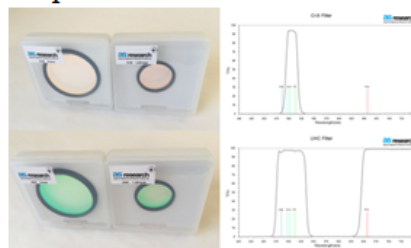
## Apache-Sitgreaves Observatory

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Telescope  
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Arizona



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[www.Apache-Sitgreaves.org](http://www.Apache-Sitgreaves.org)

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Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu 10AM-5PM Fri, Sat 10AM-10PM  
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**The HyperStar-equipped ISERV telescope is now installed on the ISS!**

The HyperStar-equipped Celestron 9.25" telescope (and its backup) that is now installed on the ISS. The scope also features a Starizona MicroTouch Autofocuser. With the Starizona gang: Steve, Scott, Dean, and Donna. (Steve has since had to move to NY because he was dressing too much like Scott.)

Call Us: (520) 292-5010  
<http://starizona.com>  
[info@starizona.com](mailto:info@starizona.com)



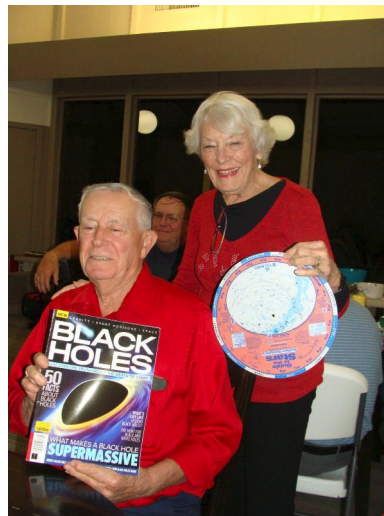


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# Bits & Pisces

## Photos of the December 9<sup>th</sup> SAC Holiday Party Potluck

Photos by Susan Trask





# SAC History

*\* Editor note: I'm running this three part series one final time.*

## The Beginnings of the Saguaro Astronomy Club

© 2019 by former SAC President, Fred Tretta

I won't pretend to recall all the details of the SAC beginnings, but let me share what I DO recall.

### **Things started to form in 1976.**

The dominant astronomy club in the Phoenix area at that time was the Phoenix Astronomical Society and it centered around lectures and meetings. A number of us had a far greater interest in using our telescopes to do some observing and attempted to stir up some PAS effort in that direction, but it didn't seem to get much traction. Interestingly, I can recall discussions amongst those of us that ended up leaving PAS about the different expectations one might have from a group that saw themselves as a society versus one that might consider itself more as a club. And I feel that difference really did have a bearing because I think deep down most people did see the title and functional difference between a society and a club as real, and tended to function accordingly.

In any case, the talk started to turn into action. I think the failed effort to try and create a section within PAS that was more associated with astronomical observing stimulated a rebellious attitude by those who wanted to go play with their scopes, that attitude pointed toward those who preferred to discuss things. The division became increasingly obvious as time went by. And because the observing ideas failed to get traction, we finally began meeting in parallel with PAS meetings, the emphasis being on getting out and using our telescopes. While others joined in shortly after we started to go out on our own, I think the earliest members were Gene Lucas, Pete Yurka, Bob Latterman, Lynn Blackburn, Kent Hepburn, Paul Maxson, Tom Muggleton, George Kohl, John Adair and myself.

### **Some scattered facts:**

- The original membership, before there was even a membership, was seven people.
- We originally met at ASU but never really felt that was the right place for us. For a time, we met at members' homes.
- It was my assignment to find us a new place to meet. Why I talked to Grand Canyon College is no longer clear to me, but thank goodness we did. The Club has been there ever since.
- We were very closely associated with a downtown camera shop called Wilson Camera where much of our equipment and membership came from. At that time they were located around 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave and maybe Campbell?
- The name, Saguaro Astronomy Club, came out of a group séance and was put together a word at a time, first CLUB, then ASTRONOMY and lastly, SAGUARO.
- The logo was created either by Bob Latterman or Pete Yurka.
- Because I missed some meetings I was punished by being elected the first, second and 4<sup>th</sup> president. Slim pickings, I guess.

### **Fessler's Ranch**

George Fessler worked for me at Honeywell and had both an interest in astronomy and some acreage slightly south of what is now Anthem. He was delighted to let us "claim" an acre of that land and so we busied ourselves clearing it of brush and leveling it. George let us run some power out there and we kind of set things up into pads. One of the guys knew of an old 14' trailer that we could have and so we moved that out to Fessler's, wired it up, and sunk it into the ground aways. It barely made it out there, but it became the club storage facility and our warming tent. There were times when there would be 15 or more people sitting on the floor in there warming up, drinking hot chocolate and telling stories. Outside, there were discussions about how to avoid getting beamed up.

### **RTMC**

One of the very special attractions each year was RTMC, held at Big Bear Lake, CA. Back then, there were certainly as many built scopes as bought scopes. One year we teamed up with the Tucson club to go together. I called the Riverside Club that puts on RTMC and asked if they would allow us to take over one of the big second story rooms in the building over near that small lake which is now only one story. They agreed and what a ball we had that year! I still try to attend every year.





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# SAC Observing

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2024

## ASTRONOMICAL CALENDAR

© 2020 by Guy Ottewell  
www.universalworkshop.com



1

The left column gives Julian Dates (number of days from 4713 B.C. Jan. 1 noon), useful for finding time spans between events by subtraction. The first 3 digits of the Julian date (245) are omitted, to save space.

Hours and minutes, where given, are in Universal Time. (Sometimes the hour appears as "24" or the minute as "60," because the instant was shortly before the end of the day or hour.)

Occasions such as "Moon 1.25° NNE of Venus" are **appulses**: closest apparent approaches. They are slightly different from conjunctions, when one passes north of the other as measured in right ascension or in ecliptic longitude. A quasi-conjunction is an appulse without a conjunction, and typically happens when a planet is near its stationary moment.

Occasions when three bodies are within a circle of small size are "**trios**." Like appulses, they are most interesting when the bodies are bright and are not at small elongation from the Sun.



For **meteor showers**: ZHR (zenithal hourly rate) is an estimate of the number to be seen under ideal conditions at the peak time if the radiant were overhead. Actual rates may be very different. Peak times (predicted from where the center of the stream seems to cross nearest to Earth's orbit) are uncertain; best to start watching the night before. Meteor are usually most abundant in the morning hours.

Tell me of errors you notice. It's hard to check the accuracy of every detail, but errors are more easily corrected here than in the former printed *Astronomical Calendars!*  
[universalworkshop.com/contact](http://universalworkshop.com/contact)  
This calendar may be subject to improvement. Come back to it!

Explanation of terms can be found in our glossary book **Albedo to Zodiac**. There is more about each kind of event in **The Astronomical Companion**. And events in this list can be traced in the large **Zodiac Wavy Chart** for the year.

For all these, see [universalworkshop.com](http://universalworkshop.com)

JD 245-

UT

JANUARY

0310.5	Jan	1	Mon	Gregorian calendar Jan 1 = Julian calendar 2023 Dec 19
0311.141	Jan	1	Mon 15	Moon at apogee; distance 63.48 Earth-radii
0311.626	Jan	2	Tue 3	Mercury stationary in longitude; resumes direct motion
0311.656	Jan	2	Tue 4	Mercury stationary in right ascension; resumes direct motion
0312.468	Jan	2	Tue 23	<b>Earth at perihelion</b> ; 0.9833 AU from the Sun
0313.5	Jan	4	Thu 0	<b>Quadrantic meteors</b> ; ZHR 80; near Last Quarter Moon

Continued next page...



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## SAC Observing

0313.647	Jan	4	Thu	3:32	<b>Last quarter Moon</b>
0314.286	Jan	4	Thu	19	Moon at descending node; longitude 200.9°
0314.583	Jan	5	Fri	2	<b>Moon 1.78° NE of Spica</b> ; 80° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -9.7 and 1.0
0314.807	Jan	5	Fri	7:22	Latest sunrise, at latitude 40° north
0316.381	Jan	6	SAT	21	Mars at southernmost declination, -24.03°
0316.813	Jan	7	SUN	8	Venus 6.3° N of Antares; 36° and 37° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -4.0 and 1.0
0318.167	Jan	8	Mon	16	<b>Moon 0.86° NE of Antares</b> ; 37° and 38° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -7.4 and 1.0; <b>occultation</b>
0318.271	Jan	8	Mon	19	Moon 5.6° S of Venus; 36° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -7.3 and -4.0
0319.271	Jan	9	Tue	19	Moon 6.6° S of Mercury; 24° and 23° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -6.4 and -0.2
0319.875	Jan	10	Wed	9	Moon 4.2° S of Mars; 16° and 15° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -5.7 and 1.4
0320.998	Jan	11	Thu	11:57	<b>New Moon</b> ; beginning of lunation 1250
0322.020	Jan	12	Fri	12	Autumn equinox for Mars north hemisphere
0322.101	Jan	12	Fri	14	<b>Mercury at westernmost elongation</b> ; 23.5° from Sun in morning sky; magnitude -0.2
0322.944	Jan	13	SAT	10:39	Moon at perigee; distance 56.80 Earth-radii
0323.5	Jan	14	SUN		Julian calendar 2024 Jan 1
0323.979	Jan	14	SUN	12	<b>Moon 1.96° SE of Saturn</b> ; 41° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -7.8 and 1.0
0325.396	Jan	15	Mon	22	Moon 0.86° SE of Neptune; 60° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -8.9 and 7.9; <b>occultation</b>
0327.086	Jan	17	Wed	14	Moon at ascending node; longitude 19.6°
0327.662	Jan	18	Thu	3:53	<b>First quarter Moon</b>
0328.292	Jan	18	Thu	19	Moon 2.53° NNW of Jupiter; 98° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -10.5 and -2.5
0329.271	Jan	19	Fri	19	Moon 2.80° NNW of Uranus; 110° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -10.9 and 5.7
0329.742	Jan	20	SAT	6	Pluto at conjunction with the Sun; 35.919 AU from Earth; latitude -2.87°
0329.876	Jan	20	SAT	9	Sun enters Capricornus, at longitude 299.78° on the ecliptic
0330.088	Jan	20	SAT	14	Sun enters the astrological sign Aquarius, i.e. its longitude is 300°
0330.125	Jan	20	SAT	15	Moon 0.78° SE of Pleiades; 120° from Sun in evening sky

*Continued next page...*

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## SAC Observing

0332.604	Jan	23	Tue	3	Moon 3.9° N of M35 cluster; 150° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.9 and 5.3
0332.832	Jan	23	Tue	8	Mercury at descending node through the ecliptic plane
0333.964	Jan	24	Wed	11	Mercury at southernmost declination, -22.96°
0334.083	Jan	24	Wed	14	Moon 5.1° S of Castor; 166° and 163° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -12.3 and 1.5
0334.313	Jan	24	Wed	20	<b>Moon 1.71° S of Pollux</b> ; 168° and 167° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -12.4 and 1.2
0335.245	Jan	25	Thu	17:53	<b>Full Moon</b>
0335.479	Jan	25	Thu	24	Moon 3.5° NNE of Beehive Cluster; 175° and 177° from Sun in midnight sky; magnitudes -12.5 and 3.7
0336.700	Jan	27	SAT	5	Uranus stationary in longitude; resumes direct motion
0336.801	Jan	27	SAT	7	Jupiter at east quadrature, 90° from the Sun
0336.829	Jan	27	SAT	8	Uranus stationary in right ascension; resumes direct motion
0337.135	Jan	27	SAT	15	Venus at southernmost declination, -22.48°
0337.208	Jan	27	SAT	17	<b>Mercury 0.24° N of Mars</b> ; 20° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -0.2 and 1.3
0337.354	Jan	27	SAT	21	Moon 3.3° NNE of Regulus; 156° and 157° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -12.0 and 1.4
0338.834	Jan	29	Mon	8	Moon at apogee; distance 63.62 Earth-radii
0341.346	Jan	31	Wed	20	Moon at descending node; longitude 197.9°

## SAC Outreach

### Outreach: Post the Covid Pandemic

By Steve Rottas, SAC Vice President



It was a nice day in March. My wife and I are having a great time snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef. A nice young couple strikes up a conversation asking us about our trip so far and what is coming up next? We explain that the next day we will be flying back to Sydney to catch a flight the day after that to New Zealand for the rest of our trip. Cordialities are exchanged and they move on to strike up a conversation with someone else.

A few minutes later a young lady walks over saying "I couldn't help but overhear your conversation," almost embarrassingly. She goes on to say that she had gotten a call from her father earlier that day, and again in an embarrassed tone says something to the effect, "I know he can be a bit of a conspiracy theorist, but he told me that he is seeing on the news that all flights in and out of Australia are about to be canceled." Did I mention this was March 2020? The airlines did shut down. We were lucky to catch the last flight out of Australia.

When we landed in L.A. we exited the plane into an empty international terminal. We did not even have to go through customs because all the agents were at home. Between the international terminal the walk between terminals and the Southwest Airlines Terminal we saw MAYBE 15 or 20 people. That includes the six hours we waited for our flight to Phoenix and, four of those people were on our flight, and that included the flight crew.

If you have never been to LAX, any day, and any time of day, you can expect to weave your way through tens of thousands of people, inside and out. This was about an eerie an experience we have ever experienced. You know the rest; the next 2 years was a time like no one alive has seen before. Public gatherings came to a halt, all meetings went to Zoom. Meetings of all types, let alone club meetings were attended while sitting on the couch "in their underwear with a beverage of choice in their hand."

Luckily our hobby is basically a self-isolating hobby when viewing out in the desert so a few of us would get together out at the airfield from time to time but we kept our distance. As time went on, Tom Curry, our president throughout the entire pandemic period was able to keep SAC up and running, virtually, but at least we met.

That was then, now is now. The club has new officers, we have been meeting in person now for a little over a year. The real live outreach event was the Grand Canyon North Rim Star Party albeit under some fairly strict constraints at first. This year will be the third time it has been held since being canceled during covid. These are big steps toward getting back to normal, but things were still feeling a bit out of sync.

*Continued next page...*





## ***SAC Outreach (Conclusion)***

The last few months on the other hand have really made me feel like the world IS getting back to “normal,” whatever the new normal is going to look like. It started, at least for me, on October 21<sup>st</sup> when the formally annual Thunderbird Park Public Star party was held for the first time since the beginning of covid. The event was well attended by the public, maybe 75 to 100 visitors and 8 or 10 scopes from the club. Thank you to all who attended and helped.

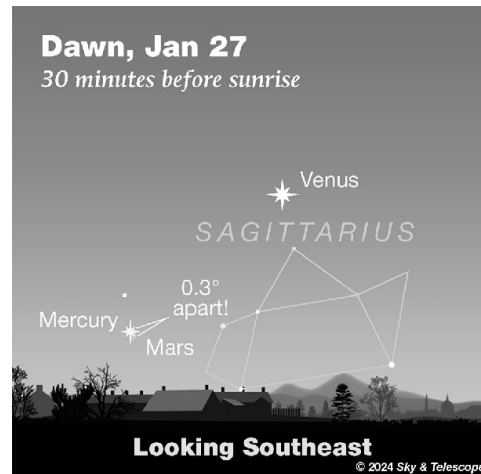
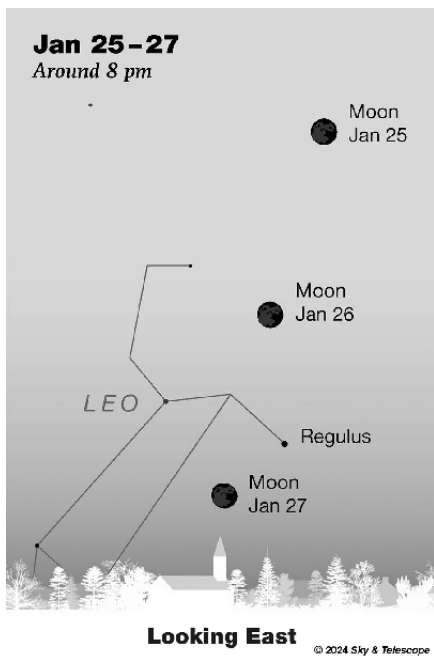
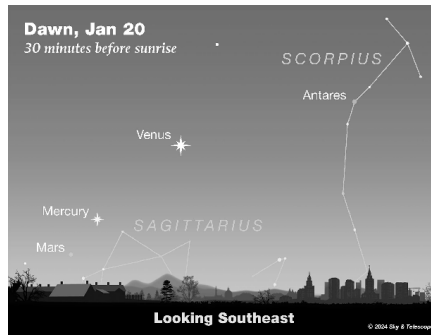
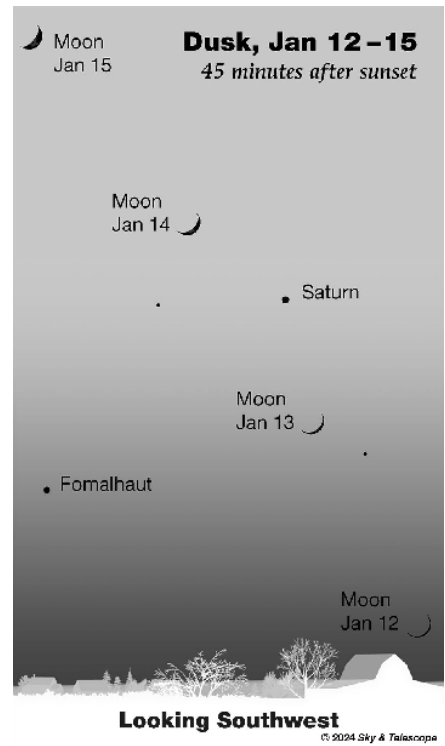
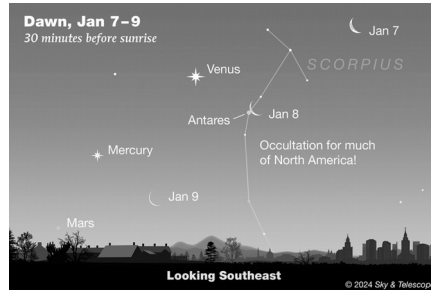
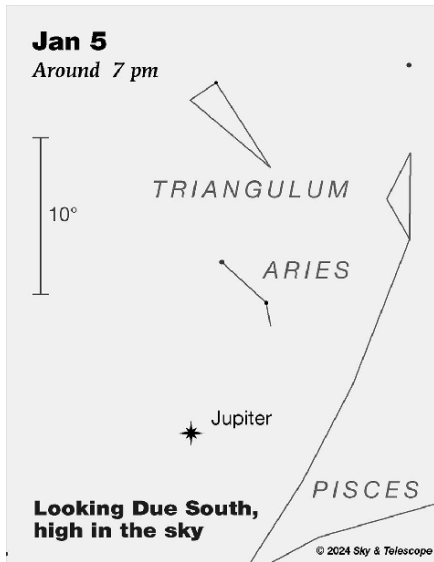
On December 8<sup>th</sup> Tom Curry, myself, and 2 representatives from EVAC participated in an outreach event for the STEM program at Kino Jr. High in Mesa. Conservatively, I would guess we had 150 or so kids, parents, and faculty visit our scopes over the 2.5-hour event.

Finally, a week later the annual SAC Christmas party tradition returned with a party at our regular meeting location. We grilled hot dogs and burgers, ate great goodies brought by members, and exchanged white elephant gifts before adjourning to the lawn outside and did some urban star viewing. Several neighborhood residents dropped by, and we were more than happy to share our scopes with them. I live in the neighborhood where we meet and I have heard a lot of great comments about the event, and how much many in the neighborhood appreciated our generosity. If they only knew how much we amateur astronomers enjoy sharing our scopes!

Out of this event the club received a message on the website asking if we would be willing to bring some scopes to the neighborhood grade school. An outreach event is now scheduled for them in early January. On December 13<sup>th</sup> myself, Tom Curry, and Ken and Sandy Milward all met at the Beatitudes Retirement Community here in Phoenix where we set up scopes for what was originally supposed to be for a few residents that were taking an astronomy class taught by a fellow resident, Joe Stickney. Joe decided to open the event to all community residents. We had our scopes available for some very nice solar viewing starting at about 4:30. By 8:30 when we packed up, we had about 150 residents and staff looking through our scopes. One of those residents, Ellie, will have turned 100 years old by the time you read this. At nearly 100 years old, Ellie was all about learning. She was asking questions that really made you think about the answer. When I am 100, I hope I still have that thirst for knowledge, you go Ellie.

I'll be honest, I have not been in the hobby long enough to have participated in outreach events pre-covid but the last couple of months has been a lot of fun for me and the people that have attended these outreach events. I don't have a clue why it has taken three and a half years for people to feel comfortable again attending and holding these events? Was it us not trying hard enough to schedule outreach events? Were the groups that are now asking for outreach help uncomfortable with sharing scopes publicly? Whatever the reason is, I am glad people are again comfortable attending these types of events. Maybe now we can restart the process of introducing our hobby to a whole new generation. Let's do whatever we can to continue or even accelerate this trend.

## SAC Sky



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<https://skyandtelescope.org/observing>



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## 2024 SAC Officers and Contacts

### Board Members

President Michael Poppre ([mail to: president@saguaroastro.org](mailto:president@saguaroastro.org))  
 Vice-President Steve Rottas  
 Treasurer Tom Curry ([mail to: treasurer@saguaroastro.org](mailto:treasurer@saguaroastro.org))  
 Secretary Sandy Milward  
 Properties Tom Curry ([mail to: properties@saguaroastro.org](mailto:properties@saguaroastro.org))

### Non-board Positions

Novice Leader Steve Dodder ([mail to: fester00@hotmail.com](mailto:fester00@hotmail.com))  
 Newsletter Rick Rotramel ([mail to: r.rotramel@cox.net](mailto:r.rotramel@cox.net))  
 Webmaster Terry Shay ([mail to: webmaster@saguaroastro.org](mailto:webmaster@saguaroastro.org))  
 Public Events Jack Jones ([mail to: publicevents@saguaroastro.org](mailto:publicevents@saguaroastro.org))  
 ATM Group Paul Lind ([mail to: atmgroup@saguaroastro.org](mailto:atmgroup@saguaroastro.org))  
 Imaging Al Stiewing ([mail to: amst@cox.net](mailto:amst@cox.net))  
 Deep Sky Jack Jones ([mail to: deepskygroup@saguaroastro.org](mailto:deepskygroup@saguaroastro.org))  
 Public Outreach Tom Curry ([canyonhiker2@cox.net](mailto:canyonhiker2@cox.net))

### SAC on Facebook:

Moderator, Mike Willmoth ([mwillmoth@compuserve.com](mailto:mwillmoth@compuserve.com))

## 2023 Board Mtgs:

January, TBA

April, TBA

July, TBA

November, TBA

## Occultation Info

Wayne Thomas has asteroid occultation info for the greater Phoenix Area:

[Mail to: tomwaymas@gmail.com](mailto:tomwaymas@gmail.com)

**Meeting Location:** The Clubhouse, 7:00 PM, 3030 E. Mission Lane, Phoenix, AZ



## Saguaro Astronomy Club

Saguaro Astronomy Club (SAC), Phoenix, Arizona, was formed in 1977 to promote fellowship and the exchange of scientific information among its members-amateur astronomers. SAC meets monthly for both general meetings and star parties, and regularly conducts and supports public programs on astronomy. Membership is open to anyone with these interests.

Saguaro Skies is posted as a pdf file monthly on the SAC website,

<https://www.saguaroastro.org/newsletter/>

for browsing or downloading for SAC members and friends of SAC. A email announcement of the monthly newsletter release is included with membership.

Direct all membership inquiries to the SAC Treasurer by using the membership form found in this newsletter. For editorial and SUCH-A-DEAL advertising inquiries, contact the Saguaro Skies Editor.

## Contacting This Issue's Authors

If you wish to write to an author in this month's issue, contact them by sending your message to the editor of Saguaro Skies, Rick Rotramel, at: [r.rotramel@cox.net](mailto:r.rotramel@cox.net)

I will then forward your questions or comments to the author.

## Saguaro Skies Staff

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2013-2023 Contributors: Bob Christ, Mike Collins, AJ Crayon, Tom Curry, Paul Dickson, David Dillmore, Steve Dodder, Richard Harshaw, Dean Ketelsen, Kevin Kozel, Joan McGue, Andrew Perry, Tom & Jennifer Polakis, Michael Poppre, Jimmy Ray, Rick Rotramel, Steve Rottas, SAC Imagers & Observers, Darrell Spencer & Rick Tejera.





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## Saguaro Astronomy Club Membership Services

**Membership** -- Memberships are for the calendar year and are pro-rated for new members as follows:  
Jan - Mar: 100%; Apr - Jun: 75%; Jul - Sep: 50%; Oct - Dec 25%.

- \$32.00 Individual Membership
- \$36.00 Family Membership



Note: You can now pay with PayPal through the SAC Website. Click Below:

<https://www.saguaroastro.org/join-sacpaypal/>



*Please print all information legibly*

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ For the year of: 20\_\_

**Make check payable to: SAC**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please bring your completed form to a meeting or mail it with payment to:

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Check here if this is updated information*

**SAC Treasurer  
1238 E. Orchid Lane  
Phoenix, AZ 85020**

### **AZ-Observing.groups.io** (Email discussion list)

AZ-Observing is NOT a SAC mailing list, but it's a discussion mailing list about amateur observing in Arizona.

It's an open list for those interested in astronomical observing in Arizona. Messages to the list membership must be sent to [az-observing@groups.io](mailto:az-observing@groups.io)

Subscribing: Go to Groups.io, search for the group AZ-observing (or "AZ Observing"). Click on the button down the page to join the group. Your application will be accepted in a day or so by the moderators. Alternatively, send an email to [AZ-observing+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:AZ-observing+subscribe@groups.io). After your membership is set, go to the Subscription tab on the left. Set your preference as to how you should receive messages.

For help, email [AZ-observing+help@groups.io](mailto:AZ-observing+help@groups.io)

Unsubscribing:

Go to Groups.io, then go to the group SAC Forum. Go to the tab "Subscription" on the left, at the bottom of the page click "Leave Group".

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