

Saguaro Skies



Saguaro Astronomy
Club, Phoenix, AZ
Volume 49, Issue 2
February 2025

The President's Corner

It's happening! SAC is once again going to go forward with the Messier Marathon (the weekend of March 29th.) This year it will be the Messier Marathon and Observing Get-Together. The name change was suggested to let potential attendees know that we recognize many attendees do not actually do the marathon but are there for the observing and to be with other like minds.

We will also attempt to have another dinner and raffle this year to offset some of the event expenses to the club. The event will need club members to assist in making the weekend a success. Let's hope for clear skies too.

I've been out to the North Hovatter site a couple times since the January meeting and the solar installation to the south-southeast is bright, mostly due, I hope, to continued construction. The solar installation south of the airfield should start construction anytime now. With Venus out and bright, and I do mean BRIGHT, I found Venus to be a bigger detriment to viewing and photography than the solar array. I was working Pegasus, Aries and Pisces for faint objects. Readings from my Unihedron Sky Quality Meter ranged from 21.19 MSAS (magnitudes per square arc seconds) at 8 p.m. to 21.55 by 10:30 p.m., so later, is definitely better.

Once Venus set, light readings were plenty dark, but then again, temperatures got colder too. Early sunsets made for plenty of viewing time before my back, feet, and cold hands gave out and I would quit.

So, what have you all been up to or hope to be up to, as far as observing goes. Let Rick Rotramel know, and he might add your descriptions to the newsletter, photos too.

As I have asked before, what is it that the club needs to be doing that we are not. We need your suggestions. We're also looking for additional dark sky locations if you run across them that are convenient to the valley. And, of course, for those of you who have not, please pay your dues.

Clear skies,

Tom Curry, SAC President



Quick Calendar

At the clubhouse, 3030 Mission Ln, Phoenix, AZ:

Friday, February 7th, SAC Board Meeting, 6 pm

Friday, February 7th, SAC General Meeting, 7pm
Guest speaker – Tom Polakis, SAC

- Speaker topic: "All About Asteroids"

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With *PayPal* Link (Via the SAC website)

Header image © 2000-2013 Stellarium Developers

* Scorpius setting in the southwest.

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Editor Notes

Hi Folks,

Such-A-Deal has four old ads.

Bits & Pisces has the minutes of the Jan. 10th SAC Board mtg. and SAC general meeting by SAC Secretary Michael Poppre.

SAC Observing has sky info for the month.

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

Enjoy,



Rick Rotramel >



< Left: SAC Webmaster, Terry Shay



Right: SAC ATM Leader, Paul Lind >

Photos: Susan Trask

Schedule of Events 2025

SAC General Meetings

Jan. 10	Feb. 7	March 14	April 11
May 9	June No Mtg.	July 11 No Mtg.	August 8 No Mtg.
Sept. 5	Oct. 3	Nov. 7	Xmas Prty Dec, TBD

* 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 32nd Street)

Meeting time: 7:00 PM

View video recordings of the *past* Zoom meetings here:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCKTf10gwebABZXwKbhe9oA>

Messier Marathon / Spring Star Party

Date: Sat, March 29, Hovatter North Site plus Dinner & Raffle

Spring Thunderbird Park Public Star Party

Date: TBA TBird Park, Glendale, AZ

Grand Canyon North Rim Star Party

Dates: June 21-28, Steve Rottas, Coordinator

(Email: gcnrspcoordinator@saguaro.org)

(Web: saguaroastro.org click on "Events")

SAC Officers

Photos: Susan Trask(2), Tom Curry(2)



President: Tom Curry >

Vice President: Lori Prause and Treasurer, Mitch Prause



Secretary: Michael Poppre >



Properties Director: Ken Milward >



Such-A- Deal

Ads placed here are free to SAC members and friends. SAC is not responsible for the quality of the items. If you wish to place an ad here to sell your telescope or an astronomy related items, contact the editor at

<mailto:rrottramel601@gmail.com>

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
- Tele Vue Qwik Point Finderscope
- Tripod
- 602 736-9221
- I'm near 7th St. and Thunderbird. Buyers pick up.
- **\$ Best Offer \$**

Email Contact – Click Link Below:

<mailto:lorraine.drobny@cox.net>

Lorraine Drobny

602 736-9221



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



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

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

\$ Best Offer \$

- Lorraine Drobny , 602 736-9221

lorraine.drobny@cox.net



Such-A- Deal

Ads placed here are free to SAC members and friends. SAC is not responsible for the quality of the items. If you wish to place an ad here to sell your telescope or an astronomy related items, contact the editor at

<mailto:rrottramel601@gmail.com>

Telescope For Sale:

Vintage Unitron 60mm f15 Telescope

- OTA with four eyepieces, rotating eyepiece mount, barlow, finderscope and wooden carrying case.
- WITH tripod.
- "I think it is the 114 model from the late 1950's or early 1960's with the original box..."
- Paul Jorgenson KE7HR
- Email Contact: ke7hr@cox.net
- Asking \$250.00



Correction: In the January 2025 issue, the "Sold" sign was placed incorrectly here.



Bits and Pisces

Minutes of the January SAC Board of Directors Meeting, January 10, 2025

Submitted by club Secretary Michael Poppre

Board members present:

President Tom Curry, Vice President Lori Prause, Treasurer Mitch Prause, Secretary Michael Poppre, Properties Director Ken Milward; Other members present: Webmaster Terry Shay

President Tom Curry opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Exchange of officers took place as Michael Poppre handed over the gavel to incoming President Tom Curry.

Tom then handed over the office of Treasurer to incoming Treasurer Mitch Prause.

Lori Prause and Ken Milhouse attended as newly elected Vice President and Properties Director respectively.

Tom reported we already had 10 members sign up in 2025.

Tom reported financials of:

Total \$3,108.10

Cash \$2,685.32

Outstanding (2024 room rent) and future 2025 debt in the form of insurance (due Sept 2025) \$1,097

The BOD voted to keep the speaker stipend at \$100.00

Tom researched getting BOD insurance on top of our regular liability insurance. This was going to cost between \$600 and \$850 per year depending on coverage levels. Brief discussion was made with most members indicating they did not think SAC needed this additional insurance. Issue was tabled with no formal motions or vote.

VP Lori raised the topic of the 2025 Messier Marathon. Issues included waivers, food, port-a-potties, publicity, BLM permit, raffle and prizes. It was agreed we should again combine the MM event with a general spring star party so as to attract people who may not be interested in a MM. We also agreed to ask EVAC for help with tables and EZ up canopies. It was agreed to ask the SAC membership for volunteers to help with these items at the general meeting. The MM organizers could meet via Zoom to coordinate and track progress.

It was proposed by VP Lori to cancel SAC meetings for the months of June, July and August. It was decided to put this to a vote of the members present at the January 10th general meeting (this same evening).

The BOD agreed we needed to restart advertising dark of the moon observing sessions monthly. These would be placed on the activities calendar. The site chosen was the Hovatter Road north location.

VP Lori brought up the need for increased publicity to bring in new members. One method mentioned was use of club business cards members could give out to the public. A motion was passed to have these cards made. Lori and Terry (webmaster) agreed to design the cards.

The BOD meeting was adjourned at 6:58 pm by Tom Curry.



Bits and Pisces

SAC General Meeting Minutes, January 10, 2025

Minutes submitted by SAC Secretary Michael Poppre

Meeting was opened at 7:04 pm by President Tom Curry.

Tom asked if any new members or visitors were present. One new member was welcomed to the club.

There were 13 members present.

Tom reported the financials: Total income on hand - \$3,108.10, Cash on hand - \$2,685.32, Outstanding - \$1097

Tom reported an outreach event request for members to participate in from the Mercury Mine Elementary School in Phoenix. This is to take place on Tuesday, February 4th at the school at 5:30 pm. Some members reported helping with this event last year and said it was well received by the school. Anyone interested can contact Tom Curry.

Tom then brought up the 2025 Messier Marathon. He asked for members to consider volunteering for this annual event. The date will be the weekend of March 29th.

The club will hold a star party in the spring at the Thunderbird Conservation Park in Glendale. Date is TBD.

Mention was made of the North Rim Grand Canyon Star Party in June. Club contact is Steve Rottas.

Tom asked the members to think about ways to help bring in new members. One person mentioned the use of [Meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) as a way to let people know of an activity.

The issue raised during the BOD meeting regarding canceling meetings in June, July and August was brought before the members. The motion passed by a show of hands with 3 yes, 0 no, and 10 abstentions.

Tom announced a short break before the main speaker.

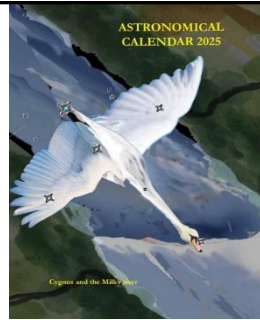


VP Lori Prause introduced the main speaker, Dr. Lillian Ostrach, PhD. Dr. Ostrach is with the USGS, Astrogeology Science Center in Flagstaff. Her topic was "Exploring the Moon." She covered lunar formation hypothesis both classical (pre-Apollo) and modern. She also focused on better understanding of surface feature formation and the best technologies for studying these. The talk was very informative and generated some good discussion.

VP Lori Prause organized this lecture via Zoom with Dr. Ostrach in Flagstaff and SAC members in attendance at the "clubhouse". This format was successful and will be used for future meetings when a speaker is not available in person. The meeting was adjured at 8:46 pm.



SAC Observing



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ASTRONOMICAL CALENDAR 2025

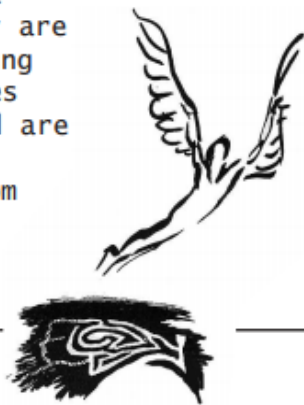
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The left column gives Julian Dates (number of days from 4713 B.C. Jan. 1 noon), useful for finding time spans between events by subtraction. The first 3 digits of the Julian date (245) are omitted, to save space.

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
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

Continued next page...



SAC Observing

2025 FEBRUARY					
0707.688	Feb	1	SAT	5	Moon 1.00° NNW of Saturn; 35° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -7.3 and 1.2
0708.300	Feb	1	SAT	19	Moon, Venus, and Neptune within circle of diameter 3.33°; about 44° from the Sun in the evening sky; magnitudes -8, -5, 8
0708.417	Feb	1	SAT	22	Moon 1.27° NNW of Neptune; 45° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -8.0 and 7.9
0708.420	Feb	1	SAT	22	Moon at ascending node; longitude 358.1°
0708.458	Feb	1	SAT	23	Moon 2.09° SE of Venus; 45° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -8.0 and -4.6
0708.5	Feb	2	SUN		Groundhog Day
0708.611	Feb	2	SUN	2:40	Moon at perigee; distance 57.61 Earth-radii
0708.708	Feb	2	SUN	5	Moon shows minimum libration for the year, 0.84°
0710.876	Feb	4	Tue	9	Jupiter stationary in longitude; resumes direct motion
0711.021	Feb	4	Tue	12	Jupiter stationary in right ascension; resumes direct motion
0711.835	Feb	5	Wed	8:03	First quarter Moon
0712.313	Feb	5	Wed	20	Moon 4.5° NNW of Uranus; 96° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -10.4 and 5.7
0712.833	Feb	6	Thu	8	Moon 0.66° NNE of Pleiades; 103° from Sun in evening sky
0713.604	Feb	7	Fri	3	Moon 5.4° N of Jupiter; 113° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.0 and -2.5
0715.167	Feb	8	SAT	16	Moon 4.3° N of M35 cluster; 132° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.5 and 5.3
0715.338	Feb	8	SAT	20	Mercury at southernmost latitude from the ecliptic plane, -7.0°
0715.996	Feb	9	SUN	12	Mercury at superior conjunction with the Sun; 1.393 AU from Earth; latitude -7.00°
0716.354	Feb	9	SUN	21	Moon 0.85° NE of Mars; 147° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.9 and -0.8
0716.5	Feb	10	Mon	0	Moon 5.3° S of Castor; 149° and 148° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.9 and 1.5
0716.729	Feb	10	Mon	6	Moon 2.03° S of Pollux; 152° and 151° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -12.0 and 1.2
0717.172	Feb	10	Mon	16	Mars at northernmost declination, 26.23°
0717.620	Feb	11	Tue	3	The equation of time is at a minimum of -14.23 minutes
0717.833	Feb	11	Tue	8	Moon 2.69° NNE of Beehive Cluster; 165° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -12.3 and 3.7
0718.308	Feb	11	Tue	19	Uranus at east quadrature, 90° from the Sun
0719.079	Feb	12	Wed	13:53	Full Moon
0719.604	Feb	13	Thu	3	Moon 1.97° NE of Regulus; 173° and 174° from Sun in morning midnight sky; magnitudes -12.5 and 1.4
0720.5	Feb	14	Fri		St. Valentine's Day
0721.432	Feb	14	Fri	22	Venus shows greatest illuminated extent, 334 square seconds
0721.789	Feb	15	SAT	7	Moon at descending node; longitude 177.6°
0722.874	Feb	16	SUN	9	Venus brightest; magnitude -4.64°
0722.911	Feb	16	SUN	10	Sun enters Aquarius, at longitude 327.97° on the ecliptic
0724.042	Feb	17	Mon	13	Moon 0.39° SE of Spica; 125° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -11.2 and 1.0
0724.542	Feb	18	Tue	1	Moon at apogee; distance 63.48 Earth-radii
0724.921	Feb	18	Tue	10	Sun enters the astrological sign Pisces, i.e. its longitude is 330°
0726.316	Feb	19	Wed	20	Venus at perihelion; 0.7185 AU from the Sun

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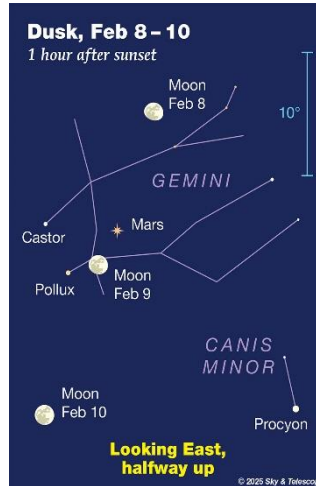
SAC Observing

22 Astronomical Calendar 2025

0727.232	Feb	20	Thu	17:33	Last quarter Moon
0727.896	Feb	21	Fri	10	Moon 0.53° SE of Antares; 83° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -9.8 and 1.0
0730.580	Feb	24	Mon	2	Mars stationary in longitude; resumes direct motion
0730.896	Feb	24	Mon	10	Mars stationary in right ascension; resumes direct motion
0731.917	Feb	25	Tue	10	Mercury 1.44° NNW of Saturn; 13° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -1.2 and 1.2
0734.397	Feb	27	Thu	22	Mercury at ascending node through the ecliptic plane
0734.532	Feb	28	Fri	0:46	New Moon; beginning of lunation 1264
0734.648	Feb	28	Fri	4	Venus stationary in right ascension; starts retrograde motion
0735.292	Feb	28	Fri	19	Moon 1.32° NNW of Saturn; 10° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -5.2 and 1.2



SAC Sky



The “planet parade” isn’t over yet — the waxing Moon will pair with the planets in the coming week, with a pretty Venus-Moon pairing on February 1st.

Six of the planets line up across the sky during late twilight on Jan. 30, 2025. In the coming nights the waxing Moon will pair up with each in succession starting at



Saturn.
Bob King

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<https://skyandtelescope.org/observing>



2025 SAC Officers and Contacts

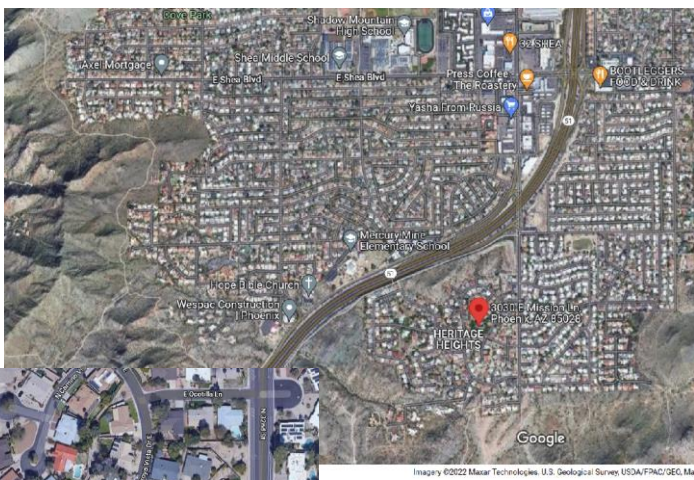
Board Members

- President Tom Curry [mail to: president@saguaroastro.org](mailto:president@saguaroastro.org)
- Vice-President Lori Prause
- Treasurer Mitch Prause <mailto:treasurer@saguaroastro.org>
- Secretary Michael Poppre
- Properties Ken Milward <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:rrotramel601@gmail.com](mailto:rrotramel601@gmail.com))
- Webmaster Terry Shay [mail to:webmaster@saguaroastro.org](mailto:webmaster@saguaroastro.org)

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



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: rrotramel601@gmail.com

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

2025 Board Mtgs:

Board meetings will be called by the SAC President and will contact the board members for the meeting time and date.

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.

Saguaro Skies Staff

Editor: Rick Rotramel; Photographers: Tom Curry, Sandy Milward, Tom Polakis, Michael Poppre, Rick Rotramel and Susan Trask.

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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

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Name: _____

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State: _____

Zip Code: _____

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Check here if this is updated information

Make check payable to: SAC

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

Mitch Prause

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