

Saguaro Skies



Saguaro Astronomy
Club, Phoenix, AZ
Volume 50, Issue 2
February 2026

The President's Corner

My thanks to those members who presented talks last meeting. Remember, we are always willing and interested in hearing what you have been up to. If you are not into public speaking, at least write up what it is that you were doing and send it to Rick Rotramel for the newsletter.

Austin and I were out at North Hovatter the evening of Saturday the 17th and had a fairly nice night of observing. The previous Saturday we were out, as were some massively illuminated pieces of equipment working on the airfield solar array. The light from the equipment literally illuminated the hills to the north and east of where we were set up. Wow! The 17th we must have gotten lucky that the offending equipment were not working that night. The evening was chilly and not bad until the breeze started to kick back up. It was a good evening to get out. Now we just need to have clear sky for the February evenings.

I forgot to mention, I got another replacement Celestron *StarSense AutoGuider*, my 4th so far, and it worked fine on the CGX mount, as did the mount for the evening!

When I go out for an evening of observing, I like to get to the site early to set up then relax for an hour or two. That gives me time to read a little if I want, or plan what I want to view, if I've not already, or, in the case of this past evening, write some limericks. Did I mention I am part Irish and that comes naturally to us? So here goes:

A guy I once knew as a resident,

In a club where all were quite hesitant.

He sat on his hands,

And thought of rock bands,

While the club was minus a vice president.

So, if one of you doesn't volunteer for the SAC *Vice President* position, more limericks could happen. Forewarned is forearmed, so the saying goes. Seriously, the club needs your participation. We will also need your participation with the planning and execution of the *March Spring Observing Party and Messier Marathon*. How 'bout it?

OK, see you at the SAC meeting on Feb. 6th. Until then, clear skies.

Tom Curry



Photo: Susan Trask



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

Quick Calendar

At the clubhouse, 3030 Mission Ln, Phoenix, AZ:
SAC meets **Friday, February 6th, @ 7:00 pm.**
Guest speaker: TBA
Topic: TBA

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Six old ads, check them out.

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Jan. 9th General Meeting Minutes
(Michael Poppre)

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The Astronomical Calendar 2025
The Astronomical Calendar,
©2024 By Guy Ottewill

SAC ASU Tour 14

ASU *School of Earth & Space*
Exploration Facilities, Feb. 13th,
@ 10:00 AM
(Ken Milward)

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Fountain Hills Star Party

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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 six old ads, check them out.

Bits & Pisces has a report on the SAC January 9th general meeting.

SAC Observing has for you daily astronomy data from *The Astronomical Calendar*.

SAC ASU Tour has info on the tour of the ASU School of Earth and Space Exploration SAC tour of their facilities.

SAC Outreach has info on the *Fountain Hills Star Party*.

Enjoy,

Rick Rotramel



< Left: SAC Webmaster, Terry Shay



Right: SAC ATM Leader, Paul Lind >

Photos (3): Susan Trask

SAC-Forum Email Discussion Group

Join this email discussion group for all SAC business and newsletter release notifications.

Go to Groups.io, search for the group SAC-Forum (or "SAC Forum"). 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:

SAC-forum+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.

Schedule of Events 2026

SAC General Meetings

Jan 9	Feb. 6	March 6	April 10
May 29	June 26	July 24	August 21
Sept. 25	Oct. 23 Nominations	Nov. 20 Elections	XmasParty Sat, Dec. 12

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/UCEKTf10gwebABZ-XwKbhc9oA>

March Spring Observing Party and Messier Marathon

(TBA)

Grand Canyon Star Party
June 6 – 13, (North Rim portion cancelled, DRAGON BRAVO FIRE.)

SAC Officers



President: Tom Curry >

Vice President: (Open Position) >



Secretary: Michael Poppre >



Treasurer: Jack Jones >



Properties: Ken Milward >

Photos: Susan Trask (2), Sandy Milward (2)

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: rrotramel601@gmail.com

Astronomy Equipment For Sale

I am closing my BrewSky Observatory in Casa Grande, AZ. All the equipment needs to be sold, so I am offering very competitive prices. Go to the link below for a complete list of items being sold. If you need something small, maybe I have that too...

brewsky.space/BigSale/ForSale.html

Questions? Contact Robert Brewington at eridanibrew@gmail.com



1 Takahashi FSQ106 \$1500



3 Paramount MX \$5000



2 SBIG STF8300M \$1500



7 Celestron Edge 11" HD \$1200



5 Optec TCF-5 Focuser \$300



6 QSI686-wsq \$1400



4 Light Panel \$50



8 ExploraDome 8' Automated Dome \$1500



Astronomy Equipment Big Sale (continued)

x

Telescopes for sale:

Celestron Edge 11" HD with Homeyer Cradle *Price: \$1200 (Orig. Cost: \$3700)*

Andy Homeyer used to make beautiful telescope cradles out of 1/2" aluminum to hold SCTs on their mounts, replacing the typical dovetail rails. These eliminated pretty much all flexure in the mounting.

Image 2 shows the C11 in the Homeyer cradle with an extra Losmandy dovetail visible. The Edge is strapped securely into the cradle, then the cradle is bolted directly to the Paramount Versa plate. My TPoint flexure (especially in the piggy backed refractor) was completely eliminated.

It also shows the FSQ106 piggy backed on top via a second Losmandy rail. The Optec focuser and STF8300M are on the back of the C11.

Image 3 shows someone else's C14 cradle without the OTA (mine looks slightly different). The cradle originally cost \$800, but I am including it with the C11 since I can't use it for anything else.



SOLD!

Takahashi FSQ106EDX-III *Price: \$1500 (Orig. Cost: \$3500)*

This is my premium wide field imaging scope. It is a 530mm f5 with FeatherTouch focuser.

The second image shows the current configuration. The Tak is piggy backed onto the Edge 11 using a Losmandy rail and Tak clamshell. I added screws in the clamshell base to allow alignment of the Tak with the Edge 11. Focusing is done with an EasyFocus focuser running a Robofocus motor. A Pyxis Rotator is next, followed by a QSI683 camera with filter wheel and off axis guider.

The third image shows the Robofocus motor connected directly to the FeatherTouch focuser via the knob axle (the knob has been removed). The EasyFocus controller and RoboFocus motor are included.



SOLD!

Takahashi Sky90 *Price: \$300 (Orig. Cost: \$1800)*

Doublet Apochromat. 50mm aperture. Large back focus adjustment. I should have the FSQ attachment, I have to look through my parts.

I used this for several years, first mounted on a NexStar 11, then on the Edge 11. I was very happy with the results. Eventually moved up to the FSQ106.



SOLD!

William Optics Zenith Star 80mm *Price: \$100 (Orig. Cost: \$500)*

80mm f6.8. Used as a guide scope before installing the dome. Includes case, nice mounting rings.



SOLD!

SBig Guide Scope *Price: \$25 (Orig. Cost: \$250)*

This is a small scope/lens similar to an St-i, with a mounting bracket and small USB camera. The product was intended to provide an easy autoguider in a small package.

Unfortunately, the image scales did not work at all for my setup. I expect it should work OK with a main imaging camera with 3 or more arcsecond/pixel.





Astronomy Equipment Big Sale (continued)

Cameras for sale:

SBig STF8300M Price \$1500 (original cost \$3500)



Includes filters (Astrodon LRGB, Ha, Oiii, Sii) in 8 position filter wheel. Original ST-i guider failed, replaced with QHY5III290 (available separately). Added aluminum threaded rings to guide port to help focus. Includes Pelican Case, cables.

QSI683-wsg Price \$1400 (original cost \$3000)



Includes filter wheel with filters, guide port. Has a partial column of bad pixels, easily fixed with dark/bias frames

SBig ST2000XM Price \$200 (original cost \$1200)



My first quality camera - it is wonderful. I used it for quite awhile. 100,000 e- well depth produces excellent contrast in images. USB connection. Image shows my camera with CFW10 filter wheel attached to a Takahashi Sky90. Only design problem - the guide chip is behind the filters, so I often can't guide with it (especially narrow band). The guide chip no longer works on this unit. Includes CFW10, with original LRGB filters. W/Pelican case & desiccant packs.

QHY5III290 Price \$50 (original cost \$250)



SOLD!

I have used this as both a monochrome planetary camera and as a guide camera. It works very well. In the second image the camera is installed in the STF8300M guide port. The aluminum rings I made to help focus are visible.

ZWO ASI120M Price \$50 (original cost \$250)



Monochrome camera used primarily as the guider for the QSI683. Worked very well.

ZWO ASI290MC Price \$75 (original cost \$350)



Color planetary camera. Used very little (I stopped doing planetary).

Fishcamp Guide camera Price \$10 (original cost \$300)



This was a very solid, well built guide camera. It uses the same chip as the original Orion guider, but does it much better. Unfortunately, at Windows 7? 8? the driver didn't work anymore and I couldn't find a replacement driver. This could be a fun project to write a driver for it. Or, at least it comes in a nice case.

Astronomy Equipment Big Sale (continued)

Mount for sale:

Software Bisque Paramount MX Price \$5000 (original cost \$9000, currently costs \$12-18000)



This is the original MX, not the Version II
It has sat for awhile, so it likely needs replacement of the two rubber drive belts. Here in Arizona I need to replace them every couple of years.
I have the original shipping boxes.
Includes TPoint, a truly magnificent tool. TPoint also handles alignment of the mount to great precision.
Includes 2 large counterweights and the shaft extension.

Dome for sale:

ExploraDome Price \$1500 (original cost \$8000)



This is the 8 foot dome with aluminum roof panels for a 10 foot square building. I used a pre-existing building.
Has an 8 foot pier (2 four foot sections) with Paramount adaptor plate to hold the mount high. Originally automation hardware/software by Foster Systems to open the shutter and rotate the dome.
Replaced the tracking and shutter controllers with Arduino based systems. Image 4 shows the Arduino tracking controller (smaller black box) on top of a 12V power supply. Image 5 shows the Arduino Shutter controller.
Modified the tracking system to improve reliability and accuracy. Figure 3 shows an added fence on the rotation motor. Originally the dome position was determined by counting the holes in the track. This gives 1 cm precision on the dome position instead of the original 4 cm. Wrote a VB.NET ASCOM driver to drive the 2 Arduino controllers.
Includes dome and 10' wide building panels around top of roof.
The Dome was painted with a special Arizona paint to reflect the sun, cooling the building. Originally the building was at 135 F.
Images 3 and 5 show Home Depot radiant barrier material fastened to the dome interior to further reduce Arizona heat. This stuff is amazing! The building is now down to 90 F, so the 2 air conditioners can get it down to 82 F.
Figure 6 shows someone else's dome, showing how the top shutter slides back over the dome and the lower shutter hinges open.
Buyer needs to remove dome, ship it to destination.





Astronomy Equipment Big Sale (continued)

Miscellaneous:

Optec Focuser Price \$300 (original cost \$1200)



2" Crayford style; very solid.
Includes adaptor to connect to Edge 11".
Connects via RS232 cable.
Edgeport USB to RS232 converter box
available (See below).

EdgePort USB-RS232 Converter Price \$50 (original cost \$250)



Some equipment (especially older things)
still use RS-232 connections. This box takes a
single USB port and provides 4 COM ports.

Pyramid 12V 5 Amp Power Supply Price \$25 (original cost \$100)



Typical 12V power supply.
Has connector to run 2 cigarette plugs, or
wire directly as seen in the image.

Samlex 12V 30 Amp Switching Power Supply Price \$150 (original cost \$300)



In the first image this is the larger black box under the dome
rotation controller.
This is a higher 30 Amp power supply. I run the output
through a RigRunner (visible on the right of the first image)
to supply power to the dome rotation motor, the dome
shutter motors, and a couple of other minor things. My
dome motors require 10 Amps.
The RigRunner is included.

Optec Pyxis 2" Rotator Price \$250 (original cost \$1200)



This is the original Pyxis rotator from Optec.
Modjack RS232 input.
Edgeport USB to RS232 converter box
available (See above).



Astronomy Equipment Big Sale (continued)

Home Built LED Light Panel *Price \$50 (original cost \$100)*



This is my fifth attempt at building a Light Panel to automate taking calibration bias and per-filter flat images. This one actually works pretty well. It is built around a 2 foot by 2 foot industrial LED lighting panel intended for ceilings of office buildings (like fluorescent light fixtures). The intensity of the light can be controlled by a resistor (a dimmer switch). The small pink box contains an Arduino and digital resistors (included). The Arduino connects to the computer via USB. The panel is mounted on a table fixture allowing adjustment in 3 axes to get it perpendicular to the OTA. This is important - the OTA needs to be perpendicular to the light panel, or you get off center frames. In a small dome you can't just hang the panel on the wall and be positioned appropriately relative to the telescope. The LED panel is very bright even at low settings. Two translucent 1/4" acrylic panels slide into the frame to dim it further. One or both panels can be removed as needed. I wrote a (VB.NET) software utility to determine the correct resistor setting and exposure for each filter (LRGB and narrowband) with about a 3 second camera exposure. Once these settings are determined they are re-used for each calibration run. Since I run ACP, these settings are easy to put into the ACP calibration script. The closed dome is dark enough that frames can be shot during the day, even on Arizona-bright days. I wrote a script to run calibrations during the day rather than waste darkness hours. Depending on the night's target, I typically run 25 bias and 25 of each filter needed for the night. I might need both 1x1 and 2x2 binning, so potentially I need 1600 frames although typically a few hundred. This takes 30-60 minutes. A PixInsight script assembles the individual frames into master frames for use that evening.

LEDLightTable *Price \$10 (original cost \$150)*



I originally bought this for one of my earlier attempts for a light panel for exposing calibration images (like the Light Panel above). It didn't work - it is too bright and not controllable from the computer. In addition, it runs the screen by scanning down the LEDs by row, so an exposure shows the panel partially lit depending on where you caught the scanning process. It is intended to be used as a children's toy, and to do tracing work. Includes power cable.

DLI Internet Power Controller *Price \$150 (original cost \$500)*




Controller: Server Rack 7 North			
Fri Jun 19 22:24:27 2015			
Individual Control			
#	Name	State	Action
Bus A: 111.2V @ 0A [000000.0 kWh]			
1	UBNT AP 1	ON	Switch OFF Cycle
2	DSL Modem	ON	Switch OFF Cycle
3	WiFi Router	ON	Switch OFF Cycle
4	Ethernet Switch	ON	Switch OFF Cycle
Bus B: 112.2V @ 0A [000000.0 kWh]			
5	Cisco PoE Switch	ON	Switch OFF Cycle
6	Trump Candidacy	OFF	Switch ON Cycle
7	Cooling Fans	ON	Switch OFF Cycle
8	ISL Drone Bomb Bay	ON	Switch OFF Cycle
Master Control			
All outlets OFF			
All outlets ON			
Cycle all outlets			
Sequence delay: 2 sec.			

OK, you need one of these. This lets you power up/down equipment from ANYWHERE on the Internet. There are 16 switchable standard outlets in the back of the unit, 8 banks of 2 outlets (second image). Each bank is switchable; for example, perhaps you have a camera and its focuser plugged into one bank. A single command will turn on both devices. The unit has an ethernet port in front which attaches to your local network (first image). It also has switches to manually control each bank of outlets.

From a browser you access the device by its IP address (i.e., 192.168.2.100). You get the screen in the third image (there are several screens to configure the device). Now you can access all of the devices through the network. For example, I can be in Los Angeles and power everything up for the night. When I am running from the house it is easier to turn things on and off rather than running out to the observatory.

There are more "miscellaneous" items for sale, you can find them on my website.

Copy and paste this link into your web browser:

[For Sale \(brewsky.space\)](http://brewsky.space)

eridanibrew@gmail.com

Robert Brewington



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

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<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**



Celestron C-14 on a Losmandy G11GT Mount

- It is in excellent working condition with very good optics. The Gemini II was recently upgraded to the latest firmware by Losmandy.
- The OTA is on a Losmandy dove tail and it comes with the heavy duty folding tripod.
- It sadly sits in my garage more than under the stars.
- I know the GC Star party is coming up. Since I live in Mesquite, NV, I can bring it to the North Rim if there is someone interested in purchasing it. They can inspect both the mount and optics with no pressure to purchase.

- I am **asking \$6000**
- Thank you for reading this,
- Vince Clements
- (209) 224-1894
- teachu2ride@gmail.com





Bits and Pisces

SAC General Meeting, Jan. 9, Meeting Minutes

Report by SAC Secretary, Michael Poppre

- Meeting called to order by President Tom Curry at 7:07 pm. 16 members present.
- Tom opened by discussing plans for the annual (possible) *Messier Marathon* in March. Proposed date is weekend of March 20/21/22. New moon is March 18. Discussion involved finding a new location, what the club will offer (meal, raffle, awards, etc.). Tom made an open call for members to volunteer concerning these items.
- Paul Lind spoke next about the ATM group and the 16" mirror project his is getting underway. The next ATM meeting will be at his workshop Tuesday, Feb. 3rd.
- Jack Jones reported the club has a total of \$4,312.80 in our account. REMINDER: dues are due for 2026. **The new club member dues amount are \$40 individual and \$50 family.**
- Steve Rottas reported on an effort to have SAC involved in the 2026 *South Rim Grand Canyon Star Party* spearheaded by the *Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association (TAAA)*. Steve only had basic information at this time while awaiting an organizational meeting with the TAAA and Nat'l Park Service schedule for Jan. 26th. Steve covered what is needed by volunteers (application to the NPS), accommodations in the park, some info about 'scope set up areas (near the main visitor center) and of course dates which will be June 6-13, 2026. The idea is to keep SAC a part of the GCNP astronomical efforts until the *North Rim* facilities are rebuilt in the future.
- Steve also mentioned an outreach event in the planning stages at the *Beatitudes Care Home* in Phoenix on Jan 26th, time TBA.
- After a short cookie break, we began our main event, SAC member presentations.
- Michael Poppre gave a talk about finding southern celestial hemisphere items from our northern latitude. This came from an idea he had after reading an article in the Oct. 2024 issue of *Sky and Telescope*.
- Terry Shay recapped a visit he and Rosemary made to the new visitor facility at *Lowell Observatory* in Flagstaff. This covered the main center, telescope observation deck, the outdoor planetarium and the 24" *Clark telescope*.
- Austin Grinwell told the group of his trip to the *Smithsonian Harquahala Mountain Solar Observatory* in western Arizona. This was a facility used from 1920 to 1925 to study the sun and solar constant to determine the influence of solar activity on terrestrial weather. Apparently, no conclusive results from the study & the project was closed down.
- Ken Milward asked for a show of hands from interested members to attend a visit to the *ASU School of Space and Earth Sciences* on several occasions to tour their astro related facilities including a "universe tour" using 3D goggles. Many in the group were receptive to this outing.
- After this, Tom Curry closed the meeting and reminded the group the next regular meeting will be February 6th.



SAC Observing

Astronomical Calendar 2026



					2026 FEBRUARY
1073.083	Feb	1	SUN	14	Moon 1.48° NE of Beehive Cluster; 175° from Sun in evening midnight sky; magnitudes -12.7 and 3.7

1073.423	Feb	1	SUN	22:09	Full Moon
1073.5	Feb	2	Mon		Groundhog Day
1074.688	Feb	3	Tue	5	Moon 0.54° ENE of Regulus; 164° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -12.4 and 1.4
1075.305	Feb	3	Tue	19:19	Moon at descending node; longitude 159.0°
1075.467	Feb	3	Tue	23	Uranus stationary in longitude; resumes direct motion
1075.550	Feb	4	Wed	1	Uranus stationary in right ascension; resumes direct motion
1078.833	Feb	7	SAT	8	Moon 1.68° SSW of Spica; 114° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -10.9 and 1.0

1081.030	Feb	9	Mon	12:44	Last quarter Moon
1082.205	Feb	10	Tue	17	Moon at apogee; distance 63.43 Earth-radii
1082.688	Feb	11	Wed	5	Moon 0.75° SE of Antares; 72° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -9.3 and 1.0
1082.865	Feb	11	Wed	9	The equation of time is at a minimum of -14.22 minutes
1085.433	Feb	13	Fri	22	Venus at southernmost latitude from the ecliptic plane, -3.4°
1085.5	Feb	14	SAT		St. Valentine's Day
1086.273	Feb	14	SAT	19	Mercury at ascending node through the ecliptic plane
1087.705	Feb	16	Mon	5	Uranus at east quadrature, 90° from the Sun
1088.166	Feb	16	Mon	16	Sun enters Aquarius, at longitude 327.99° on the ecliptic
1088.292	Feb	16	Mon	19	Moon 0.79° SE of Mars; 9° from Sun in morning sky; magnitudes -4.8 and 1.2

1089.001	Feb	17	Tue	12:02	New Moon; beginning of lunation 1276; annular eclipse of the Sun
1089.5	Feb	18	Wed		1st day of Ramadan (1447 A.H.)
1089.5	Feb	18	Wed		Ash Wednesday
1089.764	Feb	18	Wed	6:21	Moon at ascending node; longitude 338.9°
1089.854	Feb	18	Wed	9	Moon 1.59° NNW of Venus; 10° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -5.1 and -3.9
1090.161	Feb	18	Wed	16	Sun enters the astrological sign Pisces, i.e. its longitude is 330°
1090.479	Feb	18	Wed	24	Moon 0.20° E of Mercury; 18° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -5.8 and -0.5
1090.946	Feb	19	Thu	11	Mercury at perihelion; 0.3075 AU from the Sun
1091.231	Feb	19	Thu	18	Mercury at easternmost elongation; 18.1° from Sun in evening sky; magnitude -0.4
1091.342	Feb	19	Thu	20	Moon, Saturn, and Neptune within circle of diameter 4.08°; about 29° from the Sun in the evening sky; magnitudes -7, 1, 8
1091.354	Feb	19	Thu	21	Moon 4.1° NNW of Saturn; 29° and 30° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -6.8 and 1.1
1091.375	Feb	19	Thu	21	Moon 3.3° NNW of Neptune; 30° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -6.8 and 7.9

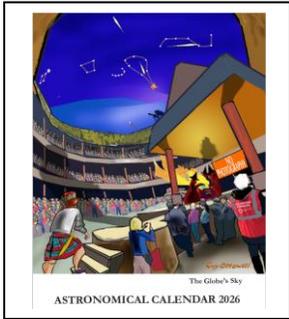
Continued next page...



SAC Observing

22 Astronomical Calendar 2026

1092.354	Feb	20	Fri	21	Saturn 0.83° SE of Neptune; 29° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes 1.1 and 7.9
1095.458	Feb	23	Mon	23	Moon 5.4° N of Uranus; 83° and 82° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -9.9 and 5.7
1095.458	Feb	23	Mon	23	Moon, Uranus, and the Pleiades within circle of diameter 5.42°; about 83° from the Sun in the evening sky; mag. -10, 6, 3
1095.646	Feb	24	Tue	4	Moon 1.19° N of Pleiades; 85° from Sun in evening sky
<hr/>					
1096.019	Feb	24	Tue	12:28	First quarter Moon
1096.475	Feb	24	Tue	23:25	Moon at perigee; distance 58.03 Earth-radii
1097.195	Feb	25	Wed	17	Mercury stationary in right ascension; starts retrograde motion
1097.458	Feb	25	Wed	23	Moon at northernmost declination in year, 28.43°
1097.780	Feb	26	Thu	7	Mercury stationary in longitude; starts retrograde motion
1097.917	Feb	26	Thu	10	Moon 4.0° N of M35 cluster; 115° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.1 and 5.3
1098.833	Feb	27	Fri	8	Moon 3.9° NNE of Jupiter; 127° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.4 and -2.5
1099.167	Feb	27	Fri	16	Moon 6.1° S of Castor; 131° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.5 and 1.5
1099.208	Feb	27	Fri	17	Middle of eclipse season: Sun is at same longitude as Moon's ascending node, 339.1°
1099.396	Feb	27	Fri	22	Moon 2.93° S of Pollux; 134° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -11.6 and 1.2
1099.417	Feb	27	Fri	22	Mercury 4.5° NNW of Venus; 13° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes 1.6 and -3.9
1099.431	Feb	27	Fri	22	Mars at southernmost latitude from the ecliptic plane, -1.8°
1100.438	Feb	28	SAT	23	Moon 1.51° NE of Beehive Cluster; 148° and 147° from Sun in evening sky; magnitudes -12.0 and 3.7



Chiricahua Sky Village

Dark Sky Astronomy in the High Desert of Arizona

- Communally owned dark sky site in SE Arizona
- Enjoy your own dedicated dark sky site
- Have your own Personal Remote Observatory [PRO]
- Enjoy breathtaking visual observations
- Create stunning astrophotography images
- Become part of a great astronomy community

New Members and Visitors Are Always Welcome!

Website: <https://chiricahuaskyvillage.com>
Email: chiricahuaskyvillage@gmail.com



SAC ASU Tour

You Are Invited to a Guided Gallery Tour and 3D Astronomy show for Saguaro Astronomy Club

Friday February 13, 10AM

Located at the ASU School of Earth and Space Exploration

Building 4 (ISTB4) Building at 781 E. Terrace Road, Tempe, AZ 85287

A two-hour experience features the tour and an immersive 3D Astronomy presentation in the Marston Theater. This is not a movie. All presenters are ASU students.

ASU requests that we pay for the group as a whole with one credit card. **Please bring \$10.00 cash per person to give to Ken Milward at the door**, and he will pay for the group.

Tours are for groups of 20, they are holding up to 40 seats for us and I may be able to arrange for additional seats.

*Please contact me with your name and number of people accompanying you for the tour **no later than February 10.***

At properties@saguaroastro.org.

Do not be late. **The doors close at 10:00.**

There is a cafe nearby on campus where we could meet for lunch after the tour.

ASU School of Earth and Space Exploration
Arizona State University

Directions to The School of Earth and Space Exploration
Located in the Interdisciplinary Science and Technology Building 4 (ISTB4) Building at 781 E. Terrace Road, Tempe, AZ 85287

ISTB4 is located on the ASU Tempe campus. Access to a paid parking garage is located at Rural Rd. and Terrace Rd. between University Drive and Apache Blvd. From the parking garage, walk west to the ISTB4 building and enter through the glass doors on the north side. The School of Earth and Space Exploration does not validate parking.

General directions:
From I-10 proceed to either the US-60 heading east and exit Rural Rd. Or from I-10 follow the 202 east and exit Scottsdale Rd./Rural Rd.

From US-60: Exit Rural Rd. and proceed north. Cross over Apache Blvd. and turn left at Terrace Rd. to enter the parking garage.

From the 202 freeway: Exit Scottsdale Rd./Rural Rd. and proceed south. Cross University Drive and turn right at Terrace Rd. to enter the parking garage.

If arriving by Light Rail:
Exit at the University and Rural Road stop. Walk south one block until you reach Terrace Road.

If you need assistance, please call 480-965-5081.



SAC Outreach

Scope support request for 2026 *Fountain Hills Dark Sky Festival Star Party!*

From: Ted Blank <tedblank@gmail.com>

Hi, I'd like to ask if you can put this request out to your mailing list for your members and add it to your event calendars. This is similar to last year's request, we were very pleased to have several members join us, and we are hoping for no wind this year! Thanks, Ted

On **Saturday, March 28, 2026** we are going to hold our ***Fountain Hills Dark Sky Festival*** again and I would like to invite club members to bring solar scopes during the day, or nighttime telescopes for the evening star party portion of the event. Or both! :-)

This year we have two keynote speakers - **Firefly Expert Tony Parker** who works at *Tucumcacori National Historic Park*, and **Retired Astronaut Susan Kilrain**, veteran shuttle astronaut and youngest person to ever pilot a space shuttle. Information on the festival can be viewed [here](#). Detailed schedule will be posted in a few weeks. You are welcome to set up early and cover your equipment to go and enjoy the festival if you wish.

The event will again be held at the **Fountain Hills Community Center, 13001 N. La Montana Dr., Fountain Hills.**

We will offer a **\$25 cash stipend** towards our food trucks and beer and wine assortment for those who can provide support to this event with a telescope. **The Festival starts at 4PM.** Solar observing will also start at **4 PM** while evening observing will start at **7 PM** running until **9pm**.

Please RSVP directly with Ted Blank at tedblank@gmail.com

I am also looking for someone who can provide a meteorite display from about 4-6 PM.

Of course, everyone is invited to attend this free event, with or without telescopes. We'll have many displays, live music, a silent auction of telescopes and other items, a tent where people can experiment with light, dark sky exhibits, virtual reality tours with the Fountain Hills High School students VR computers, green laser pointer tours of the constellations, and much more.

Last year we had over 2000 visitors, and the evening star party is well attended so the more scopes the better. We'll have **reserved parking spots close to the observing area** where you can **unload your equipment**.

I hope to see many of you at the festival. ***If you can bring a scope, please let me know at tedblank@gmail.com.*** Please wear your club name badges so we can say hi!

Ted Blank, (603) 817 9814



2026 SAC Officers and Contacts

Board Members

- President Tom Curry <mailto:president@saguaroastro.org>
- Vice-President Open
- Treasurer Jack Jones <mailto:treasurer@saguaroastro.org>
- Secretary Michael Poppre
- Properties Ken Milward <mailto:properties@saguaroastro.org>

Non-board Positions

- Novice Leader Steve Dodder <mailto:fester00@hotmail.com>
- Newsletter Rick Rotramel <mailto:rrotramel601@gmail.com>
- Outreach Sandy Milward
- Webmaster Terry Shay <mailto:webmaster@saguaroastro.org>

SAC on Facebook:

Moderator, Mike Willmoth <mailto:mwillmoth@compuserve.com>

2026 Board Meetings:

* 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.

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



Saguaro Skies Staff

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

2013-2025 Contributors: Bob Christ, Mike Collins, AJ Crayon, Tom Curry, Paul Dickson, David Dillmore, Steve Dodder, Richard Harshaw, Dean Ketelsen, Kevin Kozel, Joan McGue, Sandy Milward, Andrew Perry, Tom & Jennifer Polakis, Michael Poppre, Jimmy Ray, Rick Rotramel, Steve Rottas, SAC Imagers & Observers

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.



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%.

- \$40 Individual Membership
- \$50 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__

Name: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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:

Jack Jones
3222 W. Lucia Dr.
Phoenix, AZ 85083

