



# NORTHERN LIGHTS



NORTH CENTRAL REGION OF THE ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE

Spring 2023 - Volume 7, Number 4

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## NCRAL CHAIR'S MESSAGE

As you probably know, this is my final message to you as NCRAL Chair. I was elected to this position in 2017 – a short six years ago – at the Lanesboro meeting in Minnesota. I now must step down as Regional Chair following the conclusion of my third term as mandated by the Region's Bylaws. Elections for NCRAL Chair and Vice Chair will come up at the May convention. Vice Chair Bill Davidson is willing to continue in that position as he will be concluding only his second term in that office. According to our Bylaws, the Regional Chair is to appoint a nominations committee. I have asked for volunteers, but none have stepped forward. I will now be asking a few capable individuals I know to consider running for air. Calls for nominations also will be made from the floor at the annual business meeting.

We are also seeking hosts for NCRAL conventions in 2024 and beyond. We have one group considering an offer, but I'm not expecting to hear back from them sometime between now and the start of the NCRAL 2023 convention to be held May 5-6 convention near North Utica, Illinois.

The convention theme this year is *Amateur Astronomy for Amateurs*. Details about the convention can be found in an article further on in this issue of *Northern Lights*. Please note that registration is now open. You can also find out more and register at <https://tcaa.club/ncral2023>.

Please note that we have an "early bird" registration with "sweeteners." The last available online registration will be

April 5<sup>th</sup>. After that date, convention meals will not be available. Please also book your rooms immediately if you plan to attend as no block of rooms is being held for logistical reasons. Please note that Grand Bear Resort is a very popular place and requires two-night stays over the weekend. Rooms are available at a discount, but book early if you intend to stay on site. Because this is a rural setting adjacent to a large state park (Starved Rock), there are few hotels in the immediate vicinity. There are additional hotels in the nearby LaSalle/Peru area. I encourage you to attend this gathering as all our conventions constitute the lifeblood of the Region.

With this newsletter, we are again accepting nominations for NCRAL's Region Award and Newsletter Editor Award, and applications for both of our \$250 mini-grants. The deadlines for all are March 31<sup>st</sup>. Note that new guidelines have been instituted for the Region Award that must be followed in order for the nomination to qualify. See the corresponding articles later in this issue of *Northern Lights* for details.

Note further on in this issue that I have provided an updated proposal for NCRAL's Messier Marathon Observing Program. Following a discussion with **Kris Hultner** and an examination of a MAS Forum discussion dealing with the Messier Marathon during the spring of 2022 (see <https://forum.mnastro.org/viewtopic.php?p=62956#p62956>), I believe it wise to make an accommodation for more northerly observers due to the near impossibility of completing the full blown Messier Marathon from more northerly locations. See the proposal as it will be brought forward for a discussion and a vote at the annual business meeting at North Utica, Illinois, on Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>.

As my term in office draws to a close, I'm happy to say that I will continue writing this newsletter for the Region with the approval of and input from the new Chair. My six years as Chair have been fun despite the fact that my term was affected adversely by the COVID-19 pandemic which forced the postponement of NCRAL 2020 and cancellation of 2021. It was unfortunate that I was not able to attend NCRAL 2022 due to long-standing travel plans to Europe that I had committed myself to several years before.

Please be reminded that leadership and membership constitute the two lungs of the Region. Having one without the other, we will be greatly impaired and will not long survive. Already I have heard from peers on the National Council that several Regions are suffering from a lack of

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leadership and are languishing as a result. NCRAL has long been the Region to which the AL leadership points as being exemplary in its performance. This will no longer be the case if we don't have candidates for office and hosts for

conventions. I do hope you and your affiliate will consider running for office and offering to host a convention.

Carl J. Wenning, NCRAL Regional Chair (2017 – 2023)  
[carlwenning@gmail.com](mailto:carlwenning@gmail.com)

## NORTH CENTRAL REGION FINANCIAL STATEMENT BY ROY E. GUSTAFSON, SECRETARY-TREASURER

			Expense	Income	Balance
	1-Jul-22	Starting Balance			\$8,112.83
1026	1-Aug-22	Roy E. Gustafson - U.S.P.S. (mail certificate and pin)	\$6.39		\$8,106.44
	21-Nov-22	Proceeds from NCRAL 2022 - Northern Cross Science Foundation		\$470.51	\$8,576.95
1027	5-Dec-22	Roy E. Gustafson - U.S.P.S. (mail certificate and pin)	\$9.90		\$8,567.05
	1-Mar-23	Concluding Balance			\$8,567.05
				Net Change	\$454.22

## TCAA Hosts NCRAL 2023 Convention May 5-6 GRAND BEAR RESORT, NORTH UTICA, ILLINOIS

The Twin City Amateur Astronomers will host the North Central Region's 2023 convention on May 5-6. The Friday evening through Saturday night event will be held at Grand Bear Lodge and Resort, located just west of Starved Rock State Park near North Utica, Illinois. Its theme is *Amateur Astronomy for Amateurs*. The focus will be on what we can do as amateurs, with just a bit of professional astronomy mixed in. You are cordially invited and encouraged to attend.

The event kicks off on Friday evening with a 7-9 PM reception featuring hors d'ourves and two complimentary bar drinks. The TCAA will sponsor this event through a generous donation from one of its members who wishes to remain anonymous. The reception will include lots of tasty food and conversation, but it will also have a "freebies/giveaway" table, a sale/swap meet, and room for displays by clubs or individuals. This reception will be an excellent opportunity to make and renew friendships and to get rid of or acquire some astronomy and observing-related materials.

Saturday's program includes presentations, panel discussions, and a make-and-take solar funnel workshop. There are four concurrent sessions so you will have choices about which presentations or activities to attend. The Saturday evening banquet will feature an awards ceremony and a keynote talk about the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) by Dr. John Martin of the University of Illinois – Springfield. The sessions are as follows:

**Session 1** – Welcome, NCRAL Chair Carl J. Wenning; *Introduction to the TCAA*, TCAA leader (TBD); *Program Overview*, Master of Ceremonies Dave Osenga

<b>Session 2 – A Total Eclipse of the Heart</b> , Carl J. Wenning
<b>Session 3 – What We Learned from August 21, 2017</b> ; Panelists: Sunil Chebolu, Paul Pouliot, Sai Chander, Sharon McDonald, and Dave Osenga – Moderator: Tom Willmitch
<b>Session 4a – Advances in Amateur Astronomy</b> , Carl J. Wenning
<b>Session 4b – How to Complete an Astronomical League Observing Program</b> , Lisa Wentzel
<b>Session 5a – Creating Astronomical Diagrams</b> , Jeffrey L. Hunt
<b>Session 5b – Creating a Top-notch Club Newsletter</b> , Sandullah Epsicokhan
<b>Session 6a – Small Telescope Astronomy</b> , Matthew Will and Lisa Wentzel
<b>Session 6b – Meteoroids, Meteors, &amp; Meteorites</b> , Marc Tiritilli
<b>Session 7a – Build a Solar Funnel</b> , Dave Osenga and Tom Weiland
<b>Session 7b – Revitalizing Your Post-COVID Astronomy Club</b> ; Panelists: Darren Sawyer, Al Sheidler, and Sunil Chebolu – Moderator: Dana Sawyer
<b>Session 8 – Annual Business Meeting</b> – Moderator: NCRAL Chair Carl J. Wenning
<b>Session 9 – Awards Ceremony and Keynote Address</b> , Dr. John Martin, University of Illinois Springfield, <i>JWST: The Just Wonderful Space Telescope</i>

The keynote address will get to the science behind all the hype surrounding the JWST. And, of course, there will be door

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prizes, refreshment breaks, lunch and dinner (included in the registration fee if registered online by April 5<sup>th</sup>), an astrophotography contest (with solar system and deep sky divisions), convention regalia, and telescopic observing sessions on Friday afternoon and evening if the sky is clear.

**Again, please note that registrations made April 6<sup>th</sup> and later do not include convention meals. Meal tickets will not be sold on site due to the Lodge's requirements for advance reservations.** Four restaurants are available on site as an alternative.

Details about Grand Bear Lodge, the various aspects of the convention, registration, and accommodations can be found on the TCAA website at <https://tcaa.club/ncral2023/>.

Don't miss out on the fact that we have **discounted early bird registration** if completed on or before March 15<sup>th</sup> that

provides a number of benefits such as the availability of convention merch. The last opportunity to register online and receive meals with standard registration will be April 5<sup>th</sup>. Complete convention details, convention regalia, and registration are currently available.

The TCAA is an affiliate of NCRAL. The NCRAL convention is the yearly gathering of amateur astronomers from the Astronomical League's North Central Region. It brings together amateur astronomers from seven states: Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, North and South Dakota, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. This will be the third time the TCAA has hosted this annual event. It did so previously in 2010 and 2016.

## NCRAL SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR NEW CHAIR

Following the conclusion of three consecutive two-year terms, Carl Wenning will be stepping down as NCRAL's Regional Chair as required by the Region's bylaws. Wenning was first elected in 2017. His third and final term expires with the conclusion of the NCRAL Regional business meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Candidates for the 2023-2025 Chair position (and Vice Chair, too, though Bill Davidson is willing to run for his third term) are now being sought.

The Regional chair oversees the operations of the Region and serves as chief communicator, holding the Region together and providing guidance. While Carl has edited

NCRAL's *Northern Lights* newsletter since 2016, he points out that newsletter editorship is **not** part of the NCRAL Chair's responsibilities. Carl is willing to continue to serve in the capacity as editor and as advisor at the pleasure of the new Chair.

If any NCRAL member (affiliate member or member at large) is willing to consider serving as NCRAL Chair or Vice Chair, (s)he should contact Carl at [carlwenning@gmail.com](mailto:carlwenning@gmail.com). Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the convention's business meetings. Nominees must be present to accept floor nominations for them to be valid.

## DRAFT NCRAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS

In an effort to help candidates, new officers, and affiliate leaders to understand their roles within NCRAL, the following job descriptions are provided. These descriptions are based on both NCRAL Bylaws and experience. The descriptions found here are merely advisory; not prescriptive.

### OFFICERS:

According to the NCRAL Bylaws, NCRAL officers shall be the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer.

• **CHAIR** – Specific duties of the Chair are outlined in the NCRAL Bylaws. In general, however, these are the duties that actually characterize the position:

- Ensures that we have hosts for upcoming conventions (<https://ncral.wordpress.com/conventions/>).

- Prepares the agenda for and presides over Regional Council and Membership meetings held during annual Regional conventions.
- Prepares an Annual Regional Report (<https://ncral.wordpress.com/reports/>) during June for transmittal to the AL Secretary prior to the summer meeting of the National Council.
- Serves as a member of the National Council, attending such meetings when possible.
- Appoints webmaster, newsletter editor, and observing awards coordinator when openings in these positions occur.
- Participate in selection of the Region Award and Newsletter Editor Award recipients.

• **VICE CHAIR** – Specific duties of the Vice Chair are outlined in the NCRAL Bylaws. In general, however, these are the

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duties that actually characterize the position:

- Assist the Chair in the discharge of all duties and perform them in the case of the absence, death, disability, resignation, or removal of the Chair.

- Contribute from time to time to the content of the Region's *Northern Lights* newsletter.
- Lead the Regional Award Committee, soliciting and collecting nominations, and participate in selection of the Region Award and Newsletter Editor Award recipients.

## CALL FOR 2023 NCRAL NOMINATIONS & APPLICATIONS CHAIR & VICE CHAIR/REGION AWARD/NEWSLETTER EDITOR AWARD/MINI-GRANTS

The current terms of NCRAL's Chair and Vice Chair end with the close of the Regional Business Meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Chair Carl Wenning must step down following three terms in this position. Vice Chair Bill Davidson is willing to return to this position for a third term. Because both positions will "open," nominations for both positions are requested. Please contact one of them if you'd like to nominate someone to fill either of these two positions.

It's never too early to start thinking about nominations for the NCRAL Region Award. Do you know someone who has dedicated his or her time and energy to promoting astronomy? Wouldn't you like to let them know they are appreciated for their arduous work? This is your chance! This award recognizes exceptional individual effort and meritorious service to amateur astronomy through the member's local astronomy club, public outreach, the NCRAL, or the Astronomical League.

The Region award will be presented in a ceremony concluding the dinner banquet of the next Regional convention. The rules for Region Award nominations are as follows:

1. The nomination must be made using the [official NCRAL Region Award nomination form](#) which is an interactive PDF that must be completed in its entirety prior to submission.
2. The individual must be a member in good standing, either through an AL/NCRAL-affiliated club, association, or society or as a current member-at-large in the North Central Region.
3. The three current regional officers and the regional representative are NOT eligible for this award. Past winners are also ineligible for this award.
4. The regional officers are the voters and will base their decision on the information provided. Past winners of this award will be asked to assist in the case of a tie vote. Each member votes independently and will use his/her best judgment. All decisions are final.
5. The winner will be contacted not less than 21 days in advance of the NCRAL meeting at which the award will be

presented. The winner will not be publicly revealed until the time of the presentation. Those nominated but not selected will not be revealed.

6. All non-winning nominations will be kept on file for two years after the initial submission. After such time, a new nomination needs to be submitted. Nominations for the 2023 Region Award MUST BE RECEIVED by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Any nominations received after this date will be kept on file for 2024.
7. All nominations must be sent via email to Bill Davidson, NCRAL Vice Chair, at [rochesterskies@outlook.com](mailto:rochesterskies@outlook.com)

Let's not forget about the **NCRAL Newsletter Editor Award**. It is expected that the next award will be conferred at the NCRAL 2023 meeting. Submission Guidelines: The president of the club/society/association should email a copy of the designated issue of the associated newsletter in Adobe Acrobat pdf file format to NCRAL Vice Chair Bill Davidson ([rochesterskies@outlook.com](mailto:rochesterskies@outlook.com)), along with a cover letter of recommendation in the same file format. In addition, complete contact information of the editor must be included. A photo of the newsletter editor, preferably in an astronomical-type setting, must be received electronically in jpg format to the same email address by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Lastly, don't forget about our two **NCRAL mini grants**. A mini grant will be awarded following a successful written proposal originating with the president of an NCRAL affiliate. The focus of a mini-grant must be oriented to an increase in either: (1) an affiliate's membership whose mini-grant proposal must focus on both recruitment and retention (Member Recruitment & Retention Mini-grant), or (2) an increase in the number of A.L.-affiliated clubs, societies, or associations within the North Central Region (Non-affiliate Recruitment Mini-grant). New 2023 applications (interactive PDFs) can be found at <https://ncral.wordpress.com/awards/>. The application deadline for all mini-grants is March 31<sup>st</sup>. Mini-grants, if approved, will be announced following the NCRAL 2023 banquet.

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## NCRAL SEEKING FUTURE CONVENTION HOSTS

During NCRAL's annual business meeting, the Region receives offers for hosting future conventions. We are now looking for hosts for NCRAL 2024 beyond. It's never too early to start planning to host an NCRAL convention.

Whether or not your club has ever hosted an NCRAL Regional convention, please consider doing so in 2024 or later. While hosting a Regional convention is a considerable amount of work, it can be quite rewarding – even fun. It provides an opportunity to highlight your group's facilities and accomplishments, build club camaraderie, and to get to

personally know interesting guest speakers. You can also use such an event to grow your club's membership.

Remember, NCRAL now has its own convention planning guide. To download the planning guide, visit the following URL: <https://ncral.wordpress.com/conventions/>. Look for the link at the bottom of the page.

Please contact the NCRAL Chair Carl Wenning at [carlwenning@gmail.com](mailto:carlwenning@gmail.com) should you have any questions or wish to toss your affiliate's hat into the ring for hosting a future NCRAL convention.

## UPDATED PROPOSAL FOR NCRAL MESSIER MARATHON OBSERVING PROGRAM

I, Carl J. Wenning, Chair of NCRAL (2017-2023), propose that NCRAL establish the following NCRAL Messier Marathon Observing Program and rules for affiliates and at-large members with the following awards and certificates:

- ★ **Gold Star Award:** Observe all 110\* Messier objects in one dusk-to-dawn interval using only unassisted means (Telrad, optical finder, star hopping, sweeping, drift, etc., are acceptable).
- ★ **Silver Star Award:** Observe all 110\* Messier objects in one dusk-to-dawn interval using any combination of assisted or unassisted means (e.g., goto telescopes, setting circles, etc.)
- ★ **Bronze Star Award:** Observe at least 70 Messier objects in one dusk-to-dawn interval using any telescopic means, assisted or unassisted.



\* 109 observation will suffice for completion of the Gold and Silver Awards in more northerly latitudes due to the near impossibility of observing Messier 30 from certain locations due to its proximity to both the sun and horizon near sunrise. A concession will be granted by request for observers located in more northerly locations of the Region. This accommodation is consistent with rules established by the Minnesota Astronomical Society for their observing award.

Those who earn the Gold Star also will receive the Silver and Bronze Stars. Those who earn the Silver Star also

will receive the Bronze Star. No more than one star of each type will ever be awarded to a single observer.

Observations must be approved and sent by an affiliate's ALCor to the NCRAL Secretary-Treasurer who will serve as program administrator. The observing record must be affirmed by an affiliate's ALCor or affirmed by another observer if a member-at-large. Observing records (objects and time stamps) in the form of an electronic file should be sent to Roy Gustafson at [astroroy46@gmail.com](mailto:astroroy46@gmail.com) for final approval and recognition. NCRAL will provide and pay for suitable certificates, pins, and postage associated with this program. Recipients will be recognized in the *Noteworthy!* section of NCRAL's ***Northern Lights*** newsletter. Due to the more prestigious nature of this program, it is NOT permissible for two or more individuals to work together to earn this recognition.

*I further propose that this observing program be approved retroactively to January 1, 2023, so that anyone completing the observing program following these guidelines during the winter and spring of 2023 may receive appropriate recognition from NCRAL.*

*Notes:* This observing program is possible only under certain conditions. The time to conduct the Marathon is from mid-March to early April when no Messier objects are hidden in the glare of the sun. Within that brief period, dark nights around the time of the new moon are best for the Marathon. Even then, you'll need a good dark sky site. Many of the Messier objects are faint and need favorable seeing conditions. Around the March equinox, you'll have around eleven hours of darkness on a given night. To find all 110 objects means you only get six minutes average to locate and observe each one. Observations must be well planned and begin as soon as it gets dark and continue through morning twilight. Observations begin low in the western sky and progress eastward throughout the night.

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Consult any of the several Messier Marathon observing guides found online for details. Because the goal is to "view" and not "observe" each M object, a checklist

documenting observations is adequate. The checklist must include date and time.

## NCRAL SEASONAL MINI MESSIER MARATHON OBSERVING PROGRAM

The NCRAL Seasonal Mini Messier Marathon program is intended to serve as motivation to get NCRAL-affiliated members out under the stars to observe. The program permits the use of goto telescopes to find objects and, as such, the program must not be considered proof of observing prowess. The Astronomical League's Messier observing program serves that purpose. Still, NCRAL observing certificates include the words "assisted" or "unassisted." Certificates and pins are now being distributed on the equinoxes and solstices along with *Northern Lights* by the program administrator. NCRAL Secretary-Treasurer Roy Gustafson is program administrator. Please send observing records to Roy at [astroroy46@gmail.com](mailto:astroroy46@gmail.com). Up-to-date details about the Region's four observing program and helpful observing record sheets can be found on the NCRAL website: <https://ncral.wordpress.com/awards/>.



**Autumn:** M55, M69, M70, M75, M11, M26, M56, M57, M71, M27, M29, M39, M2, M72, M73, M15, M30, M52, M103, M31, M32, M110, M33, M74, M77, M34, and M76. (27 objects)



**Winter:** M1, M45, M36, M37, M38, M42, M43, M78, M79, M35, M41, M50, M46, M47, M93, M48, M44, M67, M40, M81, M82, M97, M101, M108, M109, M65, M66. (27 objects)



**Spring:** M95, M96, M105, M53, M64, M85, M88, M91, M98, M99, M100, M49, M58, M59, M60, M61, M84, M86, M87, M89, M90, M104, M3, M51, M63, M94, M106, and M68 (28 objects)



**Summer:** M83, M102, M5, M13, M92, M9, M10, M12, M14, M19, M62, M107, M4, M6, M7, M80, M16, M8, M17, M18, M20, M21, M22, M23, M24, M25, M28, and M54. (28 objects)

### OBSERVING NOTES:

- **Autumn:** This season's objects span a wide range of right ascension and declination. With several objects located in Sagittarius and disappearing into the glare of the sun by mid-autumn (M55, M69, and M70), it is best to complete the autumn observing program before the end of October. After that they will be too near the sun to observe during late autumn evenings. Also note that a late September start will require observations after 10 PM due to the late rising of two of these objects.
- **Winter:** It probably would be best to begin the winter Marathon around late-February or later. Any earlier in the year, observers will have to wait until later into the night for all winter objects to have risen high enough in the sky to observe. With winter weather moderating in March, it wouldn't be too late to start then so long as observations are completed by the March equinox.
- **Spring:** This season's objects span a rather narrow region of right ascension, with most of the objects being associated with or in proximity to the Virgo-Coma cluster of galaxies. At the start of spring, an observing run beginning near the end of astronomical twilight should allow observers to view all objects by around 10:30 PM. By mid-April, all objects should be well enough placed at the end of astronomical twilight allowing for their fastest possible observation.
- **Summer:** All summer Marathon objects are above the horizon at the end of astronomical twilight on the first day of summer through the last day of summer. They are nearly all tightly clustered around the galactic center, and most are globular clusters with a few notable exceptions.

UPDATE (June 4, 2021): *By fiat of the Regional Chair, it is permissible for a group of two or more individuals to work together using a single telescope on the same night to earn a seasonal Mini Messier Marathon certificate and pin, so long as the group shares a single certificate and pin. All members of a group must observe each Messier object.*

## NCRAL SEASONAL MINI MESSIER MARATHON AWARD

- *Dave Osenga, Twin City Amateur Astronomers, Autumn, Certificate # 13, Assisted*

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## ADD YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS TO THE NCRAL MEMBER DATABASE

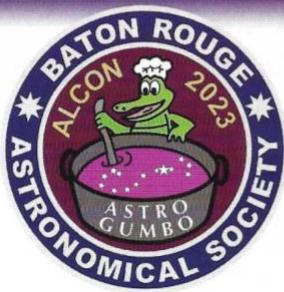
Did you know that only about 475 of our Region's 1,900 members are receiving this newsletter via email? That's less than one-fourth of the membership. Please help NCRAL get its newsletter out to the membership by encouraging fellow club members to add their email addresses to the NCRAL member database. Editors, please include this information in your affiliate's newsletter.

When one adds his or her email address to the NCRAL member database, he or she will receive direct notifications about the availability of *Northern Lights*. In addition, subscribers will receive important and timely announcements about Regional conventions, elections, star parties, and so forth. Only blind addressing (Bcc:) will be used with this email list so that others will not see subscribers' email addresses. Email addresses will never be shared with or sold to outside entities.

No one will add your email address to this list for you, so you'll need to do it yourself. Sign-up takes only about a minute. You'll need to provide your name, email address, astronomy club affiliation (or indicate A.L. membership-at-large) and let us know if you hold specific positions within your club. Go to the following case-sensitive URL to add your information to our database at <https://tinyurl.com/NCRAL> today, so you won't miss important future communications.

## BIENVENUE EN LOUISIANA! (WELCOME TO LOUISIANA!)

Join us for this unique and exciting amateur astronomy gathering!



# ALCON 2023

**July 26-29, 2023**

Hilton Baton Rouge  
Capitol Center Hotel  
201 Lafayette Street,  
Baton Rouge, LA 70801

### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

- ★ David Eicher—writer, editor-in-chief of *Astronomy Magazine*
- ★ Fred Espenak—co-author of *Totality: The Great American Eclipses of 2017 and 2024*
- ★ More to be announced

### FIELD TRIPS

- ★ Irene W. Pennington Planetarium
- ★ LIGO (Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory) Livingston\*
- ★ Louisiana State University Physics & Astronomy
- ★ Highland Road Park Observatory

\*Spaces are limited for this field trip

Brought to Baton Rouge by the **Baton Rouge Astronomical Society**

Registration info coming soon! Check **[brastro.org](http://brastro.org)**

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## REGIONAL OFFICER & LEADER CONTACT INFORMATION

### Chair and Newsletter Editor: Carl J. Wenning

**Bio:** Carl has been an avid amateur astronomer since being introduced to the sky by his grandfather during July 1957. Today he is an **A.L. Master Observer** spending most of his time introducing nascent amateur astronomers to observing. He has been involved with the *Twin City Amateur Astronomers* (Illinois) since September 1978. Carl served as editor of his club's newsletter, ***The OBSERVER***, from 2014-2021, during which time he received the Astronomical League's ***Mabel Sterns Newsletter Editor Award*** in 2017. He has served as the Region's newsletter editor from 2016 to present. He was recognized for his Regional education and outreach efforts in 2007 when he received the ***NCRAL Region Award***. Carl served as planetarium director and physics teacher educator at Illinois State University (1978-2008). (Two-year term as Regional Chair, currently in third and final term, 2017-2023; ***Northern Lights*** Newsletter Editor, 2016-present.)

**Contact:** [carlwenning@gmail.com](mailto:carlwenning@gmail.com)



### Vice Chair: Bill Davidson

**Bio:** In the days of the Apollo missions, Bill first observed the moon (and sunspots!) with a 50x, 60mm JC Penny's refractor telescope. Not discouraged, 40 years later, he built and observes with a 6.25-inch achromatic doublet objective, f/10, 1600mm focal length refracting telescope. He recently retired as a college mathematics instructor, has been a member of the *Rochester Astronomy Club* (Minnesota) for more than 20 years, and serves as editor of the club's award-winning newsletter ***Rochester Skies***. (Two-year term as Vice Chair; currently in second term, 2021-2023.)

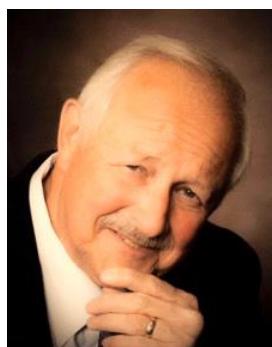
**Contact:** [rochesterskies@outlook.com](mailto:rochesterskies@outlook.com)



### Secretary-Treasurer: Roy Gustafson

**Bio:** Roy, a member of *Popular Astronomy Club* (Quad Cities), got interested in astronomy when visiting the Adler Planetarium in Chicago when he was in 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade. The stars projected by the Zeiss Projector hooked him and started him on the path of astronomy. He has been active in outreach and has presented astronomy programs to over 20,000 people. He was awarded the ***Master Outreach Award*** from the Astronomical League. Roy travels with his telescopes and has observed both Transits of Venus and total solar eclipses in 2017 and 2019. Roy also taught astronomy at Black Hawk Junior College in Moline, IL. Roy retired from John Deere & Company after 32 years of service. (Two-year term as Secretary-Treasurer; currently in third term, 2018-2024.)

**Contact:** [astroroy46@gmail.com](mailto:astroroy46@gmail.com)



### Regional Representative: John Attewell

**Bio:** John's interest in astronomy was kindled during two great comet events – comets Hyakutake (1996) and Hale–Bopp (1997). For the next ten years he used a 2½-inch refractor borrowed from his brother which he mounted on a rickety camera tripod. It wasn't until 2009 that he acquired a serious telescope as a gift from his family. He started attending meetings of the Rochester Astronomy Club in 2002, becoming a member in 2006, and Vice President in 2019. In 2017, he chaired the NCRAL annual conference held at Eagle Bluff Environmental Center in Lanesboro, Minnesota, and served as NCRAL Vice Chair from 2017-2019. John's particular interest is the history of astronomy. (Three-year term as Regional Representative; currently in first term, 2022-2025)

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# NORTHERN LIGHTS

**Webmaster:** Jeff Setzer (appointed)

**Bio:** Jeff has been an amateur astronomer since 1984 and has been part of the *Northern Cross Science Foundation* (Wisconsin) since that time. He is a longtime member of their Board of Directors, has held several office positions, and is currently their President. He has completed several Astronomical League observing programs, made his own telescopes and optics, and is a self-described telescope nut. You will often find him at star parties with his 22" Starmaster and TeleVue 85 telescopes.

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