

NORTH CENTRAL REGION ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE 2022-2023 REGION REPORT

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023
Alan Sheidler, Regional Chair (2023-2025)



Region's Executive Officers:

Chair

Alan Sheidler (Popular Astronomy Club)
3528 56th Street Court
Moline, IL 61265
Mobile: (309) 236-0077
adsheidler@gmail.com
(first 2-year term expires May 2025)

Vice Chair

Bill Davidson (Rochester Astronomy Club)
3705 Halling Place SW
Rochester, MN 55902
(507) 273-6220
rochesterskies@outlook.com
(third 2-year term expires May 2025)

Secretary/Treasurer

Roy Gustafson (Popular Astronomy Club)
11 Deer Run Road
Orion, Illinois 61273
Mobile: 309-781-4368
astroroy46@gmail.com
(third 2-year term expires May 2024)

Regional Representative

John Attewell (Rochester Astronomy Club)
3112 9th Avenue NW
Rochester, MN 55901
(507) 398-4492
john_attewell@hotmail.com
(first 3-year term expires May 2025)

Financial Report:

Initial Balances:	\$8,112.83 (July 1, 2022)
Final Balance:	\$8,877.48 (June 30, 2023)
Difference:	\$764.65 (increase)

NCRAL Banking Account:

Location –

SENB Bank
3535 Avenue of the Cities
P.O. Box 1070
Moline, IL 61266-1070
Phone: 309-757-0700
www.senb.com

Signatories and contact information –

NCRAL Secretary-Treasurer Roy Gustafson
astroroy46@gmail.com

11 Deer Run Road
Orion, IL 61273
Mobile: 309-781-4366

AL Treasurer William Dillon
wildil820@gmail.com

Regional Awards & Mini-Grants:

- The *2023 NCRAL Region Award*, given in recognition of outstanding contributions to amateur astronomy, was presented to Brian Chopp of the Neville Public Museum Astronomical Society.
- The *2023 NCRAL Newsletter Editor Award* was presented to Paul Levesque of Popular Astronomy Club for editing *Reflections*.
- There were no applicants for this year's *NCRAL Affiliate-Recruitment or Membership-Recruitment Mini-Grants*.

Region Administrative Updates:

- At its Spring 2023 convention, the Region approved a Messier Marathon Award program for observing 103 Messier objects in a single dusk-to-dawn night. Accommodations have been made for northern observers in the Region. The program includes certificates and pins. There are levels for 103 objects, both assisted and non-assisted, and for a minimum of 70 M-objects. There are gold stars (103 unassisted), silver stars (103 assisted), and bronze stars (70 any means). The Region will provide star pins and certificates.
- **The Region has updated its *Convention Planning Guide* during Spring 2023 to account for changes suggested by the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of video-conferencing-based meetings and webinars on future attendance.** The Guide can be found on the NCRAL website: <https://ncral.wordpress.com/conventions/>.
- The Region formulated in Autumn 2022 detailed guidelines for nominating Region Award recipients. The guidelines can be found online at <https://ncral.wordpress.com/awards/>.
- **The Region held its NCRAL 2023 convention May 5-6, 2023, at Grand Bear Resort at North Utica, Illinois.** The convention was hosted by the Twin City Amateur Astronomers, who hosted the event previously in 2010 and 2016. About 65 delegates attended this two-day event. **The convention format focused on providing time for socialization. The theme was *Amateur Astronomy for Amateurs*. Focus was on workshops, seminars, panel discussions, and other face-to-face activities that a Zoom-based event usually does not provide.** The convention netted a profit of \$524 for the Region.
- **The Region has confirmed hosts for NCRAL conventions through 2024 only. The 2024 convention host will be the Neville Public Museum Astronomical Society. The event will be held at St. Norbert's College in De Pere, Wisconsin, May 17-18.**

Electronic Communications:

- The Region has completed the seventh consecutive year of publishing its quarterly newsletter, ***Northern Lights***. Back issues are accessible on the Region's website at <https://ncral.wordpress.com/newsletter-archive/>
- NCRAL utilizes a [self-subscribed email list](#) for disseminating the ***Northern Lights*** newsletter and other communications. Some 425 of the Region's approximately 1,900 members (22%) are subscribed. Despite regular promotions, the number of subscribers has increased very little over the years.
- The Region maintains an active Facebook page in which celestial events and accomplishments worthy of note are listed regularly. See <https://www.facebook.com/northcentralregionastronomicalleague/>
- The Region maintains an extensive website that is regularly updated. See www.ncral.wordpress.com

NCRAL Affiliate and Member Accomplishments:

- Numerous affiliate members earned AL observing club pins and certificates during the year. These awards are recognized in the Region's newsletter.
- A small number of NCRAL members are taking advantage of the Region's seasonal Mini Messier Marathon.

Star Parties & Club Events:

- With the approval of the AL, affiliates have returned to conventions, public talks, and observing sessions, dispensing by in large with the use of personal protective devices, hand sanitizers, etc.
- A full slate of star parties and other astronomical events is now scheduled for 2023. See the NCRAL website's [Events in 2023](#) web page for details.

NCRAL Objectives for 2023-2024:

- The Region has formulated new objectives under new leadership. NCRAL Chair Alan Sheidler proposes the following, "I would like to use the concept of *Revitalization of Astronomy Clubs* as one theme. Another idea I would like to promote is improving the relationship and camaraderie between clubs. In addition, I would like to get to know more of the clubs in the region – visit them and promote Zoom meetings, observing sessions, and star parties. Also, I would like to encourage clubs to join the AL. There are several clubs that are not members (in the Region), and I would like to understand why that is – or convince them of the benefits of joining. Also, do we have any clubs in the Dakotas? If not, why not? There has to be a lot of opportunity there."

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Sheidler

Alan Sheidler, Chair (2023-2025)
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