

NCRAL blotter

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Monthly Tidbits from NCRAL Officers, A.L. Representative and Appointees

[Alan Sheidler](#), PAC, Chairman

[Bill Davidson](#), RAC, Vice Chairman

[Roy Gustafson](#), PAC, Secretary-Treasurer

[John Attewell](#), RAC, Regional Rep. to the A.L.

[Carl Wenning](#), TCAA, *Northern Lights* Editor

[Jeffrey Setzer](#), NCSF, NCRAL Webmaster

January 2024

NCRAL Online

North Central Region of the
Astronomical League



Welcome! Governance Programs Conventions Events In 2024 Publications Social Media

- ★ The NCRAL leadership is delighted to announce that webmaster Jeff Setzer recently updated the menu on the Region's website. Jeff writes, "I spent some vacation time today making numerous updates to the NCRAL website. All of the requests for posting items, new and updated, have been fulfilled. In addition, as more and more information and pages are being requested to be placed on the website, the original 'flat' menu system became unwieldy, so I have taken some time to re-think the menu and create some categories and pull-downs. It should work equally well on desktop web browsers, tablets, and phones." The above image shows the new layout. Thanks, Jeff, for your work on keeping us up to date!
- ★ Among the many updates mentioned above, NCRAL's [Convention Planning Guidelines](#) and [Benefits of NCRAL Membership](#) have been updated. The **Guidelines** include clarifications about convention finances (changes highlighted in yellow) and joint conventions, and **Benefits** now mentions our new [Speakers Bureau](#) and this publication, the [NCRAL blotter](#).
- ★ At the end of the year, many clubs have elections for officers. If there are new officers, please let NCRAL Chair Al Sheidler know. Also, please provide contact information so we can keep our NCRAL [affiliates web page](#) current.
- ★ If there are special events in NCRAL (such as club anniversary celebrations, special awards to members, VIP visits, etc., please let **Northern Lights** editor Carl Wenning know, as these might be good items to include in our Spring 2024 newsletter.

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- ★ If your affiliate hosts Regional events such as star parties, now is the time to have your information updated on the NCRAL Events web page at <https://ncral.wordpress.com/events/>. Please send your information to webmaster Jeff Setzer.
- ★ How does your club conduct public observing sessions? If you have a brief story and a photo or two in a group setting, can you send it to Chair Al Sheidler? He particularly likes group photos--fun stuff to show off what you do as a club with the public and encourage others to do likewise. He will compile them for use in Regional publications.
- ★ Many NCRAL affiliates are already sending our Regional Chair your newsletters. Thank you. If you have a newsletter and have not shared it or pointed me to where Alan Sheidler can download it, please do so. He is very impressed and thoroughly enjoys the newsletters he has received and would love to get a copy from each of the newsletter editors.
- ★ Alan has visited many clubs in our Region for the last six months. He would like to resume club visits in the new year. Would your club like him to visit for a meeting or observing session? If so, please let him know. He just wants to meet and get to know who you are and what you do.
- ★ It's never too early to start thinking about who your club might want to recommend for the prestigious *NCRAL Region and Newsletter Editor Awards*. Nominations are due at the end of March, and the awards will be presented at our 2024 Regional convention. While you are at it, consider applying for an NCRAL mini-grant! Information can be found on our [Awards & Mini-Grants](#) web page.
- ★ NCRAL 2024 is coming and will be here before you know it! It will be hosted by the [Neville Public Museum Astronomical Society](#) at St. Norbert's College in De Pere, Wisconsin, May 17-18. Stay tuned to our Winter 2024 ***Northern Lights*** newsletter and the Region's [Facebook page for details](#).
- ★ NCRAL is looking for convention hosts for 2025 and beyond. If your astronomy club has never hosted a Regional convention, please realize that hosting can be fun and has many benefits, including indemnification for unanticipated losses and a 50-50 share of the profits. Assistance is also available from the Region through ***Convention Planning Guidelines*** on our [NCRAL Conventions](#) web page.
- ★ The Winter 2024 issue of ***Northern Lights*** was disseminated just after Christmas. You can find this issue in the [NCRAL newsletter archive](#) if you haven't seen it. Similarly, all back issues of the ***NCRAL blotter*** have been moved to the [NCRAL blotter archive](#).
- ★ Do you have any information you'd like disseminated to the affiliates of NCRAL? Send your information to Carl Wenning, and it will be included in the February issue. It is best to provide a one-paragraph description and a link for details. The ***NCRAL blotter*** is disseminated to nearly 70 affiliate contacts near the start of each month.