



# NCRAL blotter

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

[Alan Sheidler](#), PAC, Chairman  
[Eric Claeys](#), NAA, Vice Chairman  
[Roy Gustafson](#), PAC, Secretary-Treasurer  
[John Attewell](#), RAC, Regional Rep. to the A.L.  
[Carl Wenning](#), TCAA, Publications Editor  
[Paul Levesque](#), PAC, Associate Editor  
[Josef Chlachula](#), RAC, Web Administrator

- ★ The *Milwaukee Astronomical Society* has volunteered to host **NCRAL 2027**. In keeping with NCRAL tradition, the Milwaukee group will present a “formal proposal” during the Region’s NCRAL 2026 annual business meeting in Cedar Rapids next May. The assembled membership will then vote on whether to accept the offer.
- ★ Make sure to mark NCRAL 2026 and ALCON 2026 on your calendar. NCRAL 2026, hosted by the Cedar Amateur Astronomers in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, will take place from May 15 to 17. Watch the *Mission Possible* descriptive [video](#). ALCON 2026, hosted by the Cincinnati Astronomical Society in Cincinnati, Ohio, will be held from August 12 to 15. Visit their [convention webpage](#) and fill out their pre-convention topics survey today. Registration will start soon.
- ★ The NCRAL leadership regrets to announce that Eric Claeys has resigned from his role as NCRAL vice chair due to health problems. We wish him well as he faces these health difficulties. Chair Alan Sheidler is discussing potential replacements.
- ★ After completing 10 years of service, *NCRAL* publications manager Carl Wenning will resign from his role as editor of *Northern Lights* and the *NCRAL blotter* following the distribution of the Spring 2026 issue of the newsletter. Paul Levesque of the *Popular Astronomy Club* will take over his duties, as announced by NCRAL Chair Alan Sheidler. Paul will serve as NCRAL’s associate editor during the interim. He was the recipient of the 2023 NCRAL newsletter editor award and is highly qualified to assume editorial responsibilities, having edited the *PAC Reflections* newsletter for several years. Welcome aboard, Paul! Paul’s contact information is in the header of this page.
- ★ The hard copy September issue of **Reflector** was mailed in late October. As of November 29<sup>th</sup>, it has not been available on [the Astronomical League website](#). Stay tuned for updates.
- ★ The RASC’s *2026 Observers Handbook* and *2026 Astronomy Calendar* are now available for purchase through [the Astronomical League’s online store](#). Get yours before they sell out!
- ★ **ALCors Take Notice** – Nearly every month, the Astronomical League Coordinator (Carroll Iorg, the Astronomical League’s immediate past president) produces a set of announcements that ALCors should read and share with their members as appropriate. See the latest announcements on the [home page](#) of the AL website and in the follow-up [news section](#).
- ★ Remember that NCRAL now has an [official YouTube page](#). NCRAL also has a [Facebook page](#). Keep in mind that the Astronomical League maintains a regularly updated [Facebook page](#) as well.

- ★ If affiliate leaders need educational resources for outreach, they should familiarize themselves with the Astronomical League's [outreach page](#). There, they will find a variety of ready-to-use articles that can be freely shared.
- ★ Regarding updates, the NCRAL leadership is once again asking our regional affiliates' leadership—particularly presidents and ALCors—to keep the lines of communication open by updating their club's record. Names of presidents, ALCors, and editors, along with their contact information, will be used to update the [affiliates page](#) on the NCRAL website. Since affiliates typically hold elections around this time of year, please send any leadership changes to Chair Alan Sheidler.
- ★ Affiliate leaders, please send the dates and details of your affiliate's star parties and other special events to Josef Chlachula (NCRAL webmaster) so he can post them on the NCRAL website's [events page](#).
- ★ Guy Ottewell's *Astronomical Calendar*, a beloved annual guide to the night sky since 1974, has published its final edition. This milestone marks the end of a five-decade tradition that combined detailed planetary data, elegant diagrams, and Ottewell's signature "universal perspective" illustrations—helping generations of stargazers visualize the solar system's grand choreography. While digital tools now take precedence, the 2026 edition remains a lasting tribute to analog astronomy, inviting readers to trace the paths of planets, eclipses, and constellations one last time on paper. Order today for your personal library or as a holiday gift for someone special. Visit the [Universal Workshop](#) for details.

### **Christmas & New Year's Greeting**

As the year comes to an end, we send our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones for a joyful Christmas season and a bright, hopeful New Year. May the upcoming weeks bring peace, rest, and time to reflect on the blessings of the past year.

Thank you for being part of our community and for all you contribute. We look forward to a new year filled with fresh opportunities, shared experiences, and ongoing growth together.

From all of us at NCRAL "headquarters" to everyone out there under the stars—

**Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and May Your Skies Be Clear!**