www.holland-saaa.org

The Shoreline Observer
April 2026

CLUB NOTES

In this issue:

Dear members,

We have passed the spring equinox and now, we have longer days than nights.

Expecting better weather our public observing will pick up and we have several private observing sessions lined up for April.

Hopefully the weather will be good enough to install the all sky camera in April next to the observatory.

SAAA will exhibit at the Hemlock Crossing Nature Center a selection of astro photo's taken by SAAA members at Hemlock Crossing Park in West Olive. This is a nice overview of one of our club activities and a good club promotion. This should be ready in the 2nd half of April.

On April 13 SAAA will be part of the Dark sky initiative in Saugatuck. This starts at 6.30 pm in the Visitor Center in Douglas.

Please be aware that our membership meeting has shifted to April 16 due to Spring Break.

Dave Lesh and I will talk about astro photography with Dwarf and Seestar cameras, as well as our ZWO astro camera setup for the 16" Meade.

April 4 Frank Roldan will do a presentation at White River Hall in Montague on the Spring & Summer sky at 11 am.

Barry Schoenfelner will do a presentation about the Spring & Summer sky at the Hemlock Nature Center on April 11 at 7 pm.

Keep an eye on Comet C/2026 A1 MAPS. On April 4 it will pass close to the Sun.

If it survives it will be a naked eye Comet in the 2nd half of April with a predicted brightness of Venus Magnitude -2.

It still is a challenge to see due to twilight and low western horizon altitude.

It will visible after sun passage in the evening sky in the Constellation of Taurus.

Good viewing and clear skies,

Karl Rijkse

President SAAA

Note

Our April Membership Meeting has been shifted to April 16 due to Spring Break.

NIGHT SKY NETWORK: 2025 Volunteer Pin—2026 Recipients*

*three recipients are missing

April 2026 Dates and Times
Viewing is Clear Sky Dependent

For More Information on any event, please go to www.holland-saaa.org

Details on events appear on page 3.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	31	Apr 1	2	3 • 8pm Public (	4 • 11am Spring
5	6	7	8	9	10 • 8pm Public (	11 • 7pm Spring • 8pm Public (
12	13 • 6:30pm Sau	14	15 • 8pm Saugat	16 • 7pm Club M	17 • 8pm Public (	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 • 8pm Public (	25
26	27	28	29	30	May 1 • 8pm Public (	2 • 11am Life Cy

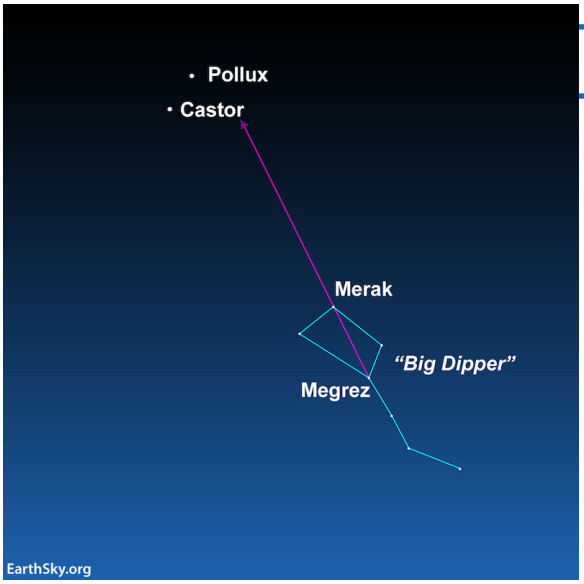
April ’26 Muskegon Club

Our next scheduled event is Tuesday, April 14, 2026 7:30PM. Regular ZOOM meeting.

Astronomy Riddle

What Star am I?

I reside in the Zodiac
My constellation's history is quite thrilling
From India to Arabia to Europe
All agreed on what they were seeing
I'm slightly brighter than my "twin"
Even though he gets first billing



Answer: Pollux

Pollux, also known as Polydeuces, is the immortal son of Zeus and Leda, famed for his adventures with his mortal brother Castor and their transformation into the constellation Gemin.

Event Details for April 2026

Spring/Summer Sky

Saturday, April 4 · 11:00am – 12:00pm

Muskegon Area District Library Montague Branch, 8778 Ferry St # 2, Montague, MI 49437, USA

Frank Roldan will explain the origin of constellations, show those visible during the Spring and Summer seasons and relate some of the mythology associated with them.

Spring and Summer Sky

Saturday, April 11 · 7:00 – 8:00pm

Hemlock Crossing, 8115 W Olive Rd, West Olive, MI 49460, USA

Presenter: Barry Schoenfelner

Seasonal constellations and their mythology.

Saugatuck Dark Sky Week Event

Monday, April 13 · 6:30 – 8:30pm

Convention and Visitors Bureau, 95 Blue Star Hiway, Douglas, MI

Display by SAAA-telescopes, equipment, handouts manned by members

Saugatuck Night at the Observatory

Wednesday, April 15 · 8:00 – 11:00pm

Hemlock Crossing Public Observatory, 8115 W Olive Rd, West Olive, MI 49460, USA

Visit by Saugatuck residents for general observing

Club Meeting

Thursday, April 16 · 7:00 – 9:00pm

Planetarium at Mac Bay School

Monthly meeting for April was pushed to the 3rd Thursday due to Spring Break.

Our monthly meetings occur on the 2nd Thursday of the month and are open to the public.

- **Announcements**
- **What's Up for April** (NASA video)
- **Seestar S50 & Dwarf 3 Telescopes** by Karl Rijkse & David Lesh

Club History—April 1991

March Board Meeting

Peter Burkey called the meeting to order at 7:25 PM on March 23rd, 1992.,

Treasurer's Report: $261.14

Welcome **Steve DeYoung** and **Fran Smith** as SAAA's newest members!

Star Parties: On Friday, May 1, a star party is scheduled at Mark's location on 46th St. On Friday, April 24 a star party is scheduled at Bob's location on 62nd St.

Summer Meetings: Sandy reported that due to remodeling, the West Ottawa Middle School Planetarium will be closed for the summer. Therefore, Pete will check into the possibility of our June and July meetings being held at Vivekananda Monastery in Ganges.

Family Night: Thursday April 16th will be SAAA family night. Bring the whole family for an evening of activities geared towards those who could enjoy an "entry level" program. Videos, slides, and a planetarium sky tour are on tap. Don't forget the "pot luck" refreshments for this special meeting. Sign-up sheets for Astronomy Day volunteering at the Westshore Mall will be available also.

Respectfully submitted by Mark Logsdon, Secretary/Treasurer.

April/May Occultations

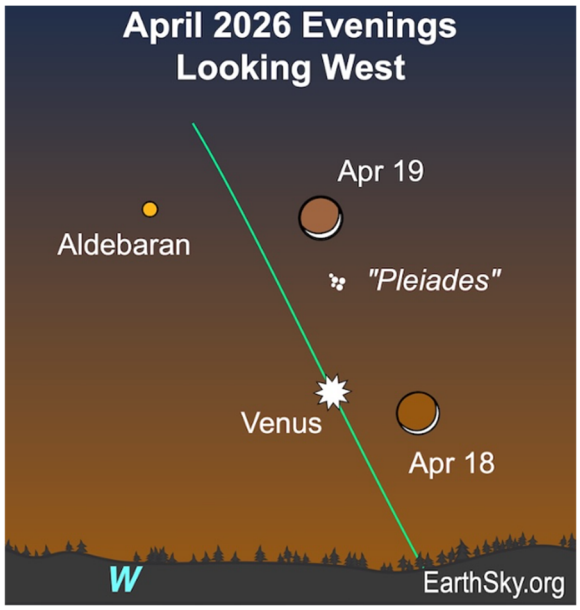
About 2:00 am local time on April 21st, the moon will occult θ Oph (magnitude 3.4). The following month, about 5:00 am local time on May 20th the moon will occult ν^1 Sgr (magnitude 5.0). So, if you can drag yourself out of bed and the sky is clear, these could be good chances to see a moderately bright star disappear behind the moon's dark limb. We will point out these stars during the April planetarium show for the benefit of those without star charts, etc.

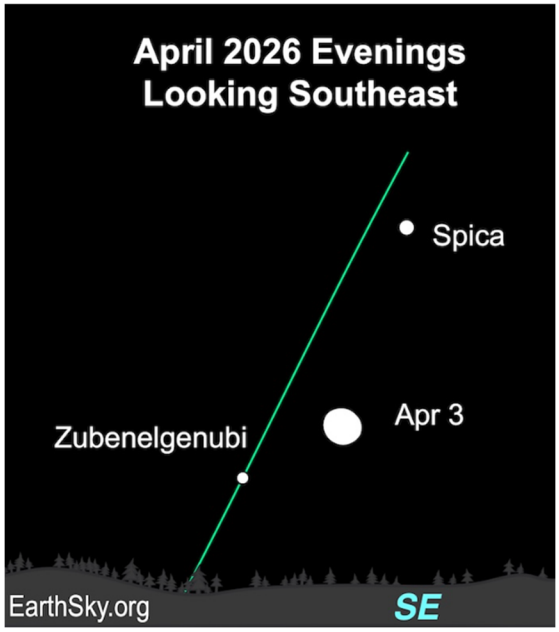
The 22nd Annual Apollo Rendezvous and Telescope Fair

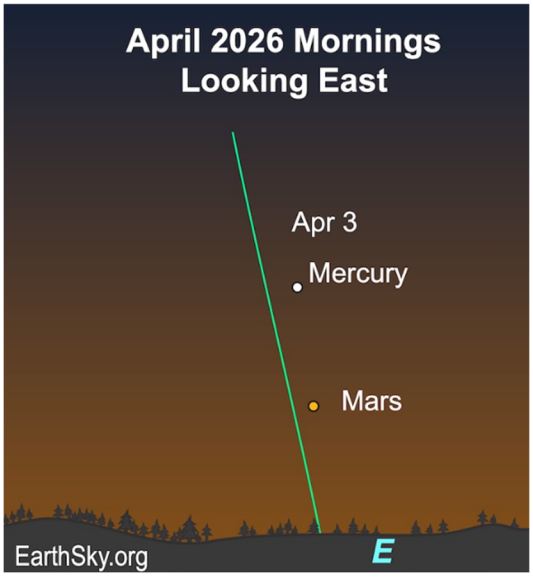
Apollo Rendezvous and Telescope Fair, on June 12th and 13th, hosted by the Miami Valley Astronomical Society and the Dayton Museum of Natural History, initiates the summer season of gatherings for amateur and professional astronomers of the midwest. This year's convention will be held entirely within the newly remodeled dayton Museum of Natural History, featuring the DIGISTAR planetarium, the only one in Ohio.

On Friday is registration, an informal slide presentation, as well as a planetarium show. Star gazing will follow on the museum grounds. On Saturday, displays will be set up featuring commercial and amateur astronomical software, a telescope fair and flea market (good place to get a scope!), as well as numerous talks. Featured speakers include Australian astronomer Rev. Robert O. Evans of supernova fame, and Deborah Byrd, formerly of *Star Date* and now producer of *Earth and Sky*. Saturday evening will host a star party at the John Bryan State Park Observatory.

What's in the Sky this Month, continued...







This Month in Astronomy History

April 1: Comet Hale-Bopp nearest Sun - 1997
April 2: First photograph of Sun taken - 1845
April 9: NASA selects original seven Mercury astronauts - 1959
April 12: Yuri Gagarin becomes first human in space - 1961
April 12: Columbia is first space shuttle to be launched - 1981
April 17: Apollo 13 returns to Earth - 1970
April 20: Shapley-Curtis debate on the distance and nature of spiral nebulae -1920
April 25: Deployment of Hubble Space Telescope - 1990
April 28: Eugene Shoemaker is born - 1928

Kids Corner

https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/ A place where kids and grown-ups have fun with chnology.

NASA Climate Kids: It's all about climate.
https://climatekids.nasa.gov/

SciJinks: It's all about weather! https://scijinks.gov/

Kid's Corner Extra! (From EarthSky.org)

Don't let these myth's fool you! Our Moon. (Continued on pg 7)

1. The side of the moon that is perpetually turned away from Earth is not darker than the side we see. It is fully illuminated by the sun just as often (lunar daytime), and is in shade just as often (lunar night), as is the familiar Man in the Moon side we see. The Earth-facing side of the moon gives rise to another misconception that many people share, namely that we see only 50% of the moon from Earth. In fact, only about 41% of the moon's far side (a much more accurate and preferable term than dark side) is invisible to earthly observers. A diligent observer on Earth can, over time, observe about 59% of the moon's surface. This is because a phenomenon called libration causes the moon's viewing angle, relative to Earth, to change slightly over its orbit. Basically, this causes our view of the moon to shift slightly up and down and side to side.

Lunar libration is when we can see a bit further over one limb (edge) or the other. The moon occasionally exposes slightly more of its surface on the eastern or western extreme, depending on the location in the orbit. That's why, as viewed from Earth, about 59% of the moon's surface is exposed over the course of the moon's (roughly) monthly orbit around the Earth.

2 To our eyes, the moon appears round. So it's natural to assume that it is actually spherical in shape – with every point on its surface equidistant from its center – like a big ball. Not so. The shape of the moon is that of an oblate spheroid, meaning it has the shape of a ball that is slightly flattened, more like a gumdrop.

3 Anyone who has seen a full moon high in a clear sky late at night has a right to believe this. Comparatively speaking, however, the moon is neither particularly bright nor actually white. It appears very bright relative to the dark sky, and ordinarily looks white to the eye. Remember the old-style incandescent light bulbs? Now imagine a 100-watt light bulb located about 150 feet (46 meters) away and shining in an otherwise complete-

ly dark night. That is approximately how bright the full moon is. Really.

And the color? Well, as with brightness, color is a subjective thing. The moon emits no light of its own, but rather shines by reflecting sunlight. Sunlight is composed of all colors, but peaks in the yellow-green range of the spectrum. The sun looks white when high in the sky, as does the moon, because of the way our eye-brain connection mixes all the colors together. The moon's color varies somewhat according to its phase and position in the sky, although this color variation is generally too subtle for human eyes. However, the moon is actually gray rather than pure white, on average much like the well-worn asphalt on most streets.

4 One myth to dispel is that our moon does have gravity. The notion that the moon lacks gravity is so absurd that scientists wouldn't even bring it up unless it were so widely accepted. When shown an image of one of the Apollo astronauts jumping high or seemingly floating across the lunar surface, some of my college students will reply that it's because there is no gravity on the moon. In reality, the force of gravity on the moon is only about 1/6 what it is on Earth, but it's still there.

Scientists think this moon myth, widespread though it may be, is simply a misunderstanding of what the word gravity means in physics. Every physical body, whether it be the sun, Earth, our moon, a human body or a subatomic particle – everything that has substance – has a gravitational pull.

While the practicality of measuring the weight (the pull of gravity) on tiny objects, such as a grain of sand, can be debated, the force exists and can be calculated. Even photons of light and other forms of energy exhibit gravity. Gravity holds galaxy clusters, galaxies, stars, planets and moons together and in orbit about each other. If every physical thing did not exhibit gravity, the universe as we know it could not exist.

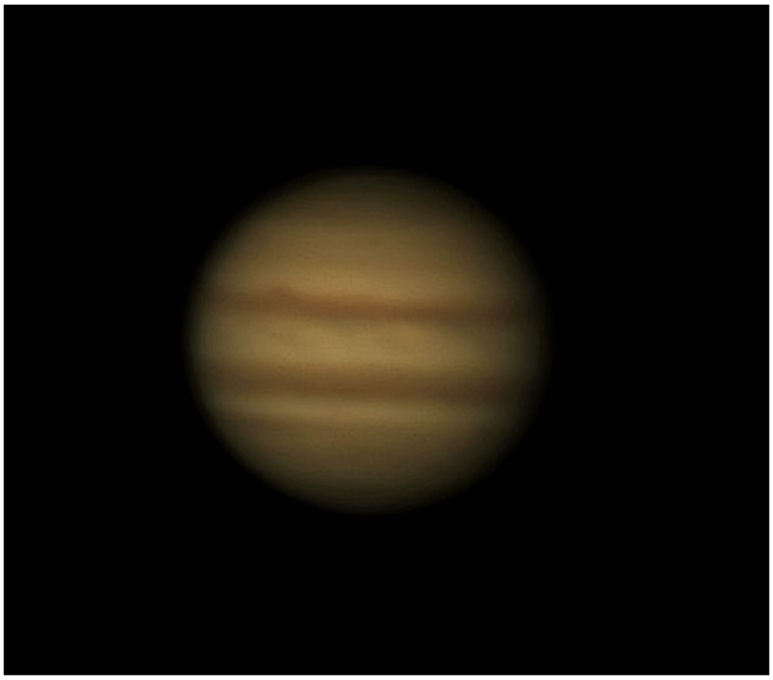
5 There is no question that the moon, or rather its gravity, is the major cause of ocean tides on Earth. By the way, the sun's gravity raises tides, too, but its effect is smaller. Some folks use the indisputable fact of the moon's effect on the tides to argue that the moon raises tides in the human body. However, to believe that ocean tides and human tides both are caused by the moon betrays a major misunderstanding about how gravity works to produce ocean tides.

If tidal effects were even measurable in the human body, which they aren't, they would be on the order of a 10-millionth of a meter, or about 1/1000 the thickness of a piece of paper. Those are still tides, you say? Perhaps. But they are far, far smaller tides than are raised within your body when a truck passes you on the highway … or even when another person walks past you on the street.

A recent study showed that people sleep less leading up to a full moon. Maybe you've noticed yourself tossing and turning as the moon nears full phase?

Club Members' Photos

Dave Lesh submitted this photo that Frank Roldan, Karl Rijkse, and he took of Jupiter with the planetary camera and the 16" telescope at Hemlock observatory on the night of March 23.



Save The Date!! National Astronomy Day—May 9th

Astronomy Special Event

Celebrate National Astronomy Day with the Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association! This family-friendly event includes telescope viewing, educational displays, and an evening lecture. All activities are free. To add to the excitement, each child will receive a free raffle ticket, and a telescope will be awarded after the lecture. The winner will be posted at www.holland-saaa.org. In case of poor weather, events will move indoors to the Nature Center.

GOOD WEATHER CONDITIONS (clear skies!)
12:00 – 5:00 PM:
-Public solar observing with the Coronado and Meade LX-600 telescopes
-Planet Walk along the path by the observatory

7:00 – 8:15 PM:
-Perspectives of Scale lecture

8:15 PM – Midnight:
-General Observing with the 16" LX-600 telescope and several smaller telescopes
-Constellation identification & mythological stories

BAD WEATHER CONDITIONS
12:00–5:00 PM:
-Planet Walk display and telescope exhibit
-Space related video displays

7:00–8:15 PM:
-Perspectives of Scale lecture

Preregistration is encouraged, but not required.

Selling Equipment?

If you want to sell your telescope or other astronomy equipment, we will provide space on this page of our newsletter.

Any member interested in selling their astronomy equipment to other members can do this via the Newsletter. SAAA will not be otherwise involved or responsible for any bidding/selling transactions. The member should list the asking price, provide a picture and a phone number for direct contact. Please send to Barb/Editor (barbwbrown@hotmail.com) seven (7) days before the end of any month in order to be included in the next month's issue.

Keyholder Schedule

Members may contact the designated keyholder to schedule (48 hour notice) a private tour of our Planetarium. Use our membership information to obtain the keyholder's phone or email.

Mar 29– Apr 4 Karl Rijkse
Apr 5-11 Frank Roldan
Apr 12-18 Barry Schoenfelner
Apr 19-25 David Lesh
Apr 26-May 2 Michael Long

NASA's Photo of the Day!

https://apod.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html features the NASA photo of the day.

Have you missed a copy, or lost one, or just want to browse old issues of Astronomical League's *Reflector*?
Astronomical League's quarterly *Reflector* magazine:
https://www.astroleague.org/reflector/

Publication Information

Self-published for SAAA members by a SAAA member. April 2026

Editor is appointed by the SAAA board. Email: barbwbrown@hotmail.com
Previous Issues of our newsletters are found on our website at: Holland-saaa.org

Not sure received your copy of Reflector, or, looking for a past issue?
Digital copies of the Astronomical League's quarterly Reflector magazine can be found at:

https://www.astroleague.org/reflector/