



**In this issue:**

- Club Notes
- Calendar and Events
- Night Sky: NASA
- What in the Sky This Month
- Kid's Corner
- Kid's Corner Extra
- Astronomy Riddle
- Club History Moment
- Equipment for Sale
- NASA Photo of the Day
- Club Photos
- Publication information

## CLUB NOTES

Dear members,

Winter is upon us, which means short days, but long nights.

On December 21 we have the longest night of the year, and Winter Solstice begins at 10.30 am EST.

December is also the month of Christmas celebration.

On December 11 at 7 pm SAAA has its Christmas Party. Several members have pledged to bring food and snacks; board members will take care of the drinks. We hope to see you there and spend some time together.

The year 2025 passed quickly with a newly elected SAAA board starting in January 2025.

SAAA had a successful year with the membership growing to 55 paid memberships.

This reminds me of a request to pay the dues for 2026! You can find on the website of SAAA convenient ways to pay for your membership.

In 2025 the weather wasn't helping us. In previous years visitors to the Hemlock Observatory were around 1700 people per year. In 2025 due to weather and numerous cancellations because of clouds the attendance dropped to 1200.

We started in 2025 Tuesday observing membership nights at the Hemlock Observatory. The Friday night public observing times are rather busy, and we don't get a chance to do some equipment testing or photography. We have a core group of people attending those Tuesday evenings, if you want to be part of this let me know.

On Friday nights, we now have an EAA setup. On a TV screen outside the dome, we display via a digital camera what we observe. This results sometimes in more people watching the TV screen than observing through the 16".

I wish you a great festive December and a Merry Christmas.

Karl Rijkse  
President SAAA



Our 2026 membership dues are due in early January. Renewals may be paid in December. Please visit the linked page below to pay your dues. **THANK YOU!**

[Membership page link.](#)

# Calendar and Upcoming Events



## Public Observing

**When** Every FRI evening starting at sunset (weather permitting) and on first SAT during the summer. See immediately below for start times.

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

**Description** The observatory is open from our start time until 11 PM (weather and clear sky permitting, see note after October 14<sup>th</sup>). There are no entry fees. Please be aware that the park gate closes automatically at 10 PM sharp, therefore visitors must arrive before 10 PM to enter the park. You will be able to leave as you wish.

**Visible night sky objects:** planets, the Moon, deep sky objects like galaxies, star clusters and planetary nebulae.

## Friday Night (and First Saturday) Viewing Times

7pm    January ~ March	9pm    June ~ September
8pm    April ~ May	7pm    October ~ December

## December 2025 Dates and Times

SUN 30	MON Dec 1	TUE 2	WED 3	THU 4	FRI 5	SAT 6		
<p style="color: blue; font-weight: bold;">For More Information on any event, please go to <a href="http://www.holland-saaa.org">www.holland-saaa.org</a></p> <p style="color: blue; font-weight: bold;">DEC NOTES: no presentation first Saturday, but Club Membership meeting (11th) is our Holiday Party!</p>		Member Only Observing on clear sky Tuesday nights at our Observatory in Hemlock Crossing Park.			● 7pm Public C			
		9	10	11 ● 7pm Club Me	12 ● 7pm Public C	13		
		14	15	16	17	18	19 ● 7pm Public C	20
		21	22	23	24	25	26 ● 7pm Public C	27
		28	29	30	31	Jan 1	2 ● 7pm Public C	3

## December 2025 Muskegon Club

<p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">Tuesday December 2, 2025</p>	<p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">6:30 P.M. Christmas Dinner @ <a href="#" style="color: yellow;">Joe Chan's</a></p>
--	--

# Astronomy Riddle

It comes only before, it comes only after.  
Rises only in darkness, but rises only in light.  
It is always the same, but is yet always different.

Answer: the Moon.

---

## What's in the Sky: December

By Peter Burkey

### A Look Back at History

Nineteen sixty eight was both a very bad and a very good year. The Smithsonian Magazine devoted an entire issue to 1968 as several historical events occurred that year, not all of them very uplifting, to say the least. There were assassinations (Martin Luther King, Jr., Robert Kennedy), riots (the Democratic convention in Chicago), and numerous protests against the war in Viet Nam. But the year ended on a high note when the Apollo 8 astronauts, Frank Borman, Bill Anders, and Jim Lovell, made the first manned trip to the Moon, orbiting it ten times before returning to Earth.

The crew made history in a couple of other ways as well. You are probably familiar with the famous “Earthrise” photo of our own planet suspended in a vast black sky over the lunar horizon. But probably the most memorable event of the mission occurred when the three astronauts each read several verses from the Book of Genesis in a live television broadcast on Christmas Eve. Finally people could enjoy an uplifting story of bravery and courage, of exploration and discovery, and a positive ending to an otherwise negative year. In fact, after the mission, Borman received a telegram that said, “Thank you Apollo 8. You saved 1968”.

The month of December is a time when there really aren't that many notable constellations well-placed for viewing. The summer triangle is sinking in the west and the bright stars of winter are just coming up in the east. Next month will offer better viewing opportunities for what's up in the sky.

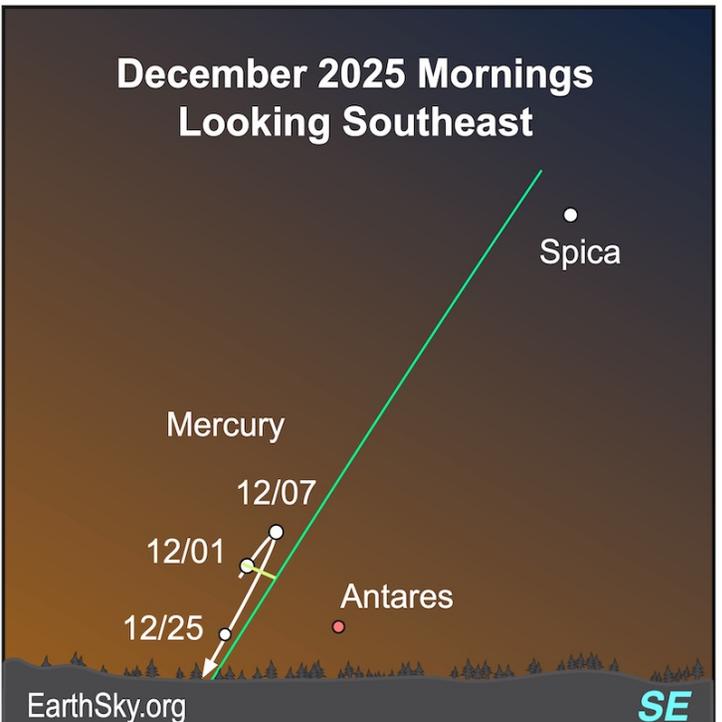
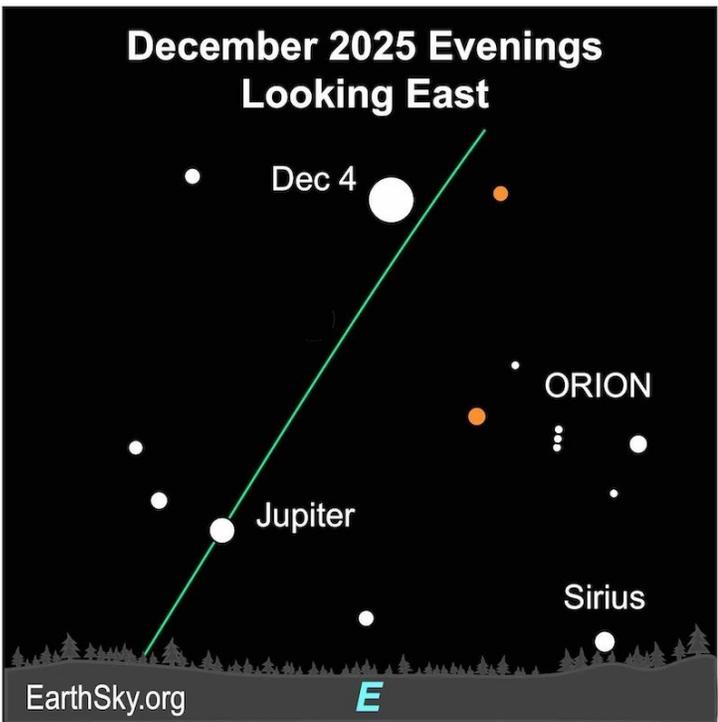
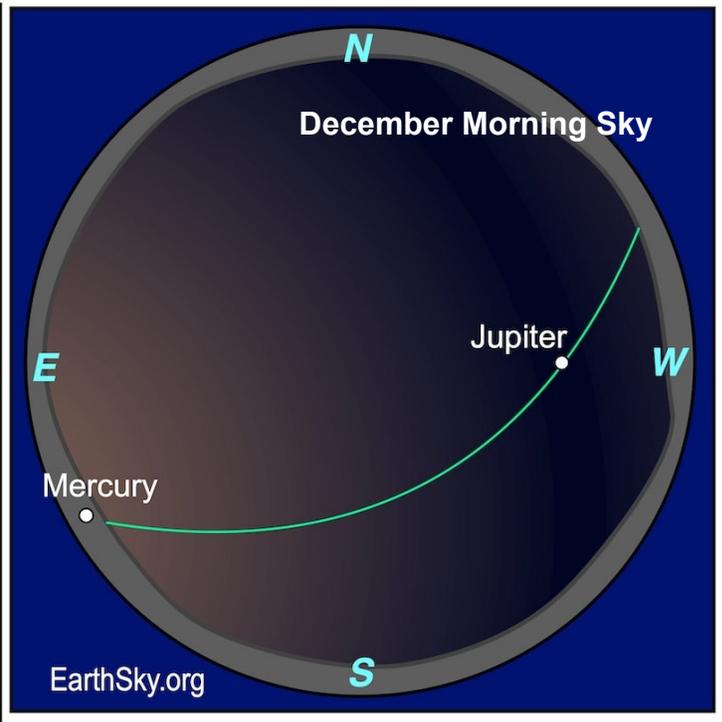
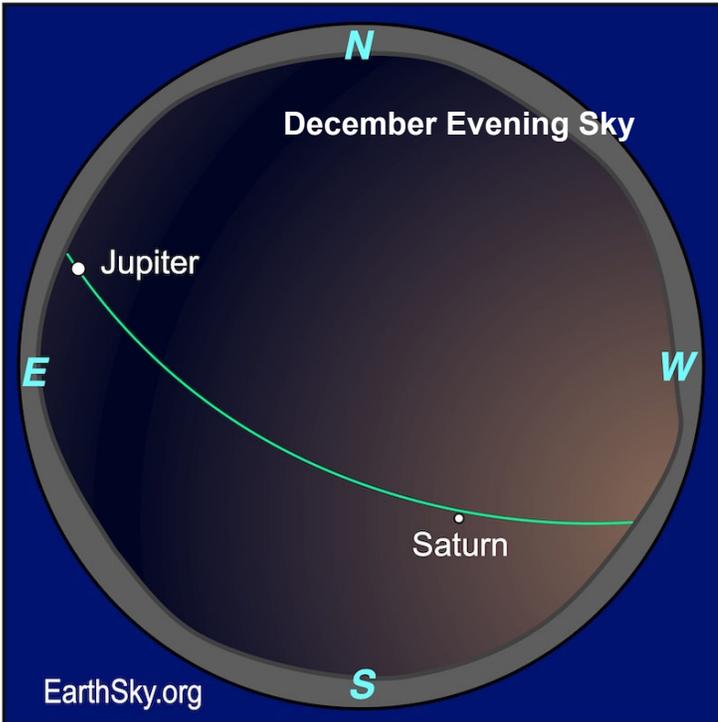
(RT) from <CTL-CLICK>

[Space Tourism](#)

December 2 – Peak of the Pheonid Meteor Shower  
December 5 – Peak of the  $\phi$ -Cassiopeid Meteor Shower  
December 6 – Peak of the Puppis-Velid Meteor Shower  
December 9 – Peak of the Monocerotid Meteor Shower  
December 12 – Peak of the  $\sigma$ -Hydrid Meteor Shower  
December 12 – Large Magellanic Cloud is Well Placed  
December 14 – Peak of the Geminid Meteor Shower  
December 16 – Peak of the Comae Berenicid Meteor Shower  
December 20 – Peak of the December Leonis Minorid Meteor Shower  
December 21 – December Solstice  
December 22 – Peak of the Ursid Meteor Shower

# What's in the Sky this Month: November

Information from EarthSky.org



# This Month in Club History: December '89

## December Executive Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 December 7th by Vice-President Robert Wade. Mark Logsdon, Sandy Plakke, and Peter Burkey were also present.

Extensive discussion followed concerning proposed amendments to the SAAA Constitution. The officers felt we could not now require all full members of the SAAA to receive *Sky & Telescope*. Since we are a new club and since many members are astronomy novices, *Astronomy* magazine would be more appropriate for them. Additionally, recall that if we elected to receive S&T at club rates, it would be received by every member as a benefit of membership - it could not be an elective option (minimum 10 members, \$16/member/year). *Astronomy* on the other hand requires only 5 members (\$14/member/year).

Accordingly, the following amendments are proposed to the constitution in an effort to move towards S&T in the future, and yet make a publication available to members at reduced rates. The changes will be voted on in the January meeting, so if you have strong opinions, come make them known! In summary, the changes are:

1. remove dues amount from the constitution.
2. make two types of membership, differing in ability to hold club office and in receiving an astronomical publication.
3. make the requirements for the Vice-president the same as those for the President, since the Vice-president may need to serve as President.

1. **Junior** - limited to full-time students.
2. **Senior** - adults of at least 62 years.
3. **Regular** - anyone who is not eligible for Junior or Senior membership. In addition, persons eligible for Junior or Senior membership shall be admitted to Regular membership in place of the Junior or Senior membership, if they so desire.

There shall be two classes of membership:

1. **Full** - A *Full* membership entitles the member to hold a club office, attend monthly meetings, receive the monthly newsletter as well as a commercial astronomical publication, and attend special club events such as Star Parties.
2. **Contributing** - A *Contributing* membership entitles the member to attend monthly meetings, receive the monthly newsletter, and attend special club events such as Star Parties.

## SECTION II

Dues for Senior membership shall be \$12.00 per year. Dues for Junior membership shall be \$12.00 per year. Dues for Regular membership shall be \$20.00 per year.

1. The *Full* and *Contributing* membership classes are further subdivided into *Senior*, *Regular*, and *Junior* memberships. The *Senior* class includes those aged 62 years and older, the *Regular* class includes those aged 19 - 61 years, and the *Junior* class includes those 18 years or less.
2. Dues for *Full* and *Contributing* members shall be set for the following year no later than the November meeting and are due no later than the following January meeting.

## This Month in Astronomy History

- Dec. 3: Pioneer 10 spacecraft makes closest approach to Jupiter - 1973  
Dec. 7: Gerard Kuiper born—1905  
Dec. 14: Gene Cernan, Apollo 17 astronaut, is last human to walk on Moon - 1972  
Dec. 20: Founding of Mt. Wilson Solar Observatory - 1904  
Dec. 24: Apollo 8 astronauts give us inspirational moment from lunar orbit - 1968  
Dec. 25: Isaac Newton born - 1642



## Kids Corner

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

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! Want to see the Earth's Shadow?

You'll see Earth's shadow as deep blue-gray. It's darker than the blue of the twilight sky.

The shadow of the Earth is big. It helps to be on a hill or somewhere you have a long view to the horizon. You might have to turn your head this way and that – along the arc of the horizon opposite the sun – to see the whole thing. And, just so you'll recognize it more easily, remember that the shadow is curved, in exactly the same way that the whole Earth is curved.

Once you spot it, don't go back inside just yet. Wait a while, and watch Earth's shadow ascending or descending at exactly the same rate that the sun is rising or setting on the opposite horizon.

And here's a fun thought ... night itself is a shadow. When night falls, you're standing within the shadow of Earth.



From EarthSky

# Club Members' Photos of The November Aurora!

From Club Member, Tavis McGeehan11/12/25  
↓ and >



From Club Member, David Lesh  
11/12/2525 < and ^



From Club President, Karl Rijkse.  
< and >





## 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](mailto: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

NOV 30-DEC 6	David Lesh
DEC 7-13	Karl Rijkse
DEC 14-20	Frank Roldan
DEC 21-27	Barry Schoenfelner
DEC 28-JAN 3	Michael Long

Members, please see our membership roster for contact information in order to schedule for the Keyholder in order to schedule an Observatory private tour.



## 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. December 2025*

*Editor is appointed by the SAAA board. Email: [barbwbrown@hotmail.com](mailto:barbwbrown@hotmail.com)  
Previous Issues of our newsletters are found on our website at: [Holland-saaa.org](http://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/>