



# Astronomy Club of Akron

## 2016 Observatory Schedule

5031 Manchester Road, Akron, OH

[www.acao.org](http://www.acao.org)

- The following events are open to the public. Please join us for stargazing and educational activities.
- Events will be cancelled if skies are cloudy. If skies are questionable, please call for the latest information: 330-837-5848
- This is an outdoor activity in an unheated environment. Nighttime temperatures drop rapidly, even during summer. A general rule of thumb is dress for 15 degrees colder than predicted nighttime low temperature.
- Please be considerate of those who bring their own telescopes. Children should be supervised at all times. Pets should be left at home.
- Please, **no smoking** in or near the observatory or on the surrounding grounds where club members have set up their telescopes.

### March 5 – 7:00pm

See Orion Nebula with 16" observatory telescope, one of the most spectacular celestial objects. We'll also view Pleiades through wide field telescope. An ACA member will take you on a Sky Tour of Winter Constellations.

### March 12 – 7:00pm

Come out this evening to view intergalactic wanderer NGC 2419. This globular cluster is 304,000 light-years distant and near zenith tonight.

### April 2 – 8:00pm

**Special Event:** *Messier Marathon* – stay all night to observe all 110 Messier objects with ACA members. Best Free Coffee in Akron will be brewing all night.

### April 9 – 8:15pm

**Galaxy Night:** Come out tonight to observe Bode's Galaxy, Cigar Galaxy, & Whirlpool Galaxy. We'll try to observe elusive Mercury at sunset.

### April 30 – 8:30pm

Jupiter is well placed for evening observing; view equatorial bands and Galilean Moons. Ghost of Jupiter also well placed.

### May 7 – 7:45pm

**Telescope Seminar:** Our members will describe advantages & disadvantages of each type of telescope. Observing session to follow.

### May 28 – 9:00pm

Observe most distant object within reach of the observatory telescope: Quasar 3C273 is 2.4 billion light-years away & receding from us at 16% the speed of light.

### June 4 – 9:00pm

Mars reached opposition on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mars is closest to Earth at this point in its orbit and best for observing Martian surface features; however, well-placed in sky later in evening.

### June 25 – 9:00pm

View Saturn, its moons Titan, Rhea, & Dione, and famous Cassini Division within ring system. Ring tilt is near maximum as seen from Earth: currently 26 degrees.

### July 9 – 9:00pm

Come out to see a 5-day old Moon. This is one of the few star parties where we do lunar observing. See craters, mountains, rills, & seas on lunar landscape.

### July 30 – 9:00pm

Tonight we'll be observing double stars: optical doubles, visual doubles, and multiple star systems. ACA member will take you on a Sky Tour of Summer Constellations.

### August 27 – 7:45pm

**WOW!** Spectacular conjunction of Venus & Jupiter with a separation of 0.06 degrees! Very Sweet! However, very low on horizon; we'll try to observe early.

### September 3 – 7:45pm

**Presentation:** *Dark Energy & the Cosmological Constant: A Truly Repulsive Topic* – globular cluster viewing to follow.

### September 24 – 7:45pm

Planetary Nebulae Night: Ring Nebula, Cat's Eye Nebula, Blue Snowball, Blue Flash Nebula, & Blinking Nebula.

### October 1 – 7:30pm

**Classical Musical Night:** Listen to the best musical selections of Mozart, Bach, & Vivaldi by which to gaze at the stars.

### October 22 – 7:00pm

**Orionids Meteor Shower:** We should see about 15 meteors per hour while stargazing at ET Cluster & Saturn Nebula.

### October 29 – 7:00pm

View Andromeda Galaxy & Herschel's Double Cluster. An ACA member will take you on an Autumn Sky Tour.

\*\*\* We hold unscheduled star parties when skies are clear. For an e-mail notification of impromptu star parties send a message to [ACAstarparty@att.net](mailto:ACAstarparty@att.net) to be added to the list. For private star parties (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Church Groups, School Groups, etc.) send a request to the same e-mail address.

# Getting Started In Astronomy

Getting started in astronomy as a hobby isn't necessarily as expensive as most people think. While it's easy to spend several thousand dollars on high-end equipment, most skywatchers begin their odyssey with little more than an inexpensive skychart and their own eyes. Taking it one step farther, a modest pair of 10x50 binoculars can be had for less than \$50.00. While binoculars are seemingly less glamorous than a telescope, the views offered are nothing short of incredible. Many deep-space objects are visible and the sheer number of stars that are revealed will delight and amaze.

While the temptation to purchase an inexpensive, department store telescope can be overwhelming, you should think twice before taking the plunge. The optical quality is often enough to discourage rather than encourage. Advertising claims of super-high magnification are nothing but smoke and mirrors in the world of amateur astronomy. How much light your instrument can collect and effectively bring to your eye is what really matters. It's not at all unreasonable to expect pricing in the 300 dollar range for a reliable and more importantly, useful telescope. It's really worth waiting and saving for such an instrument if need be.

The Astronomy Club of Akron (ACA) hosts public viewing events, also known as "star parties," throughout the year (see reverse side for dates and times). As a non-profit entity with public education as our goal, the ACA's mission is to bring astronomy to you! Our public events are designed to teach and to foster interest in amateur astronomy. This being the case, our permanent observatory facility located within the Portage Lakes State Park houses a 16" computerized, Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope. This instrument is the centerpiece of our public star parties and everybody is welcome to have a look through the eyepiece at whatever happens to be targeted. We enjoy answering questions and requests to see astronomical objects are gladly accepted. In addition to our observatory, you will find members scattered around the property, expertly manning their own private telescopes and binoculars. Again, questions are welcome as is the opportunity to show you astronomical wonders through a variety of brands and optical designs.

If you don't currently own a telescope but are considering purchasing one, our public star parties are fantastic sources of information. Come and see the many choices and options available and see how much more informed a purchasing decision you can make afterward!

As a non-profit organization, the ACA exists and operates through a combination of charitable donations and membership dues. If you'd like to be a member, you will know that your dues help to support our recurring expenses and purchase of new and replacement equipment. We often are able to offer discounts on annual subscriptions to *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* magazines and you will be able to borrow ACA loaner telescopes. You will be invited to our members-only events and will be eligible to vote on club issues. Even more important, you will know that you are part of our effort to teach and enlighten those who may never have been exposed to astronomy in any other way.



Map and directions:

To the [Observatory](#)

To the [Kiwanis Hall](#)