



# Astronomy Club of Akron

## 2018 Observatory Schedule

5031 Manchester Road, Akron, OH

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

- The following events are open to the public. Please join us for stargazing and educational activities. Please arrive on time to avoid headlight distraction.
  - For notice of “impromptu star parties” not listed, send e-mail to [ACASTARparty@att.net](mailto:ACASTARparty@att.net) to request e-mail notification of unscheduled observing sessions.
  - Events will be cancelled if skies are cloudy. Always check website for star party status two hours before event.
  - This is an outdoor activity in an unheated environment. Nighttime temperatures drop rapidly, even during summer. A general rule of thumb is to dress for 15 degrees colder than predicted nighttime low temperature.
  - Please respect those who bring their own telescopes. Children should be supervised at all times. The observatory grounds is no place for toys or tomfoolery.
  - Please, no smoking on observatory grounds. Please, no use of cell phones or tablets in observatory (to preserve night vision).
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### March 17 – 7:45pm

View the Great Orion Nebula & the beautiful star clusters of Auriga through the 16” observatory telescope and view Pleiades, Hyades, & Beehive Cluster through the 100mm wide field telescope. Sky Tour: Winter Constellations

### April 7 – 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 14 – 8:00pm

Catch a glimpse of Venus at star party start and then observe Eskimo Nebula, Ghost of Jupiter, and galaxies in the constellation Leo.

### May 12 – 8:30pm

We’ll examine the Mizar-Alcor star system with the 100mm wide field telescope and then close-up with 16” observatory telescope to view optical & visual doubles. Observing session will follow.

### May 19 – 8:45pm

The Virgo Galaxy Cluster is well-placed for observing. Come out to observe M87; a giant elliptical galaxy weighing a trillion solar masses with a 6 billion solar mass black hole at the center. Sky Tour: Spring Constellations

### June 9 – 9:00pm

Jupiter observing tonight! See Jupiter’s equatorial belts, possibly some festoons on the Jovian Disk, and the Galilean moons orbiting the planet.

### June 16 – 9:00pm

Jupiter is first on the observing list. The Great Hercules Cluster is located near zenith. This is perhaps the best globular cluster for northern hemisphere observers. Saturn is rising in the east and will close out our observing session.

### July 7 – 9:00pm

The Ring Nebula is a stunning sight in the 16” observatory telescope; placed in the Milky Way, observers can see the nebula set in a field rich with stars.

### July 14 – 8:45pm

Planet Night – Observe Venus at star party start. Jupiter and Saturn are well-placed during the observing session. Mars rises late and will close out our event.

### August 4 – 8:45pm

**Mars Event** – Mars makes its close approach to Earth and appears nearly as large as it ever gets. Observe Martian surface features! Venus observing early, followed by Jupiter and Saturn observing; then our featured planet Mars!

### September 1 – 8:15pm

The sky is filled with globular clusters and we’ll be observing many of them tonight. Also, view the Coathanger star cluster and M26 star cloud through the 100mm wide field telescope.

### September 8 – 8:00pm

The constellation Sagittarius hosts many Messier Objects and we’ll try to find all of them tonight; including, the Butterfly Cluster that we’ll view with observatory telescope & 100mm wide field telescope. Sky Tour: Summer Constellations

### October 6 – 7:45pm

Planetary Nebulae Night: Ring Nebula, Cat’s Eye Nebula, Blue Snowball, Blue Flash Nebula, Saturn Nebula, & Blinking Nebula. Also, view Herschel’s Garnet Star.

### October 13 – 7:45pm

**Classical Musical Night:** Listen to the best musical selections of Mozart, Bach, & Vivaldi by which to gaze at the stars. And view craters, mountains, & seas on a 5-day old Moon. ET Cluster, Andromeda Galaxy, Herschel’s Double Cluster are on observing list. Uranus observing will close our event.

\*\*\* 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 sky-watchers 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. 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. 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 at the Portage Lakes State Park houses a 16" Meade LX200-ACF, 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. You will also receive discounts on annual subscriptions to *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* magazines and 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 & Direction to:

[Observatory](#) [New Franklin City Hall](#) [Kiwanis](#)