



Astronomy Club of Akron

2020 Observatory Schedule

5031 Manchester Road, Akron, OH www.acao.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 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 cooler than predicted nighttime low temperature.
- Please respect those who set up their telescopes. Children should be supervised at all times. The observatory grounds are no place for toys or tomfoolery.
- Please, **No Smoking** on observatory grounds. Smoke reacts with optical surfaces, damaging optical coatings.
- Please, no use of cell phones or tablets in observatory (to preserve night vision).

April 18 – 8:15pm

Venus is well placed for observing early, and then we'll view Ghost of Jupiter and the beautiful star cluster M37 through the 16" observatory telescope and view Beehive Cluster through the 100mm wide field telescope.

April 25 – 8:30pm

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

May 16 – 9:00pm

Sombrero Galaxy and galaxies M65, M66, M95, M96, M106, and NGC 4631 are well placed for observing. We'll view Melotte 111 through the 100mm wide field telescope and attach a spectroscope to one of our telescopes to view the spectrum of a star.

May 23 – 9:00pm

The Virgo Galaxy Cluster is well placed for observing. Come out to observe M87; a giant elliptical galaxy weighing one trillion solar masses with a 6 billion solar mass black hole at the center. Later we'll try to observe the farthest object within reach of the 16 inch observatory telescope: 3C273, a quasar that is 2.4 billion light-years distant and receding from us at 16% the speed of light.

June 13 – 9:00pm

Double Star Observing: We'll view 24 Coma Berenices, the Mizar-Alcor system, and Cor Caroli. An observing session and Sky Tour of the Spring Constellations will follow.

June 20 – 9:00pm

Come out to view globular clusters tonight. These star clusters contain tens of thousands of stars in an area less than a 100 light-years across. We'll examine M5, M53, M13, M92, M10, & M12 and discuss globular cluster classification.

July 18 – 9:00pm

Come out to view open cluster NGC6633, Wild Duck Cluster, Ring Nebula, M26 Star Cloud, and Swan Nebula using an OIII filter.

July 25 – 9:00pm

We'll be observing a 5-day old Moon. This is a great opportunity to see crater central peaks lit up by the grazing angle of the Sun, while the rest of the crater is in shadow.

August 22 – 8:30pm

See Jupiter's equatorial belts and Galilean Moons. Saturn's magnificent ring system is at 23 degree tilt as seen from Earth. We'll also view Coathanger asterism, Ring Nebula, Wild Duck Cluster, and open clusters M25 & M23.

September 12 – 8:00pm

Saturn and Jupiter observing followed by Blinking Nebula, open clusters IC4665 & NGC6709, and globular clusters M71 & M15. Sky Tour of the Summer Constellations will follow.

September 19 – 7:45pm

We'll be viewing celestial objects in the constellation Cygnus including open clusters M39 & M29, globular cluster M56, double star Albireo, and the Cygnus Star Cloud using the 100mm wide field telescope.

October 10 – 7:15pm

Planetary Nebula Night: Observe Ring Nebula, Cat's Eye Nebula, Blue Snowball Nebula, Blinking Nebula, Saturn Nebula, Blue Flash Nebula, and Herschel's Garnet Star.

October 17 – 7:00pm

Mars makes its closest approach to Earth on the 13th. Our observing list includes Andromeda Galaxy, Herschel's Double Cluster, and ET Cluster. We'll end our observing session with Mars.

*** 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 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](#)