



# Astronomy Club of Akron

## 2010 Observatory Schedule

Portage Lakes State Park, 5031 Manchester Road, Akron, OH 44319

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

- Our star parties are free and open to the public. Please join us for stargazing and educational activities. Star parties will begin promptly.
- Events may be cancelled if the skies are cloudy. If the 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 in the summer. A general rule of thumb is dress for 20 degrees colder than the 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.
- Smoke and expensive optics don't mix. Please, **no smoking** in or near the observatory or on the surrounding grounds where club members have set up their telescopes. If you must smoke, walk to the down-wind side of the observing site. Be considerate of your fellow observers.
- Come As You Are, Learn As You Go!

### January 16 – 6:30pm

Observe Herschel's Double Cluster, the Pleiades, and the Beehive in a wide field of view eyepiece.

### February 13 – 6:30pm

See Mars at its best 2010 appearance.

### March 13 – 7:00pm

Special Event: Messier Marathon, stay all night to observe all 110 Messier objects with ACA club members.

### March 20 – 8:00pm

View a five-day old Moon and globular cluster NGC 2419, an intergalactic wanderer at a distance of 304,000 light years.

### April 10 – 8:00pm

Planet Parade: View Mercury, Venus, Mars, & Saturn.

### April 17 – 8:30pm

Observe galaxies in the Virgo Cluster and the most distant object within reach of the observatory telescope: Quasar 3C273 at a distance of 2.4 billion light-years.

### May 8 – 9:00pm

An ACA member will take you on a sky tour of the Summer Constellations.

### May 22 – 8:00pm

**Annual ACA Telescope Seminar!** Our members will describe the advantages and disadvantages of each type of telescope.

### June 5 – 9:00pm

*Program: Astrophotography*

Learn how astronomers photograph the heavens.

### June 12 – 9:00pm

*Program: A Beginner's Guide to Finding Celestial Objects\**  
We'll show you how to follow a map to the stars!

### June 19 – 6:00pm

**Solar & Lunar Event / Hotdog Roast!** View sunspots, solar flares, and prominences on the sun and craters, mountains, and maria on the Moon. Enjoy a hotdog for a small fee.

*Program 1: The Sun Program 2: The Moon*

\* listed program or make-up program

### July 10 – 9:00pm

*Program: Extrasolar planets\**

Find out what techniques astronomers use to detect planets orbiting other stars.

### July 31 – 9:00pm

*Program: Naked Eye and Binocular Objects\**

Many celestial objects can be observed without a telescope. Find out which ones.

### August 7 – 8:30pm

*Program: Double Stars\**

View the finest double stars in the night sky!

### August 28 – 8:00pm

*Program: Globular Clusters\**

See a few hundred thousand stars packed together!

### September 4 – 8:30pm

An ACA member will take you on a sky tour of the Autumn Constellations.

### September 11 – 8:00pm

A thin crescent Moon, Venus, and Mars form a pretty trio in the southwest just after sunset.

### October 2 – 7:30pm

Can you see ET in the open cluster NGC457? Come see if you can find him in the ET Cluster.

### October 9 – 7:30pm

View Comet 103P/Hartley! The comet will be just out of reach of the naked eye, but an easy target for binoculars & telescopes.

### November 6 – 6:30pm

Jupiter is well placed in the sky for evening viewing.

### November 13 – 6:30pm

The Moon is at first quarter. This is an excellent time to view the Straight Wall!

### December 4 – 6:30pm

Come out to observe the season's most beautiful celestial objects while enjoying a cup of Akron's best free coffee!

# 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. 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 14 inch, 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.

