



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron
www.acaoh.org

Volume 33 Number 5

May 2011

Next Meeting: Friday, May 27, 2011 8:00PM.

MAY IS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL MONTH!

DON'T FORGET!

SUPPORT YOUR CLUB AND ITS PUBLIC OUTREACH
ACTIVITIES WITH A MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TODAY!

Observatory Report

By Ron Kalinoski

On April 29th, we hosted a star party for the Boy Scouts at Camp Butler. This was the same group of scouts we held a star party for back in 2007. Back then we had excellent sky conditions, but this time, after a week of rain, it was doubtful we would even have the star party. Clouds persisted all day Friday until finally around 8pm, the skies cleared giving us some very good observing conditions. Camp Butler is located in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and is one of the darkest sites in the area. Five scout packs were at the campout totaling about 150 youngsters. I think just about all of them came out to the star party to observe the night sky. Although the grounds were saturated, we did find an area to setup that was fairly dry. Lew Snodgrass, Rick



John Shulan stops for a photo before finishing setup and pointing his 11" Celestron at Saturn.

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Lou Poda

2011 - May Activities Calendar - 2011

Club

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>May 7 - ASTRONOMY DAY 2011
 Cleveland Museum of Natural History
 09:45 am EDT (2011 05 07 13:45 UT)</p> <p>May 7 - 8 OTAA: Scenic Vista Stargaze
 Scenic Vista Park, Lisbon, OH</p> <p>May 21 - OBSERVATORY: Public Event.
 09:00 pm EDT (2011 05 01 01:00 UT)</p> | <p>May 27 - KIWANIS: General Membership Meeting.
 08:00 pm EDT (2011 04 23 00:00 UT)</p> <p>May 28 - OBSERVATORY: Public Event.
 09:00 pm EDT (2011 05 01 01:00 UT)</p> |
|--|---|

Celestial*

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>May 3 - New Moon at 06:60 UT.</p> <p>May 6 - ETA AQUARID METEOR SHOWER
 Peaks at 13h UT.</p> <p>May 7 - ASTRONOMY DAY 2011!</p> <p>May 10 - First Quarter Moon at 20:32 UT.</p> <p>May 18 - Moon at perigee (closest) at 11h UT.</p> <p>May 17 - Full Moon at 11:07 UT.</p> | <p>May 24 - Last Quarter Moon at 18:51 UT.</p> <p>May 27 - Moon at apogee (farthest) at 10h UT.</p> |
|--|---|

**Source: www.skymaps.com*

The ACA wishes to welcome our newest member:

Jeff McGlaughlin

We look forward to seeing you at all Club functions!

Minutes of the April 22, 2011 General Meeting

By Mary Pickelsimer

8:00PM With no presenter for the evening, the discussion centered around the recent NEAF convention.

8:50PM Break.

9:08PM Business meeting called to order.

Treasures Report:

- Reporting March 2011 activity. (No more check copies!)

Observatory Director's Report:

- Observatory Director was away enjoying the Holiday weekend.

Old Business:

- Library Telescope Project – Motion to table till further information was gathered, specifically the issue of liability.

New Business:

- Need to replace existing 14" scope. John Crilly wrote an opinion on the issue.

10:00PM Meeting adjourned. Next general meeting will be May 27, 2011.

*Article by Mary Pickelsimer,
ACA Secretary.*

- PUBLISH YOUR ARTICLES AND IMAGES -

THE NIGHT SKY NEWSLETTER IS LOOKING TO PUBLISH YOUR ARTICLES! SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS, EXPERIENCES, STORIES, OPINIONS, LATEST ASTRO-IMAGES, AND ADVICE WITH YOUR FELLOW AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS.

ARTICLES MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE SIXTH OF EACH MONTH. ARTICLES MUST BE RELEVANT TO OUR FORUM. ALL TEXT FILES SHOULD BE SAVED IN PLAIN ASCII FORMAT OR ANY VERSION OF WORD TO MINIMIZE IMPORT PROBLEMS. ALL IMAGES MUST BE SAVED IN .JPG FORMAT. SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES VIA E-MAIL TO:

truemartian@aol.com

OR VIA SNAIL-MAIL:

JASON SHINN
1025C Hemlock Hills Dr.
Akron, OH 44313

April Treasurer's Report

By Lew Snodgrass

4/1/2011 Through 4/30/2011

Checking Beginning Balance	\$2,695.61
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Income

50/50 Drawing	27.00
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Donation: Russ Ferral	27.00
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Dues	140.00
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Total Income	\$194.00
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Expenses

Observatory: SWA 4000	80.00
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Website Expense	45.00
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Total Expenses	\$125.00
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Income Less Expenses	\$69.00
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Checking Ending Balance	\$2,764.61
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Charter One Ending Balance	\$2,764.61
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Difference	\$0.00
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Savings Opening Balance	\$6,431.23
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Earned Interest	0.26
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Savings Closing Balance	\$6,431.49
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Petty Cash	50.00
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ACA Savings	6,431.49
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ACA Checking	2,764.61
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Total	\$9,246.10
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*Article by Lew Snodgrass
ACA Treasurer.*



Burke, Glenn Cameron, John Shulan, and Robert Benedict represented ACA at the outreach event. Our equipment included two 11" Celestrons, two 8" Celestrons, one 10" Dobsonian, and an 80mm refractor with video camera. As it was in 2007, Saturn was well placed in the sky and looked stunning through the 11" telescopes. Also on the observing list were globular clusters, planetary nebulae, double stars, open clusters, and some galaxies keeping us out until about midnight. The scouts made us a patch and Certificate of Appreciation for our effort. I'll bring them to our next meeting.

The following evening we had a star party at the observatory. We postponed our Messier Marathon due to the condition of the observatory grounds, which was quite poor because of ground saturation. The grass was a mixture of green and brown due to the recent attempt to mow it. The sky conditions had deteriorated from the previous evening; however, we still had 10



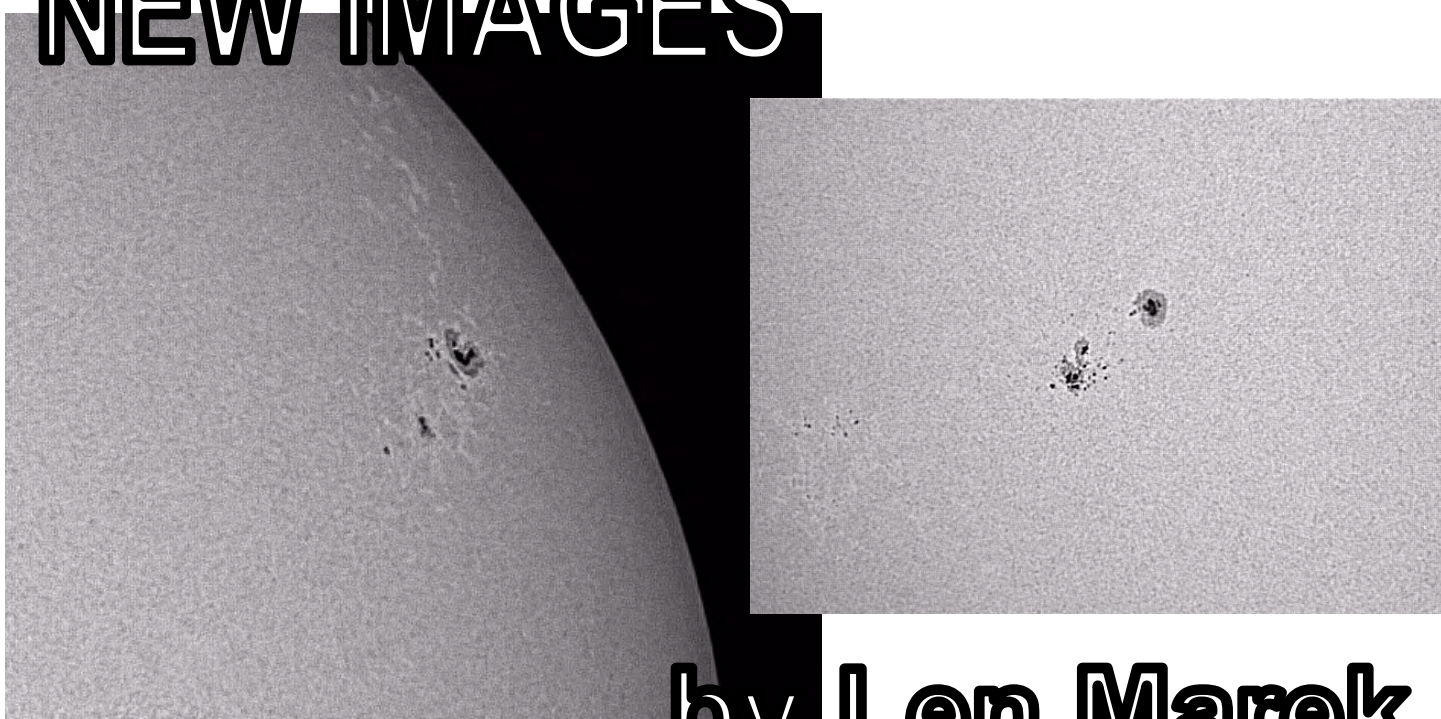
Rick Burke is ready to start alignment of his 8" Celestron. Globular Cluster M13 looked fabulous in Rick's telescope.

public attendees show up to see stars. The featured object of the night was Saturn and it thrilled all observers. We observed M3 and the double star Mizar before clouds moved in forcing

us to call it a night. Our Messier Marathon is rescheduled for May 21st.

*Article by Ron Kalinoski,
ACA Observatory Director.*

NEW IMAGES



by Len Marek

SkySafari iPhone/iPod/ iPad Application And Connection Hardware From Southern Skies

By Robert Benedict

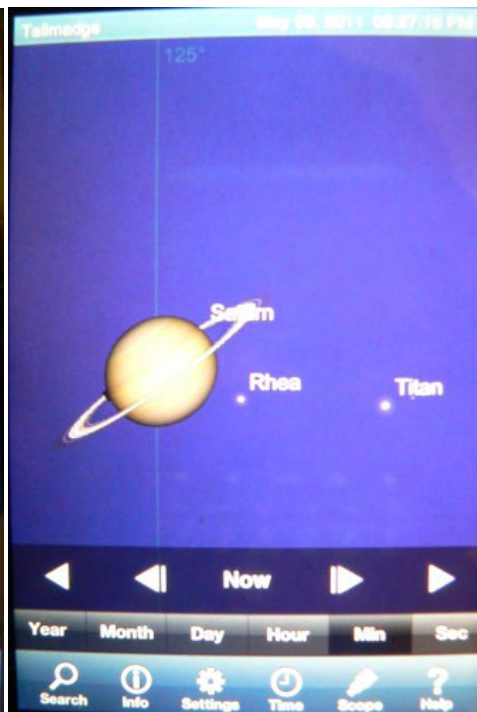
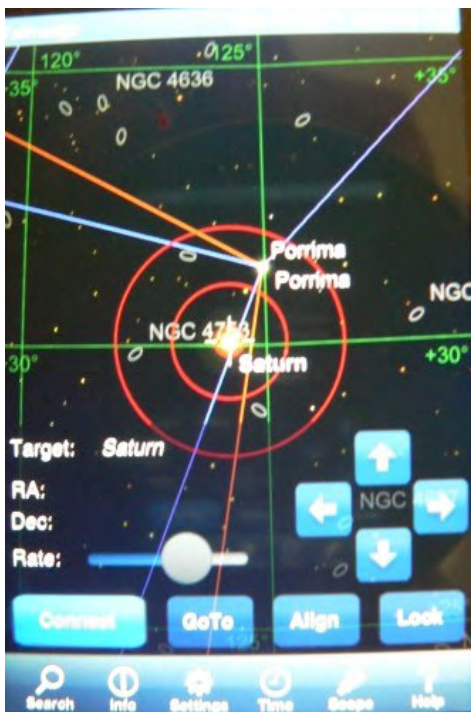
SkySafari is a comprehensive iPhone / iPad / iPod Touch (iPxx) Astronomy app. It is a powerful planetarium program which renders the planets and moons in detail, using NASA mission imagery. This is a review of the \$14.95 Pro version without the \$5 expansion pack. There is also a \$2.99 Lite version not covered here.

The main screen is a planetarium display with optional overlays including Telrad, finder field, wide and narrow eyepiece fields and crosshairs. From the main screen you can access object search, object info, settings, time control, scope control and help screens.

Searchable object lists are arranged by Planets, Moons, Asteroids, Comets, Satellites, Named Stars, Brightest Stars, Nearest Stars, Double Stars, DSO, Messier Objects, Caldwell Objects and Asterisms. There is also a custom observing list feature that lets you build your own lists or download lists from others posted on the Southern Skies Yahoo Forum.

Objects include 300,000 stars and 30,000 deep space objects. One nice addition is the moons of planets. When you zoom in to a planet, SkySafari renders the moons in their correct locations at that time. An expansion pack is available that adds 2.5 million stars and more images.

SkySafari provides basic information about objects and their coordinates, including Ra/Dec and Az/Alt. In addition, touching the "Description" button brings up screens full of detailed description. In those descriptions are embedded links to very cool images. A touch brings



(left) Main screen with Telrad and Scope Control displayed. (right) Saturn and moons displayed with time control on.

up the image and another touch returns you to the description.

The settings screen sets time and location, display options and telescope control options.

The time option lets you set the observing time and advance or retard times used in the display. I found this much easier to use than time setting in other programs. One cool use is that you can advance the time by hours and watch the moons of Saturn orbit around the planet.

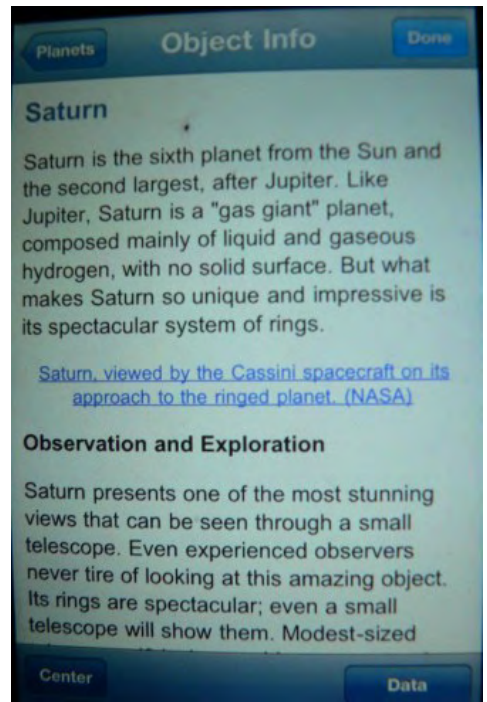
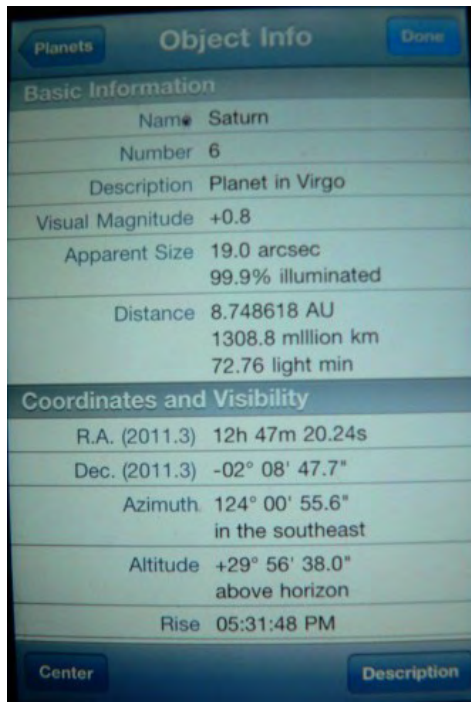
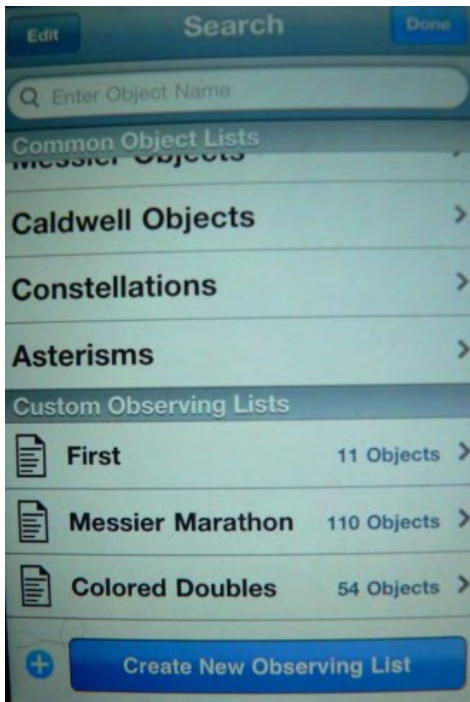
For devices with a compass and accelerometers you can use SkySafari as a sky map oriented by pointing the device. Hold the device up and SkySafari displays and identifies what you are seeing, or would be seeing if you didn't live in Ohio.

I use SkySafari's object Az/Alt info for my push-to dobs that has an azimuth setting circle and an electronic altitude read out. I also use SkySafari's Telrad display rendering option to help me manually find objects.

If this were all SkySafari did I think it would be the best iPxx Astronomy app. With the addition of hardware from Southern Stars you can also control your go-to scope directly from your iPxx device. Southern Stars offers two link options. SkyWire is a wired connection that plugs into your iPxx and terminates in a serial port that can connect to a standard scope cable. SkyFi is a small, battery powered Wi-Fi device that attaches to and plugs into your scope and communicates wirelessly via the Wi-Fi in your iPxx.

I have the SkyWire interface and have used it to drive both my ETX-90 and my LXD75 through their 497 controllers. I had concerns about the SkyWire interface as I had been unsuccessful in getting my laptop to connect to a 497 controller using a USB to serial link that works well with my ham radio gear.

My iPod Touch 4 and iPad2 had no problems connecting to my scopes through SkyWire. It worked immediately with no fiddling around. The iPxx device provides date, time and location information to the



(left) Object list scrolled down to Custom Observing Lists. (center) First screen of object info, scroll down for more, hit “Description” for text. (right) First screen of object description with links to images.

controller. The graphical user interface is easier to navigate than the two line display on the 497 controller and the touch screen is much easier to use than mashing down on controller buttons.

With the scope connected you can search for an object in SkySafari, read the info if you like, center it in the iPxx display with a touch and hit the goto button that drives the scope to the object. There is a speed setting and 4 directional drive buttons for manual control. There is also an “align” button to sync objects with the controller. All in all I much prefer SkySafari to using the 497 controller.

Downsides

The SkyWire interface electronics are built into the iPxx connector. This is a bit clumsy and you must handle it carefully to not disconnect the connector.

The text is small on an iPod/iPhone screen. The limited screen size is a challenge for those of us that need reading glasses. This is a problem for all iPhone / iPod apps. The extra display real estate in the iPad display is easier to read without fumbling for

glasses.

The iPxx retina display uses touch capacitive technology. That means that it does not work if you wear gloves. This is not an issue for me as I use fingerless gloves in cold weather any way for better handling of scope and eyepieces.

Summary

SkySafari is a powerful, comprehensive Astronomy application for iPxx devices. It has a large object list, good search capabilities, excellent information and descriptions, well thought out interface and can control go-to telescopes through optional hardware.

I am reviewing SkySafari on the basis of also owning and having used several other iPxx apps. Star Walk and GoSkyWatch are both powerful programs with many features, but they are distinct seconds to SkySafari in features and ease of use. Distant Suns, SkyView and Stellarium have a few nice features, but are not nearly as comprehensive as Star Walk and GoSkyWatch, let alone SkySafari. None of the other programs have scope control capability.

You can get SkySafari through Apple’s app store. The hardware comes directly from Southern Skies <http://www.southernstars.com/index.html>

Clear Skies,
Bob

*Article by ACA member
Robert Benedict.*

ANSWERS TO APRIL’S WORD SEARCH:

ALL ABOUT THE PLANET MERCURY

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E B P A Q E R Z D V L Z R T K
C I N N E R M G S T U E Z C V
N X G T V O A X M U A O J U E
S A M H K C R L E A X W L X T
S Y V J T K I G S F N V F G Q
H R R S Q Y M R S F H G Y L U
Y V E U R J T E E C U O T L
S F H K C E R I N X I L O R M
S I X V I R T A G N B A K Q H
D Z J A G E E A E H X I L O T
R S X I L I M R E T N H F H
X M X A V A G O H C L D V E Y
N W M U F T I W O U F A T T
H S T A K C E J T M B P T Y B
F G S P M Y E V K U D Q A C S

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H W M W T N T W L O F B C T Z
G M N O R A I P B R U K Z R U
B R K G I W G U L T R U K I Z
L W X G A S O S T I L H C F U
A O B S N P E E W A E Q U I E
C D O K G L R M Y Y Q A D D S
K N X P U F A D E M O R D N A
E O F C L D U M B B E L L E E
Y B R Y U R L E E H W N I P S
E E A E M Z I A C W M J W G E
H A P R R R Q H G Z M G R A S
T L L U C B R G W O N L G Z X
S W H L T A M H C I O L D G R
N O I R O C C O R U E N O W L
B E E H I V E E S L R E W G U

ANDROMEDA galaxy
BEEHIVE cluster
BLACK EYE galaxy
BUTTERFLY cluster
CRAB nebula
DUMBBELL nebula
EAGLE nebula
HERCULES cluster
LAGOON nebula
ORION nebula

OWL nebula
PINWHEEL galaxy
PLIEADES cluster
RING nebula
SOMBRERO galaxy
SWAN nebula
TRIANGULUM galaxy
TRIFID nebula
WHIRLPOOL galaxy
WILD DUCK cluster

Answers in next month's newsletter.

Created with: <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/>

ASTRONOMY DAY



2011

NEW IMAGES



Sun - 04/23/2011 01:05 pm EDT
Coronado Maxscope 90 Double Stacked $\lt 5 \text{ \AA}$
SBIG ST2000XM
By: Len Marek



by Len Marek

Sun - 04/30/2011 09:10 am EDT
Coronado Maxscope 90 Double Stacked $\lt 5 \text{ \AA}$
SBIG ST2000XM
By: Len Marek

The Night Sky

Newsletter of the Astronomy Club of Akron

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Yes! I want to become a member of the Astronomy Club of Akron

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Astronomy Club of Akron annual memberships renew in the month of May.

ADULT (ages 18 and older) \$30.00

JUNIOR (ages 12 to 17) \$15.00

ADDITIONAL ADULT member \$15.00

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$40.00

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