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# What's Up With the Astronomical League March, 2015

Compiled by Carroll  
Iorg, Media Officer

## Don Parker Longtime Supporter of the Astronomical League Passes

Amateur Astronomy lost a giant with the recent passing of Dr. Don Parker. He was an accomplished astrophotographer and pioneer planetary imager, especially of the planets Jupiter and Mars. He imaged over 20,000 objects.

He was always willing to share his knowledge with other astronomers. His sharp wit was legendary. Don co-authored an introductory book regarding astrophotography, many papers for scientific journals, magazines etc., and his work was often cited by NASA and other professional organizations. He was a member of the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers, a past executive director of that group. He was a fixture as an attendee and usually a speaker at the Winter Star Party, speaking last at the WSP just a few days before his passing.

Don was a featured speaker for many years at the League's annual ALCon conventions, the most recent one in Atlanta in 2013.



Dr. Don Parker with family and friends at the 2015 Winter Star Party. Photo courtesy of Julie Kim Zajonz. .

Also thanks to Terry Mann, past A.L. President and Dr. Barbara Harris, longtime friend of Don's for their assistance with this article.

(other photos on page 3)

## Call to Use Your Talents As A.L. Secretary

The two-year term of the office of secretary ends on August 31, 2015. If you are interested in using your talents to serve, we would like to hear from you. Briefly, this position entails recording minutes at the annual council meeting during the week of ALCon, the League's national convention, and documenting the minutes on executive committee conference calls, etc.

For more specific information regarding the duties and responsibilities of the position, please refer to the League's bylaws, which can be accessed on the League website at [www.astroleague.org](http://www.astroleague.org). This is an excellent way of learning about the operations of the Astronomical League.

Candidates should send background statements explaining why they are interested, along with a photo of themselves for publication in the *Reflector*, to Nominating Committee Chair Bill Bogardus, [vicepresident@astroleague.org](mailto:vicepresident@astroleague.org). Please limit all statements to approximately 250 words.

**ALL SUBMISSIONS SHOULD BE MADE BY THE END OF MARCH**



# ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE

A NONPROFIT FEDERATION OF 290+ ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES AND 16,000 MEMBERS

- To promote the science of astronomy
- By fostering astronomical education;
- By providing incentives for astronomical observation and research; and
- By assisting communication among amateur astronomical societies



## Solar Eclipse Glasses from the Astronomical League

**Experience the beauty, the wonder, the mystery.**

The celestial event of a generation arrives August 21, 2017. View the incredible total solar eclipse safely with a pair of commemorative solar eclipse glasses from the Astronomical League!

**Each total solar eclipse is unique, all are impressive.**

Are you ready? Do you have equipment for safely viewing the eclipse and the sun? Solar eclipse glasses are one inexpensive way to safely view the eclipse, and the BEST way to share the event with a group. These glasses are ideal for visually observing large sunspots on the face of the sun, partial solar eclipses, annual solar eclipses, and the partial phases of total solar eclipses.

Discounts for as few as 10 and huge discounts for ordering 500 or 1000. Distribute them at solar events! The more you purchase, the better the price! They can be personalized for keepsakes. Order early to insure availability!

Check out the League webstore – [www.astroleague.org/store](http://www.astroleague.org/store) – for complete information. Email [leaguesales@astroleague.org](mailto:leaguesales@astroleague.org) if you need more help.

Quantity	Discount	Price (ea)	Price per pack	Estimated shipping*
1		\$1.00		Starting at \$0.70
10	10%	\$0.90	\$ 9.00	1st Class \$3
25	20%	\$0.80	\$ 20.00	1st Class \$3
50	25%	\$0.75	\$ 37.50	1st Class \$4
100	40%	\$0.60	\$ 60.00	Parcel \$6-10 / Priority \$6-12
250	55%	\$0.45	\$ 112.50	Parcel \$7-14 / Priority \$8-19
500	65%	\$0.35	\$ 175.00	Parcel \$10-16 / Priority \$10-24
1000	70%	\$0.30	\$ 300.00	Parcel \$14-29 / Priority \$14-44

*Prices subject to change. Shipping rates vary depending on destination and class of service.*



Wear them as you would your normal sunglasses. You may safely gaze directly at the sun with these glasses since the filters block 99.9999% of the sun's visible light and all of its harmful infrared and ultraviolet light.

- If the filters have pinholes, or are damaged in any way, do not attempt to look at the sun with them.
- Do not use the solar eclipse glasses with binoculars or a telescope! Eye damage may result.
- Never look at the sun without the proper filters! If you do, you may not realize it, but you are damaging your vision. You may not feel immediate pain.

## Reminder From the A.L. National Office Regarding April Dues and Ballot Emails

Office Coordinator, Mike Stoakes, would like to remind societies that the national office is scheduled to email society ALCors the 2015 dues and ballots in April.

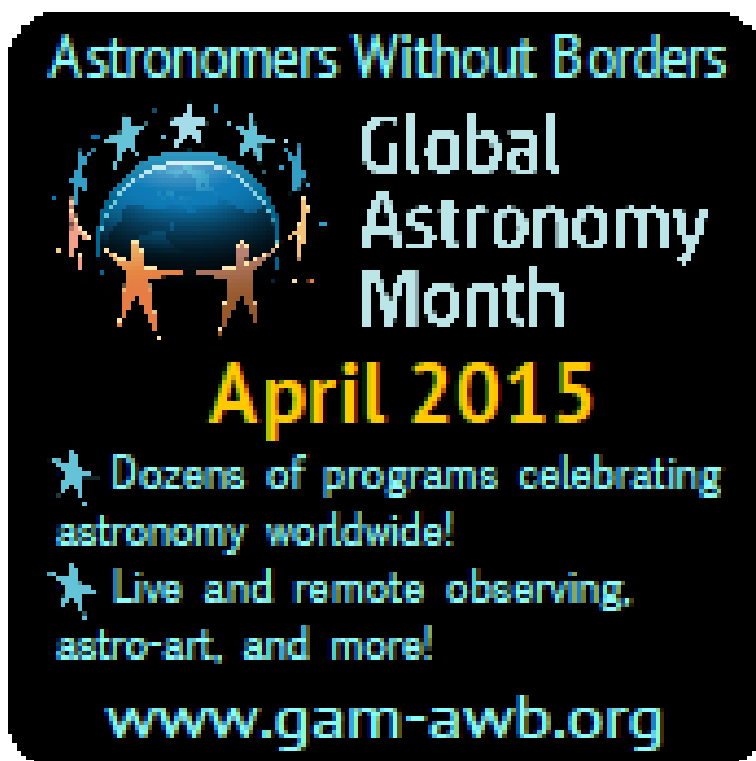
**PLEASE RETURN BOTH TIMELY.**

### “What's Up Doc?” Monthly Observing Tool

If you are working on an Astronomical League Observing Program, Aaron Clevenson ([aaron@clevenson.org](mailto:aaron@clevenson.org)) has provided two tools that might be of use to you. What's Up Doc? and What's Up Tonight, Doc?

The What's Up Doc is a two page PDF file that is updated each month with information on basic level Observing Programs. It lists those objects that are visible in the evening sky for the next month, by program. These Observing Programs are included: Meteors, Constellations (Northern), Binocular Messier, Deep Sky Binocular, Messier, Caldwell, Double Star, Solar System, and Lunar. To access this document, click the What's Up Doc? link on this webpage: [www.humbleisd.net/observatory](http://www.humbleisd.net/observatory) (about halfway down the webpage).

Also on that webpage is a link to the What's Up Tonight, Doc? This is a large spreadsheet in Excel (16.5 Mb). It includes all current Astronomical League observing programs. Due to the Macros that are integral to the spreadsheet, this will not run on Apple Macintosh computers. This spreadsheet provide buttons to sort by individual Observing Programs as well as the entire list. The user enters their latitude and longitude and the date and time when they plan to observe (Universal Time). The spreadsheet then provides target objects listed from highest to lowest altitude. There is a column to check off an object once you have observed it (left side) and also columns to include your observing details (right side).





(Tom Kahn, Tippy D'Auria and Don Parker at 2015 WSP)

(Photo courtesy of Julie Kim Zajonz).



Don Parker (left) shows off his 16-inch Newtonian telescope to another planetary imager, Damian Peach. Parker took thousands of images of Jupiter through this scope. (Photo courtesy Damian Peach and *Astronomy* magazine).

## League Award Deadlines

### Jack Horkheimer Service and Journalism Youth Awards

- Entries due by March 31
- For specific information please refer to <https://www.astroleague.org/al/awards/horkhmr/horkhmr.html>.

### Mabel Sterns Newsletter Award

- Deadline March 31
- For specifics see <https://www.astroleague.org/al/awards/sterns/sterns.html>

### Webmaster Award

Club Presidents please send nominations between January 1 and no later than April 1 to

[Webmaster-Award@astroleague.org](mailto:Webmaster-Award@astroleague.org), or you can mail your nomination to the following address:

Mike Rao Administrator,  
Astronomical League Webmaster Award  
2559 Rusk Street  
Houston, Texas 77003  
[mike.rao@optimus-us.com](mailto:mike.rao@optimus-us.com)

### Astronomy Day

The official spring Astronomy Day designation is April 25, and the **deadline for submissions is June 13, 2015**. Special cash prizes are available to top finishers. See

<https://www.astroleague.org/files/astroday/AwardEntryForms2015Final.pdf>



### **A Total Eclipse of the Sun In the United States!**

A total eclipse of the sun is one of the most spectacular and awe-inspiring events of the natural world. It is truly an experience for those who witness it. You can feel the shadow approaching. Wildlife becomes quiet. The temperature drops. The light becomes ghostly and strange, then, an eerie darkness engulfs you. You feel awe and anxiety at the same moment. You feel the shadow.

To help celebrate the total eclipse of the sun on Monday, August 21, 2017, the Astronomical League will hold its annual national convention in the days leading up to the event. Casper, Wyoming will be the site of the conference, as the eclipse path goes right through the city.

ASTROCON 2017 will be held at the Parkway Plaza Hotel & Convention Center in Casper, Wyoming, Wednesday August 16 through Saturday August 19, 2017. In addition to the lectures, presentations, and workshops, the conference includes the fun, casual Star-B-Q and the Gala Awards Banquet featuring a keynote speaker. Well-known vendors will also be on hand to display a multitude of astronomical products and to provide expert advice.

Lowell Lyon, ASTROCON 2017 Chair, [bolide@sisna.com](mailto:bolide@sisna.com)  
Astronomical League website: [www.astroleague.org](http://www.astroleague.org)  
ASTRON 2017 website: [astrocon2017.astroleague.org](http://astrocon2017.astroleague.org)