



Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club  
[www.charlotteastronomers.org](http://www.charlotteastronomers.org)

## Tracking Artemis II: A Lunar Mission For All Humanity

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**Speaker:** Dan Reczek

Dan Reczek is an Operations Engineer at NASA's Johnson Space Center in the Mission Control Center. He earned his Bachelor's in Aerospace Engineering from Saint Louis University's Parks College in 2018. Shortly thereafter he began in the Mission Control Center's Propulsion Systems group, where he started as an Instructor for the Orion Prop and SLS Booster consoles. He ultimately supported the Artemis I mission in 2022 as a Flight Controller for both consoles, working in the support room during launch and several of the orbital burns. Between Artemis I and II, his responsibility increased, and he taught the crew the majority of their propulsion related lessons. Dan worked in the flight control room during launch as the Ascent Booster Officer, responsible for the SLS launch vehicle as it carried humans to space for the first time. After launch, he continued support, serving as the Propulsion Officer for several shifts. Following Artemis II, he transitioned to role now as a Chief Training Officer, responsible for overall execution of training for human spaceflight missions.

### CAAC May Meeting

<b><u>Next Meeting:</u></b> Friday May 15th, 2026  <b><u>Time:</u></b> 7pm ET	<b><u>Place:</u></b> <i>Myers Park Baptist Church Education Building – Shalom Hall (Basement)</i> <i><u>Or Zoom Virtual Meeting</u></i> (See info on next page)	<b><u>Address:</u></b> 1900 Queens Road Charlotte, NC 28207
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## CAAC Virtual Meeting Login Instructions

1. If you have not used Zoom before, go to Zoom.com and download the Zoom program onto your computer.
2. **To Log In:**

Click on the meeting link below:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82489334922?  
pwd=dWRsdDFkMjJOWFVNUFIIN1IFL1NoQT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82489334922?pwd=dWRsdDFkMjJOWFVNUFIIN1IFL1NoQT09)

If needed Meeting ID: **824 8933 4922**

Passcode: **893125**

This manual “log in” rather than invitation to everyone prevents all the emails showing up on the invite. This is a security issue for your privacy.

3. When on the Zoom screen to prevent chaos and overloading bandwidth:
  - a. Mute your microphone-icon lower left of screen
  - b. Mute Video icon on the lower left of screen.
  - c. You will be able to see and hear leaders of the meeting when they are speaking
4. If you wish to ask questions of the speaker after the main presentation:
  - a. Submit on the chat feature which is at the bottom of the screen. You will then type out your question and hit enter.
5. Excellent Zoom tutorials are available on You Tube:
  - a. <https://www.youtube.com/user/ZoomMeetings>

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**From the President:**

Greetings Friends,

Southern Star was a rousing success this year. For all those who attended, thank you for coming! For those that missed out, I hope to see you there next year! Thank you so much to our committee and amazing speakers for a smooth and enjoyable weekend.

As we roll over to the next term, I look forward to serving as your president once again. If you ever have thoughts or feedback, I'm always glad to hear it. Feel free to send me an email or grab in person at our monthly meetings or down at GHRO.

Clear skies,

Justin  
CAAC President

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**CAAC 2026 -2027 OFFICIERS AND DIRECTORS**

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President	Justin Peatross	<a href="mailto:president@charlotteastronomers.org">president@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Vice President	Margaret Dunford	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@charlotteastronomers.org">vicepresident@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Treasurer	Scott Goforth	<a href="mailto:treasurer@charlotteastronomers.org">treasurer@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Secretary	My Do	<a href="mailto:info@charlotteastronomers.org">info@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Observatory Director	Jim Gaiser	<a href="mailto:ghro@charlotteastronomers.org">ghro@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Public Outreach Coordinator	Tom Blevins	<a href="mailto:publicoutreach@charlotteastronomers.org">publicoutreach@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Southern Star	Jim Gaiser	<a href="mailto:southernstar@charlotteastronomers.org">southernstar@charlotteastronomers.org</a>

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## Secretary's Report:

1. The **2026 CAAC annual membership** began in October and we want to express our gratitude to new joining members and to our renewing members. Your participation is greatly appreciated.
  - Annual individual/family membership, which includes access to the CAAC dark sky **observatory** (GHRO) - \$60.00
  - Dues are collected at the October meeting and are pro-rated for members joining in January or later.
  - Students up to 18 years old - \$15.00 per year.
  - Private Observing Pads - additional \$25.00 per year.  
Optional fee for members with private concrete observing pads at the club's dark sky location. Contact the Observatory Director for additional information.

Membership Applications are available through the CAAC Treasurer at monthly meetings. Click <https://charlotte-amateur-astronomers-club-2.square.site/> to navigate to the CAAC online store. Then select "CAAC Membership" to add it to your cart

2. If you are a former CAAC member and have not been keeping up with your membership dues, firstly please come back! We'd love to reconnect you with the love of astronomy through our club, use of GHRO observatory, and the camaraderie of our members.

Please also remember to return your badges on the table near the exit at the end of the meeting before you leave! Doing this will significantly reduce the chances of badges getting lost and reduce the amount of time (and cost) of having to re-create your name tag if it is lost. Thank you!

3. Register with the **Night Sky Network!** It is imperative that all members of the CAAC join the Night Sky Network (NSN). Many of the club's outreach activities are managed by the NSN, as well as club communications (newsletters, event notifications, general email). The NSN is a wonderful tool specifically designed for amateur astronomy clubs like ours. Membership allows you to contact other members via email, and receive last minute updates for outreach events via text message:

[http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-apply.cfm?Club\\_ID=1468&ApplicantType=Member Pre-Monthly](http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-apply.cfm?Club_ID=1468&ApplicantType=Member-Pre-Monthly)

4. **Are you looking for ways to participate in the club?** We would appreciate volunteers for the following standing committees to better serve our members:
  - Room Set Up
  - Refreshments
  - Audio/ Video
  - Web Master/ Social Media. Please be on the lookout in the next couple of weeks for emails with more details and how to participate. Please contact the CAAC Officers and let us know which committee interests you. Thank you for your consideration. The club is adding a new CAAC Astronomy Equipment Sales page to the newsletter. Please check out the offerings at the end of the newsletter.

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6. Sign up for **CAAC Slack / chat!**

Chat with fellow astronomy and astrophotography enthusiasts on our discussion group. This is a free service, we are using the basic plan. See who's going to GHRO, ask questions, or just be sociable. You can access via webpage or native applications on all major platforms and mobile phones. Sign up, introduce yourself, talk to your peers, tell your stories, ask your questions, and share your wisdom!

How do I sign up?

- Visit this link: <https://slack.theastroshed.com> or email [caac-slack@jamieandamy.com](mailto:caac-slack@jamieandamy.com)

If you run into issues signing up, email Jamie at [caac-slack@jamieandamy.com](mailto:caac-slack@jamieandamy.com) and he will help you get on the team.

7. The **CAAC website**, <https://charlotteastronomers.org/> has been updated to provide better service to our members with easier navigation, up to date announcements and postings, and accessible communication. Please explore and enjoy your new CAAC website.

Best,

My Do  
CAAC Secretary

## CAAC Treasurer's Report as of 4/30/2026

### Operating Fund

**Purpose: Enable the CAAC to pursue our non-profit goals, maintain our facilities, and run our programs.**

\*Funds are acquired through ongoing receipts of dues, fees, and annual Southern Star income (or expense).

\*Funds are expended to meet operating obligations of the club.

1	<b>Operating Fund Balance: 3/31/2026</b>	<b>\$34,918.41</b>
2	<b>Income:</b>	
	Dues and Fees	\$2,100.00
	Sale of apparel and equipment	\$60.00
	Southern Star Deposits	\$3,955.00
3	<b>Expenses:</b>	
	Meeting expenses	\$26.99
	Refunds	\$715.00
	GHRO pest treatment	\$240.00
	Southern Star Expenses	\$16,605.80
	GHRO Binocular equipment	\$216.00
	GHRO Utilities (alarm, elec, internet)	\$303.90
	Temporary \$ transfer to endowment fund account	\$1,400.00
	Service fee to accept credit cards	\$77.53
4	<b>Operating Fund Balance: 4/30/2026</b>	<b>\$21,448.19</b>

### Non-Operating Funds

**Purpose: Administer gifts and donations for designated use.**

1	<b>Non-Operating Funds Balance: 3/31/2026</b>	
	Scholarship Fund	\$4,706.87
	CAAC Self Insurance Fund	\$30,000.00
	Contingency Fund	\$7,435.04
2	<b>Income:</b>	
	Interest	\$0.35
3	<b>Expenses or Transfers:</b>	
4	<b>Non-Operating Funds Balance: 4/30/2026</b>	
	Scholarship Fund	\$4,706.87
	CAAC Self Insurance Fund	\$30,000.00
	Contingency Fund	\$7,435.39

Scott Goforth  
CAAC Treasurer

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## News from GHRO

1. Don't forget the monthly star party on Saturday, May 16...dusk is getting later!!!
2. The next training date is May 23 **at 6:30pm**.
3. When observing at GHRO please ensure you minimize the amount of light you produce. Especially for imagers, **please take care to hide lights from your equipment and computers**. Plastic bins are available for use to put your laptop in.
4. Please follow the posted startup and shutdown procedures for any club owned scopes. This helps other members when they go to use our equipment. Please ask if you are unsure.
5. Don't forget that the current sky conditions and weather and the Clear Sky Clock is found at the bottom of our homepage... <https://charlotteastronomers.org/>
6. The binocular observatory building is complete and the binoculars are installed...ready for training on May 23. Please do **not** go in the binocular building as all the fail safes are not in place.
7. The complete GHRO calendar for 2026 is at the bottom of this page.

**We are having something special at the June Star Party.** The Star party coincides with Gayle Riggsbee's birthday, so a celebration of Gayle's life in the Astronomers Club will take place. To celebrate, we will deposit small, sealed vials of Gayle's ashes in each of the 4 major visual observatories that Gayle was an integral part of. This remembrance, led by Gayle's son Robert, will take place at 5:30. This will be followed by a pot luck dinner similar to what we do at the Cosmic Camporee, the club will provide burgers and dogs and all of you will provide the side dishes and desserts. We will ask for folks to bring drinks...iced tea is a crowd favorite. Please plan now to attend the one-time event to honor Gayle in the place the was important to him... and all of us. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the May meeting and anyone who cannot make it to the meeting in person can send me an e-mail at [ghro@charlotteastronomers.org](mailto:ghro@charlotteastronomers.org) with you name, number of attendees and what you plan to bring for the pot luck. See you on June 13.

## What would you like to see at GHRO?

Please provide any suggestions on things you would like to see at GHRO! I want to make sure this facility is providing the maximum benefit to all of our members, and I can't do that without your feedback. GHRO is already a world class amateur astronomy location, but it can always be improved. You can always contact the GHRO director, Jim Gaiser at [ghro@charlotteastronomers.org](mailto:ghro@charlotteastronomers.org).

## 2026 GHRO Star Party and Telescope Training Schedule

	Moon Illumination			Training	
	Star Party	on Star		Date	start time (PM)
	Date	Party date	Moon rise/set time	Date	time (PM)
<b>January</b>	17	3% waning	4:26 PM (set)	24	4:30
<b>February</b>	21	16%	10:58 PM (set)	28	5:00
<b>March</b>	21	6% waning	10:57 PM (set)	14	6:00
<b>April</b>	18	1% new	9:52 PM (set)	No training, Southern Star	
<b>May</b>	16	1% new	5:42 AM	23	6:30
<b>June</b>	13	6% waning	4:15 AM	20	6:30
<b>July</b>	11	15% waning	2:53 AM	18	6:30
<b>August</b>	15	8% waxing	9:47 PM (set)	22	6:30
<b>September</b>	12	1% new	8:13 PM (set)	19	5:30
<b>October</b>	10	0% new	6:40:00 PM (set)	17	5:00
<b>November</b>	7	4% waning	4:10 PM (set)	14	4:30
<b>December</b>	12	9% waxing	8:21 PM (set)	No training in December	

Jim Gaiser  
CAAC Observator

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### GHRO Information

GHRO is located at [1427 Bloomwood Drive, Lancaster, SC](#). (some GPS show city as Pageland). Gravel road leading to the observatory is located 5.22 miles east of the "522 Grill" on Taxahaw, Rd.

#### Facebook FAQ

<https://www.facebook.com/CharlotteAstronomers/> scroll down to NOTES, then Frequently Asked Questions page for more information about GHRO. Be sure to share your astronomy photos and observing tips.

#### Night Sky Network -- "Heading to GHRO"

For updates on GHRO, be sure to join the <https://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/index.cfm> "Heading to GHRO" message group.

As always, we care about the safety and security of all visitors to our observing facility, the GHRO. To keep us all mindful for the need to keep alert while visiting the observatory, we provide the following reminder. Please share this with your family and any visitors who may join you at the observatory. Thank you.

\*\*\* WARNING \*\*\*

This facility (GHRO) and adjoining area may contain uneven terrain, dangerous wildlife, low light conditions, and dangerous man-made obstacles.

By using this facility, users assume the risk of personal injury, and loss or damage to personal property. All persons should use extreme caution at all times.

Users of this facility agree to hold harmless the Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club, its Directors, and its members for any and all injuries sustained while participating in club activities or using this facility.

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## CAAC Outreach Report May 2026

### Scheduled:

**05/22/2026**    **Cornelius Family Campout - Robbins Park Cornelius - Lunar**

[Robbins Park 17500 W. Catawba Ave. Cornelius](#)

Setup: 7:30 PM

Program: 8:30 - 10:00 PM

**05/23/2026**    **Huntersville Parks & Recreation - R.C. Bradford Park Huntersville, NC - Lunar**

[R.C. Bradford Park 17005 Davidson - Concord Rd, Huntersville, NC](#)

Setup: 7:30 PM

Program: 8:30 - 10:00 PM

**09/19/2026**    **Cornelius Family Campout - Robbins Park Cornelius - Lunar (Rain Day for May)**

[Robbins Park 17500 W. Catawba Ave. Cornelius](#)

Setup: 7:30 PM

Program: 8:30 - 10:00 PM

If you would like to volunteer with any of these outreach programs, please contact Tom Blevins at, [publicoutreach@charlotteastronomers.org](mailto:publicoutreach@charlotteastronomers.org)

Clear Skies,  
Tom Blevins  
CAAC Public Outreach Coordinator

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## CAAC Astronomy Ad Listings

Welcome to the CAAC classifieds. If you would like to post an ad in the newsletter, please let us know at the beginning of each month and we will list your items. Please provide a brief description and your contact information.

- Item 24-001:** *Obsession 15 Classic f4.5 with Argo Navis, Custom Equatorial Platform, etc.* for sale in Chapel Hill. \$2700. Local pick up or seller is willing to drive for meet up. Ad can be viewed on AstroMart [here](#), or contact:
- Bob Clemen, [rtclemen@gmail.com](mailto:rtclemen@gmail.com)



**Item 24-002:** Sold

**Item 24-003:** Sold

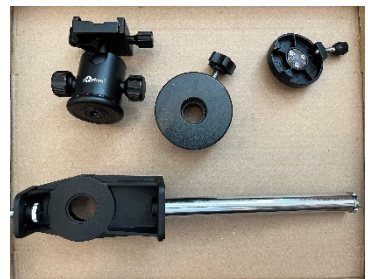
- Item 24-004:** *Star Tracker for sale: iOptron SkyGuider Pro EQ camera & the optional iOptron SkyTracker Ball Head camera mount, lightly used & in excellent condition.* for sale in Charlotte  
Included:

1. *iOptron SkyGuider Pro EQ camera (mount model #355)*

- internal rechargeable lithium battery, good for 20 hours of operation
- illuminated internal polar scope for polar alignment & built in bubble level
- built in camera trigger port & ST-4 guiding port
- Detachable counterweight shaft & 3-pound counterweight

2. *Includes the separately purchased iOptron SkyTracker Ball Head camera mount (model #3305A)*

- ball head mount allows for 360 degree panning & makes it easy to tilt a camera into position
- can support a heavy camera lens, bubble levels on each axis & also has a dovetail mounting bracket



List price for this package brand new with the optional ball head mount is \$463 today. Asking \$325 for the full package. Can be picked up in Charlotte or other arrangements may be accommodated, contact:

- David Harris, 704-577-8977, [davidharris11@yahoo.com](mailto:davidharris11@yahoo.com)

- Item 23-001:** *1958 Criterion Newtonian reflector*, 6" f/8 for sale with original mount. Asking \$600 with free delivery within the Charlotte area.
- David Friday, [wdfriday@twc.com](mailto:wdfriday@twc.com) 704-579-1778.

- Item 23-002:** **New SkyQuest Intelliscope XT8.** List Price \$ 1,300.00.  
All manuals with it-including initial purchase paperwork
- **Make An Offer.**
  - Contact Jim Gaiser



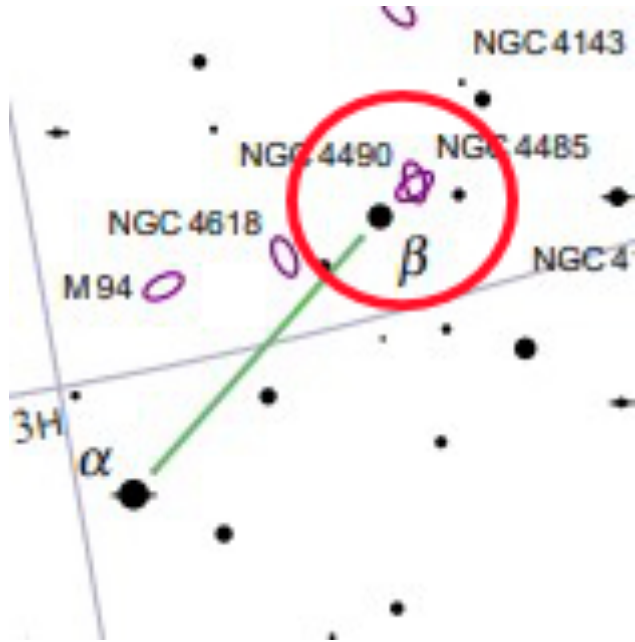
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## The Night Sky in May 2026

The monthly Sky Challenges provide three levels or degrees of observations ranging from Binoculars, to Small Telescope, to the Challenge Object. The fun is in the hunt for each object and to take time to carefully observe, may be sketch, and share your observations.

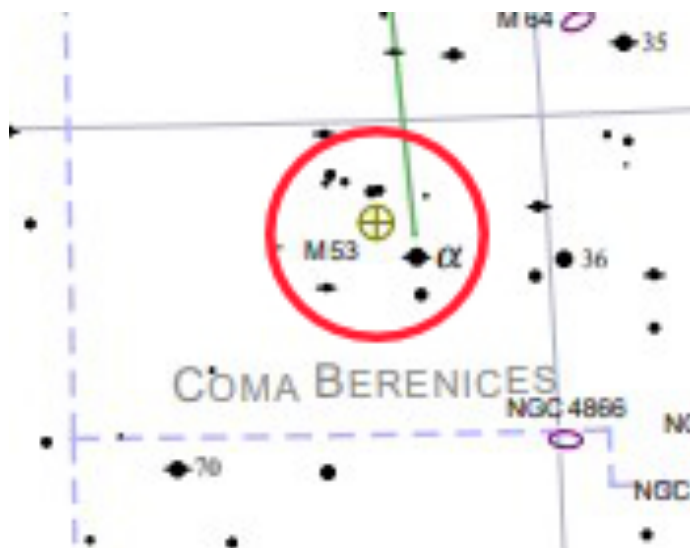
### Deep Sky Challenge – Galaxy NGC 4490 - Constellation - Canes Venatici

You will need to take advantage of GHRO to see this one.  
Mag. 11.9 **R.A.** 12 hr. 30 min. **Declination** +41 deg. 42 min.



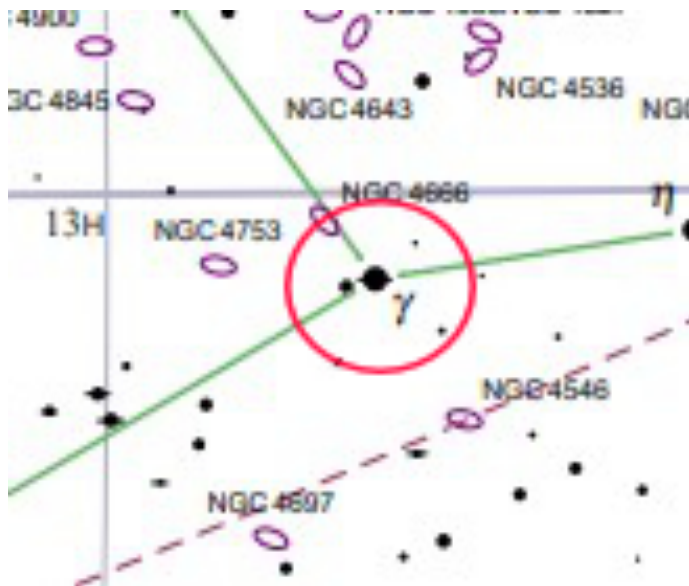
### Urban Challenge – Globular Cluster M 53

In a urban/suburban setting this will be a challenge to tease out.  
Mag. 7.7. **R.A.** 13 hr. 12 min. 10 sec. **Declination** +18 deg. 10 min.



### Double Star Challenge – Gamma Virginis (Porrima)

The two components are equally matched F0 Stars. Separation has now opened from less than .5 arc second at periastron in 2006 to 4 arc seconds today.  
Mag. 2.7 mag. **R.A.** 12 hr. 41 mi. 36 sec. **Declination** -1 deg 27 min.



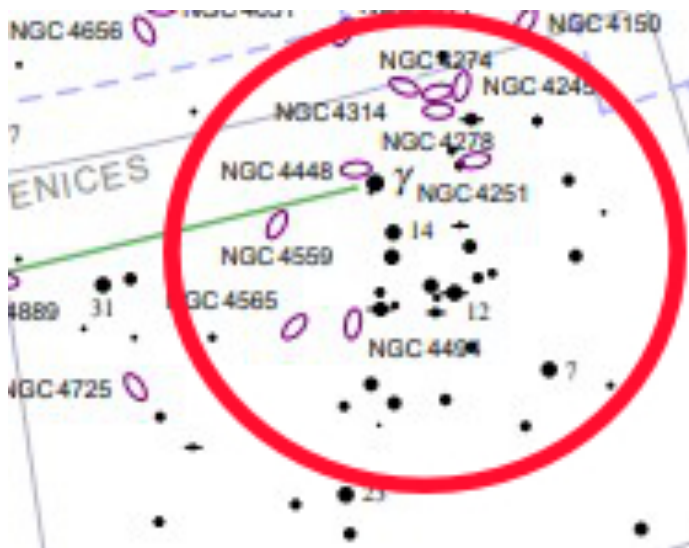
### Small Scope Objective – N/A

Mag. \_ R.A. \_ Declination +\_.

### Binocular Challenge – Coma Berenices Star Cluster

Easily visible as a hazy patch of light at GHRO around Gamma Coma Berenices.

From in town the easiest way to find the cluster is to locate Denebola in Leo and scan to an area halfway between Denebola and Alpha Canes Venatici (Cor Coroli).



We welcome and encourage our CAAC members to visit the **GHRO Observatory** to enjoy, learn, and observe these and other celestial wonders.

**Celestial Objects** Map courtesy of [Stellarium](#)

We would like to acknowledge the star field map for this report was edited from information courtesy of [Mag Star 7 Star Atlas Project © 2005 Andrew L. Johnson for star maps](#)

If you would like to download a map of each month's night sky, use this link, <http://www.skymaps.com/downloads.html> to download, print, and navigate the Evening Sky Map.

## **An *ENHANCED* Star Atlas – FREE!**

Our CAAC member, Mark Hoecker, has used the *Mag 7 Star Atlas – Color Milky Way version* (available on the internet) and added some enhancements including:

- A star map index to quickly identify the individual star chart you are looking for.
- Blue directional arrows at the edge of each chart guiding you to the adjacent chart. Also large page numerals were added in the lower right corner, helpful when thumbing through the charts.
- Finally, he manually added common star names and a selection of deep sky object names to the star charts, helpful in finding your way around the sky.

Such enhancements are allowed under the Creative Commons License by Andrew L. Johnson, author of the original charts.

**SUGGESTION:** While printing at the largest paper size you have available is helpful, a great alternative if you have a “letter size” color printer with a manual auxiliary feed slot, is to print on “legal size” (8½ x 14-inch) heavy paper or even “card stock”. You could also punch holes and place in a legal-size report cover available at office supply stores. You would then have a wonderful star atlas to help you through the night skies!

If you have access to a color printer that can print on 11 x 17-inch paper (or card stock), you can print a magnificent copy whose readability will rival that of very nice, commercially available atlases.

To download your ***Mag-7 Star Atlas Milky Way version – ENHANCED***, go to the CAAC website and scroll down the left column to “Mag 7 Star Atlas” and follow the link.

***Happy Observing!***

## Endowment Corner

### Gifts for Tomorrow

#### Bequests:

A bequest is one of the easiest gifts to make. The CAAC Endowment has sample language that can be used to include a planned gift to the CAAC Stewardship Foundation in your estate plan. Always consult your attorney before executing a new will or other estate planning document.

To make a contribution or learn more, please visit <http://charlotteastronomers.org/endowment.htm>

FYI: The balance in the CAAC Stewardship Foundation is \$33,703.31.

Ken Steiner  
Chair, CAAC Stewardship Foundation

#### CAAC CONTACTS

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President	Justin Peatross	<a href="mailto:president@charlotteastronomers.org">president@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Vice President	Margaret Dunford	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@charlotteastronomers.org">vicepresident@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Treasurer	Scott Goforth	<a href="mailto:treasurer@charlotteastronomers.org">treasurer@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
Secretary	My Do	<a href="mailto:info@charlotteastronomers.org">info@charlotteastronomers.org</a>
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