

San Diego Astronomy Association

Celebrating Over 50 Years of Astronomical Outreach



April 2026

<https://www.sdaa.org/>

A Non-Profit Educational Association
P.O. Box 23215, San Diego, CA 92193-3215

Next SDAA Business Meeting

April 14th at 7:00pm

Via Zoom

Next Program Meeting

April 15th 2026

Via Zoom

April Program Meeting

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April 15th
Speaker: TBD

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline to submit articles
for publication is the
15th of each month.

See <https://sdaa.org/program-meeting/>

Link to SDAA Merchandise Store <https://sdaa28.wildapricot.org/SDAA-Store>

Link to Outreach Calendar <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=g-calendar@sdaa.org&ctz=America/Los>



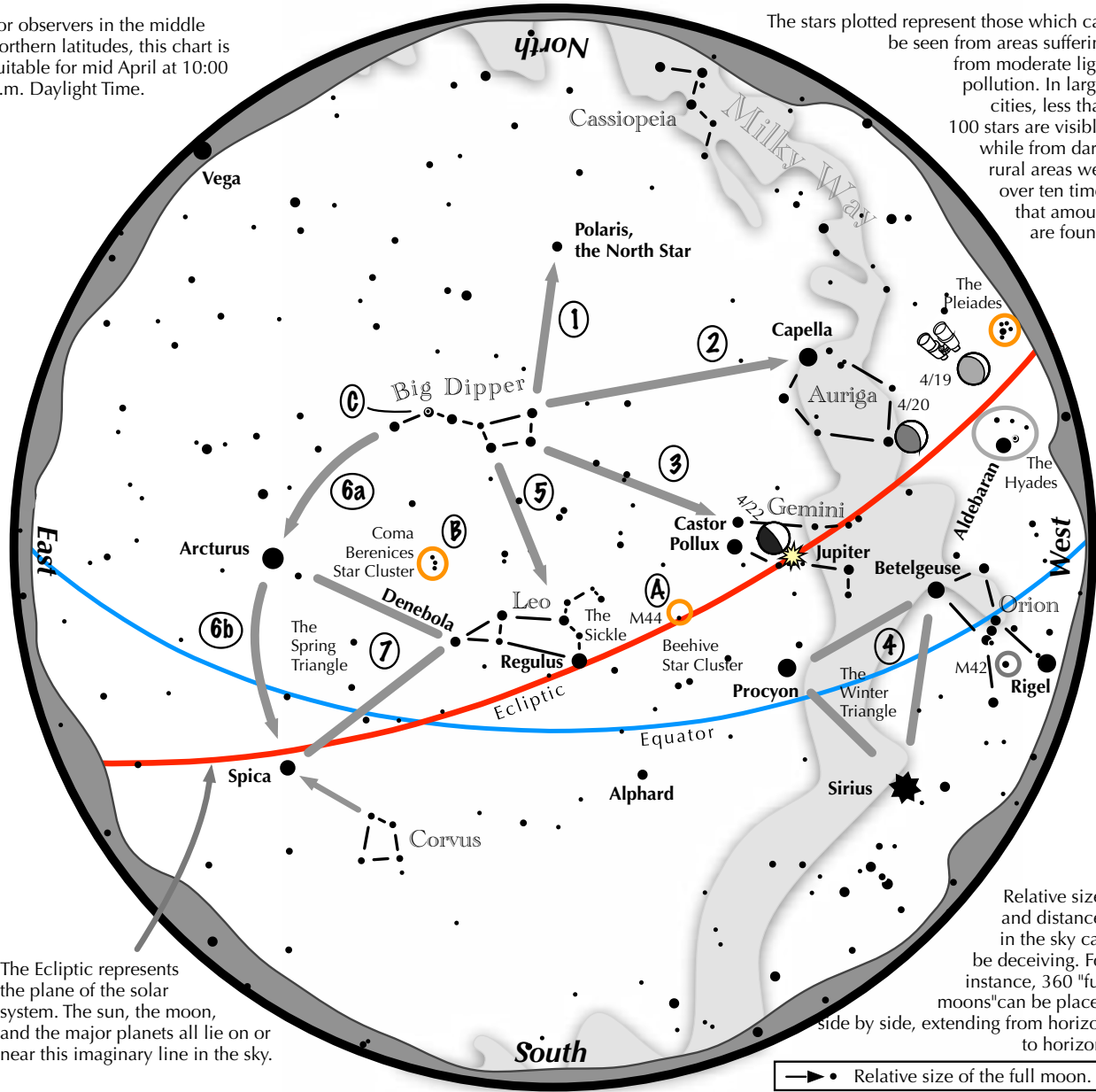
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Navigating the mid-April Night Sky

2026

For observers in the middle northern latitudes, this chart is suitable for mid April at 10:00 p.m. Daylight Time.

The stars plotted represent those which can be seen from areas suffering from moderate light pollution. In larger cities, less than 100 stars are visible, while from dark, rural areas well over ten times that amount are found.



The Ecliptic represents the plane of the solar system. The sun, the moon, and the major planets all lie on or near this imaginary line in the sky.

Relative sizes and distances in the sky can be deceiving. For instance, 360 "full moons" can be placed side by side, extending from horizon to horizon.

→ • Relative size of the full moon.

Navigating the April night sky: Simply start with what you know or with what you can easily find.

- 1 Extend an imaginary line from the two stars at the tip of the Big Dipper's bowl. It passes Polaris, the North Star.
- 2 Draw another imaginary line west across the top two stars of the Dipper's bowl. It strikes Capella low in the northwest.
- 3 Through the two diagonal stars of the Dipper's bowl, draw a line pointing to the twin stars of Castor and Pollux in Gemini.
- 4 Look in the west-southwest for the bright Winter Triangle stars of Sirius, Procyon, and Betelgeuse.
- 5 Directly below the Dipper's bowl reclines the constellation Leo with its primary star, Regulus.
- 6 Follow the arc of the Dipper's handle. It first intersects Arcturus, then continues to Spica.
- 7 Arcturus, Spica, and Denebola form the Spring Triangle, a large equilateral triangle.

Binocular Highlights

- A: M44, a star cluster barely visible to the naked eye, lies to the southeast of Pollux.
- B: Look nearly overhead for the loose star cluster of Coma Berenices.
- C: In the Big Dipper's handle shines Mizar next to a dimmer star, Alcor.



Astronomical League
www.astroleague.org

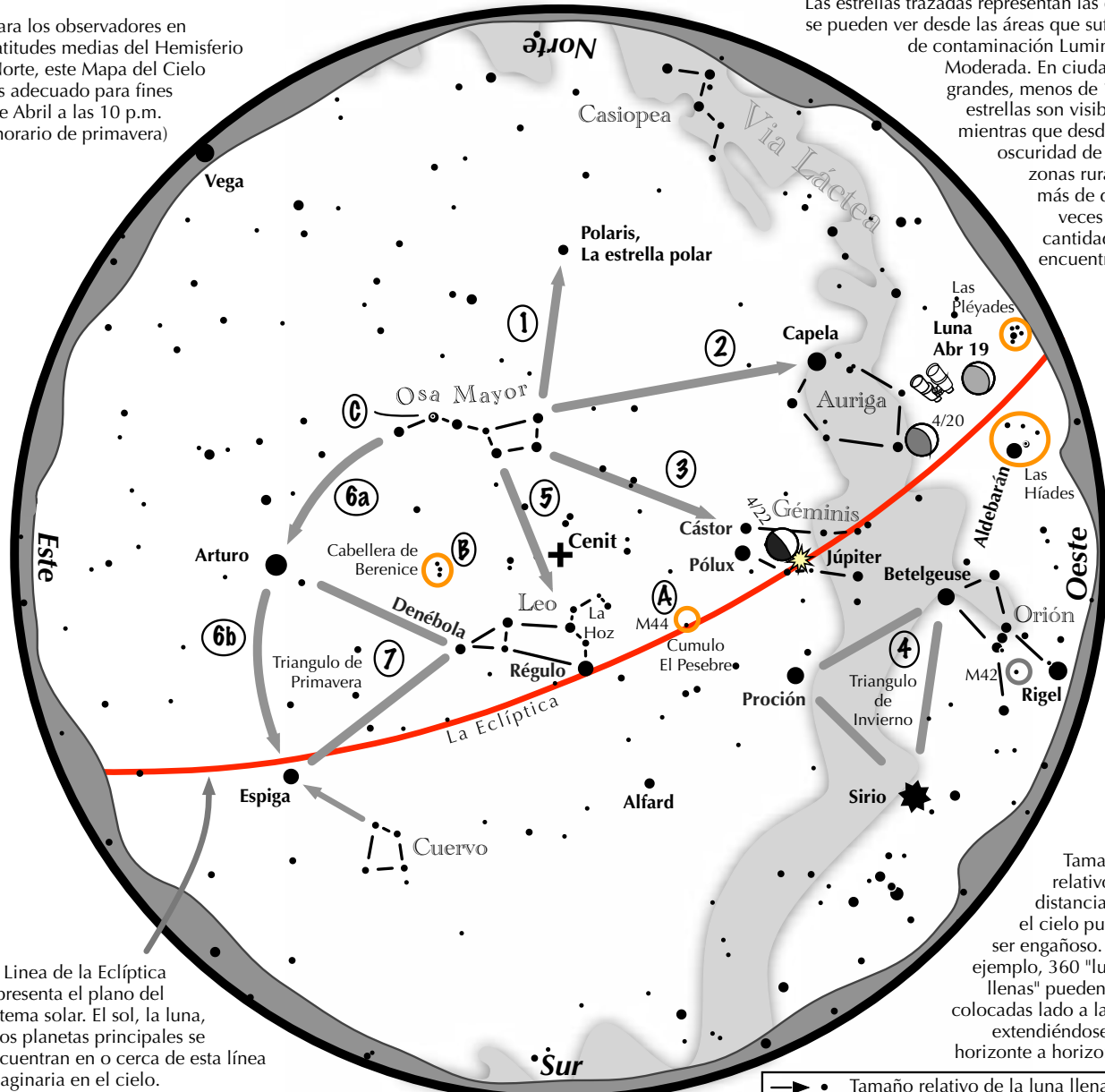


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Navegando por el cielo nocturno de Abril 2026

Para los observadores en latitudes medias del Hemisferio Norte, este Mapa del Cielo es adecuado para fines de Abril a las 10 p.m. (horario de primavera)

Las estrellas trazadas representan las que se pueden ver desde las áreas que sufren de contaminación Luminica Moderada. En ciudades grandes, menos de 100 estrellas son visibles, mientras que desde la oscuridad de las zonas rurales más de diez veces esa cantidad se encuentran.



La Línea de la Eclíptica representa el plano del sistema solar. El sol, la luna, y los planetas principales se encuentran en o cerca de esta línea imaginaria en el cielo.

Tamaños relativos y distancias en el cielo puede ser engañoso. Por ejemplo, 360 "lunas llenas" pueden ser colocadas lado a lado, extendiéndose de horizonte a horizonte.

→ • Tamaño relativo de la luna llena.

Navegando por el cielo nocturno: simplemente comience con lo que sabe o con lo que puede encontrar fácilmente.

- Haz una línea hacia el norte desde las dos estrellas en la punta de la Osa Mayor. Pasa por Polaris, la estrella polar.
- Haz una línea a través de las dos estrellas superiores de la punta del tazón de la Osa Mayor. Llegaras a Capela en el noroeste.
- A través de las dos estrellas diagonales de la Osa Mayor, dibuja una línea que apunta a las estrellas gemelas de Cástor y Pólux en Géminis.
- Busque en el oeste-suroeste las brillantes estrellas del Triángulo de Invierno de Sirio, Proción y Betelgeuse.
- Directamente debajo del tazón de la Osa Mayor se encuentra Leo con su estrella principal, Régulo.
- Siga el arco del mango del tazón de la Osa Mayor. Primero cruza Arturo, luego continúa hacia Espiga, luego Cuervo.
- Arturo, Espiga y Denébola forman el triángulo de primavera, un gran triángulo equilátero.

Puntos destacados con binoculares

A: M44 (Cumulo El Pesebre), un cúmulo de estrellas apenas perceptible a simple vista, se encuentra al sureste de Pólux. B: Mira alto en el este para ver el cúmulo de estrellas perdidas de Cabellera de Berenice. C: Mizar brilla junto a una estrella más tenue, Alcor.



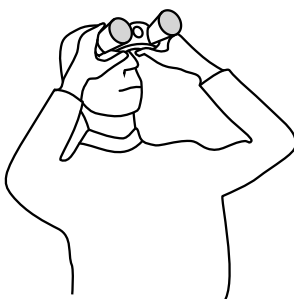


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If you can see only one celestial event this April, see this one.



Perhaps the most enchanting evenings of 2026!



Enhance the scene – use binoculars!

On April 18, 19, & 20, look low in the west-northwest 60 minutes after sunset.

- On the first evening, the crescent moon, glowing full with earthshine, floats near brilliant Venus, while on the second evening, it moves just above the delicate Pleiades star cluster, and to the right of the bright star Aldebaran and the intriguing Hyades star cluster.
- On the third evening, the slightly thicker, but more pronounced crescent moon hangs above the Pleiades and the Hyades.
- Above it all, bright Jupiter plows through Gemini, shining near Castor and Pollux.



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Astronomical League Notes

By Mark Smith

The Western Region of the Astronomical League has planned a group roundtable of member club reps in Flagstaff in mid-April. In addition to electing regional officers and completing the reconstitution of the region as a functional entity within the Astronomical League, we hope to start planning regional events including star parties, educational events, research collaborations, and more. This will include databases of speakers, events, people looking for research opportunities, events, a regional calendar, and other opportunities throughout the Western Region (California, Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii). Expect to see much more in the May Newsletter.

While you are waiting for more local Astronomical League offerings, I encourage everybody to check out all of the League's offerings at www.astroleague.org whether you are a member of the club or not. There are observing lists, observing projects, resources, and more and all are available for free regardless of membership status.

If you are interested in what you've read, I invite you to explore what the Astronomical League has to offer and use it to help guide or enrich your astronomy. You may even decide to join the next time you renew your SDAA membership. If you have any questions about the Astronomical League, please don't hesitate to contact me at ALCOR@SDAA.org.



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Private Pad News

by Mark Smith

Engineering work is getting close to complete, and the club is mostly waiting for SCG&E to switch over power of the club buildings to the new North Grid before shutting off power to the South Grid and starting work. Once work begins, there will be no private vehicles allowed on the private pads until work is complete and the trenches are filled in. It is likely that foot traffic will also be restricted for much of the private pad area. It is currently estimated that this will take less than a month, but it is possible that the work could take longer. Expect notice from the club with more details before work begins.

Once the work is complete, it will probably take at least another 2 months for final inspections to occur before the grid will be powered. Once we bring power back up, there will be no legacy on pad connections to the grid. Exact requirements for new on-pad wiring are still being worked out, but provisions have been made to allow on pad infrastructure to be updated and connected to the new grid if the pad lessee desires. The requirements and standards will be published before we power up the private pads again. Stand-alone systems that function off of the grid will not be affected, although access will be restricted during construction.

When everything is complete, we will have a reliable grid on the private pads for the first time in over a decade. New bollards similar to what are on the public pads will have been installed (you can see the marked positions on the private pads now) and, when the new entry system is brought online, we hope to eliminate the sign-in requirement. In addition, we are planning new procedures to ensure the long-term stability of the grid and avoid the issues that lead to it being turned off.

While we are waiting for electricity to return, we still have several private pads available. I realize that without electricity, the pads are of limited use to most members, but they still provide a viable option for many visual astronomers. In addition, if you are already a pad lessee, please continue to sign into your pad whenever you are at TDS whether you set up on your pad or are using the public pads. Although pad usage requirements have been waived while there is no power on the pads, the private pads usage data is the best TDS usage tracking information that we currently have.

If you have any feedback, are interested in leasing a private pad, or just have questions about them, please don't hesitate to contact me at pads@sdaa.org or emarksmi@san.rr.com.



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Member Proposal Committee – New Ideas!

After a slow start, the Member Proposal Committee has received 4 additional member proposals. One of those proposals has been approved and forwarded for implementation along with other TDS West work. That means there are now 2 Member Proposals that are in the process of being implemented. The remaining 3 are in work and are expected to be ready for BOD approval shortly.

We are up to 5 submissions now but are looking for more. That committee is searching for member suggestions for programs large and small that the SDAA can take on to advance our mission of Education in Astronomy and related sciences. These could be ideas for Outreach, equipment purchases, facility improvements, or anything else you can think of that advances our mission. If you have an idea that you think would be a fit for the SDAA, the process starts at <https://forms.gle/cDkCW5DNFh6ayVho9>.



Astronomical.League

on Facebook ...

Monthly sky maps,
Observing activities,
AL LIVE sessions,
League news & a whole lot more!



AL YouTube Channel

Observing Program Previews: What a program requires of the Observer.

Our View from Earth: How to find interesting celestial objects in three minutes. Perfect for club viewing.



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SDAA Contacts

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Treasurer	Treasurer@sdaa.org
Corresponding Secretary	Corresponding@sdaa.org
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Director Delta	DirectorDelta@sdaa.org
Director Gamma	DirectorGamma@sdaa.org

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Observatory Director	Observatory@sdaa.org
Private Pads	Pads@sdaa.org
Outreach	Outreach@sdaa.org
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S. County Star Parties	SouthStarParty@sdaa.org
E. County Star Parties	EastStarParty@sdaa.org
Central County Star Parties	CentralStarParty@sdaa.org
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since April 2011

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Assistant Editor: Craig Ewing

Have a great new piece of gear? Read an astronomy-related book that you think others should know about? How about a photograph of an SDAA Member in action? Or are you simply tired of seeing these Boxes in the Newsletter rather than something, well, interesting?

Join the campaign to rid the Newsletter of little boxes by sharing them with the membership. In return for your efforts, you will get your very own byline or photograph credit in addition to the undying gratitude of the Newsletter Editor. Just send your article or picture to Newsletter@SDAA.Org.



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San Diego Astronomy Association Board of Directors Meeting *March 10, 2026* - Unapproved and subject to revision

1. Call to Order

The meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order at 7:02pm with Jim Love, Vice President presiding. The following BOD members in attendance: Jim Love, Vice President; Mike Chasin, Treasurer; Kin Searcy, Recording Secretary; Ross Salinger, Corresponding Secretary; Damon Blackman, Director; Francisco Contreras, Director; Tom Kennedy, Director; Drew Koning, Director. Board member absent and excused was Dave Decker, President.

2. Approval of Last Meeting Minutes

The February meeting minutes V1.1 were approved by unanimous resolution. (Motion: D. Koning/Second: F. Contreras)

3. Members Present

Bee Pagarigan, Woody Schlom, Mark Smith, and David Wood were present.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer was on vacation in February, and both January and February treasurer's reports were reviewed. \$4.5M from the Chalmers trust was distributed to the Foundation as expected and \$1M remains to cover obligations. This residual could be released at the end of the year. The required CPA audit of the Foundation and SDAA accounts by CPA firm Considine and Considine is ongoing. The audit is extensive, goes back several prior years, and has not identified any red flags.

Membership is 836. Budget execution is positive, with revenue above target and expenses on track. The annual banquet should no longer be considered a fund raiser since SDAA subsidizes the meal tickets for member benefit and incurred an expected loss.

The Treasurer's report for January 2026 was approved by unanimous resolution. (Motion: D. Wood/Second: F. Contreras). The Treasurer's report for February 2026 was approved by unanimous resolution. (Motion: K. Searcy/Second: F. Contreras).



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5. **Standard Reports** The standard reports are included as submitted with Board discussion and action in italics.

a) TDS Operations Report

Pagarigan/Schutze

TDS Operations Committee Charter – development of committee and charter under review
An improved method for updating members on TDS East developments is in progress.

b) TDS-W Status

Burch

On the evening of March 2nd and 3rd TDS-W hosted a soft opening and Lunar eclipse event. The weather was clear and a couple dozen members and guests attended and also enjoyed the company of 3 special guests, David Levy, Mario Motta, and Jean Mueller. Discussions with these 3 very experienced astronomers in the comfort of the living room was delightful. We also thank Jim Traweek, Ed Rumsey, and Steve Myers for moving and setting up the 8" D&G refractor at the new site.

Alexander is still working on the repair items from the inspection list, including posts around the septic tank, new covers for the water pumps, and fixing the vent above the stove.

Woody and I are working on some final stuff so we can hopefully have the place ready for some initial visitors in time for our spring clean-up.

To be done, are some initial policies for member usage, based on similar policies from TDS proper.

The BOD discussed the success of the soft opening and thanked G. Burch, W. Schlom and team for their outstanding efforts in preparing TDW-S for the event.

c) Lipp Observatory

Rumsey

A much better month for star parties! Held both and opened up a number of other times just for fun. I performed a critical review of the scopes collimation and found it to nearly perfect. Trapezium shows six stars on excellent seeing nights. We owe Jim Traweek a hearty thank you. I had been trying to chase down an issue with the drive running slow in both far westerly and easterly orientations with little success. Balance, clutch adjustments, and re-greasing, all proved futile. Jim's genius idea was to loosen the worm's transverse limits and let it find its own resting position. We have very good tracking of objects on either the low eastern and western horizons now. Still muddy views, but mechanically correct. The Nexus Digital Setting Circles and tablet



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(Sky-Safari Pro) continue to function flawlessly. The tablet and access to immediate information have worked out better than originally anticipated. No more rough estimates in response to questions – look it up and respond.

We are looking forward to the remaining star parties. I will support the lunar eclipse, and UCSD's visit, in the first half of March.

d) Loaner Equipment

Krizak

35 loaner items are currently out. 8 were returned in February and 8 were checked out.

New loaner items have been added to the fleet:

SDAA-098 - SBIG ST-8300C OSC camera

SDAA-099 - ZWO ASI071MC Pro camera

SDAA-100 - Celestron C6 on Orion VersaGo alt-az mount

SDAA-101 - Another laser collimator for Newtonians

SDAA-102 - Orion Plossl eyepiece kit

SDAA-103 - Orion Stratus eyepiece kit

SDAA-104 - Glass solar filter for 8" SCTs

Donated (but not yet in use) equipment notes:

Orion XX12i push-to dob with travel cases for the mirror box, UTA, and trusses - Jose M. has volunteered to assist with onboarding this kit.

A couple spare push-to control boxes and extra encoder sets were included with the XX12i donation, so we can upgrade our XT10i's that have had the push-to functionality removed

Celestron C8 OTA: will be paired with the current Celestron CG-5 AS-GT mount from SDAA-091

(new!) Orion Atlas EQ-G mount: will replace the CG-5 mount used in SDAA-091 to better handle the 10" SCT.

(new!) Celestron C8 OTA with iEXOS-100-2 PMC-Eight goto mount - pending testing and integration work

(new!) Explore Scientific FirstLight EXOS Nano goto mount - pending testing and integration work

(new!) 10" Meade LightBride dob - pending testing and integration work

Maintenance notes:

SDAA-095 Celestron Power Tank battery has been replaced and it's back in the fleet.

SDAA-036 8" Meade SCT + MT Pro: Ken H. has volunteered to look into the handset battery drain issue.

New volunteers:

I've got a list of 9 members who have reached out and volunteered to help.

I'm having these folks "shadow" me to learn how the loaner program operates.

In ~April or so I'll start granting storage unit access to volunteers with enough hands-on experience to run loaner exchanges.



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Volunteers are also stepping up to assist with onboarding and testing donated equipment.

Budget extension:

I'd like to request a \$1000 budget extension to get me through the remainder of the fiscal year. With all the new donations I've burned through my existing budget buying odds and ends needed to get donated equipment ready for members to loan out. I'm also going to need to buy one or two more eyepiece kits (probably another Agena Starguider kit, plus a Baader Morpheus based kit if we can swing the budget) to keep pace with the rapid expansion of the loaner telescope fleet. An agenda item was added for the February board meeting but I believe it did not make it up for discussion.

e) Storage Facility

Krizak

The Lucas Newtonian still needs to be moved to TDS.

Soon I will be replacing the lock on the storage unit with one that has more keys (our current lock only has 3 keys). This will allow us to broaden access to more volunteers while retaining administrative access.

With the recent influx of donations, the storage unit is over capacity (which is crazy, because just a few months ago I had reported that we had sufficient space -- we are getting a lot of donations!). If all the checked-out gear were to be returned today, I would not be able to store everything. The next time I'm at the facility I'm going to get a quote for a larger unit, or perhaps a second unit (which can be used to store less-frequently-accessed gear).

The BOD unanimously approved a motion to approve \$1000 for the budget extension and \$2000 for the larger storage unit. (Motion: R. Salinger/Second: K. Searcy)

f) Private Pads & Policies

Smith

We had one more returned pad so we are up to 9 free pads. Interest remains extremely low while power issues are resolved, although I have heard several members comment that they will be interested once power is restored. Note that Grady Boyce's membership has expired and he is the lease holder for Pad 2 (the Boyce Observatory). Several attempts to reach either him or Pat have been unsuccessful. Given that we know they are using the facility, I'm convinced this is an oversight and am expanding my efforts to resolve the issue.



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g) SDAA Monthly Programs Report

Searcy

Since there is no formal program committee, meetings are being organized ad hoc. K. Searcy recommended that the 18 March program meeting be used to discuss the relationship with the UCSD astronomy department in a town hall fashion. This would be put together at the last minute to reflect the meeting with UCSD at TDS on 14 March. The BOD agreed with this approach.

h) AISIG

Wood

AISIG organized an in-person “meet-up” on Saturday, March 7th. The meeting, held locally in San Diego, was conceived by Francisco Contreras to bring together members with limited or no experience in astrophotography with those actively involved in astro-imaging using various telescopes and imaging equipment. Approximately 35 people attended, and Francisco delivered a brief presentation on astro-imaging before sunset. The meeting was highly successful, with at least two members who had been frustrated with their attempts at astro-imaging successfully capturing image data using their systems with the assistance of the other attendees. Many members expressed a strong desire to continue these types of meetings in the future.

F. Contreras has conducted a survey of participants. Response was very positive and 90% of participants responded that they had learned something new.

i) Newsletter

Kuhl

Nothing new to report this month.

j) Website

Stevens

Webmaster report: I need to update the Contacts page <https://sdaa.org/contacts/> with the new Board and any other changes. I need pictures for Tom Kennedy, Damon Blackman and Francisco Contreras. I also need to know which director seat each director holds. In addition, please review the Contacts page and send me any other corrections. If anyone doesn't like their picture this is their chance to send me a new one. Also, the forwarding addresses are now done as delegates through Google Workspace. Steve Myers should be contacted to make those changes.

The BOD noted that the MPC and SPC should be added to the SDAA Committee Chairpersons section.



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k) SDAA Social Media Report for February 2026

Pagarigan

ORBIT is a temporary working group supporting SDAA communications. Current members include Pagarigan (Content), Prascilla (Content), Gracie (Content), Melissa (Design) and Francisco (Content).

Work-in-Progress

Efforts to create member-only webpages for updates on the TDS east-side electrical grid and the west-side new property have encountered limitations with our current digital infrastructure. As a result, the initial goals of this project will instead be addressed through alternative social media channels that can support member-exclusive content.

Facebook Focus

Current membership is 475 as of 260308; an increase of three members since the previous report.

The group remains private and limited to SDAA Members who agree to the group rules. Because Facebook may serve as a backup platform for member-only information (given the challenges with a members-only webpage), an audit is currently underway to ensure access is restricted to verified SDAA members.

SDAA Podcast

The podcast team (video editor, hosts, featured guests/programs) are gearing up for a 2026 debut. Early episodes are currently being revised following feedback from the recent Zoom town hall, which highlighted gaps in new member orientation. The updated content will help to better address these onboarding needs.

l) Outreach Report

Ammann

This month started off with a **'Big Bang'** on February 1st with the annual SDAA Banquet at the San Diego Air & Space Museum with an overflow crowd of about 250 people and a lower price to attend as compared to previous years. The doors opened at 3:00pm for our members who toured the museum and walked through the new exhibit, 'Ripley's Believe It or Not' with an aviation theme to it. From 5:00 to 8:00pm the banquet was held with guest speaker Dr. Andy Boden, Deputy Director of Optical Observatories for CalTech who spoke about the planning and drawings of Palomar Observatory.

As for the rest of February, this might be the record for worst San Diego weather month on account of all the cancelled events. Starting February 4th, the first casualty was Stars-in-the-Park, cancelled the day before. It was forecasted as 'Mostly Cloudy' but turned out to be a clear



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night and doable! Two schools were cancelled next on February 5th because of foul weather: Northmont and Ocean Beach Elementary Schools. Kumeyaay Lake Campground fared no better on February 6th, cancelled because of clouds. Meanwhile on Saturday, February 7th, TDS Public Night survived, so was credited with a completion.

During the second week two elementary schools were cancelled: Spreckels on February 10th and Carson on February 12th. Oakoasis County Park and TDS Member Night pressed on during Saturday, February 14th.

As for the third week, clouds obscured Miller Elementary School on February 17th. The first Zoom Town Hall was held on February 19th generating good ideas from about 15 members who attended. Kin Searcy's Sycamore Canyon West had to be cancelled because of a muddy gravel parking lot on February 20th. Barona Charter School was successfully completed on that same night with Woody Schlom, William Cecil, Craig Storms, and Dennis Ammann providing telescopes for the students and parents.

Only one event was scheduled for the last week of February... Sycamore Canyon East on February 27th. An excellent night with Kin Searcy leading this event, supported by his son Jim. The other members in attendance were: Corey Breininger, Tim Gruber (with son Adam), Jose Mag-saysay, and Dennis Ammann.

Year to Date:

2026	Previous	February	YTD
Completed	7	4	11
Canceled	7	8	15
Attendance	905	135	1040

m) TARO

Wood

The Optical Telescope Assembly (OTA) has been successfully disassembled, and the cleaning of the optics is currently underway. During the assembly process, several minor issues were identified that will be addressed once the OTA is reassembled. The faulty rotator has been sent back to Optec for repair and will be reinstalled in the optical train. We anticipate that the system will be operational again within the next 30 days.



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n) Cruzen Observatory

Salinger

The Cruzen observatory continues to be under-utilized. There were 5 reservations during 2025. I sent out a revised operations manual. Once I get 5 training requests, I'll schedule some training. Most likely this will be on a Saturday in early May.

I'd like to buy a PiFinder to make using the DK much easier. This eliminates the rather complicated and touchy digital setting circle system and will make the DK much easier to use.

If the usage doesn't pick up, I really think that we should reconsider the observational use only rule. The CGX/Tak system could be used for casual BYO imaging without much expense. A manual would need to be written to ensure safe use. The only equipment that would be needed for DSLR use would be some kind of guiding system. (I'm sure that we have an old refractor lurking somewhere that could be mounted on the Takahashi 130.)

o) Pad 70 Observatory

Salinger

The system continues to work, night after night. The NINA sequences now close the roof when the weather is bad and re-open it if things clear up later in the night. Other than that one change, all the software remains the same.

I would like to tap into the donated money for three licenses. The system uses Pushover to send status messages. For member use we need two perpetual licenses a \$5 each, a google drive at 1.99 a month and a license for AnyViewer at \$47.88 annual fee. So, for the rest of the proof of concept the total bill is going to be \$80. *D. Blackman offered the SPC google account.*

The Edge 11 has not been put into service. It needs to be mounted and collimated. I'm lending an imaging train that can be used for the collimation. I would expect when the weather is better to get this done – during March – but I'm not optimistic.

I have identified 3 members in being beta testers. If the weather cooperates, I'll have a group meeting on date TBD to discuss next steps. I have 4 reservations so far for the April through July (2 week) intervals/leases. We also have the three of us who are using the system and will likely continue to do so whenever there are no contributing members reserving it. *D. Blackman offered the use of his SCT collimator.*

p) Merchandise Report

Burch

Nothing new to report. Waiting for a new logo for merchandise.



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q) Astronomical League Report

Smith

The Western Regional meeting will be the evening of April 14th, all day on the 15th, and the morning of the 16th in Flagstaff at the Lowell Observatory. Given the length of the drive, I plan on driving out a day early. The AL is showing a lot of support for the effort to stand up the Western Region again including providing funding for the meeting facility. The agenda is heavy on organizational activities, but if there is anything that we would like to address or volunteer for, let me know. *The BOD offered to sponsor an AL event at TDS.*

r) Grid Reconstruction

Wood

North Grid - The final transition of the club's assets (including the Lipp, bathrooms, and public pads) from the southern grid to the northern grid is being delayed due to the acquisition of the proper electrical panel necessary for integration with SDG&E. This delay is caused by supply chain issues beyond our or Neal's direct control.

South Grid - A meeting was held at Neal Electric headquarters to review the current South grid design plans. We disagreed with some changes in the grid layout and believed it would be more effective to address these changes in person at Neal Electric headquarters. We anticipate receiving updated design plans from Neal Electric within the next 2 to 3 days. Once these changes are approved, Neal Electric and their electrical design contractor will proceed with the complete 100% design documentation.

s) Membership Project Committee

Love

The committee received 3 new submittals for consideration in February. Two of them are ready for board consideration and 1 is in the review process.

Approved Project updates.

The BOD approved proposal submitted by Mark Smith titled "SD County Fair Photography Award" is in the process of implementation.

The necessary paperwork for the County Fair and Payment will be submitted by the end of WW10.

Mark will be publicizing the SDAA involvement and helping to locate volunteers to be judges for the event.



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This project is on track and on budget. *M. Smith has delivered a check to the Fair and has recruited AISIG judges. The Fair thanked SDAA for sponsoring a night sky photography award. OPT had sponsored one in the past.*

Projects Ready for Action by the Board.

The committee reviewed a proposal submitted by Woody Schlom titled, "Free membership for outreach volunteering" via the online submission tool.

The description of the idea is Provide free club membership for SDAA outreach volunteers. The goal is to encourage more outreach volunteers and reward those volunteering.

Using the ranking tool, the project received a total score of 82/100 and was therefore approved for forwarding to the BOD.

The committee agreed to submit this idea for approval of the board for implementation. The proposal asks the board to select the number of events to be a volunteer at to get the free membership - suggested range is 6 to 10 per year.

Project documents are archived in the MPC shared drive per our procedures and are included in the pre-meeting board materials.

The BOD gave unconditional support to this project and requested an expansion of some details (reporting, number of qualifying events, class of membership, possible ceiling) for a BOD vote next month.

The committee reviewed a proposal submitted by Woody Schlom titled, "SDAA Member Workshops at TDS-W" via the online submission tool.

The description of the idea is Configure TDS-W to be the central location for conducting SDAA workshops -- outreach, AISIG, basic telescope operation, telescope calibration and repairs, TDS orientation, etc. The goal is to provide a facility for conducting SDAA member workshops in a dark-sky location with appropriate amenities.

There was a discussion on the content overlap with the 2 new committee charters currently under consideration of the board (the Membership Committee and the Facility Committee).

The ranking for the submission was rated 94/100 and was therefore approved for forwarding to the BOD.

Project documents are archived in the MPC shared drive per our procedures and are included in the pre-meeting board materials.

The BOD supported this project and directed that the language be included in the appropriate committee's charter.

Our next meeting will be held on April 7th



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t) Strategic Planning Committee

Blackman

The Strategic Planning Committee offers two documents for discussion. The documents are in the business meeting folder.

Digital Infrastructure with RFP
Office Manager (remote) with Job Description:

6. Old Business

a) Membership Committee Charter

The BOD reviewed detailed comments on the draft charter, submitted as markups by BOD members. The BOD directed a change in scope to remove meetings management (social, program, and banquet) from the membership committee to a separate events committee. The revised charter was approved by unanimous resolution. (Motion: M. Chasin/Second: K. Searcy).

b) Facilities Management Committee Charter

The BOD reviewed detailed comments on the draft charter, submitted as markups by BOD members. The BOD directed removal of private observatories management from the charter and tabled consideration pending review by additional stakeholders. **Action Item: BOD 03-01: D. Blackman meet with D. Wood, M. Smith, E. Rumsey to address their interests in the facilities management committee charter.**

c) Strategic Plan Summary Slides

The BOD reviewed the strategic plan summary slides for publication and approved a motion to adopt option 2 format for the first slide and the remaining slides as presented by unanimous resolution. (Motion: D. Blackman/Second: D. Koning). B. Pagarigan offered contact information for her committee's graphics designer to improve the presentation.

7. New Business

a) TDS Electric Gate

D. Wood updated the BOD on the design and cost of a gate control system for TDS that would use RFID chips on member car windows or a phone app. The gate would be a powered, double swing gate, existing TDS unit or replacement depending on condition, with emergency manual



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opening capability. The BOD has already recommended an electric gate, and the cost of the Lift-Master system proposed is less than other options and offers better features. Another system could also be installed at TDS-W and have unified management with TDS. The BOD unanimously approved a motion to recommend this solution to the Foundation (Motion: J. Love/Second: R. Salinger).

b) MPC Projects

Action on MPC projects is addressed in section 5.r.

8. Action Items

BOD 03-01: D. Blackman meet with D. Wood, M. Smith, E. Rumsey to address their interests in the facilities management committee charter.

9. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:25pm by unanimous resolution. (Motion: D. Koning/Second: K. Searcy)



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2026 TDS Star Party Schedule

Date	Type	Sunset	Astro. Twi.	Moonrise(set)	Closing	Illumination	Hosts
Jan-10-26	Public	4:58 PM	6:25 PM	12:42 AM	9:30 PM	51.1%	Ed Rumsey
Jan-17-26	Member	5:04 PM	6:30 PM	6:56 AM	9:30 PM	1.2%	Ed Rumsey
Feb-07-26	Public	5:23 PM	6:47 PM	11:28 PM	10:00 PM	69.1%	Jim Traweek & Jannet
Feb-14-26	Member	5:30 PM	6:53 PM	5:31 AM	10:00 PM	8.0%	Ed Rumsey
Mar-14-26	Member	6:52 PM	8:14 PM	5:03 AM	11:00 PM	20.3%	Igor von Nyssen
Mar-21-26	Public	6:57 PM	8:20 PM	(10:19 PM)	11:30 PM	10.8%	Ed Rumsey & Dave Wood
Apr-11-26	Public	7:12 PM	8:37 PM	3:32 AM	11:30 PM	36.3%	Ed Rumsey & Kin Searcy
Apr-18-26	Member	7:17 PM	8:44 PM	(9:13 PM)	12:00 AM	2.9%	
May-09-26	Public	7:32 PM	9:05 PM	2:01 AM	12:00 AM	53.2%	
May-16-26	Member	7:37 PM	9:12 PM	(8:03 PM)	12:00 AM	0.2%	
Jun-06-26	Public	7:50 PM	9:31 PM	12:31 AM	12:30 AM	69.0%	
Jun-13-26	Member	7:53 PM	9:35 PM	4:47 AM	12:30 AM	3.1%	Steven Myers
Jul-11-26	Member	7:55 PM	9:34 PM	3:30 AM	12:30 AM	10.8%	Ed & Kate Rumsey
Jul-18-26	Public	7:52 PM	9:29 PM	(10:47 PM)	12:30 AM	25.7%	
Aug-08-26	Public	7:37 PM	9:07 PM	2:19 AM	12:00 AM	22.1%	
Aug-15-26	Member	7:29 PM	8:58 PM	(9:14 PM)	12:00 AM	12.6%	
Sep-05-26	Public	7:04 PM	8:28 PM	1:15 AM	11:30 PM	35.5%	
Sep-12-26	Member	6:55 PM	8:18 PM	(7:41 PM)	11:30 PM	3.6%	
Oct-03-26	Public	6:27 PM	7:48 PM	12:17 AM	11:00 PM	50.0%	
Oct-10-26	Member	6:18 PM	7:39 PM	7:50 AM	10:30 PM	0.1%	Paul Krizak
Nov-07-26	Member	4:49 PM	6:13 PM	5:40 AM	9:30 PM	2.5%	
Nov-14-26	Public	4:44 PM	6:09 PM	(9:06 PM)	9:00 PM	27.2%	
Dec-05-26	Member	4:39 PM	6:06 PM	4:33 AM	9:00 PM	10.3%	
Dec-12-26	Public	4:40 PM	6:08 PM	(7:57 PM)	9:00 PM	13.1%	

SDAA is now registered with the employer fund-matching platform Benevity. If your workplace offers matching charitable donations for non-profits and uses Benevity to distribute funds, you can now designate the San Diego Astronomy Association. Thank you for supporting the SDAA!

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Send dues and renewals to P.O. Box 23215, San Diego, CA 92193-3215 or renew on-line. The notice that your membership in SDAA will expire is sent by email. Dues are \$60 for Contributing Memberships; \$40 for Basic Membership; \$70 for Private Pads; \$5 for each Family membership.