

BURT SALK

SEPTEMBER 15, 1940 - JULY 6, 2026



It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of our friend and fellow club member, Burt Salk.

Burt has been a mainstay of our club for well over a decade. Serving in many roles including club president and secretary. He guided the club through many difficulties and breaks in leadership, stepping forward to preserve its continuity. He had a lifelong devotion to education, and a personal commitment to advancing science and human understanding of our universe. This drive made our club the strong and active organization that we enjoy today.

Burt was a personal friend to many of us, and was active in the club up to the very end. Despite health challenges he continued attending our monthly general meetings where we visited with him and enjoyed his presence.

In addition to serving the club as an officer, Burt was a dedicated visual observer and space exploration enthusiast. He had a special interest in human exploration and potential colonization of Mars. He gave multiple talks on the subject, and its challenges and opportunities. He was gratified to live to see the resumption of human deep space exploration and the promise of more yet to come.

He had a burning passion for education of children. He wanted to convey to them a wonder in the universe around them, and the active roles they can play in understanding it. He advocated for the educational tools that our club has developed to accomplish this, particularly the Michael Weiss Memorial Solar Walk.

We will miss Burt's lively character and close friendship, but we will keep his commitments alive in our club and its activities since he has done well to educate us in them and engrain them into the character of our organization.

Let us celebrate his manifold accomplishments during his life. May his memory be a blessing to us all.

Club Website:
<http://vlgastroclub.org/>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/vlgastroclub/>

Personal Remembrances of Burt Salk

I'm so sorry to hear about Burt. He was a dear friend and donated a tsunami of history, stories, and efforts to The Villages Astronomy Club! I have photos from the 7-28-2021 TVAC Solar Walk that Burt gave with my grandson, Kevin, attending. After Burt's presentation, Kevin asked me if Burt was a college professor of astronomy and was there anything about the planets that Burt did NOT know. Kevin was very impressed with Burt!

-Bob Averitt

I am deeply saddened by Burt's passing. He was always such a positive part of my experience with the Club. A truly kind and caring man - I will miss him.

-L. John Keller II

I always would like taking with Burt and hearing his many stories. He leaves a great legacy with the club and his wisdom & passion for astronomy and club activities will be missed!

-Jeffrey Kahler

I couldn't have done what I've done as club president without Burt. Burt built the foundation that I sustained and built on, and taught me the things I need to know to run this club and work with The Villages. We became good friends with our shared interests and passions about space, educating younger generations, and sharing our love of astronomy with others. I wasn't prepared to be president of the club, but Burt mentored me along with Warren, Jerry, and Linda to learn what I needed to know. Meanwhile, Burt & I got to spend a lot of time together talking about all sorts of things and spending time together. I always felt a special pleasure when he complimented me on doing a good job, because I felt like it was his club that I'd been entrusted with.

I miss him already, but I treasure the time we had together spreading the word about the magnificent universe we're part of. Burt was a

great teacher, not just for me, but for everyone who came to one of our events. He had great concern for the youngsters who weren't being introduced to the wonders of our universe as we had been in school in our childhoods.

I hope we can keep sharing that both with youth and adults, carrying forward Burt's legacy.

-Mark Graybill



Above Images of Burt by Bob Averitt

Burt had a passion for teaching young people about astronomy. He put so much energy into Camp Villages and into the Solar Walk, in addition to all he did for the club. I'm honored to carry on in his rather roomy footsteps.

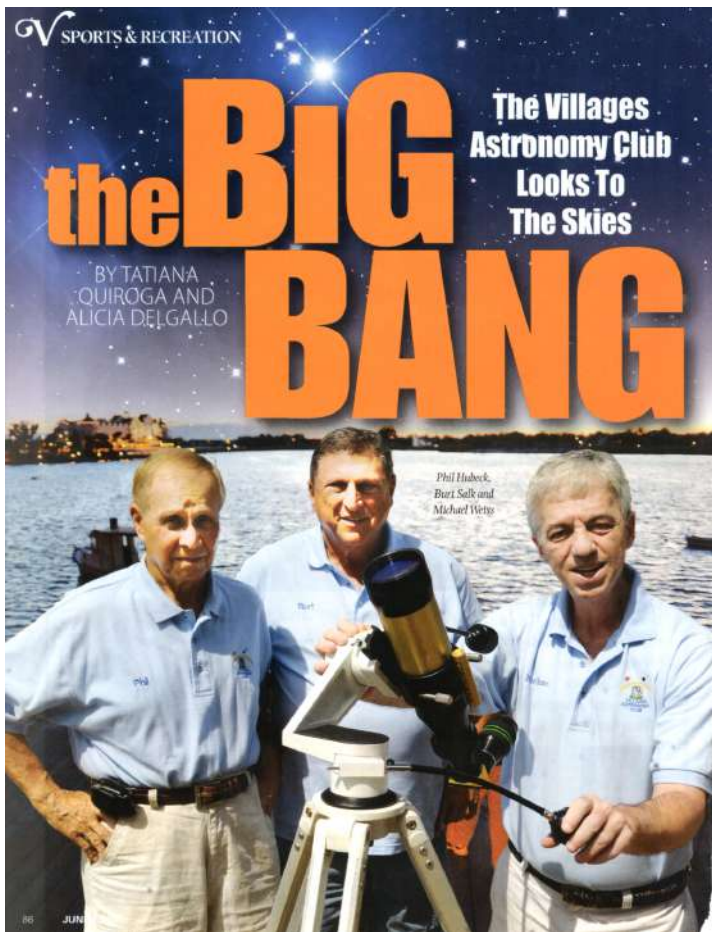
-Toni Graybill



Burt, Wildwood 2022 image by Jeff Kahler, Sr.



Burt Setting Up His 8" SCT, 2010



Club members Phil Hubeck, Burt Salk, and Michael Weiss. Villages image, June 2013.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Space Academy, August 3rd, 6:30pm
Truman Rec Ctr, 2705 Canal St.

Join us as Space Academy, where we talk about the basics of space, astronomy, and astrophysics. We cover recent events in astronomy research and space exploration.

Observers Workshop, Aug 3rd, 8pm, Truman Rec Ctr, 2705 Canal St.

The August Observers' Workshop is likely to be inside the recreation center, after Space Academy, unless we get surprised by nice weather and clear skies, in which case we will move out to the Picnic Pavilion to enjoy a rare starry summer evening.

Join us for assistance with telescopes, observing, or Astronomical League programs.

Executive Directors' Meeting, August 7th, 11am-12pm, Fishhawk Rec Center, 2318 Buttonwood Run

All members welcome to our monthly planning meeting. This month we'll be planning our fall and winter event schedules, and preparing for November's Starry Starry Night event.

Smart Scope Meetings are in abeyance through the summer. Join us when they restart in September, we are looking at changes to allow for more and better smart scope meetings in 2027!

Fruitland Park Astronomy Group, Aug 15th, 5pm, 300 Shiloh Rd, Fruitland Park

Weather permitting, join us for an evening of observing and astronomy talk with the Fruitland Park Astronomy Group! Come to Cales Soccer Field in Fruitland Park, 300 Shiloh Road (at the corner of Shiloh Road and Dixie Avenue, north of the Fruitland Park water tower.) Enter on Shiloh Road (some GPS's will guide you to the Dixie Avenue entrance.) Gate opens at 5pm. We will stay as late as conditions permit and people are interested in observing. Bring power if required.

Public is welcome to this event, **no Villages ID required!** Bring family and friends to view the evening sky with our astronomers!

General Meeting, August 18, 6:30pm:
Round Table: Your Astronomy Interests and Resources

Join us for our annual round table where we hear from our membership! We want to know more about you, your interests in astronomy, what you enjoy about astronomy, what you like about our club, and what our club can do for you.

We will also be collecting your astronomy resources for our annual resources issue of the newsletter in September. Tell us about your favorite video streamers on space and astronomy, books, magazines, websites, vendors, products, online educational institutions, amateur organizations, and anything else that contributes to your astronomy hobby!

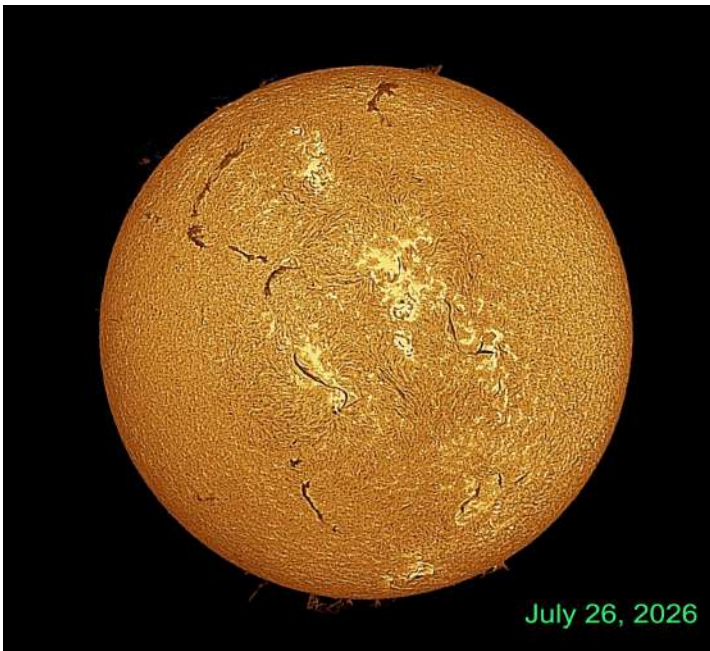


Image of the Sun by member Craig Henry.
SkyWatcher 76mm H-alpha telescope and
SharpCap software.

Upcoming Meeting Cancellations/Changes

There will be **no Space Academy or Observers Workshop in October**, as Truman Recreation Center will be closed for maintenance.

Space Academy will be held outside at the picnic pavilion in November, with the Observers Workshop, as we hold a “mini star party” to help our astronomers prepare for Starry Starry Night by giving them a preparatory event! The inside room will be in use as a polling place for the election, so it won’t be available. Please come and look at the sky with our astronomers, or bring your scope and learn to show the sky if you’ve never done so before!

The General Meeting for November has been cancelled due to Laurel Manor scheduled maintenance. Yes, even though the center has recently been refurbished, the maintenance schedule for the building is resulting in another meeting cancellation. Plan to come to Starry Starry Night on Saturday November 14th, then our **regular meetings resume on December 15th**, where we will have ice cream at our holiday season meeting!

Your Club Officers & Directors

President	Mark Graybill
Vice President	Ken Katta
Secretary	Randy Gilbert
Treasurer	Linda Meng
Space Academy	Toni Graybill
Public Relations	Jeffrey Kahler, Sr.
Directors	Craig Henry
	Tim Connolly

Newsletter Contact: saundby@gmail.com

See Calendar at End of Newsletter, before star chart.

Club Calendar Online:

<https://vlgastroclub.org/calendar/>

NEWS

Starship Flight 13 Success

SpaceX successfully flew version 3 (V3) of their Starship launch vehicle for the second time. The first flight of this version was on May 22nd earlier this year. That flight had issues with the return of the booster (called “Superheavy”) and one of the upper stage (“Starship”) engines failed to light on ascent. As a result, test objectives for a simulated landing of the booster and a relight of the Starship’s engines in space did not occur.



Starship full stack the night before launch. SpaceX

Despite that, flight 12 had many successes and provided a good basis for advancements in flight 13.

Flight 13 launched from SpaceX’s Launch

Pad 2 in Starbase, TX, on July 24th, 2026. This was their third attempt with this rocket. The first experienced a pad abort after 4 of the 33 Superheavy engines failed to ignite. The cause was found to be ice buildup in the turbopumps, and the engines were removed and replaced before the later attempts.

The second launch attempt was cancelled due to poor visibility, as one of the objectives of this mission was to obtain good imagery of the heat shield during ascent to see how it stood up to a very aggressive high speed launch.

On the third attempt, the weather was clear and all engines started. Flight 13 was on its way!



Ship 40 and Booster 20 lift off from Pad 2. SpaceX

On Flight 12, the booster “flip” maneuver had pushed the Superheavy in the wrong direction, causing problems with its engines restarting for boostback after separation of the two stages. So with Flight 13, it was important for SpaceX to get this right.

The booster flip went seamlessly, and they obtained a full booster engine relight to send the booster back toward its launch site. Then the engines shut down during the booster’s cruise across the Gulf.



Booster 20 falls away from Ship 40 after separation. SpaceX image.

When the time came to relight the engines for its descent burn, all relit initially, then some were lost beyond the number planned. Though Superheavy tried to compensate with its remaining engines, it failed to simulate a tower catch and struck the sea at a higher than intended velocity. We can expect another try to get this right in Flight 14.

Meanwhile, Starship continued its flight into space with no problems. It achieved orbital velocity, but was kept on a suborbital trajectory so

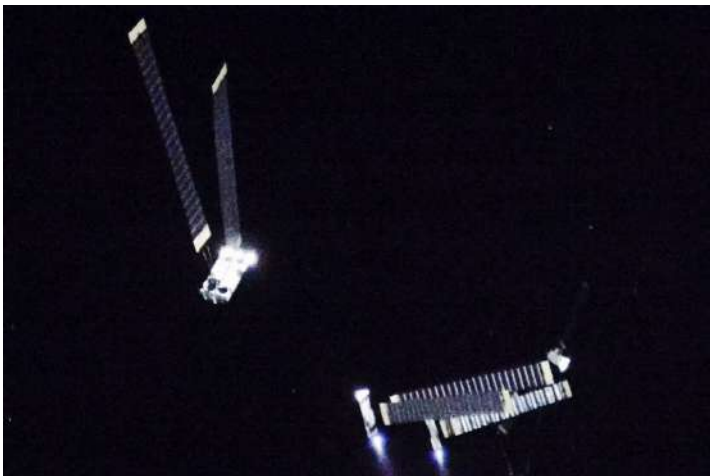
that it would safely return to Earth no matter what, and not remain in space.

Starlink Satellite Deployment

Another first for this flight was that it was carrying 20 real Starlink V3 satellites in its cargo bay. The V3 Starlink satellite is much larger than the earlier Starlinks, and capable of far more communications bandwidth than earlier versions.

Flight 12 had carried mass simulators rather than actual satellites, so this marked the first time Starlink V3s have been to space. They are too large to be carried by a Falcon 9 rocket.

Shortly after arriving in space, Starship opened its payload bay door and began sending the Starlinks out in to space. Once there, they deployed their solar arrays and began tying in to the orbital Starlink network using both radio communications and laser communications.



The first Starlink V3s in space deploy their solar arrays and begin communications with the network. Starlink image.

While the satellites would be re-entering the atmosphere because they were on the same suborbital trajectory as Starship, the time they had in space was enough for SpaceX to make critical tests of the design in space for the first time. SpaceX reported that the satellites worked perfectly.

Six of the Starlinks also carried cameras to take pictures of Starship to examine its heat shield in the time between ascent and descent.



Images from a camera-equipped Starlink V3 of other Starlinks and Starship 40 in flight. Starlink.

Raptor Firing in Space

Earlier Starship flight tests have fired earlier versions of Raptor in space, one of the major objectives on Flight 13 was to fire a new Raptor V3 rocket while in space.

This is a critical test to allow Starship to go into a full orbital trajectory on future flights. Once in an orbit, it requires a rocket firing to return to come out of the orbit and return to Earth in a controlled fashion. Starship is too big to take a chance of having it re-enter uncontrolled, as it's likely to survive re-entry.

The Raptor V3 is a heavily redesigned engine from earlier versions, so tests performed on prior versions are repeated..

While travelling over South Africa, Starship fired a single Raptor engine for 14 seconds. The firing was successful, so now Starship will be going into orbit on Flight 14! This is a major advancement for Starship.



Starship fires Raptor in space. SpaceX.

Return to Earth

This flight intentionally flew faster during launch to stress the heatshield as much as possible. SpaceX wants to punish it to test how survivable it is as they continuously work to make it more robust.



Plasma in the thin air of the upper atmosphere as Starship enters at Mach 25. SpaceX.

When it returned to Earth, they flew Starship on the same profile it would use if returning to Texas to be caught by the tower arms. They wanted to see if the heat shield would protect the craft, and whether Starship would be able to come to a pinpoint landing accurate enough for a tower catch.

Starship performed perfectly, and not only made a pinpoint landing but also survived tipping over into the sea. As of this writing, it is still afloat and Elon Musk has announced that Starship will be recovered and brought back to land.



Starship 40 gently touching down in the Indian Ocean. SpaceX image.

As a result of the quality of the landing, Elon Musk has announced that they will attempt to catch Starship upon return from orbit on its next flight. Pending full review of the flight's data, but this is another exciting step forward for Starship.



Starship 40 floating intact next to a SpaceX camera drone. SpaceX image.

This flight represents an important maturation of the Starship system for launch. Not only will it be going into orbit from now on, it is now open to catching both ship and booster. The current V3 booster will likely require at least one more test flight to clear it for a catch attempt, with

a fully successful simulated catch before a full catch attempt. However, with the improvements seen between Flight 12 and Flight 13 this will hopefully be only one more flight before we see both stages caught, and then not long before re-use.



The SpaceX recovery team with Ship 40. SpaceX.

Flight 13 also marks the first recovery of any sort of the Starship upper stage. This will allow the heatshield engineers to make detailed examination of their work after flight in person, rather than simply through imagery and shipboard flight data. While some tiles showed damage, overall the heat shield looked to be in very good condition after flight.

Flight 14 and Beyond

Flight 14 could be happening as soon as this month. The stages for this flight are already well into preparations for flight, and the launch pad appears to be in excellent condition.

Flight 14 will be the first flight to orbit, the

first deployment of active satellites into orbit, and the first recovery of the Ship. It will be another important step toward later tests of Starship focused on its use as the Human Landing System for humanity's return to the Moon in 2028.

Future flights will be launched from launch complex 39A here in Florida. The Artemis III Starship may be one of those, to be launched next summer as part of 3 coordinated launches for the Artemis III mission.

Florida's first flight may be Flight 15 or Flight 16, depending on SpaceX's plans.



Starship. Humans for scale. The full stack of Starship is the size of a 40 story skyscraper. SpaceX image.

Within the next year, we can also expect a propellant transfer demo between two Starships in space. This is a critical milestone toward the lunar landing in 2028.

Once fully operational, Starship is projected to reduce the cost of launching payloads to about one tenth of today's Falcon 9 costs, while carrying more and larger payloads.

Full Article and video:

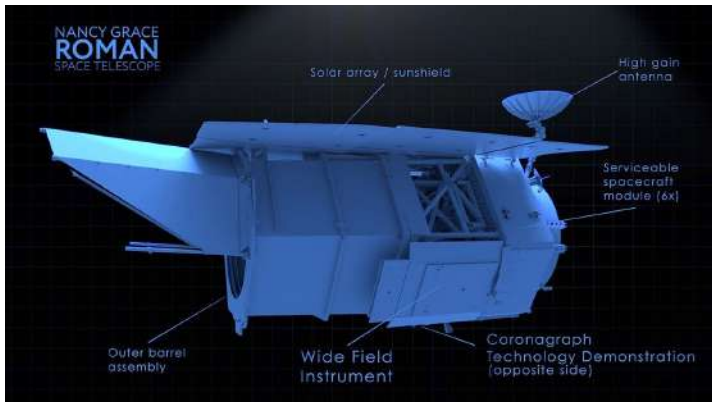
<https://www.spacex.com/launches/starship-flight-13>

Nancy Grace Roman Telescope to Launch This Month



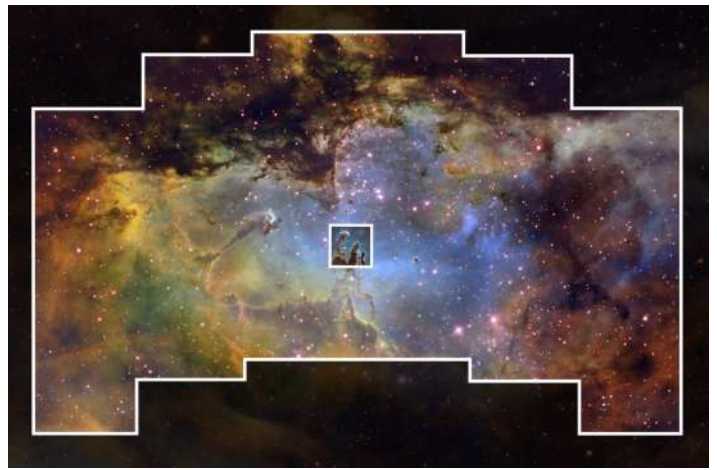
Using a Hubble-like mirror donated to NASA from the National Reconnaissance Office, the Roman Telescope provides views that Hubble cannot. NASA image.

Under budget, and ahead of schedule, the Nancy Grace Roman Space telescope is due to launch near the end of this month. This new space telescope takes advantage of some old parts, including a mirror originally created for a reconnaissance satellite, coupled with new technology and a home in an L2 orbit to provide observations that are 10x better than Hubble.



Layout and instruments of the Roman Telescope. NASA image.

The field of view of the Roman Telescope will be far greater than that of Hubble, over 200 times the area of Hubble. Its orbit at the L2 point, nearly a million miles from Earth, will give it a more stable thermal environment. And modern sensor technology will allow it to provide images far sharper and more detailed than those of Hubble.



Field of view for Hubble (center square) compared to Roman (outer area.) ESA image.

The Roman Space Telescope has three main areas of focus in its mission:

- Understanding Dark Energy
- Exoplanets
- Infrared Astrophysics

Its ability to see high detail will allow it to map galaxies at extreme distances, providing an understanding of the effects (if any) of dark energy on their movements and the expansion of the universe. Similarly, this will allow the mapping of unseen concentrations of dark matter as well.

Roman will carry an experimental coronagraph instrument that will allow it to block out the light of a specific star in its observation of remote solar systems. Coupled with its highly sensitive sensors, this should allow far more exoplanets to be detected than can be observed using current instruments.

With instruments that can view large areas of the sky from nearby stars to the edge of the visible universe, Roman's sensors will give information about how the universe formed and grew in this period. It will reveal early galaxy and galaxy cluster formation, and provide insight into the factors that affected the universe at different stages of its growth.

Roman's primary mission is scheduled to last for 5 years, with the expectation that there will be further mission extensions beyond that.

It will be launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon Heavy with the boosters returning to land at LZ-2 and LZ-40 at Cape Canaveral. If you are looking for an exciting launch viewing opportunity, this will be one of the best this year! And don't forget--wait for the sonic booms after the landings! The show's not over till the sky goes BOOMBOOM!

Further information:

[Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope - NASA Science](#)

[Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope | STScI](#)

[ESA - Roman factsheet](#)



Roman Telescope being prepared for encapsulation. NASA image..

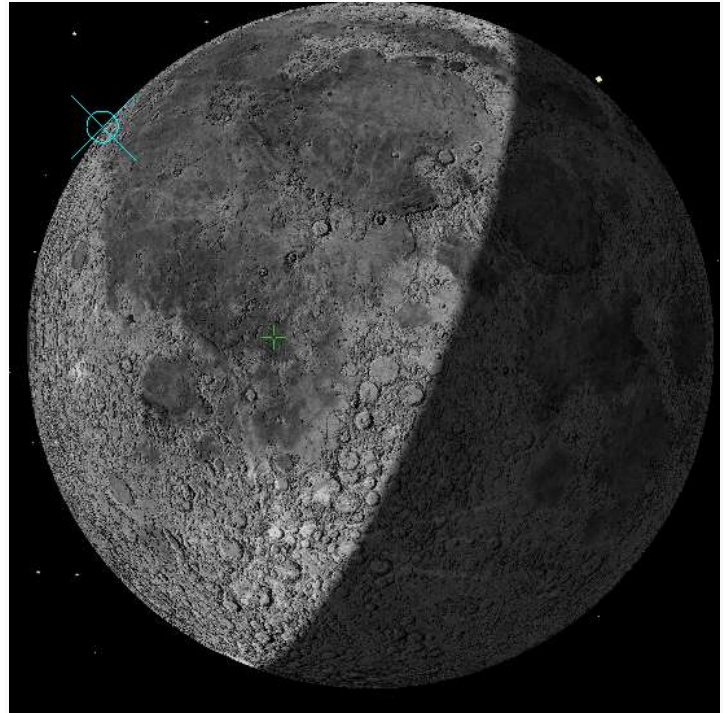
IN THE SKY THIS MONTH

Also refer to the sky map on the last page.

Falcon 9 2nd Stage to Crash on Moon

The second stage of the Falcon 9 that carried the Blue Ghost and Hakuto-R missions to the Moon is predicted to impact the Moon in the early morning hours of August 5th.

The impact is predicted to occur at about 2:34am Eastern Time, near the crater Einstein in the upper left edge of the Moon.



Predicted impact point on the Moon. Project Pluto image.

There is a possibility that a flash may be visible at impact, depending on the precise point of impact, and a plume being ejected up from the edge of the Moon that may be visible for minutes after the impact.



The Falcon 9 second stage prior to launch. SpaceX image.

The site below will be updated with new information as predictions are updated closer to the event.

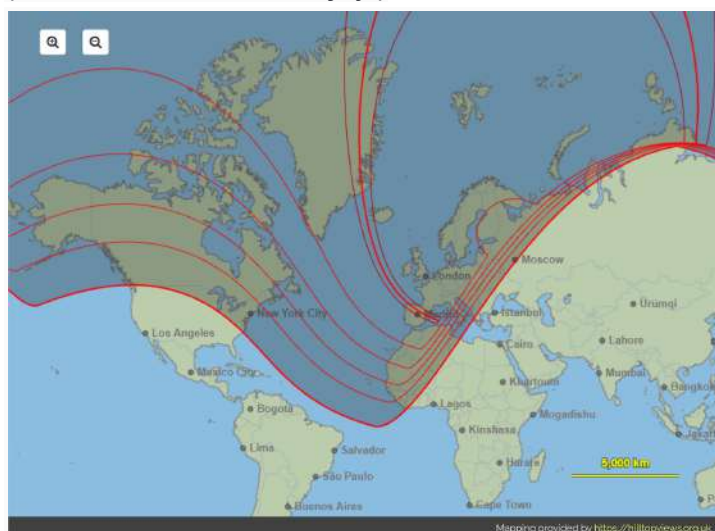
The tracking of the stage and prediction of its impact is an amateur project, conducted by amateur astronomers who track space objects as part of their passion.

Project Pluto page for the impact:

[Upper stage impacting the moon on 2026 August 5](#)

Solar Eclipse, August 12th

While it won't be visible even as a partial eclipse to us here in Florida, a total solar eclipse will be visible in Greenland and Spain on the 12th. Total eclipse fever is high in Europe, and many vendors are having equipment sales to celebrate (which even we can enjoy.)



The path of totality travels down the eastern side of Greenland, into the Atlantic, then through Madrid in Spain. A partial eclipse will be visible in the U.S. northeast and northern midwest.

More information:

[Total solar eclipse - In-The-Sky.org](#)

Partial Lunar Eclipse, August 27-28

While Greenland and Europe will enjoy a total solar eclipse this year on August 12th, the entire world will get to enjoy the following lunar eclipse on the night of the 27th and 28th.

The eclipse will begin at 9:25 pm on the 27th with the Moon beginning to enter the Earth's outer shadow (penumbra), with little visible sign on the Moon because of how faint that shadow is.

At 10:35pm the Moon will begin to enter Earth's central shadow, the umbra. At this point, the shadow will be easily visible and will begin to look darker overall than it did earlier in the evening.

On the 28th, at 14 minutes after midnight, the Moon will be at greatest eclipse. One edge will still appear relatively bright.

At 1:53am on the 28th, the Moon will leave the Earth's umbra, and the last easily visible trace of the shadow will disappear from the Moon.

Finally, at 3:02am, the Moon will leave the penumbra of the Earth, ending the eclipse.

More information, including an animation of the shadow on the Moon:

[Partial lunar eclipse - In-The-Sky.org](#)

Perseid Meteor Shower

The annual show of the Perseid meteor shower has begun, with the peak of the shower coming on August 12th this year. The show that the Perseids puts on starts well before the peak and lasts for a week or two afterward.

The placement of the radiant in our sky means that unlike many showers, you don't have to stay up till after midnight to enjoy the show. A bit after 9pm will be a good time to start watching for Perseids. Since the peak falls on the date of the New Moon, the brightness of the Moon will not be interfering with the meteors.

Perseids tend to be fast meteors, producing long streaks when they strike the atmosphere at grazing angles. So by the time you hear someone notice one, it'll often be too late to see it. They produce occasional fireballs.

While the peak rate is predicted to be about 130 meteors per hour (about 2 per minute) for our area, local light pollution and atmospheric conditions mean most of those will be too dim to

be seen, though photography may pick them up.

Expect to see one every couple of minutes, with occasional lapses and occasional bursts of a few.

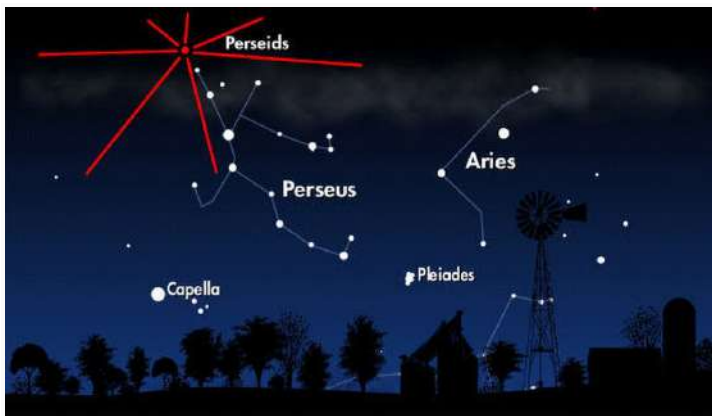
Look toward the “head” of Perseus (eta Persei) near Cassiopeia. The meteors will appear around that point in the sky, streaking outward from that point.

Mark I eyeballs are the best instrument to use to observe meteor showers, and the best mount is a chaise lounge or some other comfortable way of reclining, with a cool drink being a valuable observing accessory.

For photography, use a wide angle lens on a fixed tripod. For film, use ISO 200-400 film with the iris open as far as possible without lens distortion (usually one stop below full open.) Lock open the shutter for periods of 5-15 minutes depending on how dark your sky is. Go shorter the more light pollution you have.

For digital, longer exposures will catch more complete meteor paths, but you will have to balance time against bloom of the sky’s background brightness. Take test exposures early in the evening to find the best contrast between trails and sky background to save yourself trouble in processing. Note that in processing, most noise and transient removal techniques will also remove your meteor streaks, so you want to turn those features off in your camera and your processing software.

[Perseid meteor shower 2026 - In-The-Sky.org](http://In-The-Sky.org)



Radiant of the Perseids. NASA image.

THE MOON

Last Quarter, Aug 5th

New Moon, Aug 12th

1st Quarter, Aug 19th

Full Moon, Aug 28th

Last Quarter, Sep 4th



Waxing Moon, July 25, by Bill Hillman

August Highlights:

Venus: Continues as a brilliant Evening Star, reaching greatest eastern elongation mid-month, remaining high in the west after sunset.

Jupiter: Emerges as a morning object after solar conjunction in late July; low in the east before sunrise by mid-to-late August.

Mars: Steady morning planet, rising earlier and gaining altitude in the eastern pre-dawn sky.

Saturn: Strong morning object, rising earlier and climbing higher.

Mercury: Strong morning visibility early in August, then becomes less favorable.

THE PLANETS

August 1, 2026

Planet	Rise	Transit	Set
Mercury	5:10 am	11:40 am	6:10 pm
Venus	10:50 am	5:30 pm	12:10 am
Mars	2:20 am	9:10 am	4:00 pm
Jupiter	6:20 am	1:20 pm	8:20 pm
Saturn	11:40 pm	5:50 am	12:00 pm

August 15, 2026

Planet	Rise	Transit	Set
Mercury	5:50 am	12:20 pm	6:50 pm
Venus	11:20 am	6:00 pm	12:40 am
Mars	1:50 am	8:40 am	3:30 pm
Jupiter	5:40 am	12:40 pm	7:40 pm
Saturn	10:50 pm	5:00 am	11:10 am

August 30, 2026

Planet	Rise	Transit	Set
Mercury	6:40 am	1:10 pm	7:40 pm
Venus	11:50 am	6:30 pm	1:10 am
Mars	1:10 am	8:00 am	2:50 pm
Jupiter	5:00 am	12:00 pm	7:00 pm
Saturn	10:00 pm	4:10 am	10:20 am

Viewing Guides for Visible Planets

Mercury

<https://in-the-sky.org//data/object.php?id=P1>

Venus

<https://in-the-sky.org//data/object.php?id=P2>

Mars

<https://in-the-sky.org//data/object.php?id=P4>

Jupiter

<https://in-the-sky.org//data/object.php?id=P5>

Saturn

<https://in-the-sky.org//data/object.php?id=P6>

Camp Villages 2026

On July 22nd we held our second Camp Villages event for this summer. We had Craig Henry and Tim Connolly with solar telescopes giving views of a nicely active sun in Hydrogen Alpha light.

Indoors, we had our meteor crater activity where we build layers of “regolith” in foil pans, with the bottom layer being flour, the middle being paprika, and a layer of cocoa as the surface of the celestial body. Campers drop “meteors” in the form of rocks onto the surfaces, or give it a bit of a toss to get some transverse velocity, then study the effects of the strike as revealed in the ejecta pattern formed on the surface, with bright flour and red paprika marking the dispersion of materials.

We also had balloon rockets, with balloons blown up then attached to a guide string, generating thrust by pushing the air out of their insides to propel them through “space” across the room.

The campers and the grandparents had a great time with those and with our static displays on the Artemis Program, the Apollo and Gemini programs, and the Black Hole coin funnel (always a favorite!)

We had a good turnout this month, it appears that we not only had more campers scheduled for this session than for June, but a higher proportion turned out for the event. They went home with an Artemis coloring and assembly project and information about SLS and Orion.

Thank you to our volunteers for Camp Villages this year, we appreciate all of you and hope you had a great time sharing your knowledge with the kids and their grandparents, who were very appreciative of our program in both sessions!

Images that follow are by member Jeff Kahler, Sr.



A Close-Up View of the Sun



Meteor Strikes Form Ejecta Blankets



Learning about solar features.



Campers Learn About Their Craters



Campers Load Propellant into Their Rockets



Hurling Meteors



A Rocket Shoots Across the Cosmos

Club Calendar

Special events by The Villages Astronomy Club

Events not hosted by The Villages Astronomy Club

Notable dates with no event planned.

August 2026

3 Space Academy, Observing Workshop (Inside after Space Academy), Truman Rec. Ctr. 2705 Canal St.

7 Astro Exec Meeting, 11am, Fishhawk Rec Ctr, 2318 Buttonwood Ln.

15 Fruitland Park Observing, 5pm, 300 Shiloh St. Fruitland Park

18 General Meeting: Resources Roundtable
No EAA Meeting Planned

September 2026

4 Astro Exec Meeting, 11am, Fishhawk Rec Ctr, 2318 Buttonwood Ln.

7 Space Academy, Observing Workshop Bino Wkshp, Truman Rec. Ctr. 2705 Canal St.

15 General Meeting, Carlos Garcia, Southern Cross Astro Soc., Remote Observing with Smart Scopes

19 Fruitland Park Observing, 5pm, 300 Shiloh St. Fruitland Park

October 2026

2 Astro Exec Meeting, 11am, Fishhawk Rec Ctr, 2318 Buttonwood Ln.

5 No Space Academy, No Observing Workshop

13 Camp Geneva Star Party

17 Fruitland Park Observing, 5pm, 300 Shiloh St. Fruitland Park

20 General Meeting, Joel Nussbaum, Apollo 11 engineer

November 2026¹ DST ENDS

2 No Space Academy, Observer Workshop Star Party for All Members., Truman Rec. Ctr. 2705 Canal St.

6 Astro Exec Meeting, 11am, Fishhawk Rec Ctr, 2318 Buttonwood Ln.

7 Sand Hill Boy Scout Reservation Star Party

14 Starry Starry Night, 6pm-8:30pm, 5 day Moon, Saturn, Uranus, Cygnus, Lyra, Sagitta, Pisces, Taurus.

17 No General Meeting Laurel Manor Maintenance.

21 Fruitland Park Observing, 5pm, 300 Shiloh St. Fruitland Park

Club Calendar: <https://vlgastroclub.org/calendar/>

Camp Villages in The Daily Sun, Saturday Jul. 25th.



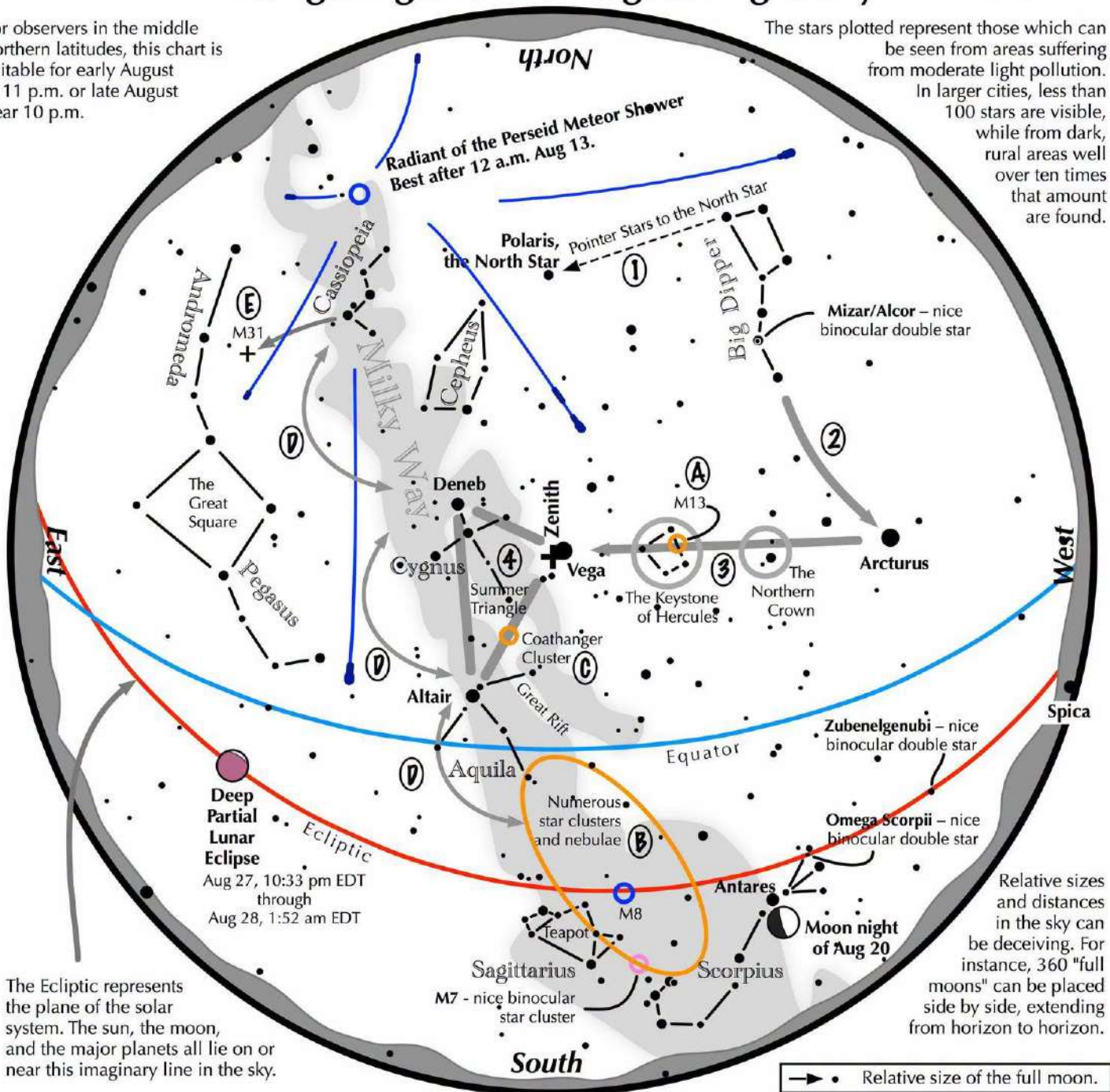
See the monthly star chart on following page:

Navigating the mid August Night Sky

2026

For observers in the middle northern latitudes, this chart is suitable for early August at 11 p.m. or late August near 10 p.m.

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.

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

- 1 Extend a line north from the two stars at the tip of the Big Dipper's bowl. It passes by Polaris, the North Star.
- 2 Follow the arc of the Dipper's handle. It intersects Arcturus, the brightest star in the June evening sky.
- 3 To the northeast of Arcturus shines another star of the same brightness, Vega. Draw a line from Arcturus to Vega. It first meets "The Northern Crown," then the "Keystone of Hercules." A dark sky is needed to see these two dim stellar configurations.
- 4 High in the East lie the summer triangle stars of Vega, Altair, and Deneb.

Binocular Highlights

- A: On the western side of the Keystone glows the Great Hercules Cluster.
- B: Between the bright stars Antares and Altair, hides an area containing many star clusters and nebulae.
- C: 40% of the way between Altair and Vega, twinkles the "Coathanger," a group of stars outlining a coathanger.
- D: Sweep along the Milky Way for an astounding number of faint glows and dark bays, including the Great Rift.
- E: The three westernmost stars of Cassiopeia's "W" point south to M31, the Andromeda Galaxy, a "fuzzy" oval.

