



Roanoke Valley Astronomical Society

Amateur Astronomy News and Views
In Southwestern Virginia



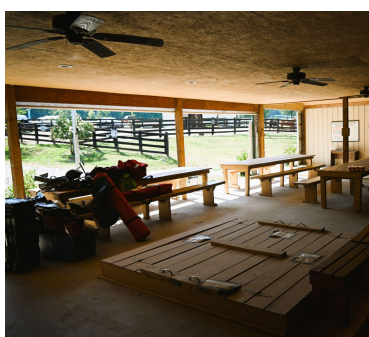
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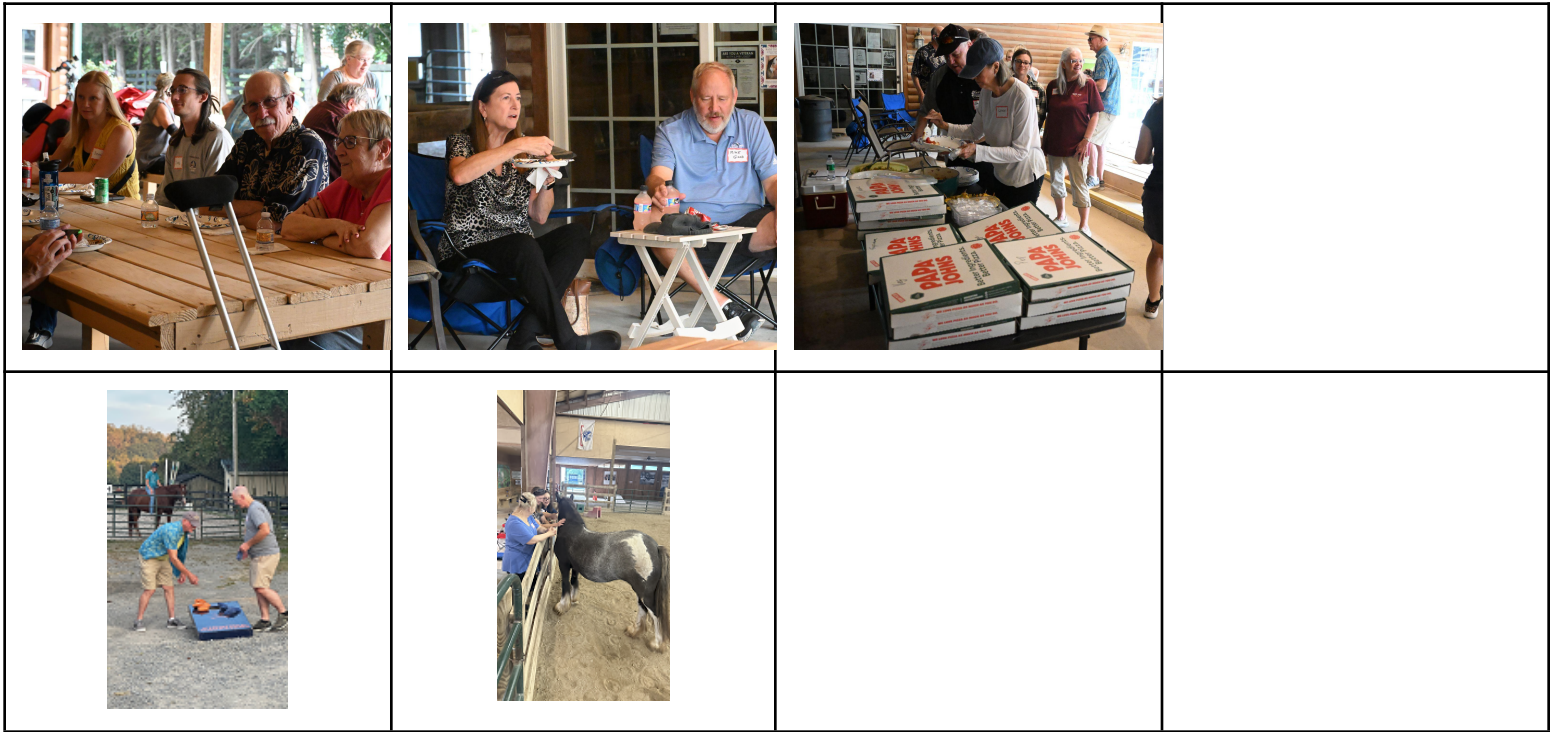
October 2025

RVAS September Meeting Summary

RVAS Annual Picnic Held at Healing Strides

The annual RVAS picnic was held on September 20 at Healing Strides! It was a great place for the event with a covered pavilion and picnic tables already there. The event was attended by about 20+ members and friends. The event started about 3:30 and continued into the early evening. The club provided pizza and drinks and the meal was served about 5PM. Both Michael Good and Ed Dixon brought solar scopes and set those up for any to use/see. Included below are a number of pictures from the event.





You can see the complete list of images and full rez versions on our Facebook page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/262461596251>

Next month: Regular monthly meetings will resume on Monday, October 20 at 7:30pm. Our speaker will be Ramin Lolachi, who gave a presentation at Star Quest, Green Bank, back in July. His presentation will be on The History of Mars' Water, Real and Imagined. Dr. Ramin Lolachi is an Assistant Research Scientist with UMBC at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, where he studies the Martian atmosphere and the behavior of dust and water in planetary environments. His work explores how these processes shape the surfaces and climates of worlds like Mars and the Moon.

RVAS Member Mark Hodges

Contributed by Michael Good

Mark Hodges had a ruptured Gall Bladder on September 5, which put him into sepsis, and he was rushed to Lewis Gale. They did surgery that day. Mark stayed in Lewis Gale for 2 weeks, and was released to rehab on Sep 15, at Our Lady of the Valley. \

Mark was undergoing rehab when, last Monday, he got a bloody nose. This escalated, given blood thinners, to his spending a week at Roanoke Memorial to stop the nose bleed. He is now released back to rehab where he expects to remain through October at least.

Because of this spate of bad luck, Mark now believes he will need to downsize some of his larger telescope inventory, so await a future update in this newsletter concerning this. Please keep our friend and great club member in your thoughts and prayers.

What's Up? Highlights

October 1 to 31, 2025

This Month:

This month continues the pattern of giving us individual planets in the sky that span the entire night from sunset to sunrise, with Saturn and Neptune passing opposition last month (and Mars still lingering in the evening sky) while Jupiter and Uranus still dominate the morning. Venus remains a prominent sight in the morning sky, and Jupiter steadily gets earlier, rising before midnight by the end of the month. The Moon gives us the first “Supermoon” of the year on the 6th. New comet C/2025 R2 (SWAN) seems likely to brighten into naked eye range, with perigee at 25.1 million miles occurring on the 21st as it travels from Scutum into Sagittarius, and later into Aquila and Aquarius. This month gives our final opportunity to view the shadow of Titan on Saturn, as well as the final opportunity to see Titan disappear into and reappear from the shadow of Saturn (for another 15 years). The summer constellations are still dominant in the evening sky, though the autumn constellations are beginning to cross the meridian and enter their peak view time overnight.

Celestial Events:

- October 2: Opposition of (1) Ceres
- October 6: Final morning Titan shadow on Saturn (crosses meridian around 2:15am)
- October 8: Peak of the October Draconid meteors
- October 10: Moon passes through the Pleiades
- October 14: Titan reappears from Saturn's shadow (half-phase at 1:08am)
- October 21: Peak of the Orionid meteors
- October 21: Perigee of Comet C/2025 R2 (SWAN)
- October 29: Final Titan disappearance and reappearance
- October 31: Mercury at highest evening altitude

Sunset and Twilight:

- Sunset ranges from 7:02pm (1st) to 7:03pm (31st)
- Evening twilight ends from 6:22pm (1st) to 7:50pm (31st)

Lunar Phases and Apsides:

- Full Moon: October 6, 11:48pm
- Perigee: October 8, 8:27am (223,578 miles)
- Last Quarter: October 13, 2:14pm
- New Moon: October 21, 8:25am
- Apogee: October 23, 7:29pm (252,553 miles)
- First Quarter: October 29, 12:22p

The Roanoke Valley Astronomical Society is a membership organization of amateur astronomers dedicated to the pursuit of observational and photographic astronomical activities. **Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month. We meet at the VWCC STEM building ST312. Directions are below.** Meetings are open to the public. Observing sessions may be held, weather and sky conditions permitting, at a dark-sky site. For information regarding joining RVAS, including annual dues, [click here](#). Articles, quotes, etc. published in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the RVAS or its editor.

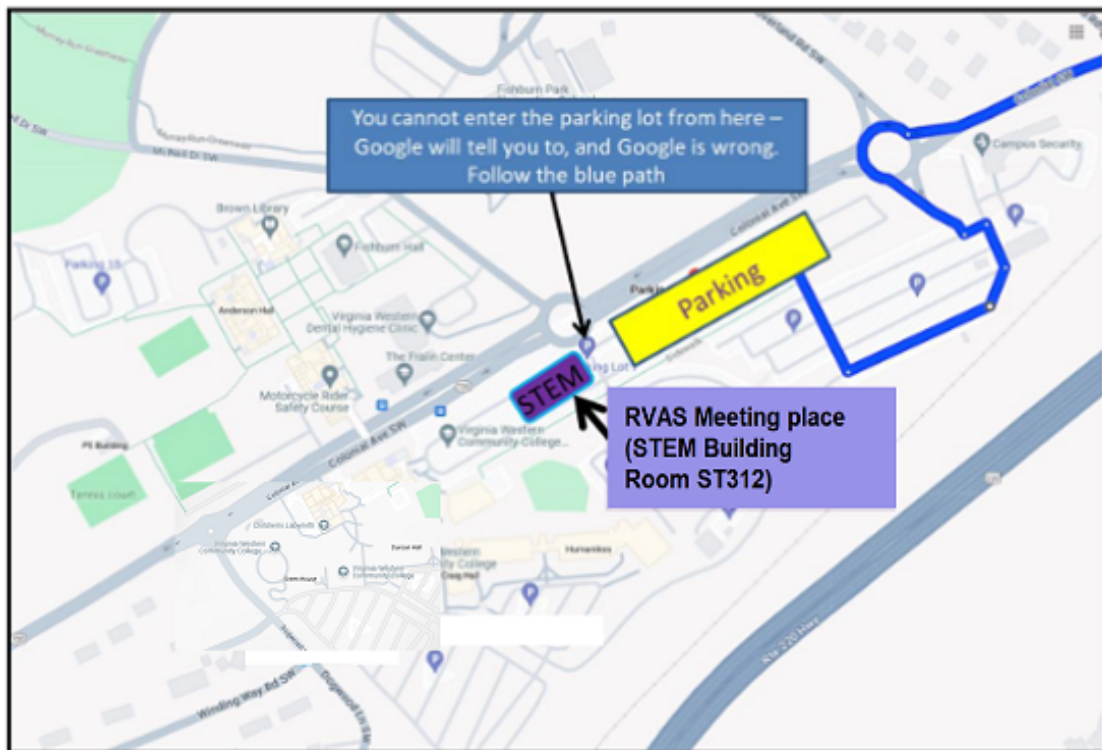
Officers/Executive Committee/Editor/Webmaster

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Michael Hutkin, Past President (pastpresident@rvasclub.org)
Ed Dixon, Newsletter Editor (newsletter@rvasclub.org)
Ed Dixon, Webmaster (webmaster@rvasclub.org)

Directions to RVAS Meeting Location

Virginia Western Community College STEM Building, Room ST312
3094 Colonial Ave SW, Roanoke, VA 24015

VWCC is located in the southwestern area of the City of Roanoke. The STEM Building is accessed via the roundabout at Overland Drive and Colonial Avenue, near Campus Security at the top right of the map. The STEM Building is at the opposite end of the Colonial parking lot from Campus Security. Follow the darker blue path from the roundabout and park anywhere in the lot.



Note: Google provides incorrect guidance to access the parking lot from the roundabout at McNeill Drive. That roundabout **does not** provide an entrance to the parking lot.

RVAS Member Appears on National Podcast

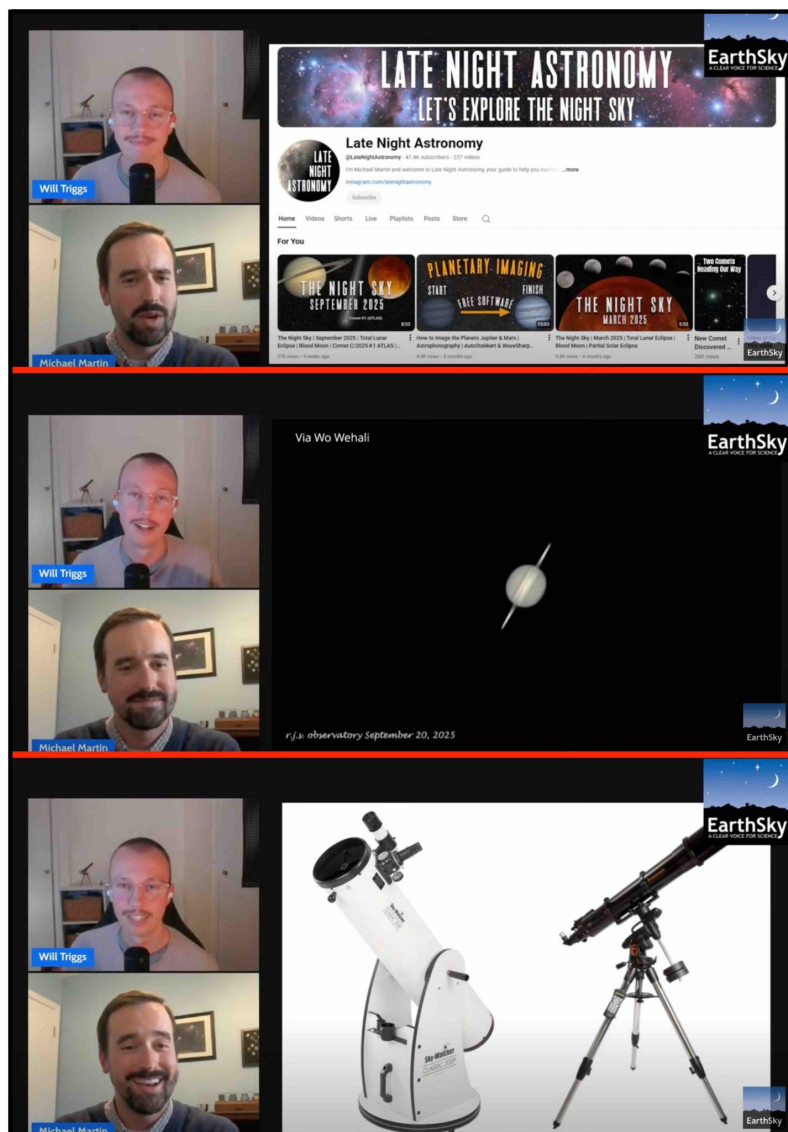
Contributed by John Goss

RVAS past president Michael Martin was recently interviewed on EarthSky.org. The topic?
“Do You NEED Binoculars or a Telescope for Stargazing?”

Michael is the creator of and presenter on “Late Night Astronomy,” his YouTube channel delving into how to get the most out of enjoying the wonders of the night sky.

He and EarthSky host Will Triggs discussed the equipment needed to get started – first the unaided eye, then binoculars – and what can be seen. Michael touched on some favorites: the moon, the planets, constellations, and a few deep sky destinations such as the Double Cluster and M31. The discussion later moved on to telescopes and concluding with the adage, “The best telescope is the one that you will use.”

See Michael for yourself at EarthSky.org (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9BgXOmQPXo>) and visit his “Late Night Astronomy” (<https://www.youtube.com/@LateNightAstronomy/videos>).

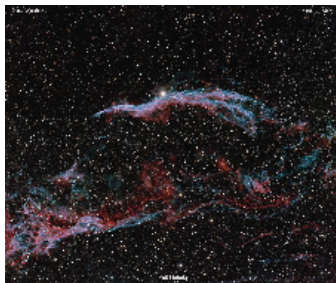


September 2025

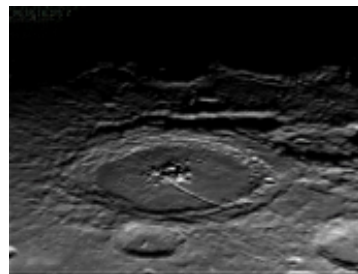
Ctrl- Click on the picture see the source file and additional information

David Thomas 	Stephen Boyd 
David Thomas 	Ed Dixon 
Ed Dixon 	Stephen Boyd 
Noah Winslow 	David Thomas 

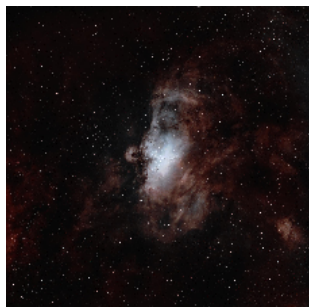
Noah Winslow



Ben Hartman



Noah Winslow



Stephen Boyd



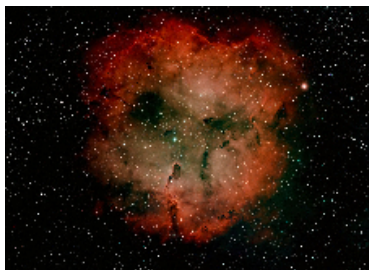
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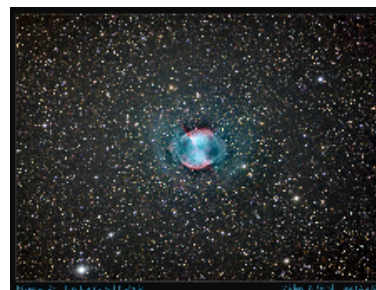
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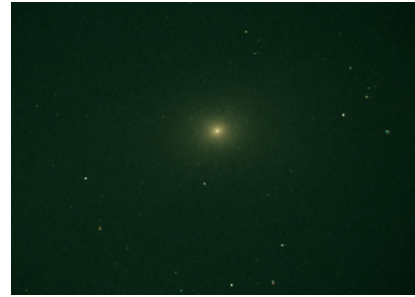
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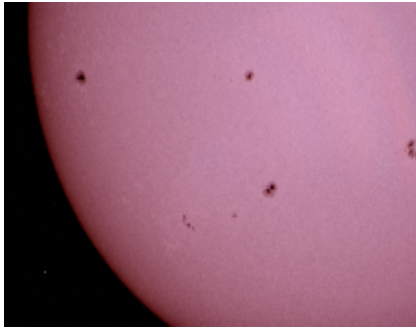
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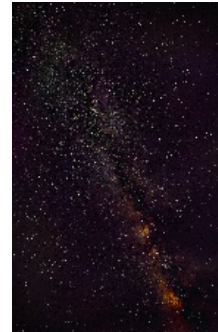
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Ed Dixon



David Thomas



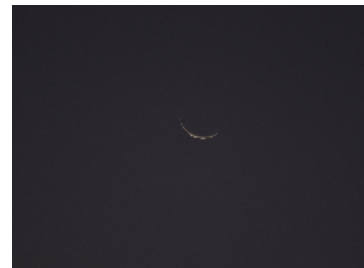
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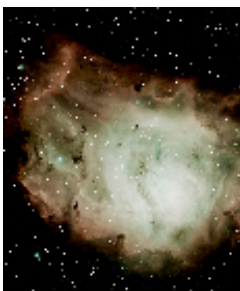
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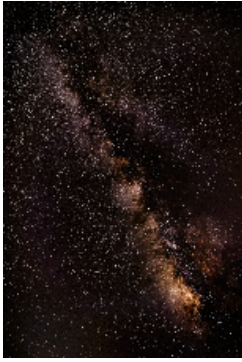
Ed Dixon



Vincent ST. Angelo



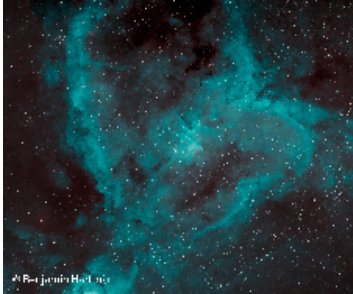
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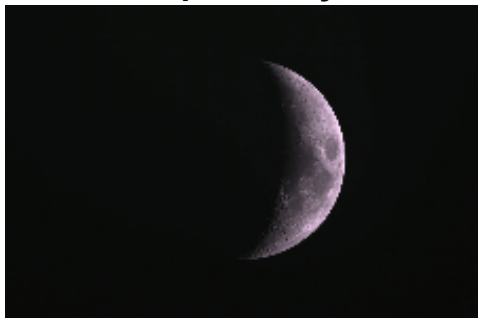
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