



Presents

The Fifteenth MICHIANA STAR PARTY

Potawatomi Wildlife Park

16998 State Road 331
Tippecanoe, IN 46570

October 23rd – 26th 2025

**Dark Sky
Special Speakers
Constellation Guided Tour
Observing Opportunities
Vendors
Astronomy Enthusiasts
Camping, Hiking Trails**

Program

All times are Eastern Daylight-Saving Time

Thursday

- After 3:00 pm – Camp Set Up
- 5:00 pm – Social Time
- 6:30 pm – Observing (lights out)

Friday

- After 7:00 pm – Laser Sky Tour: Speaker
Jim Hopkins' Tonight's Constellations"
(contingent upon weather, may be Friday or Saturday night)
- Observing (lights out) following Laser Sky Tour

Saturday

- Vendors and swaps
- Solar observing
- Hiking, free time
- Yard games for kids of all ages
- Noon-Lunch break
- 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm: Speaker
Alex Thomas, Ph.D.
Characterizing Exoplanets
- 2:30 - 3:30 pm: Speaker
Lauren Henderson
Cosmic Alchemy: How Stars Turn Iron into Gold
- 4:00 pm – Group Photo
- Dinner break
- 7:30 pm – Observing (lights out) following Laser Sky Tour – If rescheduled

Eating and Sleeping

- Community campfire if the weather prevents observing and imaging.
- Bring your own food and drinks.
- Restaurants, motels, and hotels are nearby.
- Campsites available for tents & RVs at the Bessinger Pavilion.
- Public restrooms and running water & Showers available at the Bessinger Pavilion. A second restroom is at the Bennack 1800s Potawatomi Village.

Park Opportunities

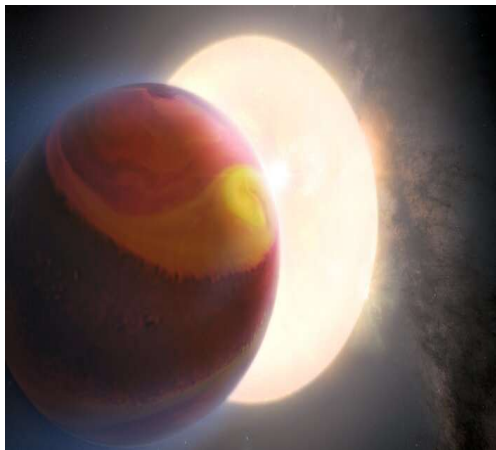
- Wildlife observation
- Hiking and biking trails
- Open fields for games, Frisbee.
- Kayaking and fishing with a valid license.

Star Party Camping Guidelines

- Arrive after 3:00 pm Thursday; set up equipment and campsite before Civil twilight / Dusk.
- Star party ends Sunday at 11:00 am
- Parking in the designated parking areas.
- Access to the Bessinger Pavilion is limited to paid attendees and is subject to MAS gate fees. The Observing Field is open, with the exception that telescope equipment is removed before dawn. **No camping allowed.**
- Telescopes can stay set up in the Bessinger Pavilion for paid attendees.
- No car movement on the field after dark
- Limited electricity is available for medical devices and battery charging at the Bessinger Pavilion, although no extension cords to campsites or telescopes are allowed. You are responsible for providing a silent power source after 8 p.m.
- **Red flashlights only!**
- Minors must be accompanied by an adult in the designated star party area.
- Dogs on leashes are allowed
- Vendors and swap tables welcome!
- Acoustical musical instruments are welcome!
- Dress warmly
- Smoking permitted beyond telescope areas, downwind
- You are responsible for the security of your own belongings.
- **Do NOT look at the sun through any device that is not designed for it!**



Speakers



Alex Thomas, *Characterizing Exoplanets*

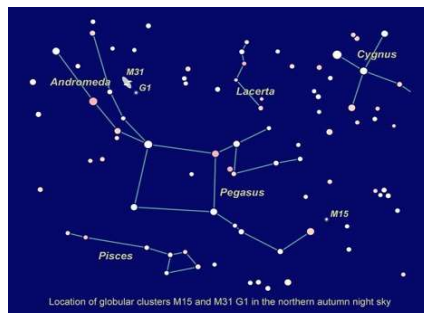
Alex Thomas is a 6th-year graduate student in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Notre Dame. In 2018, Alex earned his bachelor's degree in Astrophysics from Yale University, and he hopes to earn his Ph.D. in the Spring or Summer of 2026. His current research interests focus on understanding the patterns that emerge in planetary systems around other stars. When he isn't studying astronomy, you can probably find him watching the Cincinnati Reds or on the golf course. Alex will give his presentation on how we detect and characterize planets around other stars. In honor of the 30th anniversary of the discovery of the first exoplanet orbiting a Sun-like star, he will highlight key discoveries over the years in the field of exoplanets. Additionally, he will showcase some interesting and extreme planets, hoping to provide insight into the question, "Is our Solar System special?"



Lauren Henderson *Cosmic Alchemy: How Stars Turn Iron into Gold.*

Lauren Henderson is a 4th-year graduate student in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Notre Dame. She earned her bachelor's degree in physics, with a double major in philosophy, from Calvin University in 2022. Lauren's current research focuses on galactic archaeology, where she studies old stars in the Milky Way and its satellite galaxies to reconstruct their histories. Her graduate work explores the connection between the production of heavy elements in astrophysical environments and the evolution of small dwarf galaxies over time. To escape the pressures of graduate school, Lauren enjoys backpacking, rock climbing, and baking delicious vegan desserts.

Lauren's presentation will introduce the mystery of the astrophysical r-process, which is responsible for creating the heaviest elements in the universe. A key to solving this mystery may lie in some of the oldest stars in the Milky Way and its satellites. She will also highlight the role of medium-resolution spectroscopy with cutting-edge instruments such as the Subaru Prime Focus Spectrograph, which enables the acquisition of spectra from hundreds of stars at a time.



***Tonight's Constellations* Mr. Jim Hopkins – Friday After 9:00 pm**

Mr. Hopkins is a retired high school physics and astronomy teacher and Associate Professor at Joliet Junior College in Illinois. He has spent his retirement speaking to star party attendees and is the past president of the Naperville Astronomical Association. He has attended more than 60-star parties, including at the Grand Canyon, Okie-Tex, and Nebraska, for over 20 years in a row. He especially enjoys showing the night sky to various scouts, church, and park district members.

Michiana Star Party 2025 October 23rd - 26th
Pre-registration Form October Pre-registration form.

Name: _____

For others in your party, please include names and ages if under 18.

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Member of Astronomy group – name: _____

<u>Pre-registration</u>	Fee	Number	Total
<u>Pre-registration fees:</u>			
Adult non-member	\$40	_____	_____
Adult MAS member	\$30	_____	_____
Under 18 Free			
<u>At the Gate registration fees:</u>			
Adult non-member	\$45	_____	_____
Adult MAS member	\$30	_____	_____
Under 18	\$10	_____	_____

Daily pass \$10 - Come as early as you want, stay as late as you want. But no overnight camping is allowed with a daily pass.

Star Party Fees include semi-primitive camping at the Bressimer Pavilion, where the star party is being held.

Official 2025 Michiana Star Party T-Shirt (October 8th 2025 deadline - we may not have your size)

Small	\$20	_____	_____
Medium	\$20	_____	_____
Large	\$20	_____	_____
XL	\$20	_____	_____
XXL	\$25	_____	_____
XXXL	\$25	_____	_____

Make check payable to Michiana Astronomical Society.
MAS Membership for One Year (optional)

Associate & Family	\$21	_____	_____
Senior & Student	\$16	_____	_____

Grand Total: _____

Send pre-registration and check to:

Paul Surowiec
103 Apple St.
Walkerton, IN. 46574

e-mail: information@michiana-astro.org