

In 2006, **NEWSTAR** and the **North Central Region of the Astronomical League** will be holding a very special event. **NEWSTAR** will be celebrating its **20<sup>th</sup> anniversary** and the **NCRAL** will convene its **60<sup>th</sup> convention**. So we've decided to throw a real party. That is why this regional convention will be like no other.

**What will make this convention so special?**

## **A Convention For The Whole Family**

For those attending the convention, we have chosen a group of speakers with broad appeal sure to please. From authors to astronauts, our speakers will be of interest to the astronomer and non-astronomer alike.

Located in the heart of beautiful downtown Appleton, the **Radisson Paper Valley Hotel** is within easy walking distance of museums, restaurants, one of a kind shopping and the brand new "**Big Picture**" large format theater where convention attendees will get a private screening of the film "**Solar Max**" on Friday Evening. The convention is working with the **Fox Cities Children's Museum** to provide a "**Family Space Night**" early Friday evening and activities on Saturday for those attending the convention with young children. The Radisson Paper Valley Hotel **indoor recreation area is open 24 hours a day** and features a swimming pool, whirlpool, sauna, mini-golf, and a complete Fitness Center.

## **The Speakers**

"**Exploring Astronomy: The Solar System**" is the convention theme and each of our speakers have contributed to that enterprise. While it is possible this list of speakers could change at any time without notice, the tentative schedule of speakers for 2006 includes:

**Guy Consolmagno** and **Dan Davis** are familiar to many as the authors of "Turn Left At Orion". Guy Consolmagno is also a **Vatican astronomer** and head curator of the Vatican's meteorite collection. His most recent book "**Brother Astronomer**" chronicles his experiences as a Jesuit priest and professional astronomer. Dan Davis received his Ph.D. from M.I.T. in 1983 and is now a professor of geophysics at SUNY Stony Brook. His research concerns the formation of mountain belts on Earth.

**Ron Dantowitz** - Director of the Clay Center Observatory at Dexter and Southfield Schools in Brookline, Massachusetts. He is best known to amateur astronomers for developing techniques for ultra-high resolution telescopic imaging. Ron's efforts have produced some of the sharpest ground-based optical images of the moon and planets to date, with resolutions approaching 0.1 second of arc. His amateur photos of the Mir Space station, space shuttle Atlantis and the X prize winner using high resolution video, have amazed astro-imagers the world over.

**Carolyn Porco** - NASA imaging scientist. Dr. Porco received her PhD in 1983 from the California Institute of Technology in Planetary Science, as part of the **Voyager** imaging team worked on Voyager's encounters with Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. Currently Dr. Porco is the leader of the **Cassini Science Imaging Team** and a lead imaging scientist on the **New Horizons** Pluto/Kuiper Belt mission, to be launched in early 2006. In addition to being a Senior Research Scientist at the Space Science Institute in Boulder, Colorado, and an Adjunct Professor at both the University of Colorado and the University of Arizona she has made numerous appearances on radio and television explaining science to the general public. In late 1999, she was selected by the Sunday London Times as one of 18 scientific leaders of the 21st century'.

**Dr. Harrison "Jack" Schmitt** – Apollo Astronaut. Dr. Schmitt explored the lunar surface as part of **Apollo 17**, the last manned mission to the moon. Selected as a scientist-astronaut by NASA, he was instrumental in providing the Apollo flight crews with detailed instruction in lunar navigation, geology, and feature recognition. Dr. Schmitt also assisted in the integration of scientific activities into the Apollo lunar missions and participated in research activities requiring

geologic, petrographic, and stratigraphic analyses of samples returned from the moon by the Apollo missions. In addition, Dr. Schmitt served from 1977 to 1982 as a U.S. senator for his home state of New Mexico.

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## **Extra Available Activities**

In addition to the regular convention activities, attendees have the opportunity to extend their convention experience with special events and side trips.

On **Friday April 21st** join NEWSTAR on a field trip to the Experimental Aircraft Association's **Airventure Museum**. In addition to the museum you will get a special behind the scenes tour of the incredible EAA complex and facilities not available to the general public. Or enjoy an afternoon under the stars at the **Barlow Planetarium & Weiss Earth Science Museum**.

## **Region Wide Participation And Support**

Since this convention will be such a special event, we will be working very hard to see that all **NCRAL** societies are represented. This will provide a rare opportunity for region wide networking of members and societies.

To make this dream a reality, we are urging all **NCRAL** member societies to insure at least one representative attend this convention. Societies may even want to consider underwriting the registration of this individual so as to make the **NCRAL's** representation at the convention complete.

As you can see, the **2006** Convention in Appleton is going to be something truly special and not to be missed. You can help make the **NCRAL 60th** Convention a success by registering today.