



# The Observer

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

Member of The Astronomical League

<http://sbvaa.org/>



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Since 1958

January, 2018

## Meeting:

January 6, 2018

## Location:

**First Christian Church**  
**2102 E. Foothill Dr.**  
**San Bernardino, CA**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Pre-meeting Dinner,**  
**5:00 to 6:30 p.m.,**

**Jenny's Family**  
**Restaurant**  
**7750 Palm Ave.**  
**Highland, CA**

After the meeting telescopes will be set up for viewing and members will be available to answer questions. Bring your telescope to observe with us.

*No telescope is too humble,  
and beginners are always  
made welcome!*

## Program

# The Winter Sky

Our own Chris and Martin will be presenting a power-point presentation of the glories of the winter sky. For the next several months the sky will fall dark earlier and stay dark longer than we've seen over the past season. This gives us a great opportunity for some of the best observing of the year.

Start your new year off with a resolution to observe more. Whether it's via an outreach or a star party or just by yourself, plan to observe more. Go for some of the Astronomy League's certificates; they have one for nearly everyone's astro taste.



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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

Jan. 5, Outreach, Dunlop School

Jan. 6, Club Meeting

Jan. 13, Star Party, Loc. TBD

Jan. 25, Outreach, Dunlap School

Feb. 3, Club Meeting

Feb. 17, Star Party, Loc. TBD

Mar. 3, Club Meeting

Mar. 17, Star Party, Loc. TBD

Mar. 20, Vernal Equinox

Apr. 7, Club Meeting

## Milestone Year

If you read the header for this month's newsletter carefully, you probably noted that 2018 marks the sixtieth year of our club. Sixty years of good fellowship, sharing of knowledge, generous sharing of equipment, good natured teasing and joshing, star parties and outreaches. May the adventure continue for another sixty years.



## Star Parties & Outreaches

As you can see from the Calendar above, we have our first school outreach coming up very soon. This is the time when Chris starts getting requests from schools in our area. Also, you probably noted that the star parties were shown as "TBD." We are still working with the Wildlands Conservancy to confirm appropriate dates. As we know more specifics, they will be published in your newsletter.



# A Total Lunar Eclipse is Coming!

By Chris Clarke

For all you late nighters, insomniacs, or just plain ol' devoted lunar observers, we have a treat coming up at the end of January. There will be a total lunar eclipse visible early Wednesday morning, January 31. For us on the West Coast, the eclipse begins at 3:48 am (I know, an ungodly hour!) with the first nick of the earth's shadow making contact with the lunar disk. Over the next hour, the bite will continue to grow until the moon is completely engulfed by it. Totality begins at 4:52 and lasts until 6:08, with mid-eclipse occurring at 5:30. Sunrise is at 6:48, so we'll get to see all of the initial partial phases and all of totality before the glow of morning twilight sets in. The moon will then set partially eclipsed.

What's fun to watch for is what color the moon will appear when it is totally shadowed. During a lunar eclipse, the sun, earth and moon are in alignment, so the earth is blocking the sun's disk and no direct sunlight can strike the moon. However, there is a thin ring of sunlight shining through the earth's atmosphere and that is refracted into the shadow and some of it reaches the moon. Usually only the longer wavelengths of light, orange and red, make it to the moon and that will give it a reddish tint. If there is a lot of clouds and pollutants in the air, less light will get through and the moon can become very dark, and on rare occasions, even disappear to the naked eye. You never know what to expect and each eclipse is different. Colors ranging from reddish brown to bright yellow orange may be seen.



The best views are with a simple pair of binoculars, so you really don't need to use a telescope unless it is at very low power to show the disk. Of course, a naked eye view works perfectly well too, so no matter what, just give it a look early Wednesday morning. As a statistical treat, this is the second full moon to fall in the month, and that's usually referred to as a "blue moon", but don't look for the moon to turn blue during the eclipse!

# Photos From the December Holiday Party

