



nomical Society of Greenwich

Bruce Museum

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December 2013

Monthly Meeting

No Monthly meetings in December or January

*****Mark your new 2014 calendar*****

February 5

March 5

April 2

May 7

Astronomy Day: Sunday, February 9, 1-4 PM

**Bowman Observatory Public Nights
(Weather Permitting)**

December 10 – 7-9

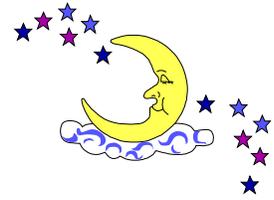
January 14 & 28 - 7-9 PM

February 11 & 25 -7-9 PM



Lunacy

December	1	Moon passes Mercury and Saturn
	2	<i>New Moon</i>
	4	Moon, at perigee (223,735 miles from Earth), passes Pluto , and also causes extreme tides
	5	Moon passes Venus
	8	Moon passes Neptune
	9	<i>First Quarter</i>
	11	Moon passes Uranus
	17	<i>Full Moon</i> – “Cold Moon”
	19	Moon at apogee (252,444 miles from Earth) passes Jupiter
	25	<i>Last Quarter</i> Moon passes Mars
	26	Moon passes <i>Spica</i>
	28	Moon passes Saturn



News of the Worlds

Pluto disappears into the evening twilight, passing behind the Sun January 1.

Venus dominates our early-evening sky, reaching its greatest brightness (mag.-4.9) December 6. The next planets to rise are **Neptune** (mag.7.9), in *Aquarius*, and **Uranus** (mag. 5.8), in *Pisces*. Both can be found high in the sky after 7 PM with binoculars or a small telescope.

Next comes **Jupiter** (mag. -2.7), on its way to a January 5 opposition and thus up nearly all night in *Gemini*. You can admire our largest planet between shooting stars when the **Geminid Meteor Shower** peaks on the night of December 13/14. Usually occurring at a rate of about 120 per minute, unfortunately some will be washed out by the waxing Moon before it sets around 4 AM.

For night owls, **Mars** is now rising around 1 AM and brightening from mag. 1.2 to 0.9 during December. And early risers can check out **Saturn** (mag.0.6), which comes up about 5 AM, and **Mercury**, visiting the morning sky before it passes behind the Sun (superior conjunction) on December 29.

Winter Solstice occurs December 21 at 12:11 PM.

Alas, poor **Comet ISON** is now just a flying rubble heap. Perhaps it will become a meteor shower someday, or part of the Asteroid Belt. See <http://isoncampaign.org/karl/in-memoriam> for a nice obituary. (I especially like the suggestion of a memorial donation to STEM programs – hey, how about the Bruce Museum?!)

Happy Holidays Everyone!

