



UBarU Star Party (USP) 2021– Sept. 3-6, 2021


The 2021 UBarU Star Party (USP) is again being held over Labor-Day weekend (Sept. 3-6) since it offers a phase of the Moon that is well-suited for deep-sky viewing. This is our fifth comprehensive star-party event (which includes, in addition to the star parties: astronomy lectures, meals, lodging, and more) offered at our IDA-certified Dark-Sky Park in Mountain Home, Texas. Please register via <http://ubaru.org/home/starParty>

Covid-19 concerns and precautions – We will follow whatever state and national recommendations are in place with respect to masking and social distancing to ensure the safety of all participants.

We have numerous options for lodging and meals for this event. All adults and youth need to purchase an event ticket. If you prefer to stay on campus, please purchase lodging. Your options include a private room in the Suites or a bunk, both of which include meals. You may stay in one of our cottages where you may prepare your own meals or purchase meal plans for your stay. There is a single cost for the use of a cottage and each additional user of the cottage needs to purchase an event ticket. If you need assistance with registration or have questions, please email director@ubaru.org for assistance.

Event:

1. Star parties each night Fri-Sun (weather permitting); in case of bad weather there will be optional activities in the Meeting House.
2. Check-in will begin after 4 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 3rd. Check-out will be 11 a.m. on Monday Sept. 6th. Refunds can be given on and before July 23, 2021 less \$100. No refunds will be issued after July 23, 2021.

3. There will be formal presentations by professional astronomers each afternoon on Saturday and Sunday. Presenters include: Dr. Angela Speck, Astrophysicist and Chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department at the University of Texas-San Antonio; Robert Reeves an accomplished and nationally-known astro-photographer, imager and author; Paul Derrick- well-known former Texas astronomer, author, and columnist (Stargazer Paul).
4. Door-prize drawings for astronomy-oriented publications and equipment from such well-known companies in the field as: Sky & Telescope , Celestron, Sky-Watcher, and Explore Scientific.
5. Recreational activities include: swimming in the UBarU pool; hiking within the park; bird watching; labyrinth walking; table tennis, bocce ball, and horseshoes near the Meeting House; and various external excursions available in the neighboring Hill Country.
6. **Children: Children must be supervised by their parent(s) at all times.**
Programming is not geared for a younger audience. Parents and children are invited to enjoy the other amenities at UBarU during the Star Party. Children 5 years of age and under accompanied by a parent are free for most things including: the event, group lodging, such as camping, cottages, and private rooms with two or more paying guests; there is a charge for lodging in a bunk and for UBarU-provided meals. There is no child care available, so bringing young children is not encouraged.

Lighting Restrictions - UBarU will have lighting restrictions for the event that will be consistent with other major star parties and also adhere to the requirements for an IDA Dark-Sky Park to enhance the enjoyment of the night-sky experience for the participants.

Meals: All meals (except the Saturday barbecue) are served in the Meeting House

Breakfast – complete meal: served from 8:30 – 9:00;

Lunch – complete meal: served from 12:30 -1:00;

Dinner - complete meal: served from 6:30 – 7:00;

Please indicate on the registration website your dietary preferences (omnivore, vegetarian or vegan) and we will do our best to accommodate you. If you prefer to bring additional food (and are staying in a private room or bunk in the Suites), we have refrigerator space and microwave access for you. If you are staying in a cottage, there are dishes, stoves, microwaves and refrigerators in each cottage for your use.

RATES (All discounts for children require the child be accompanied by a parent.)

Registration: Everyone attending must register. Registration will include access to all programming and activities; lodging, meal-plans, and lodging-meal-plan combos must be purchased separately with registration.

Early Bird - \$50 adult (child 6 – 18, \$25); **After July 23** - \$75 adult (child 6-18, \$25); student (19 – 24), \$25 (Need school/college ID)

Meal Plans – 3-day (3-B, 3-D, 2-L): \$80 adult (child aged 6-12- \$55); 2-day (B, L, D): \$65 adult (child aged 6-12- \$45)

*BBQ only \$20 Adult, \$15 child. Both 3-day and 2-day meal plans include the barbecue. Child rates are for children 12 years of age and under.

Lodging

Brown Center

There are four suites in the Brown Center; each suite has a bunk area with four EXL-double bunks, two private rooms, and a gender-neutral, full bathroom. Each private room has one queen bed and one EXL double bunk, and are available for a 3-day rate only. There are additional larger, multi-use, gender-specific bathrooms between the suites. The Brown Center is air-conditioned and ADA accessible.

Early Bird Basic Bunk Package –

Includes: meals & assigned bunk/bed (per person), all bunks EX-L.

3-day - \$170; (with parent: child 6-12 - \$120; child 13-19 - \$150, Child 5 & younger \$90)

2-day - \$125; (with parent: child 6-12 - \$100; child 13-19 - \$115, Child 5 & younger \$60)

After July 23:

3-day - \$200; (with parent: child 6-12 - \$120, child 13-19 - \$150, Child 5 & younger \$90)

2-day - \$150; (with parent: child 6-12 - \$100, child 13-19 - \$115, Child 5 & younger \$60)

Private Room Option– \$250 is charged to the first registrant who selects one of the 8 private rooms; each additional person sharing the room only pays for their event registration and meal plan. The maximum number of persons allowed to share a private room is 4 people; regardless of age, and, since meal preparation is not allowed in the private rooms, each person sharing the room must select a meal plan.

Meal Plans – Adult (13 & older) 3-day (3-B, 3-D, 2-L): \$80 (child aged < 12- \$55); Adult (13 & older) 2-day (B, L, D): \$65 (child aged <12- \$45)

*BBQ only \$20 Adult (13 & older), \$15 child. Both 3-day and 2-day meal plans include the barbecue. Child rates are for children 12 years of age and under.

Campers – (Anyone sleeping on-site apart from the indoor accommodations is considered a camper) UBarU has tent camping as an option. You will have access to the multi-use bathrooms and showers accessed from the central breezeway of the Brown Center. Since fires are prohibited, tent campers will not be able to cook their own meals, so are strongly advised to choose a meal package. If you would like to bring an RV camper, we can accommodate campers up to 24' in length. We have water and electricity (no clean-out) available for 2 campers behind the Ranch House, and any others would have parking space only.

Camper rates per person sleeping on site apart from indoor accommodations are:

3-nights (no meals) - \$50 (with parent: child 6-12 - \$30; child 13-19 - \$40). Adult price is \$60 after July 23.

2-nights (no meals) - \$40 (with parent: child 6-12 - \$25; child 13-19 - \$30). Adult price is \$50 after July 23.

Cottages – UBarU has three self-contained cottages; each cottage is equipped with a refrigerator, microwave, and range (or other conventional cooking capability). Two of these can sleep 2-6 people (best for 2-4); and one can sleep up to 10 (best for 8 or less.) **Meals are not included.** Rates for the cottages are for all three days only, these are:

***Ranch House** (1 King bed, 1 double bed, & 1 EXL-double bunk) – Maximum capacity=4 adults) \$325

***Sojourner House** (1 queen bed, 1 double bed, 1 futon) - Maximum capacity=4 adults \$325

***Hermitage House** (1 futon, 1 twin bed, & 3 EXL-double bunks) - Maximum capacity=8 adults \$400

* The maximum capacity for each cottage will be allowed to accommodate children beyond the maximum adult capacity.

Equipment Trailers – There is no charge for equipment trailers for those who are staying overnight at UBarU; and \$20.00 for two days, or \$25 for three days for those not staying at UBarU. In most cases equipment trailers not needed for direct viewing support cannot be parked in the viewing areas after unloading, however reasonable accommodations will be made to locate the trailers at or near the perimeter of the viewing site used.

Parking

In general, parking is by assigned areas depending on the type of lodging (if any), and is governed by the intent to minimize any possible obstruction with the viewing sites or interference with the viewing experience due to vehicle lights. This means that vehicles for participants not staying overnight must be parked in designated areas near the entrance of UBarU, and the rest are expected to stay in place after nightfall. It is permissible to drive to the viewing areas to unload scopes and equipment during daylight hours, or to retrieve equipment in case a star party is suspended on any night due to inclement weather.

Viewing Sites – UBarU is a 142-acre Dark-Sky Park of which some 10 -12 acres is used as a carefully light-controlled campus consistent with the requirements for an IDA

Dark-Sky Park. The rest is under a wildlife management plan with the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife which is left in a largely natural state (no running water, lights, power sources, etc.) There will be three primary viewing sites for this event, all conveniently located along the perimeter of the campus area, and each regularly rating between 2 and 3 on the Bortle Scale.

Hill-Top site- in front of the Ranch House which has minimal view obstruction from trees including a horizon-to-horizon view of the Ecliptic at this time of year; and external power is available.

Observatory Area at Western Head of Loop Trail – this is the newest site created strictly for night-sky viewing, and the one that is most protected from light emanating from any other part of the campus. It provides a good view of the night sky in most directions though not quite as expansive as the Hill-Top site; external power is available from outlets on the observatory.

Athletic Field – this is the largest of the three sites and the eastern portion will be the location for most of the camper's tents. It has a good view of the sky with some slight blocking by small trees to the east. It is closest to the Brown Center with easy access to the breezeway bathrooms. This is by far the best and most feasible site for people who are not lodging at UBarU and want to take their equipment with them each night since it is located closest to day-users parking and at the same level; external power is available.

External Power Access – external power outlets are available at all three campus viewing sites, however the number of scopes that we will be able to provide external power for at any given time and site may be somewhat limited. For this reason, **anyone for which external power is essential should note this on their application**, so that we do not accept more than can be accommodated using a first-come-first-registered basis, however this is only a precaution and we do not expect limiting to be needed.

Lighting Restriction Details – Given the location of the primary viewing areas either within or closely bordering the UBarU campus it is essential that all participants and visitors practice good light-management etiquette. Thus, only red-light flashlights and lanterns are allowed in or near the viewing sites during the star parties. However, low lumen, soft-white or cooler spectrum colors may be used elsewhere. There must be no

car lights anywhere on the campus after nightfall except to exit the campus from the designated parking area. Camp and other types of fires are prohibited throughout the UBarU property except by staff using the Meeting House area fire-pit.

No Smoking – UBarU is a no-smoking facility, meaning there can be no smoking anywhere on the property at any time.

No Pets Allowed – no pets are allowed for this event, however properly identified service animals will be permitted with the understanding that they must be closely controlled by their owners not to interfere with others and must not be turned loose to run freely about the property.

Distinguished Presentations – There will be astronomy presentations in the Meeting House on both Saturday and Sunday by professional and/or distinguished astronomers. (The times listed may change as we get more input from those attending.)

1. Saturday 1:00 pm - **Presentation #1** by **Dr. Angela Speck**, – Ph.D. in Astronomy from University College London, and Chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department at the University of Texas-San Antonio .
2. Saturday 4:00 pm – **Presentation #2 by Robert Reeves** - an accomplished and nationally-known astro-photographer, imager and author.
3. Sunday – 1:00 p.m - **Presentation #3 by Paul Derrick**
4. Sunday 4:00 pm – **Presentation #4**

Saturday Afternoon Barbecue & Door-Prize Drawing –The BBQ meal will be accommodate the door-prize drawing, and will be served at approximately 6:00 as the evening meal.

The UBarU Youth Astronomical Observatory – The observatory will be available for use during the star party according to the following guidelines: There will be programed viewing for all participants on Friday and Saturday during the early evening until approximately 10:00pm. After 10:00pm on Friday and Saturday and all of Sunday night the observatory will be preferentially available for approved, supervised projects

until approximately midnight, and the immediate area will be under strict lighting requirements for private observing and/or imaging with private telescopes.

Note About UBarU – UBarU is a privately-owned-and-managed, non-profit 501(c)(3) camp and retreat center. We depend upon guest usage fees and tax-deductible donations to maintain and continuously improve our beautiful 142-acre, Dark-Sky Park property. Any and all donations are gratefully received and may be sent to: UBarU 277 UBarU Drive, Mountain Home, TX 78058, or may be made via PayPal at <http://ubaru.org/home/Support>. UBarU also has an ongoing membership program in which all dues are applied to the maintenance and operation of the facility. New members are welcomed and appreciated; details are found by following the membership menu tab on the website at www.ubaru.org.

Thank you for your support.