

## Offered Title: Looking Into 2018

2017 was an eventful year. Face it, every year has lots to offer. As New Braunfels Astronomy Club (NBAC) "first contact" Mick Homer says, "because it's out there"! [www.astronomyntx.org](http://www.astronomyntx.org).

Let's take a look at some notable astronomical happenings expected in 2018.

*Astronomy Night* at Tye Preston Memorial Library in Canyon Lake: Jan 13, Feb 10, Mar 10, Apr 14, May 5 (daytime Sun Party), Sep 8, Oct 20 (Moon Night), Nov 3, Dec 1. [tpml.org](http://tpml.org) for information.

Jan 31: Total Lunar Eclipse. The eclipse starts at 5:20 am CST as the Earth's shadow just starts to darken our Moon's limb. It will be in total eclipse by 7 am, and as it sets. Incidentally this is the second full Moon of January, qualifying it as a "Blue Moon". Also, the Moon will be just a day past perigee (closest orbital approach to Earth) so it will be a bit larger than when it's full at greater distances. Your weather forecaster might call it a "Super Moon". A trifecta!

Mar 7-8: Three planets, the Moon, and bright star Antares are in the southeastern sky before dawn. Get up and see a celestial line up composed of (from left to right) Saturn, Mars, orange Antares (Greek for "rivaling Mars"), a waning gibbous Moon, and Jupiter.

Apr 21/22: Lyrid Meteor Shower. The Moon interferes.

May 5/6: Eta Aquarid Meteor Shower. The Moon interferes.

July 15: Venus and the Moon make a beautiful pair in the southwestern sunset sky.

July 27+: Mars will be at opposition and situated just about as close as it gets to Earth...it will be very bright and very orange in the south. Get your telescope out, Mars won't be this close again until 2035!

Aug 12/13: The Perseid meteor shower can provide some spectacularly bright meteors and this year the Moon will be out of the way so even dimmer meteors should be visible.

Oct 8: The Draconid Meteor Shower peaks during the day and is best seen at dusk.

Oct 20/21: Orionid Meteor Shower. The Moon interferes.

Nov 17/18: Leonid Meteor Shower

Dec 12: If we are lucky and predictions are correct, we will be treated to a naked eye visible comet. Comet 46P/Wirtanen is on its way into the inner solar system, will zip around the Sun and get within 7 million miles of Earth on its way back to the outer solar system. Its closest approach will be on December 12 so look for it in Taurus as it passes close to the Hyades and Pleiades star clusters.

Dec 13/14: Geminid Meteor Shower

## What's in the Sky?

Jan 11; pre-dawn: A waning crescent Moon, Jupiter, and Mars are near Scorpius in the southeast

Jan 13; pre-dawn: Saturn and Mercury are close low in the southeastern sky