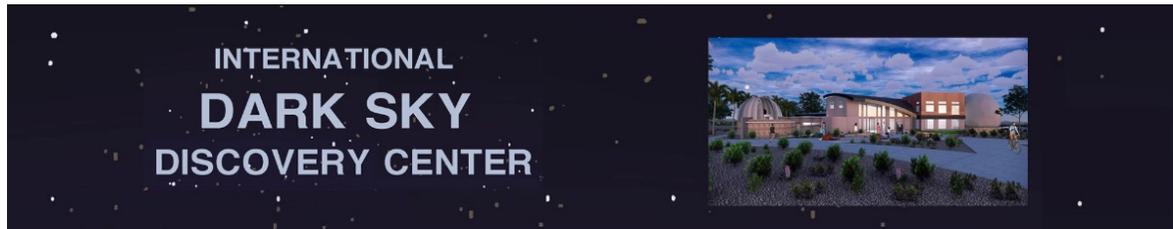
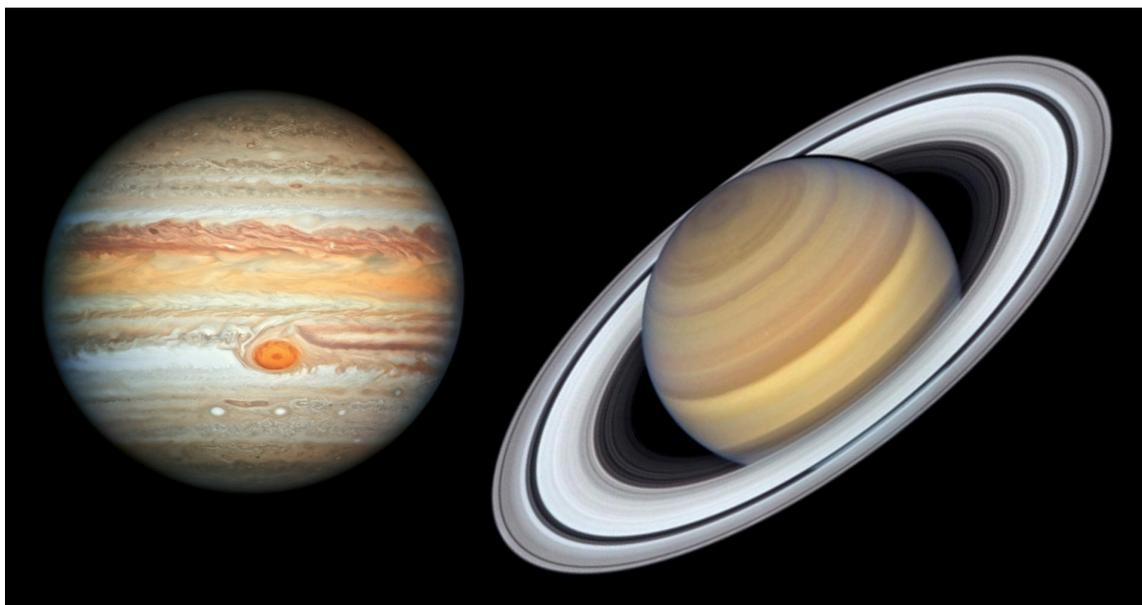

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December 21, 2020

Dear IDSDC Friends,

There hasn't been a day like today in 794 years – astronomically speaking. Early this evening, the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn will be so close that they will look like one bright object. Binoculars or a telescope will demonstrate they are separate. Of course, they'll still be about 400 million miles apart, but they'll be in almost perfect alignment as seen from earth. The last time the two planets appeared this close to one another in the sky AND were observable (i.e., not in the Sun's glare) was on the morning of March 4, 1226!



To see them, look for the brightest object in the southwest sky shortly after it

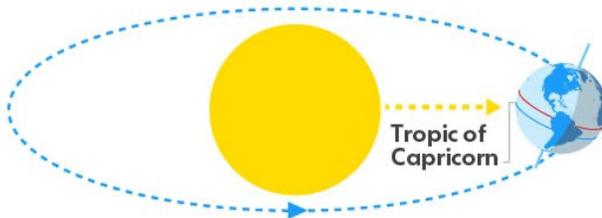
to see them, look for the brightest object in the southwest sky shortly after it gets dark tonight. Within an hour or two, they'll be below the horizon.

Do you want to impress your friends? Okay, listen to this. December 21 marks the day of the half-moon this month. However, astronomers will tell you it's a quarter-moon. Why is that? Half the moon is lit by the sun. But you're only seeing half of the half that is lit, which means you can see one fourth of the moon. It also indicates the moon is one quarter of the way through its monthly cycle when lit on its right half and three quarters of the way when lit on the left side. But to keep it simple, just tell your friends it's a quarter moon and watch for the puzzled looks.



WINTER SOLSTICE

The sun shines directly on the Tropic of Capricorn in the Southern Hemisphere. The Northern Hemisphere is tilted away from the sun.



Lastly, today is the winter solstice. This is the shortest day and longest night of the year and it marks the end of fall and beginning of winter. On this day, the sun rises furthest to the south in the east and sets furthest to the south in the west.

Regarding the International Dark Sky Discovery Center, we are still on track to launch our fundraising on January 8, which coincides with the 3rd anniversary of Fountain Hills being designated as an International Dark Sky Community. As mentioned in our November 21 email, we will greatly appreciate your help distributing the new 3-minute video that will anchor the launch. We will send you more information when that date approaches.

More good news. Our website has a fantastic new look. Click [HERE](#)

Thank you for your interest in the IDSDC project. Please stay safe during this holiday season.

May all your stars align – and Jupiter and Saturn, too!

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 **JOIN OUR LAUNCH CREW!** 
International Dark Sky Discovery Center

Donations in any amount are welcome and are tax-deductible. Donors contributing \$100 or more will be recognized on a plaque in the Center as follows:

\$100 – 499:	Launch Sponsor
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\$1,000 or more:	Launch Founder

Name: _____
 Email address: _____
 Amount of Donation: _____ Date: _____

Please make check payable to: **International Dark Sky Discovery Center** and mail to:
International Dark Sky Discovery Center, PO Box 18198, Fountain Hills, AZ 85269

Donations can also be made via PayPal on our website here: darkskycenter.org/contact

All donors will be added to the email list of supporters to receive occasional updates.

IDSDC Website



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