



# What's Up With the Astronomical League March 2024

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Compiled by Carroll  
Iorg, President

*A periodic publication for the AL membership*

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Astronomical Society of Kansas City



# ALCON 2024

## STARS AND ALL THAT JAZZ!

JULY 17–20, 2024



### ALCON 2024

Wed Jul 17, 2024 8:00 AM - Sat Jul 20, 2024 5:00 PM 📍 Doubletree Hotel, 66210

[Buy tickets](#)

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**ALCON 2024**  
GOING TO KANSAS CITY FOR  
**STARS AND ALL THAT JAZZ!**

**SPEAKERS INCLUDE**

- ★ Stephon Alexander, theoretical physicist, cosmologist, jazz saxophonist and author of *The Jazz of Physics*, a book that discusses the link between music and the structure of the universe
- ★ David Levy, comet hunter, amateur astronomer and science writer
- ★ Keivan Stassun, Professor of Physics and Astronomy, Vanderbilt University
- ★ Tim Russ, actor, musician screenwriter, director and amateur astronomer

**EVENING EVENTS**

- ★ Gottlieb Planetarium
- ★ Linda Hall Library, Rare Books Room
- ★ StarBQ at Overland Park Arboretum
- ★ Powell Observatory
- ★ Awards Banquet

**VENDORS INCLUDE**

- ★ DayStar Filters
- ★ Explore Scientific

**JULY 17–20, 2024**  
DOUBLETREE BY HILTON, OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

Hosted by

It's ASKC's 100th anniversary, and we are honored to be the official host for this year's Astronomical League Convention—ALCon 2024—this July, right here in the Kansas City area!

We would like to invite you to join us at **ALCon 2024, Stars and All That Jazz!** In addition to the daily convention activities, we will be hosting evening events at Gottlieb Planetarium, Linda Hall Library, Overland Park Arboretum, and our very own Powell Observatory, home to our 30-inch Ruisinger telescope.

## **To reserve your lodging for ALCon 2024:**

Room reservations are now open for the special ALCon rate at the beautiful **Overland Park DoubleTree Hotel:**

<https://group.doubletree.com/hp0506>

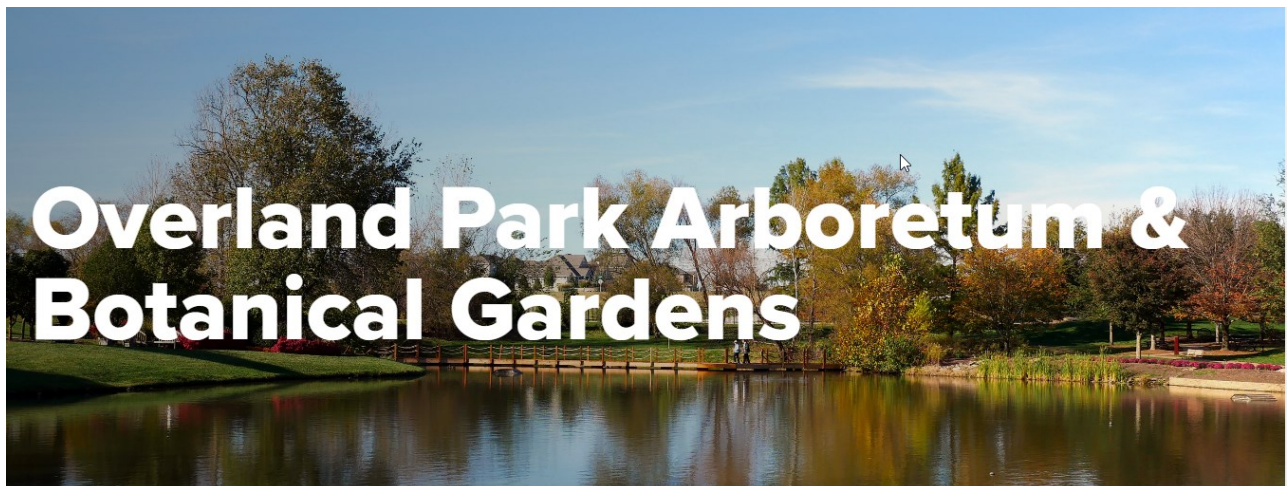
or scan the QR code to take you to the Double Tree booking site.

Once you are on the site, click "edit stay" on the upper right of the page to adjust your room nights. (The default is 6 nights!)



## **The beautiful Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens is the site of the Traditional Friday night Star-B-Que**

Zarda Hickory Pit Bar-B-Q has been serving their special offerings for almost 50 years in the Kansas City area. They are also strong community partners with many Kansas City area charities and non-profits such as Big Brothers Big Sisters Kansas City, The America Royal, and The Bishop Sullivan Center, which is committed to helping people coping with financial hardships.





## Highlights include:

- **Gottlieb Planetarium** at Union Station in downtown Kansas City, Mo., will provide us a private presentation in their facility.
- **Linda Hall Library**, a world-famous science and technology research library, will feature guest speaker David Levy and a chance to visit the library's rare book room, featuring such books as two of the few extant copies of Galileo's *Siderius Nuncius* (1610).
- **Powell Observatory** for a presentation by ASKC member and astronomy student Rachel Cionitti and an evening of stargazing with the 30-inch Ruisinger Telescope (weather permitting). The observatory visit will be preceded by a stop at the beautiful **Overland Park Arboretum** for a Star-B-Que dinner featuring Kansas City-style BBQ.
- **Banquet and Awards** ceremony featuring a local jazz band, and Brown University professor of physics and astronomy and jazz musician **Stephon Alexander** will discuss his latest book, *The Jazz of Physics*.

## Our speaker lineup:



**Dr. Stephon Alexander**, is a musician and professor of physics and astronomy at Brown University (Providence, RI), and author of [\*The Jazz of Physics: The Secret Link between Music and the Structure of the Universe\*](#). As a theoretical physicist, jazz saxophonist, and author, Alexander specializes in the connections between cosmology, particle physics, and quantum gravity, exploring interconnections between music, physics, mathematics and technology.

## Speakers (continued)

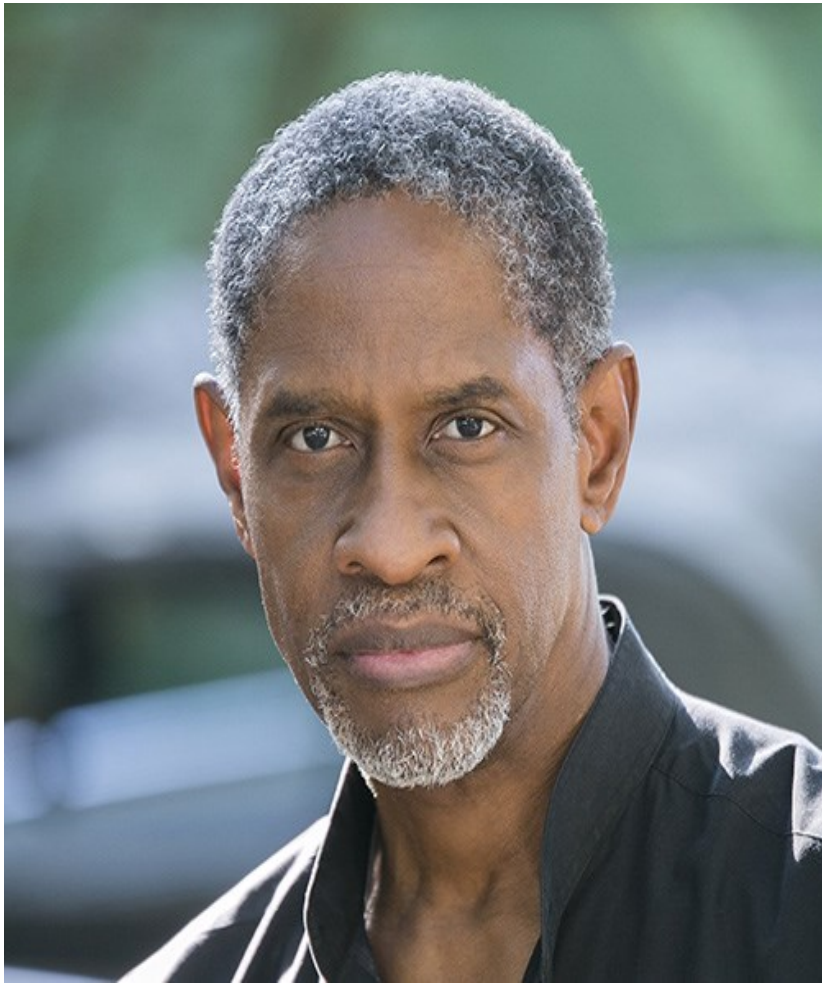


**Dr. Keivan Stassun** holds the Stevenson chair in Physics and Astronomy at Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN). A passionate leader and advocate for broadening participation in STEM, especially of underrepresented minorities and persons with disabilities, he currently serves as founding director of the [Frist Center for Autism and Innovation](#) in Vanderbilt's School of Engineering. In January 2022, Dr. Stassun was appointed by President Joe Biden to serve on the National Science Board.

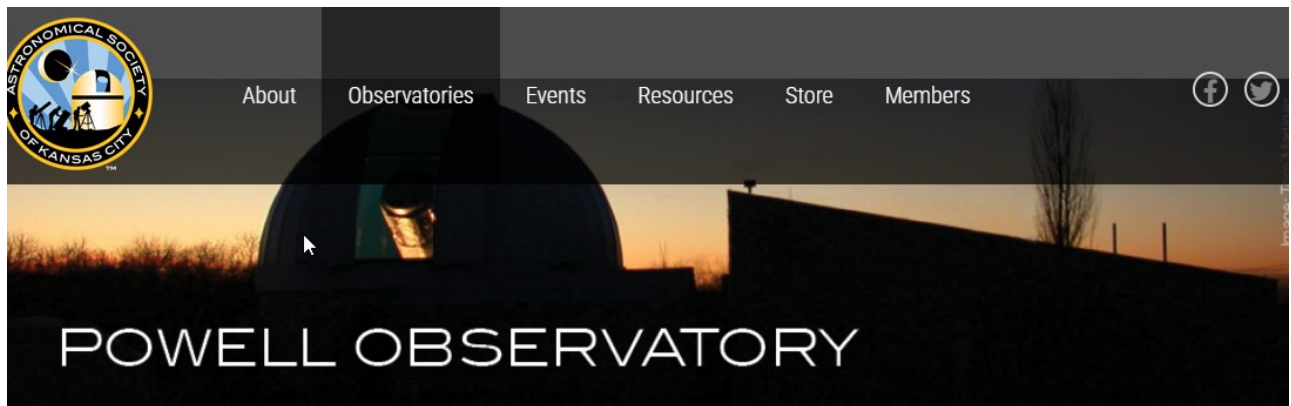


**Dr. David Levy** is an Emmy Award winning amateur astronomer, science writer, and discoverer of comets and minor planets, who co-discovered Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 in 1993. Awarded a PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Levy has written 34 books including [The Quest for Comets](#), as well as a poignant [biography of Pluto-discoverer Clyde Tombaugh](#).

## Speakers (continued)



**Mr. Tim Russ** is best known for his role as Lieutenant Commander Tuvok in the TV series *Star Trek: Voyager*. [Russ](#) has been working as an actor, director, and musician for the past thirty-five years. His talents encompass a wide spectrum of the performing arts, including composing, musical performances, writing, producing, and directing, and he is an avid amateur astronomer.



**Powell Observatory, one of the special stops scheduled for Friday night, July 19, 2024, just after the Star-B-Que dinner**