

Astronomy Club of Asheville  
**August 2024 Sky Events**

# Conjunction of the Moon With the Star Spica

During early evening on **August 9<sup>th</sup>**, the waxing crescent Moon will form a most striking conjunction with the bright star Spica in the constellation Virgo. This juxtaposition will be visible in the W-SW – with both the Moon and Spica setting about one hour before midnight.

As the Moon proceeds eastward along the ecliptic each night, watch its illuminated disk grow (wax). The Moon moves eastward, about 13° along the ecliptic, from one night to the next, or about ½° per hour. Try following its movement across the sky during these mid-summer nights.

Because Spica (a Roman name meaning “ear of grain”) is located along the ecliptic (the approximate path of the Sun, the Moon, and the planets across the sky), encounters with the Moon are not rare. Spica sends its photons of light our way from a distance of 250 light years ( $\approx 6$  trillion miles times 250).



*Illustration created using SkySafari & PowerPoint software*