

How 'Rosette Nebula' gets its nickname

February often brings talk of hearts and flowers, but it is also a good month to highlight one of the sky's most recognizable deep-space objects: the Rosette Nebula.



Carlos Rotellar

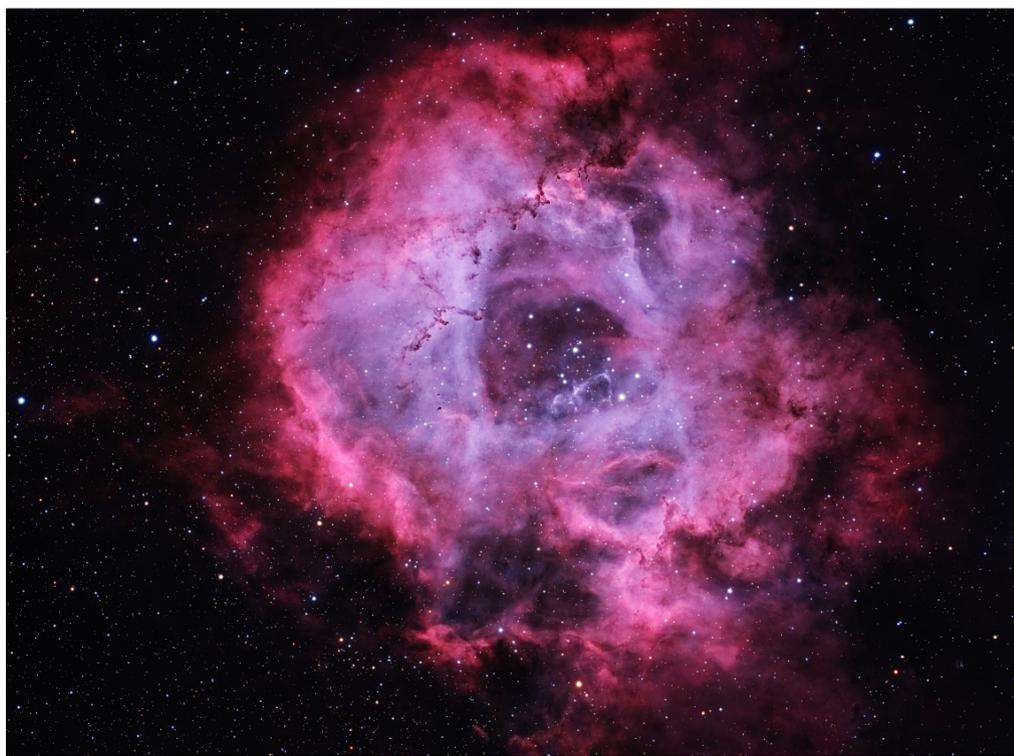
It sits about 5,200 light-years away and spans roughly 130 light-years across, making it one of the larger nebulae visible from Earth. Its rounded, petal-like shape is what led early observers to nickname it the "Rosette." The reddish glow comes from hydrogen gas that is energized by young, hot stars located in the center of the nebula. At the core of the Rosette is the star cluster NGC 2244.

These young stars formed from the gas and dust inside the nebula and emit strong ultraviolet radiation that lights

up the surrounding material. Their stellar winds also help shape the structure of the nebula, creating the clear central cavity and the surrounding ring of gas. The stellar winds of these massive stars are composed mainly of protons, electrons, and other ions moving at high velocities.

As these winds collide with the surrounding gas, they create shock fronts, carve out cavities, and trigger the formation of new stars. The winds also help disperse the residual gas and dust influencing the nebula's appearance and evolution. These stellar winds can reach speeds of 6.7 million miles per hour. Happy Valentine's Day!

— Dr. Carlos Rotellar is a Bowling Green nephrologist who has had an interest in astrophotography and has been taking images of the universe from his driveway for several years. Website: Skyastrophotos.com.



CARLOS ROTELLAR PHOTO

The Rosette Nebula sits about 5,200 light-years away and spans roughly 130 light-years across.

Maker of new humanoid thinks it might change your mind on robots in homes

By MATT O'BRIEN
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK — As the new robot called Sprout walks around a Manhattan office, nodding its rectangular head, lifting its windshield wiper-like "eyebrows" and offering to shake your hand with its grippers, it looks nothing like the sleek and intimidating humanoids built by companies like Tesla.

Sprout's charm is the point. A 5-year-old child could comfortably talk at eye level with this humanoid, which stands 3.5 feet (1 meter) tall and wears a soft, padded exterior of sage-green foam.

Forged by stealth startup Fauna Robotics over two years of secret research and development, Sprout's public debut on Tuesday aims to jump-start a whole new industry of building "approachable" robots for homes, schools and social spaces.

The robot is in many ways the first of its kind, at least in the United States, even as rapid advances in artificial intelligence and robot engineering have finally made it possible to start building such machines. If its emotive expressions and blinking lights seem vaguely familiar, it might be from generations of Star Wars droids and other endearingly clunky robotic sidekicks dreamed up in animation studios and children's literature.

"Most people in this industry



SETH WENIG / AP

Fauna Robotics' new robot, called Spout, gets up from the prone position to demonstrate its maneuverability in New York, on Jan. 14.

take inspiration from the science fiction that we grew up with," said Fauna Robotics co-founder and CEO Rob Cochran. "I think some do so from 'Westworld' and 'Terminator.' We do from WALL-E and Baymax and Rosie Jetson."

Making a business case for robots that won't work in car assembly lines

The usual hypothesis for the commercialization of humanoid robots is that they will get their first jobs in warehouses or factories long before they are ready for homes. That's the path proposed for two of today's best-known prototypes: Tesla's

Optimus, which CEO Elon Musk sees as the carmaker's future, and Boston Dynamics' Atlas, which parent company Hyundai plans to deploy in car manufacturing by 2028.

Fauna looks to skip that step for an entirely different clientele: other robot tinkerers. Much as early personal computers and, later, smartphones sparked a culture of developers designing new games and applications, Sprout is a software developer platform more than just a robot. It's also a mechanically complex one that will cost buyers \$50,000.

That's a price some university

research labs and technology entrepreneurs are already spending on China's Unitree, which sells a lightweight humanoid often seen at robotics conferences and competitions. Others have avoided Chinese hardware due to tariffs and broader security concerns.

Cochran believes Fauna is "the first American company to be actively shipping robots as a developer platform" and has been hand-delivering the first models. Early customers include Disney and Boston Dynamics.

See **ROBOTS**, 3C

The rehab patient

The transmission of her car has given out. Every day, she hitches a ride to work because she is broke.

She works hard. Too hard. And when she's not cooking in the kitchen of the medical rehab, delivering trays to patients, she's a full-time single mother.

Sometimes, her kids visit her at work. They get thirty minutes for supper. Her breaks are never long enough.

The strain of day-to-day living is wearing her thin. She is overworked, underpaid, vehicle-less.

One day, she meets a patient. An old man.

In the three months he's been in rehab, nobody has seen him move or speak. Most days, he faces the window with his jaw slung open. Empty eyes.

She's delivering food to his room. Her emotions get the best of her. She collapses on a chair and has a meltdown.

She bawls because life is unfair. Because a busted car sits in her driveway and she can't afford to have a mechanic look at it.

The old man stirs in his wheelchair.

See **PATIENT**, 3C



Sean Dietrich

LifeSkills earns Community Behavioral Health Clinic certification

Karen Garrity, LifeSkills Executive Vice President of Behavioral Health Services, expressed excitement and enthusiasm for the new year to arrive. The arrival of 2026 was highlighted by the achievement of having earned certification as a CCBHC, a nationally recognized model designed to expand access to high-quality mental health and substance use services across the communities it serves. "This valuable undertaking has been a multi-year journey that began in 2022 when

we received a federal grant to start working toward certification," said Garrity.

"LifeSkills will deliver services in collaboration with Pennyroyal Center across 18 counties, including: Allen, Barren, Butler, Caldwell, Christian, Crittenden, Edmonson, Hart, Hopkins, Logan, Lyon, Metcalfe, Monroe, Muhlenberg, Todd, Trigg, Simpson, and Warren," said Garrity. "The organization will continue to ensure coordinated, accessible care across South Central and Western Kentucky."

"This certification comes in response to growing behavioral health needs across the region," said Garrity. "It also reflects a shared commitment to providing timely, accessible care." CCBHC's offer a wide range of behavioral health services for people of all ages, including children and teens, no matter their insurance status or ability to pay.

Community members may notice improved access to services, including more staff, extended hours with evening

and weekend appointments, and expanded Mobile Crisis Services available around the clock. Every day of the year.

The CCBHC model also establishes clear standards for timely access to care, ensuring that community members can get help when they need it most—whether that's scheduling an appointment quickly or receiving immediate crisis support. "Current clients will continue receiving services without interruption, and many individuals and families will

benefit from expanded services and improved access to care. Service expansion is scheduled to continue through 2026," said Garrity.

— Maureen Mahaney coordinates public information for LifeSkills, Inc. a non-profit, behavioral health care corporation that plans for and serves the people of southcentral Kentucky in three main areas: mental health, addiction, and developmental disabilities. Her column appears monthly.