



June 2015

Editor -Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 259 adult members are dedicated to promoting and sharing the wonders and science of astronomy. We host dark-sky and local star parties, telescope-making workshops, science / astronomy lectures, educational outreach sessions and much more.

President's Message

KYLE BRINKMAN

★ What a difference a month makes. We held the very first long range planning meeting and are getting excited about the future of our club. There was some lively and constructive discussion about what we are doing and what we can do even better. The minutes are a good three pages so I'll bring up some highlights.



We agreed to cooperate in outreach events with the MARS club which is sponsored by MOSI. Some of our members met with the MOSI & MARS groups this weekend and we now have an open invitation to a private planetarium show and access to networking to find new and interesting speakers.

We are committed to our dark sky observing site at Withlacoochee River Park. Our long term plan is to have a clubhouse on that site. We have a lead on a suitable building and volunteers who would assist in the installation. We are still in need of a coordinator who would see this project through. The facility would be a centerpiece of our monthly viewings and a great addition to our annual star party. Those of you who remember Hickory

Hill may remember the midnight cookies. That is one tradition we need to bring back.

There is going to be a new outreach program each month. The event will be at the Science Center each Saturday after New Moon Weekends. We'll have an instruction time for people to bring their scopes and learn how to use them.

Please be sure to check the calendar and newsletters. There will be more announcements and opportunities. Good times are sure to follow.

New Members

We would like to welcome Barbara Katcha, Anne Bowen, Carl Wright, and Charles Zehmer to our family of members.

General Meeting

This month's meeting will take place on Friday, June 26, 2015 at 8:00 PM, at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22nd Ave. N, St. Petersburg, FL.

Beginning Program - Kyle Brinkman will welcome guests and make pertinent announcements followed by Mr. Ed Peachey the CEO of Career Source Pinellas. He will update us on the future of the Science Center.

Break & Sidewalk Astronomy - Snack Time plus a walk outside to observe and discuss the night sky.

Main Program - This month's featured speaker is Kin Searcy. He will be presenting *Discoveries of Mount Palomar* via Skype from Palomar Mountain, CA.

Coming Programs

July - John O'Neill present *The Adventures of Astro Photography*.

Club Meeting Hurricane Policy

Hurricane season is upon us. We may cancel the meeting if a hurricane is threatening Pinellas County. If that happens, we will send a cancelation notification via email. Alternatively, you may call Allen Maroney at 727 867-4781 or Jack Fritz at 813 508-5680 to check on the status of the meeting.

Member Appreciation of the Month

KYLE BRINKMAN

★ This month I'd like to highlight a friendly face, Shirley Vuille. If you joined within the last few years you were welcomed by an email from Shirley. She welcomes all our members and takes care of membership renewals as well. She has spoken at our meetings, participated in outreach events, and has led group outings to launch weather balloons. As our Weather Ambassador, she is our point of contact with the National Weather Service. Hurricane season has started and she is helping to distribute safety information from NOAA. Thank you Shirley, for all you do.

Stelliferous Live June 24th

SPAC is going to Stelliferous Live at the South Florida Museum's Bishop Planetarium. Join us for our exciting live star talk with Jeff Rodgers, Director of the Bishop Planetarium.

We'll take a look at the upcoming month's night skies, then enjoy a discussion about current events in astronomy.

SPAC members meet at the Science Center for carpooling at 6PM. [Click here](#) to make your own reservations at the Museum's website.

Editor's Note

JACK FRITZ

★ Our first club planning meeting turned out to be a very useful event. Kyle had prepared a detailed agenda and we were able to get through all of it. Several action items were assigned to individuals that when completed, will have a positive impact on the future of our club. The member survey that you will see at the June meeting is just an example. We are planning to make this meeting an annual event and would like for you to join in next year.



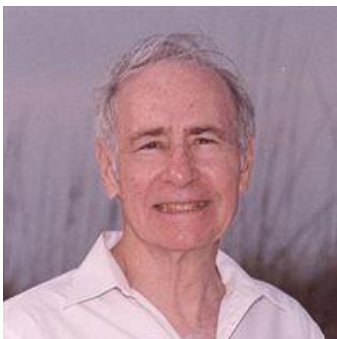
Fifteen club members conspiring to create growth and improve our club.



Please do not send me text messages. While I whole-heartedly embrace new technology, I have yet to understand the point of

texting. I do not get alerts for text messages, so I rarely see them. I almost never see them before they are overcome by events. If you need something from me, please call or email. I always respond to those.

Richard Pecha Passes



Richard Pecha

Richard J. Pecha, 85 of Seminole passed away on March 30th. Richard was born in New York City on June 18, 1929. Richard moved to Seminole in 1980 and worked from his home as a broker/sales representative for Seal-Tite Plastics which he continued until his death. He has been a member of SPAC for more than 20 years.

Patrick Air Force Base Tour

Dimitri Leventis and Shirley Vuille are busy planning a tour of Patrick Air Force Base for our members. The tour will include a visit to the Air Force Space and Missile Museum, several launch complexes and the historic Cape Canaveral Lighthouse. The tentative date is Friday, October 9th. Please let us know if you believe you will want to attend, and stay tuned for more details.

July Astronomical Events

STEVE ROBBINS

★ Find the Moon and Aldebaran .9° apart on July 12th in the eastern sky just before sunrise. Then on the evening of the 18th, after 10 PM, look for a very nice triangle with the Moon over Venus half a degree apart with

Jupiter 4.5° to the right. Then on the evening of the 25th, find the Moon 2.5° from Saturn.

The Delta Aquarid Meteor Shower should peak on the evening of July 28th, giving us a ZHR of about 20; a very average shower. But with the first quarter Moon setting by midnight, skies will be black during the early morning prime time.

July's full Moon is the Full Buck Moon, for the bucks sprouting antlers in July. Of course, we have two of them this month and the second is a Blue Moon.

Lunar Phases

- Full Moon - July 1, 22:19 EDT
- Third Quarter - July 8, 16:24 EDT
- New Moon - July 15, 21:24 EDT
- First Quarter - July 24, 12:14 EDT
- Full Moon - July 31, 06:42 EDT

Learn to Use Your Telescope Observing Night

SHIRLEY VUILLE

★ Bring all of your telescope, its accessories, and the telescope manual to the Science Center field on Saturday, June 27th. Setup time is 6:00 PM. This will allow time to learn tripod placement, telescope-tripod assembly, finder alignment, scope adjustments, and get familiar with procedures before it gets dark.

The targets will be: Venus, Jupiter, Moon, Saturn, double stars, and star clusters.

Please email Shirley, svuille@aol.com; or John, john@oneilladvertising.com with your questions.

We are planning to make this a monthly event when weather permits.

Coming Outreach Events

Details of our outreach events may be found at www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/calendar.php. Please contact the event coordinator if you can help with these events:

- 6/24 Sand Hill Scout Reserve in Brooksville. - JF
- 6/27 Observing Night at the Science Center - JO
- 6/30 Sand Hill Scout Reserve in Brooksville. - JF
- 7/25 Observing Night at the Science Center - JO
- 9/19 International Observe the Moon Night - TBD

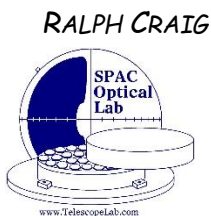
Event Coordinators

- *JH Jim Hunter 813 507-8415
- *JO John O'Neill 727 637-5945
- *JF Jack Fritz 813 508-5680

Please send a brief description of any events you are planning to Jim Hunter for inclusion in the newsletter.

Mirror Lab

★ Brent and Joey Hilker finished their 10" f/5 mirror this month. It is a very nice, smooth mirror with a better than 1/6 wave front and a Strehl ratio of 0.93.



Brent and Joey

Paul is in the final polishing phase with his 10" f/6 Black Vitrified Ceramic mirror. Mike Davis just returned from vacation out west (again!) and is back to finish his 12.5" hex-back mirror.



Paul and Dimitri building a dew heater controller.

Dimitri started soldering up one of the dual channel dew heater controllers that Allen designed for the lab crew. We should have several of these operational in the near future. Tom Spano has made a replica of the original Newtonian telescope for the club to raffle off.

More pictures on the mirror lab web page at: www.telescopelab.com, and also on Mike Davis's web page at: www.mdpub.com.

The award winning Mirror Lab welcomes interested visitors to their facility at the Science Center's rear annex. The lab is open on Saturdays between noon and 4:00 pm. Several experienced and skilled tutors are there to give you support, help & instruction. For more information call Ralph Craig 727 384-2086; Paul McNabb 727 345-5713; or Allen Maroney 727 867-4781

If you have any surplus telescope parts, the mirror lab could use them for various projects.

NASA News

[Messenger was able to sample](#) the very faint magnetism from rocks on Mercury's surface. The data collected from high risk, low passes has revealed that Mercury's magnetic field is at least 3.7 to 3.9 billion years old, and tags Mercury as the only inner solar system planet to have a magnetic field like Earth's.

While descending from its first orbits of Ceres at a distance of 8,400 miles to its Survey orbit 2,500 miles high, [Dawn paused at 3,200 miles](#) to take some photos. Having a resolution of 1,600 feet per pixel these are the best resolution photos ever taken

It's time to get excited about NASA's New Horizons mission to Pluto. Already they have resolved the [very first features](#) on Pluto's surface, produced [a movie of Charon's orbit](#) around Pluto and imaged all the known moons. New Horizons will be at closest approach to Pluto on July 15th, so we have seen nothing yet!

Not to be outshone, Hubble posted an astounding discovery of its own relating to the Pluto system. Pluto and its inner moon Charon are essentially a double planet. The other moons orbit the Pluto/Charon center of mass. Perturbations in the rotation of Nix [produce a bizarre situation](#) where if you lived on Nix, you would never be able to predict when or if the Sun would rise the next morning and from which direction. You might well have a day where the Sun rose in the West and set in the North. Chaos is fun!

Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend

KELLY ANDERSON

★ Dark of the Moon for May was a fifty-fifty weekend for Ron & Dee Wayman, Joe Canzoneri, Dave & Mina Swan, and Natalie & me at our Withlacoochee Dark Site. Friday evening nobody bothered to break out their scopes because of all the clouds. Later on we were subjected to a real frog-choker of a downpour, but we all survived in reasonably good condition.

Saturday evening was a different matter. The clouds cleared out before sunset and we were treated to a cloud-free night and excellent visibility. One weird looking low-flying bank of clouds came over about midnight, but it quickly passed on and once again we had

beautiful seeing. Unfortunately my Advanced VX GEM broke (it turned out to be a smoked power card that Celestron is replacing for me) so I couldn't use my 8" SCT. Joe was kind enough to loan me his nifty 3" refractor that worked well on my NexStar alt/az mount. I had a great time galaxy hunting.



M101 taken at Withlacoochee by Joe Canzoneri

We're hoping you can join us at the beautiful Withlacoochee River Park for the next New Moon weekend. Mark your calendars for June 12th & 13th. Even if you don't have a camper and, like me, refuse to sleep on the ground, the Park is only a one-hour drive for most of us. So if the weather is looking cooperative, come on out for an evening.

Science Center of Pinellas

JACK FRITZ

★ The Science Center is now owned by Career Source Pinellas and they need our help. Mr. Ed Peachey, CEO, has stated that he is glad to have us there and we have a home as long as they can maintain the facility.

They are looking for additional corporate sponsorship for their efforts. If you are part of a company that may be able to help, please make sure you attend our June meeting to learn more about their goals and objectives. Be sure to let us know if you have any ideas on fund raising.

SPAC Business Meeting

The Business Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting is Wednesday, July 8th, at 8:00 PM at the Science Center. All interested members are invited to attend. All club business decisions are made at the business meeting so as not to encumber the general meeting.

Officers & Directors

President:	Kyle Brinkman	727 455-6931
Vice Pres.:	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
Secretary:	Paul McNabb	727 345-5713
Treasurer:	Jim Hunter	813 909-7013
Dir.-at-Large:	Mike Davis	727 474-6785
Dir.-at-Large:	David Pearson	727 791-4241
Dir.-at-Large:	Allen Maroney	727 867-4781
SPACE Editor	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
Public Relations	John O'Neill	727 637-5945
Membership Chair	Shirley Vuille	727 864-2624
Outreach Chair:	Jim Hunter	813 909-7013
Librarian:	Ralph Craig	727 384-2086
Club Webmaster:	Chris Curran	813 653-2604

Click on the name to send email

Recognition of Patrons & Benefactors:

Clifford B. Benham	Benefactor
David & Mina Swan	Benefactor
Jack & Roni Fritz	Benefactor
Alexie & Yanira Velez	Patron
Gustav J. Waffan	Patron
Joe Ortiz-Bradley	Patron
John O'Neill	Patron
Matt Labadie	Patron
Robert Myers	Patron
Robert & Debora Csere	Patron
Thomas Tobin	Patron

Examiner Staff

Editor	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
In the News	Steve Robbins	386 736-9123
Assistant Editor	Nancy Huff	813 621-3606
Mirror Lab	Ralph Craig	727 384-2086

Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend (Cont.)

Our next New Moon Weekend falls on July 10th & 11th.

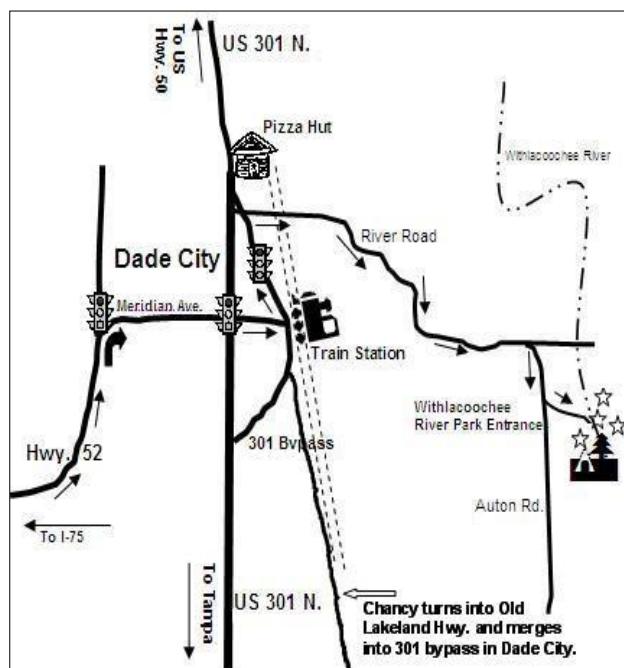
The park gate is locked at Sundown, so you will need to arrive before then. The year-round camping fee with electrical use is

\$10/night for club members, and \$20 for non-members. Tent camping without electric is \$5/night.

Be reminded that if you are not camping, you must pay the \$2/vehicle fee. Vehicles displaying the handicap parking tag are exempt. For further information, contact Bill or Nancy Huff. starhopr3@msn.com or 813 621-3606.

For Sale

Celestron Orange tube C8 2000mm/f10 Telescope with coated optics, and an 8 X 50mm finder, and a like new Meade LDX75 Equatorial Goto mount with AutoStar Controller, 8D cell power supply and AC/DC power adapter. \$300 each or both for \$500. Contact Gus Nicolella at 727 865-2938 or k3gys@tampabay.rr.com.



Withlacoochee River Park - Dade City, FL

Detailed directions can be found at:

www.StPeteAstronomyClub.org



15406 Stonecreek Lane
Tampa, FL 33613

SPAC, INC. MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc. is open to anyone, regardless of age, who is interested in astronomy. Dues are considered donations and are non-refundable. Membership options are available as listed below:

To join or renew your membership:

Complete the following form and return it with your payment to: Jim Hunter - Treasurer, 17316 Oak Ledge Dr., Lutz, FL 33549-7626 - Telephone number (813) 909-7013 (checks should be made payable to SPAC, Inc.)

Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Spouse: _____ Children (*Under 18*): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ St. ____ Zip: _____

E-Mail address: _____ Newsletter Preference: Email ☐ US Mail ☐

Single: ☐ \$ 20.00/YR. Includes one adult, minor children, the "SPACE" newsletter, and all the rights and privileges of membership.

Family: ☐ \$ 25.00/YR. Includes two adults, minor children and the above rights and privileges.

Patron: ☐ \$ 50.00/YR. A Patron member is entitled to the above rights and privileges.

Benefactor: ☐ \$100.00/YR. A Benefactor member is entitled to the above rights and privileges.

OPTIONAL DISCOUNTED MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS AS A BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP:

Sky & Telescope Magazine: ☐ \$32.95/Yr.

Astronomy Magazine: ☐ \$34.00/Yr.