

July 2015 Editor -Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 263 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

The board of SPAC approved a mission statement. That statement comes from the words found on top of this newsletter. This is a statement of who we are and what we are about. There are some key points I'd like to highlight.



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Local Star Parties. Thank you everyone who came out to the Saturn Watch at the Science Center. The new outreach event was a genuine success. We had over a dozen telescopes of various sizes and types on display as we welcomed numerous families to see the stars with us. This outreach program will continue each month after the new moon weekend. I'd also like to welcome all our new members who joined as a result of this outreach event.

Science/Astronomy Lectures. The club calendar is filling up. We have some very interesting speakers lined up. The topics have something for everyone. We've had dark matter, red dwarves, and the science of Mt. Palomar. Upcoming lectures include public outreach, astrophotography, an author, and a Nobel nominated expert on Anti-matter.

Family Astronomy. There is a trip planned to Patrick AFB to see where the Air Force launces rockets and an invitation for a private show at MOSI's planetarium we will be scheduling. This month we are invited to attend the launching of a weather balloon at the NOAA site in Ruskin on July 29th. In addition, we have a picnic, party and multiple telescope viewings.

The summer months can be disappointing weather for observing. We are still an active club and have a lot going on. I'm looking forward to seeing you at the next event.

New Members

We would like to welcome Ruggero & Carla Santilli, and Shelly & Franciose Braden to our family of members.

General Meeting

This month's meeting will take place on Friday, July 24, 2015 at $8:00\,\text{PM}$, at the Science Center of Pinellas County, $7701\,22^{\text{nd}}$ Ave.

N, St. Petersburg, FL.

<u>Beginning Program</u> - Kyle Brinkman will welcome guests and make pertinent announcements.

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

Main Program - "Public Star Shows," with Jim Hunter, our Treasurer and Public Outreach Chair. He will be speaking about what to do at public outreach events. This information will be helpful to any who are interested in participating in our outreach events but don't know what to do when you get there.

"Adventures in Astrophotography," with John O'Neil, our past president and advanced amateur astro photographer. His images have been published in Sky and Telescope, seen on Bay News 9, and have been dazzling us for years. John has also been very helpful to members who need a few pointers on taking their own astro photos.

Upcoming Programs

August - Chap Percival author of Go See the Eclipse and Take a Kid with You. Books and T-shirts will be available for purchase at the meeting. Chap Percival is a lifelong educator with a passion for sharing his knowledge of astronomy.

September - Professor Ruggero Santilli will be speaking about "The Mystery of Detecting Antimatter Galaxies."

October - Pot Luck Picnic, viewing, and election of officers

November - Auction.

December - Winter Solstice Party.

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

Allen Maroney is the member I'd like to highlight this month. Allen has been a leader in the award winning mirror lab which has helped dozens of novices manufacture high-quality mirrors at the lowest possible price. His technical work made it possible for us to take the next step in bringing in high quality speakers. He setup the club computer with Skype and microphone which allows us to communicate with astronomers from all over the world. Now he and others are working on making affordable dew heater kits. Thank you Allen for all that you do for the club.

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. <u>Click here</u> to make your own reservations at the Museum's website.

<u>SPAC at US Weather Service Weather</u> Forecast Office

SHIRLEY VUILLE

Members are invited to come to the Tampa Bay Weather Station in Ruskin. We'll meet at the weather station office with meteorologist, Daniel Noah, to observe the balloon preparation process, and launch. Please

note, they do not launch balloons in the middle of severe thunder storms so this is weatherpermitting.

Balloon Preparation and Launch, Wednesday, July 29, 2015. Balloon Inflation process approximately 6:30 PM, and launch at 7:00 PM. The location is the US National Weather Service Office, 2525 14th Ave SE, Ruskin, FL 33570.

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.

August Astronomical Events

STEVE ROBBINS

August 1 Venus is at greatest eastern elongation from the Sun at 21.5°.

August 7 find Mercury less than a degree above Regulus, and Jupiter the same distance to the right very low in the western sky at sunset.

On August 8^{th} the Moon will be .7° south of Aldebaran.

August 13th, one day before the new Moon, we are treated to the excellent Perseid Meteor Shower with a ZHR of about 90. This is a keeper!

August 19th the Moon will be half a degree south of the Beehive Cluster.

On August 31st Neptune is at opposition. For our now most distant planet, it has surprising color and brightness.

August is the month of Full Sturgeon Moon, the time to catch the large sturgeon on the Great Lakes and other large bodies of water.

Lunar Phases

- Third Quarter August 6, 22:02 EDT
- New Moon August 14, 10:53 EDT
- First Quarter August 22, 15:31 EDT
- Full Moon August 29, 14:35 EDT

<u>Learn to Use Your Telescope Observing</u> Night

SHIRLEY VUILLE

Bring all of your telescope, its accessories, and the telescope manual to the Science Center field on Saturday, July 25th. 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.

Here are some photos from last month's event taken by Scott Walsh.



Shirley Vuille with her astro binoculars.



John O'Neill and Dave Pearson set up Dave's Celestron Edge.

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

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

Mirror Lab

ning

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

STEVE ROBBINS

RALPH CRAIG

SPAC Optical

Thanks to Messenger's very risky low altitude orbits during its last months (coming within 15 km of the surface on some passes!), Messenger was able to sample the very faint magnetism from rocks on Mercury's surface. The data collected from these high risk low passes has revealed and Mercury's magnetic field is at least 3.7 to 3.9 billion years old and tags Mercury as the only rocky, inner solar system planet to share a magnetic field like Farth's

Dawn is healthy and happy in its second stage orbit of 2,700 miles from Ceres. On June 30, as the ion engine was fired up, Dawn detected an anomaly in its orientation system and terminated the burn, entering safe mode. Ground engineers successfully contacted Dawn and after making adjustments, exited

safe mode. Dawn will remain at 2,700 miles until engineers complete the analysis of the anomaly. Latest <u>photo of the famous white spots</u>. What are they?

On June 13, Rosetta's comet lander, Philae, woke up after 211 days of hibernation and successfully contacted Rosetta. Scientists are now using reception data and Rosetta orbital data to develop the location of Philae and optimize Rosetta's orbit to begin receiving science data from Philae.

Meanwhile, as the comet warms up for its active perihelion, Rosetta is getting a first look at the mechanics of how a comet shoots jets of gas from sinkholes on its surface.

Houston, we have geology! Today, July 10, the latest photos of Pluto from New Horizons shows geological features for the first time. This is only the beginning! New Horizons also snapped an intriguing photo of Pluto and Charon, both with surface details showing and a stark color difference between Pluto and Charon.

Planetary exploration has never been this good! We truly live in interesting times.

For Sale

Orion XT10 Intelliscope Dob with hand controller, viewfinder, 2 eyepieces, upgraded 2 inch, 2 speed, low-profile focuser, cooling fan, solar glass sun filter, light shield, padded scope case, storage cover and custom elevation stand. \$699. Excellent condition.

Contact Scott Walsh at <u>727-378-4355</u> or <u>sawmann55@yahoo.com</u>.

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 k3qys@tampabay.rr.com.

SPAC Business Meeting



The Business Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting is Wednesday, August 12th, 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:	<u>Jim Hunter</u>	813 909-7013
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Dirat-Large:	David Pearson	727 791-4241
Dirat-Large:	Allen Maroney	727 867-4781
SPACE Editor	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
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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. Waffen	Patron		
Joe Ortiz-Bradley	Patron		
John O'Neill	Patron		
Matt Labadie	Patron		
Robert Myers	Patron		
Robert & Debora Csere	Patron		
Thomas Tobin	Patron		

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Mirror Lab	Ralph Craig	727 384-2086

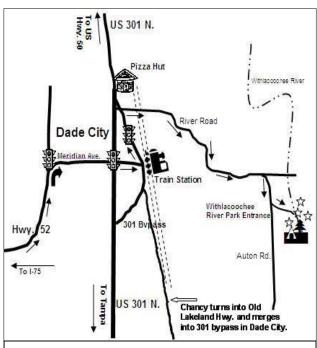
Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend (Cont.)

Our next New Moon Weekend falls on August 14th & 15th.

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

\$10/night for club members, and \$20 for nonmembers. 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.



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 (<i>Under 18</i>):					
Address:			City:		St	Zip:	
E-Mail ad	dress	:	Newsletter	Preference:	Email []	US Mail []	
Single:	[]	\$ 20.00/YR.	Includes one adult, minor children, the "SPACE" no leges of membership.	ewsletter, and	d all the rig	ghts and privi-	
Family:	[]	\$ 25.00/YR.	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	r: []	\$100.00/YR.	A Benefactor member is entitled to the above rights	and privileg	jes.		
		OPTION	AL DISCOUNTED MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS AS A BENEFT	T OF MEMBER	RSHIP:		
Sky & Tel	esco	pe Magazine:	[] \$32.95/Yr.	Astronomy	Magazine	e: [] \$34.00/Yı	