



October 2015

Editor -Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 277 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

★ It's that time of year again. Daylight savings is almost over. There is less heat in the air. The skies are finally clearing. It's time we get out there and finally see some stars again.



October's New Moon Weekend was well attended. Those who were there were treated to the best weather in months. The Milky Way was clearly visible and there were few clouds. This was a great time to be out in the field with the other astronomers to discover their techniques and improve my own.

Many of you have not attended a New Moon Weekend. You don't need an RV to enjoy the weekend. The cost of attendance is very small for a weekend getaway. The park has electricity, water and plumbing. There is day-time recreation in the park. There are nature trails and you could bring a canoe to the Withlacoochee River. Dade City is not far away if you need to go get something.

The weekend is a great time. Of course there are many ways to participate in the life of the club. There are the outreach activities, the mirror lab, attending the meetings or

even just staying in touch through the newsletter. The easiest way to have a good time is to get involved. Bring your scope to a Bring Your Scope Night. You don't have to be a great astronomer to have a good time in the club. You will be a better astronomer if you learn from your friends.

New Members

We would like to welcome Vasko & Kelly Ugrinov, Alan & Mary Powell, Donna Ketchum, Nicholas Diaco, Keoki Trask, and Kalia Kelly to our family of members.

Annual Meeting

This month's meeting will take place on Friday, October 23, 2015 at 7:00 PM, at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22nd Ave. N, St. Petersburg, FL.

This month is our fall pot-luck picnic and annual election of officers. We begin one hour earlier than normal. It's all about the food and fellowship.

Upcoming Programs

November - Auction - Bring your check-book or cash for some spectacular bargains on astronomy equipment.

December - Winter Solstice Party.

Member Appreciation

KYLE BRINKMAN

★ A welcome reception is important to any group. It gives us time to greet one another and enjoy the company of our fellow astronomers. Last month we missed out on the reception time during the general meeting. That is because our club secretary, Paul McNabb, was unable to attend. Paul has served our club as secretary, taking the minutes at our board meetings. In addition, he provides the mirror lab reports, volunteers at the mirror lab each Saturday and provides the reception snacks at the general meetings. These are some of the ways he works to make our club a fun place to be. Thank you, Paul, for all that you do.

Change in Magazine Subscriptions

JIM HUNTER

★ For decades the SPAC treasurer has received checks for renewals along with Sky & Telescope and Astronomy magazine subscriptions. Those checks require a trip to the bank and a written letter to the publishers to renew the subscriptions. This cost the club; a stamp, envelope and lots of time. It also creates a time delay for the double mailing, and high potential for errors.

In the past the publishers gave members a discount if the renewal came through the club. Now if you mention SPAC on your Sky & Telescope renewal, you will get the same discount. Kalmbach Publishing (Astronomy) has a website where you can renew online.

Since there is no savings to our members, we plan to discontinue this service. We will continue, for tradition sake, until the end of December.

The Astronomy magazine Renewal Key code is RCLUB069. Please use the link below to renew your subscription:

<http://subscribe.astronomy.com/ecare>

Outreach

JIM HUNTER

★ On October 10th and 11th, Scott & Dian Walsh, Greg & Liz Simpson, Wally & Ramona Vazquez and others attended the Pinellas Block Party and Solar Viewing. Patrons enjoyed music, good food and drinks, and of course excellent views of the Sun provided by our Outreach Club Members. The weather was good and a good time was had by all.



Pinellas Block Party

I set up about 8:00 PM at a shopping center on Dale Mabry for the International Observe the Moon night. I'm a glutton for the bright lights. Since my patrons were planning on observing pizzas, the Moon was a "cool" alternative. By 10PM, I had had about 50 people in line, many who had never viewed through a scope. We had almost uninterrupted viewing of the Moon and Saturn. It was a very good event for people not expecting an astronomy evening.

Several of our members set up at the Science Center to take part in the International Observe the Moon night. The weather was perfect and both members and non-members enjoyed the venue. Shirley Vuille passed out flyers with a moon map, with info and pictures of the more interesting selected lunar features viewable that night.



Science Center presentation of the International Observe the Moon Night.

Here are the events we have scheduled so far:

Nov 2 - Eisenhower Elem. 2800 Drew, Clearwater. Reading under the stars - It's a full moon - 3rd year.

Nov 18 - Forest Lakes Elem - 301 Pine Ave S, Oldsmar - 4th year

Nov 19 - Jimmie Keel Library - Bearss Ave - N Tampa

Jan 9 - Brooker Creek - 3940 Keystone Rd Tarpon Springs - 2nd year.

Jan 19 - Canterbury School - 990 62nd Ave NE St Pete - New

Feb 18 - Stewart Middle - 1125 Spruce - Tampa - 4th year.

Please contact me if you can help with any of these events.

Book Review

JIM HUNTER

I just finished a delightful read, *Interstellar Age* by Jim Bell, former head of Planetary Society and professor at ASU and Cornell.

It is the 40 year story of the Voyager Missions (I & II). It is not a technical tome but highlights all the major discoveries.

It has a lot of explanations of the problems relating to 40 year old technology - such as tape drives as back up.

November Astronomical Events

STEVE ROBBINS

★ Tuesday, November 3rd, Venus can be found .7° north of Mars.

Thursday, November 5th marks the Southern Taurid meteor shower with a ZHR of about 10.

On November 6th look for Jupiter 2.5° north of the Moon.

On November 7th Venus will be 1.4° north and Mars, and 2° north of the Moon.

On November 12th comes the Northern Taurid meteor shower with a ZHR of about 15. Not worth mentioning except for the dark moon.

November 17th marks the Leonid meteor shower with a ZHR of 15.

November 26th look for Aldebaran .7° south of a nearly full moon.

And on November 29th Spica will be 4.2° north of Venus.

November's Full Moon is the Full Beaver Moon. Get those beaver traps set before the beaver ponds freeze over!

The Moon

- Third Quarter - 11/03, 07:23
- New Moon - November 11, 12:47
- First Quarter - November 19, 01:27
- Full Moon - November 25, 17:44

Learn to Use Your Telescope Observing Night

SHIRLEY VUILLE

★ Bring your telescope and all of its parts, its accessories, and an appropriate battery for your scope if it needs power. Also, if you are very unfamiliar with your scope, bring the telescope's manual as well. The event will

be held in the grass field at the Science Center on Saturday, October 17. Setup time for this month will be about 6:30 PM because sunset that evening is just before 7pm. This will allow time to learn tripod placement, telescope-tripod assembly, finder alignment, scope adjustments, and get familiar with procedures before it gets dark.

This event is scheduled monthly on the Saturday that falls closest to the first quarter moon. It is free and open to the public. Owning a telescope is not necessary. Anyone is welcome to come and look through our telescopes and see the wonders of the night sky.

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

Mirror Lab

★ We had six mirrors that were recently finished or ready to be recoated so we made a run over to Spectrum Coatings in Deltona. Paul at Spectrum applies a real nice coating and is friendly to the ATM community. Ron recently refigured a Dall-Kirkham mirror that was donated to the lab several years ago. I'm looking forward to see how it came out when he gets it all put back together. Greg Simpson had a new telescope kit built around the 8 inch mirror he did at the lab several years ago. He got it from Dennis Steele of DobStuff and it came out real nice. More pictures on the mirror lab web page at: www.telescopelab.com, on Mike Davis's web page at: www.mdpub.com, and also on Allen Maroney's web page: www.knology.net/amaroney.

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

RALPH CRAIG



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.



Greg's Rebuilt Dob

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. \$599. Excellent condition.

Contact Scott Walsh at (727) 378-4355 or sawmann55@yahoo.com.

Steve Robins has a Coulter 17.5" mirror set, never used for \$700. You may contact him at Steve_Robbins@cfl.rr.com or (386) 736-9123.

American Astronomical Society

The winter meeting of the American Astronomical Society will be held in Kissimmee, Florida from Monday, 1/4/16 through Friday 1/8/16. Members might be interested in volunteering if they have some free time. Those who volunteer for 16 or more hours are granted full registration privileges.

<http://aas.org/meetings/aas227/volunteer>



Dark of the Moon weekend for October

KELLY ANDERSON

★ I told ya! I said last month that the DOTM for October was guaranteed to have better seeing, and it was so! Thursday night was clouded over, but the wee hours improved considerably. About 4:30 the skies were clear except for a high, thin overcast. Here's one of the images I was able to capture before the sun brought everything to a halt.



Andromeda Galaxy by Kelly Anderson

The Andromeda Galaxy played peek-a-boo behind occasional clouds, but I managed to grab the occasional photon from our galactic neighbor. Not the greatest image, but then, neither am I.

The thin crescent of the moon rose about 5:30, and stacked above were Mars, Jupiter, and Venus. Wow! What a sight! Venus looked like an airplane's landing light pointed right at me.

By the time Friday evening rolled around we had a pretty good crowd. Bill & Nancy Huff, Joe & Penny Canzoneri, Chris Curran & Melanie

McGruder, Jack Fritz, Allen & Betty Force, Dave & Mina Swan, Ron & Elizabeth Ward, Franklin Matos, and I made our Dark Site a small village. The Jones Boys (David, Bryan and Ethan) came out to try Bryan's new Newtonian.

And what a treat for first light on a new scope ... Saturday night was amazing! After a short, mild rain shower mid-afternoon, the clouds decided elsewhere was where they'd go and we had a beautiful, deep blue sky. That night was the best seeing we've had since OBS! It was still fairly humid so the atmosphere was a little murky, but what a great evening of observing we had. And wonder of wonders, I actually got PHD to work! I get goose bumps thinking about it.

Our next New Moon weekend will be November 6-8. With temperatures moving down into the comfortable range and skies clearing, you'll be hard pressed to find a funner place to be. Even if you don't want to camp out, we're only an hour from the Tampa Bay area, so come out for an evening. Telescopes optional ... fun is mandatory.

November Auction

Here are some of the items that will be up for sale at our November General Meeting:



Orion Newtonian



Celestron Nexstar



Meade SCT

NASA News

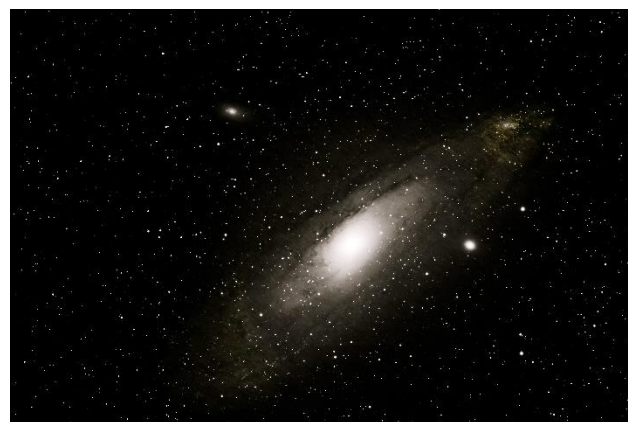
While Dawn orbits Ceres at an altitude of 950 miles taking as many as [6 full photographic surveys of the dwarf planet](#), scientists have just finished assembling the all-world map from its previous high orbital perch. Once this survey is over, Dawn will descend to its final orbit only 230 miles above the surface.

New Horizons sends data back at an even slower rate. We are less than halfway to seeing all the photos of the flyby [and it will be well into 2016 before we see them all](#). The most surprising thing discovered so far is atmospheric. Pluto's atmosphere is about three times as thick as predicted and photos taken from the dark side show a blue sky! Did anyone predict a blue sky on Pluto?

Rosetta scientists have been looking for definitive evidence of the mechanism that produced Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko's rubber ducky shape. Now they confidently say that they have solid evidence that this comet [resulted from the collision of two smaller comets at slow speed](#), which adhered to each other to form the shape we wonder at today. This was determined by seeing that the layers of material in the comet are concentric to the two separate centers of the original comets and not layered uniformly over the entire shape.

Astrophotography

Here's a shot taken by Joe Canzoneri from his back yard in Thonotosassa.



Joe's M-31

SPAC Business Meeting

The Business Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting is Wednesday, November 11th, 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
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Dir.-at-Large:	Allen Maroney	727 867-4781
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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
Tommy & Amy Ming	Benefactor
Alexie & Yanira Velez	Patron
Gustav J. Waffan	Patron
Joe Ortiz-Bradley	Patron
Lindsey & Yanira McKeown	Patron
Matt Labadie	Patron
Robert Myers	Patron
Robert & Debora Csere	Patron
Ruggero & Carla Santilli	Patron
Thomas Tobin	Patron

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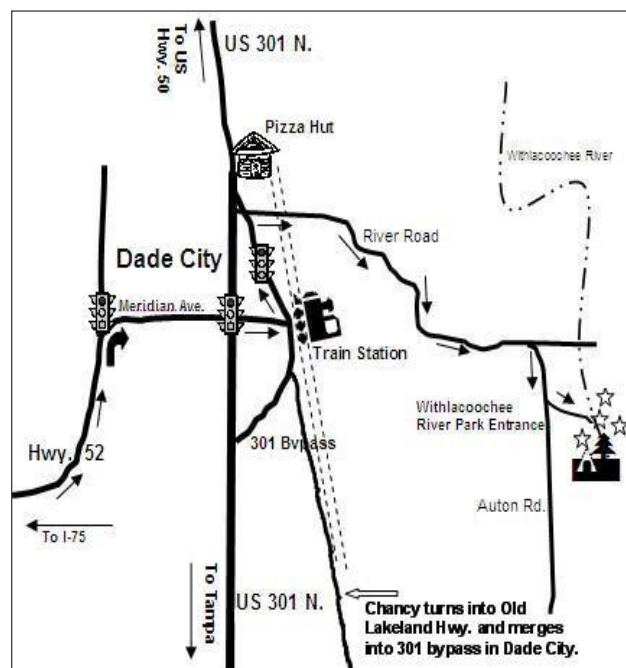
Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend (Cont.)

Our next New Moon Weekend falls on November 6th and 7th.

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.



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.