

March 2017 Editor - Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 286 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 lectures, astronomy lectures, educational outreach sessions and much more.

President's Message

KYLE BRINKMAN

Did you see the recent movie Hidden Figures? It is about a group of women of color in the 1960s who did manual calculations in support of the Apollo program. I haven't had the opportunity yet, but am looking forward to



seeing the movie. Isn't it heartwarming to hear about the success of people who overcome challenges to achieve greatness. America loves the underdogs.

Good science discovers blunt facts. The Earth is round, gravity keeps us on it and keeps the Earth orbiting the Sun. That is an example of a blunt fact. It doesn't matter who says it or what their political leanings are. It happens to be true for everyone. The inclusiveness and merits of ideas are some of the wonderful things about real science.

One thing that is central to our club is the promotion of science education. In fact, it is in our club's mission statement. Saturday, April 22nd there will be marches for science all across the US, including Tampa and St Petersburg. Our club has an interest in public policies that promote scientific endeavors. Many of our speakers work for the university

system which relies on public funding of research grants. NASA is a great resource for amateur astronomy through its public outreach programs. Our home, the Science Center, also receives funding through grants in addition to corporate partners and private donations. Public policy that supports science directly enriches our club experience.

Our club members are advocates of science through our programs and outreach. If you decide to march, do it to promote the worthwhile pursuit of science. Our club will be here all year round promoting astronomy. Keep looking up!

New Members

We would like to welcome Cliff Whitty & Wayne Gabb, Chad & Amber Thompson, Mark & Sharon Bruns, Quin Tutor, Kyle Denny, Colin Davis, Shelbie Lindsay, Samuel Guimaraes, Nicholas Sustek, and Bill Marois to our family of members.

General Meeting

This month's general meeting will take place on Friday, March 24th, at 8:00 PM, at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22nd Ave. N, St. Petersburg.

Main Program

Dedication of Glackin Solar Scopes Winter Star Party - John O'Neill Forensic Evidence For Planet 9 -Shirley Vuille

Upcoming Programs

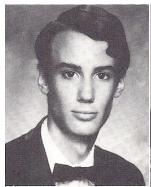
March 25th - Spring Picnic at Withlacoochee. Please refer to the SPAC calendar on the website.

Remembering David Glackin

David "Dave" Glackin came to SPAC as a young man in the late 1960s interested in the wonders of astronomy. These Lakewood High School Yearbook photos show the high regard he



had from his peers who knew he would be destined for great things in the field of astronomy.





Lakewood High Yearbook Photos

He credited his first-place win in the Florida Science Fair (Ionosphere Project) and subsequent scholarship to attend Cal Tech in 1970 to The Science Center, The SPA Club, and to his best friend Richard Burke, among others in their group. Dave passed away on March 3, 2012, in California. He was an accomplished Astrophysicist, Solar Astronomer, Remote-Imaging Processing Specialist, and author of audiophile, jazz, Le Mans racing, and technical articles and books. He loved to travel and observe solar and celestial events.

His hard work earned a BS in Astronomy from the Cal Tech and a Masters in Astrogeophysics from the University of Colorado. His career highlights include a long career as a Senior Engineering Specialist at the Aerospace Corporation, teaching at UCLA, working for the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. He worked at the Sacramento Peak Observatory and the Big Bear Solar Observatory.

Dave is survived by his wife Kathryn, his sister Gayle Nance and his brother Artie Glackin. His family has made a donation to SPAC in remembrance of Dave for two Lunt Solar Prominence telescopes. Dave's love of solar astronomy will be shared through our public outreach program to school children and other daytime outreach events.

Dave received his early inspiration in part from our club. He achieved a career full of accomplishments that enriched the sciences. We are encouraged to continue our public outreach with the hope of reaching the next David Glackin who is out there waiting in our community.

Spring Picnic at Withlacoochee River Park

Please remember our spring picnic is March 25th, the Saturday following the general meeting. It begins a 3:00 PM and ends with an evening star party. Bring a covered dish, your appetite, and your telescope. The club will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, condiments, and tableware.

Outreach

JIM HUNTER

Scott & Diane Walsh and Liz & Greg Simpson hosted a star party at Bauder Elementary Science Fair Expo on February 24th. Scott writes: "Our Outreach viewing started out with clear skies, but after an hour unpredicted low-level clouds arrived. Approx. 75 parents and children saw Venus. With no breaks in the clouds, we wrapped up at 8:00 PM."



Greg at Bauder Elementary

On Sunday, March 5th, Jack, Wally and I went to Canterbury School of Florida for the second time. Last year it was cold. This year it was windy and cloudy. They had about 40-50 viewers. We saw the Moon, Venus and a brief view of the Orion Nebula.

Then on Tuesday, March 7th, Jack, Tom, Wally and I went to Trinity Oaks Elementary for the first time. They had a big turnout – over 100, but it was mostly cloudy. The Moon and Venus were the only targets available, and they were in and out of clouds. Students, Parents, and Teachers all enjoyed it, and I will probably do a daytime solar system show.



Trinity Oaks Star Party

Gaither High in North Tampa is scheduled on April 21^{st,} and I will do a daytime presentation at Brooker Creek on June 3rd.

Have a great summer and thanks to all who helped.

April Astronomical Events

STEVE ROBBINS

Saturday, April 1st find Aldebaran .3° south of the Moon.

Friday, April 7th Regulus will be .8° north of the Moon. Jupiter is also at opposition, with the Earth. Interestingly, Jupiter's closest approach to Earth is on April 8th. Although Jupiter is sometimes called a failed star, it would take 80 Jupiter masses to have enough gravitational compression to support nuclear fusion.

Friday, April 14th Uranus is at conjunction, behind the Sun, at nearly its furthest distance from Earth. Of course, that means it culminates at noon, which promises poor observing.

Saturday, April 22nd is the peak of the Lyrid Meteor Shower, courtesy of Comet Thatcher, benefiting from a fine dark Moon night and a ZHR of about 20. The Lyrid Meteor Shower is usually a quick burst and the exact time is difficult to predict. If you catch the burst, you will be amply rewarded!

Friday, April 28th Aldebaran is again .5° south of the Moon.

April's full Moon is the Full Pink Moon. The first wildflowers to emerge are the pink phlox. Obviously, no one from Florida was naming these moons.

Moon Phases:

- > 3rd Moon at First Quarter
- > 11th Full Moon
- > 19th Moon at Third Quarter
- > 26th New Moon

Mirror Lab

We have a new grinder, Brad, who has ground his 10" mirror very quickly and is already in the polishing phase.



Devin got his mirror back from the coater and has been building his telescope.



Ralph helping with Devin's scope build

Allen, Paul, Dimitri, and Ron have also been "hogging out" some mirrors for the lab. They are 16", 14" X 2 and 12" mirrors. Jean-Paul is also coming over from Orlando to work on his 10" mirror every chance he can get.

Paul is holding soldering class for the dew heater controllers, designed by Allen.



Paul conducting soldering class

More pictures are on the mirror lab web page at www.telescopelab.com and Mike Davis's web page at www.mdpub.com, and also on Allen Maroney's web page www.knology.net/amaroney.

February Dark of the Moon

KELLY ANDERSON

We had a pretty good weekend this month with lots of folks showing up to enjoy some clear skies (finally!).

Joe Canzoneri, George Raab, and I showed up on Thursday, hoping to extend the weekend for what was promised by local TV weather people to be free of clouds. The clouds did start breaking up in the afternoon, but after sunset, they returned. As always, we were optimistic about the next night.

On Friday Jack Fritz, Bill and Nancy Huff, Franklin Matos, Jeff and Jackie Tobergte, Mike Partain, and Mark Bruns joined the crowd. Jack and I drove to the General Membership Meeting, where we presented a video field report on OBS 2017. A few minutes after we arrived back at the dark site, the clouds went away. We enjoyed good seeing well into the wee hours.

The daytime weather was delightful all weekend, warm temperatures with a stiff breeze to keep us comfortable. Perfect weather for hiking, kayaking, or (my personal favorite) sitting in the shade outdoors and swapping lies with the neighbors.

Mark & Jaqueline Grossman joined us for Saturday night, which was very clear, but also very wet. We also had five members of the USF Astronomy Club visit for the evening, along with a goodly gaggle of friends and spouses. It was a very nice astronomy party. Seeing was good to excellent. Everyone enjoyed the astronomy and the camaraderie. Good viewing and good company is a great combination.

SPAC Business Meeting



Our next meeting is Wednesday, April 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.

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President:	Kyle Brinkman	727 455-6931
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Recognition of Patrons & Benefactors:

Click on the name to send email

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Editor	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
Assistant Editor	Nancy Huff	813 621-3606
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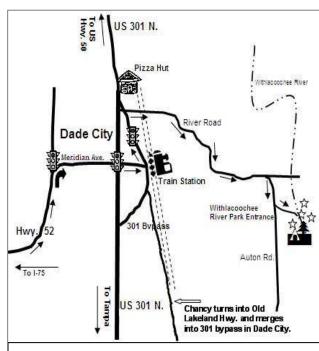
Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend

Our next New Moon Weekend falls on March 24^{th} and 25^{th} .

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 (<i>Under 18</i>):		
Address: _			City: S	St	Zip:
E-Mail add	dress	:	Newsletter Preference: Ema	il[]	US Mail [] \$25
Single:	[]	\$ 30.00/YR.	Includes one adult, minor children, the "SPACE" newsletter, and a leges of membership.	ll the ri	ghts and privi-
Family:	[]	\$ 35.00/YR.	Includes two adults, minor children and the above rights and privile	eges.	
Patron:	[]	\$ 50.00/YR.	A Patron member is entitled to the above rights and privileges.		
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US Mail:	[]	\$ 25.00/YR.	Please include \$25 if you choose to have the newsletter via US Ma	il.	