

July 2016 Editor - Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 299 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.

## <u>President's Message</u>

KYLE BRINKMAN

There are many reasons to be grateful for living in the USA. Among those reasons is our investment in education, research and exploration. People come from all over the world to study at our universities. The USA invests in



research of all kinds and has divisions devoted to exploration. No other nation on earth has made the scientific advances that match what the US has been able to accomplish. That source of inspiration we find on our flag.

Why did Betsy Ross use stars to represent states on the American flag? She could have used squares, circles, or even a six pointed star as was found on an old draft design of the flag. The answer may be a surprise. We know that one star represents each state. George Washington was quoted as saying, "Let the 13 stars in a circle stand as a new constellation in the heavens." It is quotes like this that tell us the stars were chosen for their inspirational value. Other sources indicate that the flag design was modified version of George Washington's coat of arms which was a white shield with two red bars below three

red stars. I prefer the more aspirational version.

With all the ugliness around us in the world today there is a need for something pure, peaceful and beautiful. That is just not easily found on the ground. I believe that is why our group of astronomers is growing. Keep looking up.

#### New Members

We would like to welcome Gayle & Tim Nance to our family of members.

#### General Meeting

This month's meeting will take place on Friday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00 PM, at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N, St. Petersburg, FL.

### **Upcoming Programs**

August - Exoplanets, by Dr. Simon Schuler, University of Tampa.

**September** - TBD, Dr. Kevin MacKay, University of South Florida.

# 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 cancellation 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

KYLE BRINKMAN

This month I'd like to point out the contributions of Kelly Anderson. Kelly is a regular at all club events so many of you will come across him one way or another. He has also been a presenter at our monthly meetings. He participates in, and sometimes organizes, public viewings. He is on our OBS committee, helping making that annual star party the successful event that it is. You may find Kelly at a new moon weekend trying out a new gizmo. Kelly is a reliable volunteer who helps wherever he is needed.

Thank you Kelly, for all that you do.

### July Astronomical Events

STEVE ROBBINS

Thursday, August 4th Mercury will be .6° north of the Moon.

Friday, August 5<sup>th</sup> Regulus will be 1° north of Venus and Jupiter will be .2° north of the Moon.

Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> is the peak of the Perseid Meteor Shower with a very dependable ZHR of about 90. This one is always worth watching. Early watching will be inhibited by the waxing gibbous Moon. After moonset at 01:22 you have a green light for fireballs.

Tuesday, the  $11^{th}$ , Mercury will be at greatest eastern elongation from the Sun,  $27.4^{\circ}$ .

On Wednesday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, Mars puts on a show with its stellar twin, Antares 1.8° to the north and Saturn 4.3° to the north.

Thursday, August  $25^{th}$  find Aldebaran .2° south of the Moon.

August's full Moon is the Full Sturgeon Moon for the sturgeon, which were an important food source for Native American tribes.

#### The Moon

- New Moon August 2, 04:44 EDT
- First Quarter August 10, 02:20 EDT
- Full Moon August 18, 05:26 EDT
- Third Quarter August 24, 11:40 EDT

## Mirror Lab

RALPH CRAIG

Devon has started figuring his 10" mirror and has it close to being finished. I don't think he will have it



done for the Stellafane Convention in Vermont which is being held from August 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> this year. Mike has been experimenting with slumping thick 12.5" Pyrex mirror blanks in his kiln to turn them into thinner 14" blanks. Ron has been refiguring somebody's 10" f 4.5 mirror to bring it up to mirror lab quality.

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.

#### New Moon at Withlacoochee

KELLY ANDERSON

Between hot weather, and vacations, this month's New Moor Weekend was a complete bust. No one showed up.

## SPAC Business Meeting



The Business Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting is Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 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

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### Recognition of Patrons & Benefactors:

Click on the name to send email

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## Examiner Staff

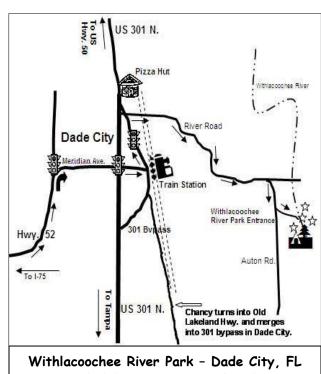
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### Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend

Our next New Moon Weekend falls on July  $29^{th}$  and  $30^{th}$ .

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:			Telepl	Telephone Number:			
Spouse:			Children ( <i>Under 18</i> ):				
Address: _			City:		St	Zip:	
E-Mail add	ress	<b>:</b>	Newslett	er 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.				
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