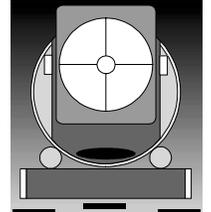


STARLITE



The Official Publication of the Peoria Astronomical Society, Inc.

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September 2003

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Mars Mania!

Mars is a place of rock, dust and dreams. Tonight it comes closer to Earth than it has been in more than 60,000 years. It will be only 34 million miles from Earth, a mere stone's throw, astronomically speaking. The last time Mars was this close to Earth was September 12, 57617 B.C.

Tonight, and the rest of this week, is the time to catch this celestial show. Mars will not come this close to Earth again until Aug. 28, 2287.

While the dust and rocks portion — which people can see quite well with the aid of a telescope — has captured the public's attention, Mars' close approach has also captured the public's imagination.

Jeff Pittenger is a member of the Peoria Astronomical Society, which owns and operates the NorthMoor Observatory on Leo Donovan Golf Course.

Pittenger, a Morton resident, has been making the drive to North Peoria regularly on Saturday evenings for weeks now to work and just share in the fun as people flock to the observa-

tory to see the "Red Planet".

The evening of Aug. 9, as he worked on the observatory's large scope, Pittenger said he was having fun. "It's nice to see so many people. They are a diverse group, but share a common interest."

Enthusiasts

Mars enthusiasts of all types flocked to the observatory in recent weeks.

Since Aug. 9, the *Times Newspapers* have made frequent trips to the observatory. One thing has come through clearly from those there — ranging from 5-years-old to adults — enthusiasm.

Those gathered at the observatory on Aug. 9 received a double treat. They got to view Mars, whose southern polar ice cap was visible, and heading outside they were able to view the International Space Station flying overhead with the unaided eye.

Marie Prokuski, of North Peoria, and her son Christopher, 5, were among those out-

(Continued on page 10)

2nd Annual PAS/TCAA Star Party

By Rich Tennis

It was another typical clear, dry (low dew-point), and dark-sky star-party attended by members of three astronomy clubs in the area, PAS, TCAA, and SAS. The hosts for the 2nd annual PAS/TCAA Star Party were Paul and Jenny Hahn, owners of the Mackinaw Valley Vineyard, east of Mackinaw on Route 9. Many were heard to say that they would come back with their wife during the day to see the expansive southern view and enjoy a fine bottle of wine with cheese. (Mackinaw Valley Vineyard is open Friday – Sunday from noon to 6:00 p. m.) Rich Tennis, PAS Light Control Committee chairperson, and Sandy McNamara, past president of TCAA, were the organizers of the event.

Everyone was waiting for the traditional kick-off event of the star-party...a bright and glorious aurora borealis...

(Continued on page 8)

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Needles from the Hay Stack

by Scott Hay



I certainly had no idea what I was getting myself into when I took on this responsibility one year ago. I had heard that to be a good leader, you have to give people what they need to do their jobs. As I actually got involved with so many different areas of the group and attempted to provide support, I began to appreciate much more fully just what my predecessors were able to accomplish. We had so many things going on with controlling light pollution, renovating the Decker-Grebner-Van Zandt Observatories, etc.

I personally want to say thanks to all those who attended the board meetings and helped kick around a few ideas. I've always enjoyed the humorous comments at those meetings and I have to tip my hat to those folks for all they have done. I've received some excellent advise from all of you.

What I would like to do is help

ease the burden of our next president by heading a committee to restore NorthMoor Observatory. In the past, a president kind of ended up with this in their lap along with everything else.

Thanks to members and concerned citizens who have gifted, We've seen our NorthMoor restoration fund grow from just over \$400 to almost \$22,000.00 in cash and approximately \$8000.00 worth of in-kind donations, such as the Peoria Park District agreeing to remove the old dome at their cost.

Some folks really gave until it hurt. For example, Jim Kelly, who now lives in Chicago, totally surprised us when he sent checks to us last year and this year for \$2,000.00 each, both of which were matched by his employer, Zurich Insurance, making his contributions worth \$8,000.00!. Tony Stolin is another member who has been very generous and maxed out his Caterpillar matching gift benefit. I know I am leaving folks out because the only one who has a list of contributors is the treasurer.

Thanks to all who stepped up and helped bring Mars to the public by volunteering at NorthMoor. I opened up a night early and had

60-80 people show up. The next night there was an estimated 1000 people lined up to see Mars.

I am very pleased that Nerio Calgaro has agreed to chair our education committee. Nerio teaches science at East Peoria High School. He has a Physics degree and a Masters in Education and has ran the ISU planetarium. He would like to build an observatory at the high school.

I look forward to seeing all of you under clear dark skies soon.

Take care.

-Scott 🌟

*...help ease
the burden
of our next
president...*

Light

Poetry by Bernice Prill Grebner

Superior Light

— Plus —

Superior Sight

— gives —

Special Delight

— so —

Hang Tight

Give it all your might

And develop your own spiritual kite.



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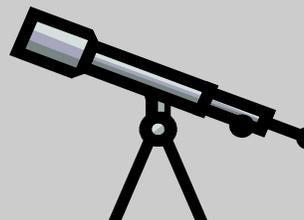
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PeoriaAstro@yahoogroups.com

compiled by Jeff Pittenger

Here are some highlights from the Peoria Astronomical Society's e-mail group. If you are an active member of the PAS and would like to subscribe to PeoriaAstro, send an e-mail message to Michael Frasca <frasca@uic.edu> with the following information: name, snail-mail address, and e-mail address. You will be added to the group.

@ @ @
From: "SUSAN ROSE" <suerose@o...>
To: <sunshine92@i...>
Sent: Sunday, June 08, 2003 11:44 PM
Subject: Request

I sent this to John Barra's e-mail as listed on the site but it got returned. Your society's web site is outstanding. Congratulations to all involved. I especially enjoyed your articles. I am in the process of putting together a Welcome Package for our new members and your work would fit in very nicely. I would like your permission to include them, with credit of course, and some other info from the site. Thanks.

Sue Rose, President
Amateur Observers' Society of NY
www.aosny.org

@ @ @
From: <heyhay@b...>
Date: Wed Jun 18, 2003 8:02 am
Subject: another extremely large scale model of the solar system takes shape.
<http://www.cnn.com/2003/TECH/space/06/07/solar.system.road/index.html>
Here's another scale model of the solar system similar in size to Lakeview's model. (<http://www.lakeview-museum.org>) Could it eventually be bigger? Sheldon Schafer, Thanks again for providing a great attraction. I am impressed with the way your World's Largest Complete Scale Model of the Solar System and others like it begin to help us to visualize how vast the real solar system really is. Thanks Eric Clifton for calling my attention to this link.
-Scott Hay

@ @ @
From: Timothy J Lester <katlester@j...>
Date: Wed Jul 9, 2003 5:57 am
Subject: Software used in July Meeting
Here are the names and links to the software websites for each of programs that I demonstrated at the monthly meeting. If you have any questions let me know.
Tim Lester

Virtual Moon Atlas Version 1.6 - www.astrosurf.com/avl
Ephemeris Tool Version 4.5310 - <http://virtualsekysoft.de/asappsen.htm>
Ephemeris Calculator Version 1.1.3.0 - <http://www.gordion-is.cz/astro/>

Stig's Sky Calendar Version 1.10 - <http://www.skycalendar.com/skycal/index.html>
Cartes du Ciel Version 2.75 - <http://www.astrosurf.com/astrocp/cartes/index.html>
TheSky Version 5.00.100 Level IV - <http://www.bisque.com/Products/TheSky/TheSky.asp>
The website that list's a large number of programs for various operating systems:
www.physics.sfasu.edu/astro/software.html

@ @ @
From: Dave Grebner <dgrebner@l...>
Date: Tue Jul 29, 2003 9:15 am
Subject: Lighting
Rich Tennis,

I have checked the darksky web site but have not found any information on actual price for a sample full-cut-off light versus a regular light, and how long it would take to recoup the extra cost. Can you help me out?
--Dave Grebner



@ @ @
From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
Date: Wed Jul 30, 2003 7:21 pm
Subject: program
Here is a program I found that people using their computer at night outside and wanting to keep your screen dim. DarkAdapted is a gamma control application program. It modifies your screen gamma settings so that you may, for example, preserve your dark adaptation while using your computer. <http://www.adpartnership.net/DarkAdapted/>

@ @ @
From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
Date: Sun Aug 3, 2003 8:43 pm
Subject: computer programs
here's a nice site with a long list of software. <http://www.stargazing.net/AstroTips/english/cartography.html>

@ @ @
From: Tim McGrath <astropunk_2000@y...>
Date: Sat Aug 9, 2003 8:53 am
Subject: Who's going to Astofest?? anyone...anyone...Bueller?? I sent in my registration for the SAS star party in Spring-

field, and I dont know if I should also send in my Astofest registration. So who amongst you are going to Astofest?
Tim

@ @ @
From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
Date: Mon Aug 11, 2003 7:41 am
Subject: T-Shirts
They have arrived !!! Thanks for the patience, the price is \$12 each and add \$2 more for the XXL if you ordered them. I will contact the group later this week, I would like to be at NorthMoor Observatory for those wishing to get them. You can also call me at 698-8611 at night or 224-9150 during the day.

@ @ @
From: <heyhay@b...>
Date: Mon Aug 11, 2003 9:06 am
Subject: Re: [PeoriaAstro] T-Shirts
Is there a demand for more T-Shirts of a different design? Lakeview Museum has 150 Tshirts with a colorful, attractive astronomy design on front. They can be purchased at cost (If memory serves, approx. \$8 each), and PAS could add a single color design and/or wording to the blank back of the shirt for approx. 75 cents each. A smaller crest design or wording might even be added to the front left pectoral area if desired. (This would also help bail out the museum, which would be a nice thing to do, provided there is a demand.) The question is: 1)Is there a demand for more shirts? 2)If yes, does someone want to serve on a committee to hash out the details?
-Scott Hay

@ @ @
From: Sheldon Schafer <sschafer@l...>
Date: Tue Aug 12, 2003 9:19 am
Subject: Re: T-shirts
To follow up on Scott's note, the wholesale price is just \$6, and although there are 71 which haven't been imprinted, any number less than that are available. The .75/shirt to imprint is the price we get from Parr Silk-screen in Chillicothe for one color, one side imprinting.
Sheldon Schafer, V.P. of Education
Lakeview Museum of Arts & Sciences
www.lakeview-museum.org
www.lakeview-museum.org/iplanet/iplanet.html

@ @ @
From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
Date: Mon Aug 18, 2003 3:40 pm
Subject: Fw: High resolution ISS sun transit video from Switzerland
This is so cool!
Roland Stalder has made a remarkably detailed video of a solar transit by the ISS this past Saturday, August 16. <http://iss-transit.sourceforge.net/subscribers/RolandStalder.html>. I'd tried to observe the transit in South Carolina, 3 orbits after Roland saw it in Switzerland, but there was a big cloud in the way!

(Continued on page 11)

Of Starlites Past

by John Barra

40 YEARS AGO September Newsletter 1963

“ ‘KEY CLUB’ Smiles lit up the faces of Bruce Brown, Eric Clifton, and Terry Pitzen as they walked from the observatory to the parking lot as new keyholders of the

NorthMoor Observatory....Let’s all join together to give these three new keyholders our hearty congratulations.”

If you’re are interested in becoming a keyholder to the North Moor Observatory, please contact Bill Cole. He will give you the lessons necessary. Now that we know when Eric first got his we assume that the “key” will be good for at least 40 years--assuming you do your duty at the assigned observatory sessions

“The time is set, and the annual event is almost upon us. The 1963 Star Party will be held in the same manners as the star parties have been in the past. Visitors will be taken on a ‘tour’ of the universe with the aid of the observatory telescopes and many others brought out by members.”

While we don’t have an annual star party anymore, we try to have some sort of a star party any new moon weekend or when some group or club wants to visit one of our observatories. And we can always use extra help and telescope for people to use.☼



25 YEARS AGO September Starlite 1978

“KEYHOLDERS’ TRAINING....Remember, its easy to learn how; just make a date with a current Keyholder. Take as much time for training as you need and then comes the hard part--Mike Hay will check you out and he is thorough and completely professional.”

Keyholder instruction, part two: If you want to become a keyholder at Jubilee, contact Tim McGrath. The procedure is about the same as it was 40 and 25 years ago, but we don’t make you get checked out by Mike Hay anymore. (I’m not sure if that is for the benefit of the trainee or Mike.)

“FLASH!! On July 22, I received a phone call from Art (Grebner) with the startling announcement: THE 24-INCH MIRROR IS FINISHED!! AND IT IS CORRECTED TO 1/10 WAVE LENGTH! Congratulations and thanks from the Society, Art.—Editor.”

That sure must have been exciting time, probably one of the greatest moments in the history of the society. By the way Art (up among the stars somewhere), congratulations and thanks from the Society still are in order.☼



Astronomical Calendar

September 2003						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2003						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2003						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

- September 9*
Moon passes 1.2° N of Mars
- September 10*
Full Moon
- September 13*
PAS Annual Banquet/
PAS Board Meeting , 5:30 p.m.
The Woodcutter—Lake of the
Woods Shopping Center
- September 18*
Last Quarter Moon
- September 20*
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory
- September 23*
Autumnal Equinox
- September 25*
New Moon
- September 26*
Mercury is at greatest western
elongation (18°)

- September 27*
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory
- October 1*
PAS Members Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Lakeview Planetarium
- October 2*
First Quarter Moon
- October 10*
Full Moon
- October 13*
Asteroid Pallas is at opposition
- October 15*
PAS Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Northpoint Shopping Center Hardees
- October 18*
Last Quarter Moon
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

- October 22*
Orionid meteor shower peaks
- October 25*
New Moon
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory
- October 26*
Daylight Savings Time ends
- October 31*
First Quarter Moon
- November 5*
PAS Members Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Lakeview Planetarium
- November 8*
Total Lunar Eclipse 7:07 p.m.

(Continued on page 5)



The Bulletin Board

New Members

Welcome to:

Gary West
Bill Mattheessen

☺ ☺ ☺

Astronomy Class

Don Hill's Astronomy classes will be starting again very soon. The class is scheduled for Sunday nights from 7 - 9 p.m. Classes start October 5th and continue on the 12th, 19th, 26th, and November 2nd at NorthMoor.

See Glen Oak Park in the fall to sign-up.

☺ ☺ ☺

New Jubilee Keyholder

Mark Koonce has completed the Jubilee keyholder training, and has earned a key to the facility. Mark has accepted the responsibility of a keyholder and has met the requirements by showing his willingness to

Calendar...

(Continued from page 4)

November 15
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

November 16
Last Quarter Moon

November 18
Leonid meteor shower peaks

November 19
PAS Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Northpoint Shopping Center Har-dees

November 22
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

November 23
New Moon
Total Solar eclipse (Antarctica)

November 30
First Quarter Moon

help out with special events, regular maintenance, and attending work parties. Congratulations Mark!

If you wish to become Jubilee keyholder, contact Tim McGrath or Eric Clifton

☺ ☺ ☺

PAS Banquet

The Annual Peoria Astronomical Society Banquet will be held on September 13th at The Woodcutter located in Dunlap's Lake of the Woods Shopping Center. A generous room has been reserved for all PAS members. Appetizers will be served at 5:30 p.m. with dinner and program starting at 6:00 p.m.

Choices for dinner are Baked Ham or Fried Chicken and include individual house salads with a choice of two dressings; one choice of potato: oven baked, whipped with gravy, or AuGratin (\$1.50 extra); and mixed vegetables with non-alcoholic beverage.

The price is \$12.10 per person. Payment is expected when placing food choice. You can make out check to PAS. The price includes gratuity and tax. The Woodcutter requests that all dinner reservations be made to our coordinator no later than September 7th. Call or e-mail Dan Son (698-8611 or sunshine92@insightbb.com) with your selections and any questions

☺ ☺ ☺

Jubilee Schedule

September 6 G. Bussman, D. Kasel,
M. Shelton

September 13 B. Bill, C. Jeske,
S. Russell

September 20 B. Bechtold, G. Horst,
G. Neaveill

September 27 J. Barra, B. Herbst,
G. Mettlach

October 4 S. Hay, J. McElyea,
P. White

October 11 M. Hay, T. McGrath,
C. Criss

October 18 B. Hakes, T. Lester,
S. Thomas

October 25 S. Swords, C. Fleming,
E. Clifton

☺ ☺ ☺

Slate of Officers Set

by Jeff Pittenger

The following slate of officers was nominated to serve the Peoria Astronomical Society for the 2003-2004 term. They will be voted on at the PAS Annual Banquet on September 13, 2003.

President: Tim McGrath
Vice-President: John Barra
Treasurer: Mike Shelton
Secretary: Dan Son
Legal Agent and Parliamentarian:
Mike Hay
Nominating Chairman: Dan Son ☺



Monthly Program Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, meetings will be held in the Lakeview Museum Planetarium, with all programs beginning at 7:30 p.m.

September 3, 2003
Stephen Russell & Dan Son
Ophiuchus and star parties

October 1, 2003
TBA

November 5, 2003
Show and Tell

December 3, 2003
TBA

Can You Spot This?

Spiral Galaxy NGC 7331

by John Barra

Can You Spot This? *premiered in Starlite Issue #144, December 2000.*

NGC 7331 is a very interesting galaxy in Pegasus. However, it does take a little work to find. If you find it, and if you have a big scope, you may be able to see the nearby galaxy cluster known as Stephan's Quintet.

First you need to locate the easily identifiable four-star "square" of Pegasus shown in the naked-eye Chart 1. The top star of the square or diamond is the bright star Beta.

Above it is Eta, which is about the same magnitude. Put in a low power eyepiece and aim your Telrad or other finder at Eta.

Looking in your eyepiece, you should see the Y-shaped asterism of four stars including Eta. Compare this view with Chart 2. Identify the stars marked 1 and 2 in the chart. Now starhop from 1 to 2 and upward until you find the two stars, which are 38 Pegasi and the star I marked as 3. They should appear much brighter than the other field stars.

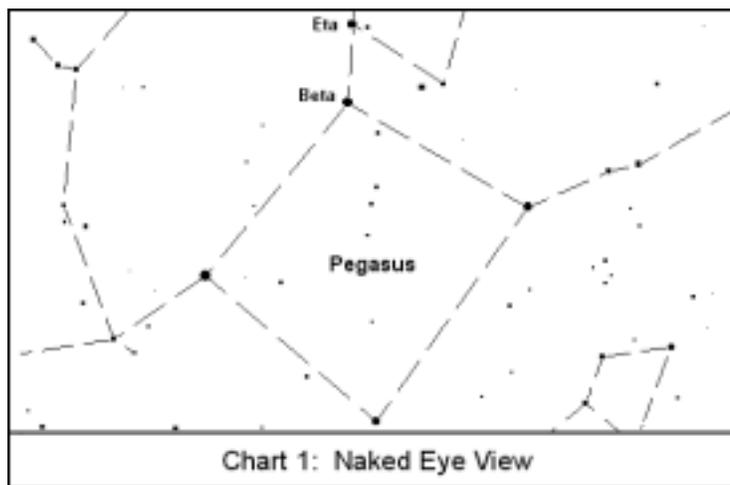


Chart 1: Naked Eye View

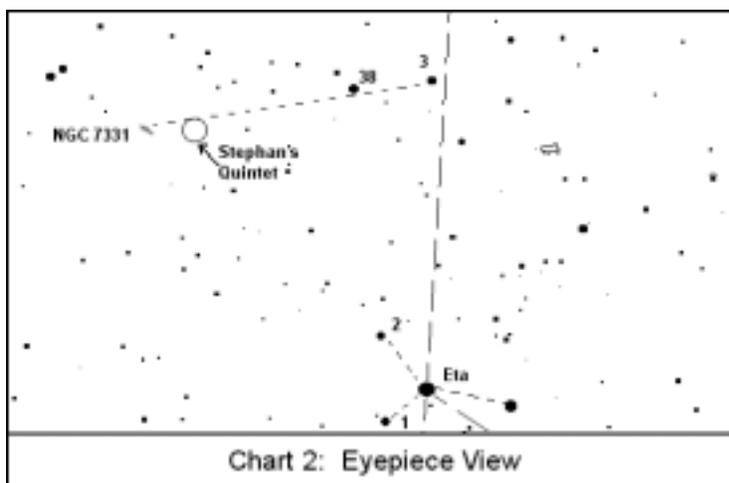


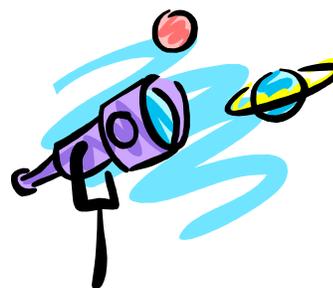
Chart 2: Eyepiece View

Now move your scope from 3 to 38 in the direction of our target galaxy. You may not be able to spot it at low power. However, you should be able to locate the pair of brighter stars shown in the upper left hand corner of the chart. Perpendicular to the two they are a wider pair of fainter stars that aim at 7331. You now need to put in a eyepiece with higher power or your favorite eyepiece that you use to spot galaxies. Follow the second pair and you should be able to see 7331.

NGC 7331 is a fairly large elongated galaxy that is fairly bright and should be easily viewed with dark skies and good seeing conditions. It also has a bright core and reminds me of a much smaller version of the Andromeda Galaxy.

Very nearby and back towards 38 and 1 is Stephan's Quintet, shown on Chart 2.

Each of the five are small and faint, around 13-13 1/2 magnitude. If you find 7331, you can also find where the quintet appears. However, you will need a very good and powerful scope to see them. So far, I have not been successful with my 12 1/2 dob.



OBJECT STATISTICS:

Name: NGC 7331
 Type: Spiral Galaxy
 Size: 10.5' x 3.7'
 Coordinates: 22 hr. 37.1 min.
 +34° 25'

...Reminds me of a much smaller version of the Andromeda Galaxy...



Minutes of the

Board of Directors

by Dan Son, PAS Secretary

Board meetings take place on the third Wednesday of the month. Those referenced below were held at the Hardee's of Willow Knolls Court in Peoria. Future PAS Board meetings will be held at the Hardee's of Northpoint Shopping Center in Peoria. Meetings start at 7:30 p.m.

May 21, 2003

Attendees: Calene Fleming, Mike Hay, Scott Hay, Scott Swords, Tim Lester, John Barra, Mike Shelton, Bill Cole, Jeff Pittenger, Mike Radigan and Dan Son.

Treasurer's Report: (Mike Shelton)
Mike presented the Treasurer's report (copies attached) for the month of April. Almost all members have paid their dues.

Committee Reports

Jubilee Observatory: (Tim McGrath)
No one is mowing.
Will consider putting Sakrete on driveway to help compact the gravel.

Northmoor Observatory: (Bill Cole)
The first night observing and we had around 20 people.
The Lunar Eclipse had 20 people come out.
During heavy rains the east wall leaks.

Northmoor Restoration: (Scott Hay)
Nothing

Observing Club: (John Barra)
Need to find a new Messier Marathon site for next year.

Program: (Dan Son)
June Demonstrating the Portal on the web site.
July Computer aided observing.

Starlite: (Jeff Pittenger)
Deadline for Starlite will be August board meeting.

Membership: (Scott Swords)
We have 1 new member, Jackie Buster.

Old Business:

We will hold off till future Board meeting for a Logo decision.
We should have advertised the lunar eclipse more (on radio, TV, Web site, etc.) for future reference.
We received a nice Proclamation from the Peoria City Council.

New Business:

Don Ware would like us to start paying for over usage charges with the web site. The amount is not known. No action was taken until more information can be obtained.
We will look at the web application form for ease of use & how clear it is to use the web site application form.
Received a letter from Andi Cristea from Romania asking for anything



astronomy related. Tim Lester made a motion to send him past Starlites. 2nd by Dan Son. Motion passed.
Concern was made about our books and magazines at Lakeview. We will look into doing an inventory.
We should start looking at Nomination Committee (get 2 members to help) & find out what positions will need new members.
Get a date for September Banquet.

June 18, 2003

Attendees: Calene Fleming, Mike Hay, Scott Hay, Scott Swords, Tim Lester, Tim McGrath, Mike Shelton, Bill Cole, Rich Tennis, Mike Radigan, Don Ware, Brandt Bechtold and Dan Son.

Treasurer's Report: (Mike

Shelton)
Mike presented the Treasurer's report (copies attached) for the month of May.
Talked about our insurance coverage on all properties. Will closely at our liability coverage and see if we need to increase this amount.
Will have a list of non-paying members next month

Committee Reports

Jubilee Observatory: (Tim McGrath)

June 20th is ICC class with 21st, 27th & 28th as rain dates.

JC Kline moved gravel around on the entrance and works great.
Thanks JC.

14 Inch: (Mike Shelton)

Eric Clifton and Tim McGrath have been working on the dome and will replace shutter doors.

24 Inch: (Tim McGrath)

Bird has been getting in dome and a hole will be plugged.

Northmoor Observatory: (Bill Cole)

Everything's running fine. We now have some color filters for Mars observing.

Starlite: (Jeff Pittenger)

Deadline for Starlite will be August board meeting.

Membership: (Scott Swords)

We have 2 new members, Gary West and William Mathessen.

www.astronomical.org:

(Mike Radigan)
Tim Lester also has administrator rights.

New Business:

PAS Banquet will be September 13th. Dan Son will call a few restaurants and get prices and report back. Thinking 40-50 people will attend.

Brandt Bechtold needs help on Friday June 20th with a 4H group out at Expo Gardens. Time is 9pm for about 1 to 1½ hours.

Don Ware made a motion that Northmoor Observatory be open for public viewing everyday from Aug. 23rd thru the 30th for special Mars viewing event. 2nd by Tim Lester. Motion passed.

(Continued on page 8)

Star Party....

(Continued from page 1)

nothing happened. Some scheduling problems with "Control Central" were blamed. However, there was a scheduled fly-over by the Hubble Sky Telescope, HST, at about 10:55 pm through the Constellation Lyra and northward. That scheduled fly-over was made, in part, by donations of the PAS, TCAA, and SAS taxpayers.

The big event was...no not the closeness of our nearest planet, Mars...the purchase of the products at the winery. Almost everyone got a taste of the award winning wines that were available in the completed tasting room. Some were even seen carrying brown-paper bags back to their cars. There was a fabulous deck that overlooks the broad southern horizon that was fairly dark in all directions (except for bright interstate highway lighting and the Twin Cities to the east).

The number of participants to the 2nd annual PAS/TCAA star-party, were down slightly from the first star-party, in part due to the helpers at the PAS NorthMoor Mars party (500+ attendees reported). Unofficial count at the star-party had about thirty-four attendees ranging from 8 months to over 60. By the sign-in sheet there were: 14 PAS members, 10 TCAA members and one Sangamon Astronomical Society member, Rick Branson of Lincoln, Illinois with his dog, Tasha. There were also 9 non-affiliated folks (mostly from the Hahn family and friends).

Telescopes ranged from a small 6 inch Astro-Physics refractor, thanks to Steve Russell, to a 16-inch Dobson, from TCAA's stock, manned by TCAA President Dan Meyer. Mike Sheldon

brought his \$2.00 80x refractor telescope, perhaps 50 mm aperture, but left it in the car so nobody would drool over it. There were about 12 telescopes up and running (about an even split between Dobs and Schmidt-Cassegrains and the lone AP) and a couple telescopes left in their owners' trunks. Last to leave were Jeff Pittenger at 5:00 a.m. and Steve Russell at 5:30 a.m. Mars was very clear at about 1:00 a.m. with some topography visible.

John Barra was able to knock-off some of his Herschel 400 objects during the night.

The evening was enjoyable with good conversation and viewing of the heavens taking place all during the evening.

The sky conditions were nearly perfect for Central Illinois in August.

The 3rd annual PAS/TCAA star-party is nearly set for August 2004 if it doesn't fall on the weekend of the Irish Festival in Peoria...a request of Mrs. Hahn. New moon weekends for August 2004 are either on the 14th or 21st with new moon on August 16th...strong preference leaning to the 14th. Does anyone know when the Peoria Irish Festival is scheduled in 2004?

Plans are being made for supernova to appear for our star-party viewing. ☛



Minutes....

(Continued from page 7)

July 16, 2003

Attendees: Calene Fleming, John Barra, Scott Hay, Scott Swords, Tim Lester, Tim McGrath, Eric Clifton, Bill Cole, Rich Tennis, Jeff Pittenger, Brian Hakes, Brandt Bechtold and Dan Son.

Treasurer's Report: (Mike Shelton)

Dan Son presented the Treasurer's

report (copies attached) for the month of June.

Have the Light Control Committee funds on a separate line

Committee Reports

Jubilee Observatory: (Tim McGrath)

No groups are scheduled

14 Inch: (Mike Shelton)

Side panels are done and work is starting on the shutter doors.

24 Inch: (Tim McGrath)

Birds beware, 1/2 of the baffle is up. Hope to finish it this weekend.

Light Pollution: (Rich Tennis)

Rich will be talking to Woodford County regional planning committee on Aug. 11th at 7:00 p.m.

Lakeview Planetarium had 174 persons attend the month long Dark Sky Show

Northmoor Observatory: (Bill Cole)

80+ people this past weekend

Replaced the light switch in the warm-up room

Bill has sent out information to the e-mail group looking for help during the Mars event

Observing Club: (John Barra)

Perseid Meteor shower peaks Aug 11 during the full moon

Mid-year Messier Marathon is in October, more news next month.

Starlite: (Jeff Pittenger)

Deadline for Starlite will be August 29th

Will increase copies of Starlite to 280.

www.astronomical.org: (Mike Radigan)

Mars event on the webpage.

Old Business:

Questionnaire will be mailed out to persons living along light pollution test site

Banquet dinner will be baked ham and fried chicken. Dan Son will have mailing ready by Aug members meeting and get mailing labels from Scott Swords.

Bike ride will have Chuck & Diane Lamb at Kewanee and Dan Son at Wyoming. Scott Swords & Calene Fleming will have scopes at the Wyoming site. The date is Aug.

9th ☛

Common Names of Popular Celestial Objects

By Tim McGrath

I put together a list of objects with common names, and their designated catalog numbers. This is the list I was referring to last Saturday night when someone

wanted to know the NGC number of the Helix nebula or Veil. I pulled them out the database for a program I like called Earth Centered Universe (ECU).☛

47 Tucanae	NGC104	Little Dumbbell Nebula	M76
Alcyone Nebula	vdB23	Little Gem	NGC6818
Andromeda Galaxy	M31	Little Ghost	NGC6369
Antennae	NGC4038	Lower's Nebula	Sh2-261
Apple Core Nebula	M27	Medusa Nebula	ABELL21
Atlas Nebula	Ced19o	Merope Nebula	NGC1435
Barbell Nebula	M76	Nanette's River	SAO3570
Barnard's Galaxy	NGC6822	North American Nebula	NGC7000
Barnard's Loop	Sh2-276	Omega Nebula	M17
Bear Paw Galaxy	NGC2537	Omega Centaurus Cluster	NGC5139
Beehive Cluster	M44	Orion Nebula	M42
Blackeye Galaxy	M64	Owl Cluster	NGC457
Blinking Planetary	NGC6826	Owl Nebula	M97
Blue Flash	NGC6905	Pancake Galaxy	NGC2685
Blue Snowball	NGC7662	Parrot's Head	B87
Bode's Galaxy	M81	Pelican Nebula	IC5070
Brocchi's Cluster	Cr399	Perseus A Galaxy	NGC1275
Bubble Nebula	NGC7635	Phantom Streak	NGC6741
Bug Nebula	NGC6302	Pinwheel Galaxy	M33
Butterfly Cluster	M6	Pipe Nebula	NGC1267
Butterfly Nebula	M76	Pleiades	M45
California Nebula	NGC1499	Pleione Nebula	Cep19p
Cat's Eye Nebula	NGC6543	Polarissima Australis	NGC2573
Cave Nebula	Sh2-155	Polarissima Borealis	NGC3172
CBS Eye	NGC3242	Praesepe	M44
Celaeno Nebula	Ced19c	Ptolemy's Cluster	M7
Centaurus A Galaxy	NGC5128	Ring Nebula	M57
Christmas Tree Cluster	NGC2264	Ringtail Galaxy	NGC4038
Christmas Tree Nebula	NGC2024	Rosette Nebula	NGC2244
Clown Face Nebula	NGC2392	Running Chicken Nebula	IC2944
Coal Sack	#12.85,-63	Running Man Nebula	NGC1977
Coathanger	Cr399	Saturn Nebula	NGC7009
Cocoon Nebula	IC5146	Sculptor Galaxy	NGC253
Cocoon Galaxy	NGC4485	Setfert's Sextet	NGC6027
Coddington's Galaxy	IC2574	Siamese Twins	NGC4567
Cone Nebula	NGC2264	Silver Coin Galaxy	NGC253
Cork Nebula	M76	Small Magallanic Cloud	#0.878,-
Crab Nebula	M1	72.816	
Crescent Nebula	NGC6888	Snake Dark Nebula	B72
Cygnus Loop	NGC6992	Sombrero Galaxy	M104
Dumbbell Nebula	M27	Sunflower Galaxy	M63
Double Cluster	#2.333,57.133	Spindle Galaxy	NGC3115
Diablo Nebula	M27	Star Queen Nebula	M16
Eagle Nebula	M16	Stephan's Quintet	NGC7318
Eight-Burst	NGC3132	Sterope Nebula	Ced19h
Electra Nebula	vdB20	Struve's Lost Nebula	NGC1554
Eskimo Planetary	NGC2392	Sunflower Galaxy	M63
Eta Carina Nebula	NGC3372	Swan Nebula	M17
Fish on a Platter	B144	Table of Scorpius	NGC6231
Flame Nebula	NGC2024	Tank Track Nebula	NGC2024
Flaming Star Nebula	IC405	Tarantula Nebula	NGC2070
Fornax A	NGC1316	Thor's Helmet	NGC2359
Ghost of Jupiter	NGC3242	Toby Jug Nebula	IC2220
H Persei	NGC869	Tom Thumb Cluster	NGC6451
Helix Nebula	NGC7293	Trapezium	M42
Helix Galaxy	NGC2685	Triangulum Galaxy	M33
Hercules Cluster	M13	Trifid Nebula	M20
Hind's Variable Nebula	NGC1555	Tuft in the Tail of the Dog	Cr140
Horsehead Nebula	B33	Veil Nebula (west)	NGC6960
Horseshoe Nebula	NGC6618	Veil Nebula (east)	NGC6992
Hubble's Variable Nebula	NGC2261	Virgo A Galaxy	M87
Hyades	Me125	Whirlpool Galaxy	M51
Inkspot	B86	Witch-Head Nebula	IC2118
Integral Sign Galaxy	UGC3697	Wild Duck Cluster	M11
Jewel Box	NGC4755	Winnecke 4	M40
Keyhole Nebula	NGC3372	White Eyed Pea	IC4593
Lagoon Nebula	M8	X Per	NGC884
Large Magellanic Cloud	#5.395,-69.75	Zeta Orionis Nebula	NGC2024
Leo Triplet	M66		

Mars Mania!...

(Continued from page 1)

side looking at the space station. Christopher had taken an interest in the stars, his mother said.

Christopher had a specific reason to look at Mars.

"I want to see Mars," the boy said. "I watched the movie, 'The Brave Little Toaster Goes To Mars.' I want to see if he's still there."

Christopher's mother smiled.

"We'll see honey," she said. "We're sharing this interest together, and we're having fun doing it. I've only seen Mars with the naked eye. This will be real nice to see."

Elizabeth Gray, of North Peoria, was also engrossed by the prospect of seeing Mars up close. Gray did not expect to see the Brave Little Toaster she did want to learn something that would spark an interest in the young about astronomy. Gray is a science teacher at the Peoria Academy.

"I want to teach astronomy in class. I came out here to learn. I'm staying tonight until I see it. (Mars) If I don't, I'm sure it will rain the entire last week of August or all of Mars will be covered in a giant dust storm," she said, laughing. "I not only now have to worry about weather here on Earth but Mars as well."

Gray said the history of science has always interested her, and now she had the opportunity to be a part of science history.

By 11 p.m. Gray had gotten her first look at Mars through the observatory's large telescope.

"I didn't see a dust storm," she said, smiling. "It was really exciting. I'm sticking around a little longer to get another look. It's neat to see something better than anyone else has for 60,000 years."

As Gray went to peer at the planet for a second time the southern polar ice cap was visible, as well as some dark surface features. She said the view had been worth the wait.

On Aug. 16, as darkness fell on

the observatory Rich Tennis, a member of the Peoria Astronomical Society, was busy helping Steve and Lisa Carter of East Peoria line up their own telescope. They had brought their computerized telescope with them to the observatory in hopes someone there could help them with it.

In a short time Tennis had helped the couple and they were star-gazing.

"Within the last year we really got interested in astronomy," Steve, a teacher at Wilder-Waite School, said. "We're still trying to figure things out, but it's fun."

Lisa said she had long wanted to know more about the heavens, and that evening their journey to learning more would begin in earnest. With a little help they centered the scope on Mars and soon found some dark surface and the polar ice cap.

"This is our first time looking at Mars. This is so neat," Steve said. "This won't be our last time looking at it."



NASA / J. Bell (Cornell) / M. Wolff (STScI)

Society reaction

Reaction from members of the Peoria Astronomical Society could be termed as nothing less than enthusiastic as well. This event has significantly raised the society's profile in Central Illinois. In addition, and just as important to society members, is the opportunity to provide education and good old-fashioned family fun.

Bill Cole, a North Peorian, and chairman of the observatory, said on Aug. 16, as he surveyed the crowd that he was happy to see the numbers.

"It's good to see so many people,

and so many coming out before the 27th. This way they get a reference to compare to on the 27th," Cole said.

Pittenger was also delighted, "It seems to me that many of the visitors are first-timers ... I am also getting feedback from others that have been to the observatory once or twice and that this event is getting them and their families back out for more. Some have been coming out several weeks in a row."

Crowds

Saturday, Aug. 23 the line to the observatory was greater than 300 people, making the wait to get in more than an hour.

Dan Son, Peoria Astronomical Society secretary was happy with the crowd.

"It's massive," he said.

Son had his own telescope set up. There was a line at his scope to view Mars as well.

Don Wylie, of Washington, had at least an hour's wait ahead of him Saturday evening to view Mars but, he did not mind.

"I've never seen a planet before," Wylie said. "I've been hearing about this on the news. I thought it would be interesting to see. It's going to be worth the wait. I will wait as long as it takes"

Exiting the observatory, Steve Kastelein, of Dunlap, said that he and his family did not mind the 45 minutes in line.

"It was worth the wait," he said. "It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. This was a pretty rare occasion. I saw the polar ice caps. That was pretty neat."

Kastelein's 13-year-old son Cameron was equally impressed.

"It was pretty cool," he said, "You could see Mars is really red. I liked that."

Cole was pleased to hear such comments.

"Most people don't lift their eyes up off the ground," Cole said. "We've opened some people's eyes tonight." 🌌

Mini-Marathon Set for October 25

by John Barra

The Peoria Astronomical Society will once again attempt to conduct a mid-season form of a Messier Marathon by holding mini-marathons at Jubilee on new moon Saturday, October 25 at sunset. October is the month with the second most Messier objects viewable other than March when the traditional marathon is held. (see related article in this month's *Starlite*).



Checkoff forms will be available for the fall seasonal marathon. Approximately one quarter of the Messier objects are used for each of the four seasons. Those completing the entire checklist will receive a fall certificate. Winter checkoff lists will also be available for those wishing to stay later in the evening. Everyone should remember it can get cold in October, so dress accordingly. Like usual, we are asking everyone to bring snacks to share in the warm-up room. Bring your own drinking water or soft drinks. ☼

Observing

(Continued from page 12)

head for about 10 minutes then began to fade. But this now cloudlike object appeared to form a dim octopus with the legs reaching down in all directions to the horizon. Horizontal bands on the "legs" then got very bright as did the "body" overhead. The whole "octopus" appeared to be in motion. For about 5 minutes the entire sky was covered by this Northern Light spectacular. ☼

A Reminder of Light Etiquette

by John Barra

There can be nothing more disturbing than having waited a half hour to get your eyes dark adapted at a viewing session than have two bright headlights stare you in the face. This article is a short reminder of light etiquette.

If you all going to Jubilee after dark, turn off your headlights once you make the turn off the road onto the white rock road. You can use your parking lights to get up the hill, if you need any at all. Assess the situation once you reach the top. If necessary park the car with your lights off to find out where and how to move you car thereafter.

When leaving, if you must turn on your lights, let others know ahead of time so they can make arrangements not to be blinded. If parked so you can do so safely, leave with no

lights or parking lights until you get ready to turn onto the main road.

Also if you can disable inside lights (or use red cellophane), do so to keep from lighting the area every time you need to get into your vehicle. These rules apply to any viewing area, although road conditions and safety may make it more difficult to always follow..

Finally, don't forget to use only red lights for flash lights. Again, covering regular flashlights with red material will make them astronomy friendly. We have a huge roll at the Jubilee warm-up room for your use.

Most members are good about following these light rules. However, it seems that more people are coming or leaving at Jubilee with headlights on. Maybe this is the result of our success a getting more people to come to Jubilee. If you have friends or a group coming to the observatory at Jubilee, please let them know about these rules. ☼

PeoriaAstro...

@ @ @
 From: mtennis@m...
 Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 7:44 am
 Subject: Rich Tennis has sent you an article from npr.org

Rich Tennis thought you would enjoy this story: "NPR : Capturing the Red Planet" <http://www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wflid=1401486> This message was included: A Mars observation journal of an amateur astronomer. Just click on the headline or the audio icon to listen to the story.

@ @ @
 From: Dave Grebner <dgrebner@l...>
 Date: Sat Aug 23, 2003 10:11 am
 Subject: Re: [PeoriaAstro] Friday night Brandt Bechtold and I have arranged for 300 August issues of Astronomy magazines to be delivered for distribution to the public at next week's Mars viewing.
 --Dave Grebner

@ @ @
 From: "stargoat70" <stargoat55@i...>
 Date: Sat Aug 23, 2003 3:18 pm
 Subject: Information on Mars...website Hi Folks,
 Here is a website I found today, it has a section on Mars with lots of useful information. <http://www.calsky.com>. and click on the "Planets", then "Mars" links. Also click on

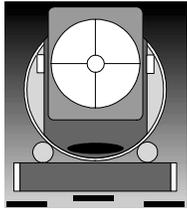
the "Apparant View/Data" link. It has a very good simulated image of the planet, just punch in the date and time.

Enjoy,
 Stephen

@ @ @
 From: Tim McGrath <astropunk_2000@y...>
 Date: Tue Aug 26, 2003 10:36 am
 Subject: Mars data
 Here is a link to Mars data. I printed it out for a handy reference to answer peoples questions during our Mars week. <http://www.the-planet-mars.com/mars-fact-sheet.html>.

@ @ @
 From: "stargoat70" <stargoat55@i...>
 Date: Wed Aug 27, 2003 11:04 am
 Subject: Website for maps of Mars etc.
 This was in one of the astro magazines, but in case you missed it here is the link. This guys work is incredible. See <http://ralphaeschliman.com/index.htm>.
 Stephen

@ @ @
 From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
 Date: Sun Aug 31, 2003 7:54 pm
 Subject: PAS Banquet
 This is the last week to get me you diner reservation. I have 7 people signed up for this event. Mike remember to check the PO box on Saturday. ☼



Astronomy Section Newsletter
 Peoria Academy of Science
 c/o Princen
 677 E. High Point Terrace
 Peoria, IL 61614

#155, September 2003

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In This Issue...

Mars Mania!, PAS/TCAA Star Party, ...Can You Spot This?, Slate of Officers, and more....

Observing Club Notes

by John Barra

**New Location for
 Messier Marathon**

The PAS Messier Marathon will move to Rich Tennis's StarHouse in rural Eureka this coming March. The change is being made because the trees in the southeast at Jubilee make it impossible to view late-rising Messier objects before sunrise.

A couple viewing sessions at the StarHouse proved a clear horizon will be available both to the west at sunset and to the east at sunrise. However, telescopes will have to be moved one time.

Set-up will be in the grassy area to the west of Rich's house, now clear by the removal of a barn. The city glow may make it difficult to locate M74, but it is always difficult to locate at marathon time. The other

low objects in the west are bright enough that they should be observable. After viewing approximately 20 objects from the west horizon to the south horizon, everyone should have a break to move scopes to the east property line. All the remaining objects will be viewable after the move, with a clear eastern horizon allowing everyone to begin to search for objects as they rise.

**Aurora Displays Top
 Fishing in Canada**

This summer I went to Canada for a fishing trip. And I may say, the wall-eye fishing was outstanding. But the highlight of the trip were two nights of spectacular Northern Light displays.

We were on the English River system about 150 miles north of International Falls.

The nights are short there during the summer, with dark viewing starting

after 11 p.m. and ending around 3 a.m. But since the aurora borealis usually peaks around midnight, I felt there would be a good chance to seek at least one good display.

The first two nights were cloudy and rainy and the third looked to be the same. However, around 11 a.m. the last storm started to move eastward in the northern sky, with clear skies elsewhere. About 11:30, a light glow appeared all around the top and left side of the lightning-filled thunderhead. The glow began to brighten. Suddenly I noticed that the wide band had separated from the clouds and stars could be seen in between with the Big Dipper just to the left. The aurora got brighter and horizontal spikes appeared throughout the band. About 15 minutes later, the display dimmed, then faded.

The next night was even better. A large, bright aurora danced over-

(Continued on page 11)

*...two nights
 of Northern
 Light
 displays...*