



Peoria Astronomical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 10111 Peoria, IL 61612-0111
Section of Peoria Academy of Science
Affiliate of the Astronomical League

www.astronomical.org

STARLITE

FALL, 2010

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Directors:

President: John Barra, jbarra31@aol.com
Vice-President: Rich Tennis, rtennis7@dishmail.net
Secretary: Perry White, whitepe@hughes.net
Treasurer: Brian Hakes, bhakes@sbcglobal.net
Parliamentarian: Eric Clifton, ericclifton@comcast.net
Nominating Chairman: Phil Burroughs, ptburroughs@comcast.net
Legal Agent: Mike Hay, me.hay@comcast.net

Editor's Notes: As requested by membership, highlights of Board meetings will be included in each issue. This edition contains board minute highlights from February through July. Article deadline for the winter issue is November 17. Articles may be submitted via two email addresses: ls_hay@yahoo.com or Starlighteditor@gmail.com. We have Banquet information included in this issue as well.

PLEASE NOTE:

Please notify Scott Swords at sswords3@comcast.net if you will be getting a new mailing address and/or phone number. It is important that he has your personal information correct so you will continue to receive the Starlite and the Reflector. He would also like to receive any changes to your e-mail address as this is part of his database.

If you would like to join the Peoria Astro e-group or if you have changed your e-mail address, please notify Mike Frasca at mfrasca@att.net with your e-mail address. He does not need your mailing address or phone number. If you are not a member of the e-group, you may want to consider joining. A great deal of club activity information is sent via the e-group. And by the way, it is free to join!!!

Welcome to New Members:

John and Leanna Crichton, West Peoria, IL
Larry Russell, East Peoria (welcome back)
Tyler Fabish, Washington, IL
Frank Landers, Washington, IL
Brad Karnes, Pekin, IL
Sastry Kompella, Peoria, IL

President's Message

The hot temperature's this summer may have made it rough during the day but has proven to be an unexpected blessing at night. High temperatures during the summer are usually the result of extended high pressure areas. And extended high pressure usually means clear skies.

As a result, we have had more good viewing nights in between the storms. For the first time since we began skipping summer meetings, all three of the club's star parties have had clear nights. No rain or cloud-outs.

I was unable to make the June public star party at Northmoor because I got home from my Wisconsin fishing trip right before sunset on that night and crashed out. (Okay, call me a woos, but I am getting old, remember.) But I understand there was a good turnout.

Our private star party at Jubilee in July also had good skies. We only had about eight attend, but the viewing was fun. The small turnout was probably the result of tired people from the ICC star party the night before. But they were able to have that star party the first available night--another sign of the weather co-operating. I understand they had a great turnout.

Finally, great skies greeted us for our last star party, the public party at Jubilee State College Park in August. We had another great turnout--probably our best for public attendance.

Then we had perfect skies for the Perseid Meteor Shower. See the related article on that event.

Some good, clear nights also has boosted the attendance at our public nights at Northmoor. Bill Cole said there were over 100 there a couple of weeks ago. On my work night at Northmoor in June, we had that many despite being a full moon that merely allowed for viewing only the planets.

Interesting enough, that night's attendance was boosted by an unusual Journal Star Supplement on dating that came with the paper that morning. The supplement had a section on cheap dates in the Peoria area. One of the three featured cheap-date activities was going to the Northmoor Observatory on Saturday nights.

On another note, the 14-inch dome at Jubilee is about ready to be put back in place. Special thanks to Eric Clifton, Tim Lester and a view other volunteers for the work on some hot weekends this summer.

Don't forget the Annual Banquet this year at Bernardi's on September 11. Read the article in this newsletter for details.

Finally, I am still waiting for Rich Tennis to convince me that winter stargazing can be fun. I guess I am just a warm-weather person. (Oh, and the bass fishing has also been great this summer.)

Slate of Officers for 2011 (To be voted on at the Annual Banquet on Sept. 11)

The Nominating Committee has prepared the following slate of Officers for 2011:

President: John Barra
Vice President: Rich Tennis
Treasurer: Brian Hakes
Secretary: Perry White
Parliamentarian: Eric Clifton
Nominating Chairman: Nick Johnson
Legal Agent: Mike Hay

Banquet Information:

Date: September 11, 2010

Place: Bernardi's, Lake of the Woods, Dunlap (Rt. 40)

Time: 5:30, banquet 6:00

Menu: Family Style: Fried Chicken, Roast Beef, Tortellini, Spaghetti, Green Beans, Salad
Relish Tray, Coffee or Tea. (Cash bar available, not included)

Cost: \$22 (includes tax and tip)

Speaker: Dr. Pamela Gay

Reservations to Brian Hakes by *September 3.*

Checks payable to Peoria Astronomical Society

Mail to Peoria Astronomical Society, INC, PO Box 10111, Peoria, IL 61612-0111

Biography of Dr. Pamela Gay:

A lifetime stargazer, Dr. Pamela L. Gay has followed her obsession to a profession. Today Pamela is on the faculty at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and is Executive Director of the non-profit Astrosphere New Media Association. She also helps to mentor students working on observational astronomy projects through Swinburne Astronomy Online.

Teaching by day, she works on astronomy data by night, teaming up with amateur astronomers who are expert observers to study variable stars. She serves on the council of the American Association of Variable Star Astronomers.

With Aaron Price and Travis Searle, Dr. Gay worked on Slacker Astronomy, the first podcast devoted explicitly to astronomy or science. Slacker Astronomy was the reason for science becoming a distinct genre in podcast. Her most well known project may be [Astronomy Cast](#), a podcast she co-hosts with Fraser Cain (Producer of [Universe Today](#)).

She is also part of the Zooniverse collaboration, and works with others helping writing the software and education content for Galaxy Zoo, Moon Zoo and other projects. Dr. Gay was also a co-chair of the United States new media efforts with regard to the [International Year of Astronomy](#), 2009. She has written articles in Astronomy and Sky & Telescope magazines.

Dr. Gay has a B.S. in Astrophysics from Michigan State University in 1996 and a Ph.D. in Astronomy from the University of Texas in 2002. In her spare time she rides her horse Skye, and works with her husband to restore an old house in Southern Illinois.

ICC Classes at Jubilee

We will host the ICC Astronomy classes at the Jubilee Observatory again this fall. The first scheduled date is Friday, Sept. 10. The rain dates are: Sept. 17, Sept 18, Oct. 1 and Oct. 2. If a rain date is needed the first clear night on the list will be used. We will need members with telescopes for this event. If you can help, contact Eric Clifton via email: ericjclifton@comcast.net. These have always been fun events for the students and members.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

September 11: Annual Banquet (Bernardi's in Peoria)--Speaker: Dr. Pamela Gay (SIU)

(resume meetings at planetarium)

October 6: "How We Found Our Home in the Universe": Eric Clifton

November 3: Astrojeopardy--Gene Hodel

December 1: Great Debate V: John Barra

From Starlites Past

By John Barra

50 Years Ago

Fall Newsletter 1960

"On the evening of September 27th, around 300 people showed up to take advantage of the expanded facilities out at North Moor Observatory for the first free public night. The response was so enthusiastic, that this will now become an annual event."

It must have become such a success that it soon became a weekly event. While we don't get 300 (except for comets and close encounters with Mars) we do get steady crowds. We also have a star party with telescopes and hopefully it will be an annual event.

"OBSERVING NIGHT....There is increasing activity in this popular feature of our educational program, which is held the second and fourth Friday at 7:30 through November. There be no regular meetings during the months of December and January."

While we don't have observing nights, per se, observing parties are still our most popular activities.

Summer star parties, the ICC star parties, and meteor parties (that have to compete with the weather) head the list of participation by our members.

Starlite Past continued

25 Years Ago

Fall Starlite 1985

“Eric Clifton underwent back surgery on August 12 after suffering a herniated disc. This painful condition had put him out of action for several weeks and his convalescence will take 6 to 8 weeks more... We miss seeing you around, Eric.”

I also note in the newsletter that Eric was Jubilee chairman 25 years ago. I don't know he keeps up with all his work with the club, but it sure is nice NOT to miss seeing him around--because he is always around.

“On September 21, the Peoria Astronomical Society will hold its annual banquet at the Heritage House in Peoria at 6 pm....The cost will be \$10 per person. The increase is because we are providing a guest speaker and a smorgasbord dinner.”

Smorgasbords are gone. They now call them “buffets.” The calories are the same. While Bernardi's (this year's banquet site) is not a smorgasbord or a buffet, Italian family-style dinners are even better. Also a great speaker. And the price is less than what 25 years of inflation would suggest. Hope to see you there.

Great Skies at Perseid Meteor Shower

By John Barra

Great skies made for a great Perseid Meteor Shower at the Jubilee observatory on the night of August 12 and morning of August 13. About a dozen people attended the shower, a few lasting until four in the morning. Not a cloud was seen in the sky the entire night--unless you consider the occasional confusion of the Milky Way that predominated the sky. For me, it was the best seeing that I have witnessed in the 16 years I have been a member of the club. I kept a running count of the meteors I observed. Keep in mind that at any given time, one can watch about one-half of the sky. My totals were:

Hours	P	NP	Total
9-10am	4	4	8
10-11am	12	1	13
11-12m	21	3	24
12-1am	23	11	34
1-2am	31	7	38
2-3am	37	7	44
3-4am	35	2	37
Totals	163	35	198

Free Items at October Meeting

Old inventory items will be made available to members at the October 6 PAS general meeting. This meeting will be the first at the planetarium since our summer recess. The items are from our cleanup and inventory check at the Northmoor Observatory. These items include old books (some musty), unused non-astronomical equipment and other miscellaneous objects which we no longer use and are taking up space at the observatory. There will be no charge for this material, but our fishbowl will be there for anyone wanting to make a donation. Items can be taken on a first come, first take basis by members only. These materials will be made available at 7:00 pm, one-half hour before the meeting, and again after the meeting.

Book Review

The Space Odyssey Series

By John Barra

Now that I am retired, I have a lot more time to read. For some reason, I decided to pick up 2001: A Space Odyssey. I never did read the book, and when the movie came out, I was in college--about 25 years before I became interested in astronomy. I fell asleep during the movie(probably after spending a few hours at a campus pub). I vaguely remember the monoliths, HAL the computer, and a guy jogging around the circular space station.

So when I started reading the book recently, it was all new to me. I was pleasantly surprised. It did not put me to sleep. In fact, I was so into the story, that I subsequently obtained the three sequels from the library and read them also. It took me only a day to read the last one.

If you have not read them all , I would strongly recommend them. Even if you have, rereading them again after the increased knowledge of space flight will convince you how brilliant their author, Arthur C. Clarke, has turned out to be.

I learned for the first time that Stanley Kubrick did not come up with the idea of the film version after reading 2001. Actually, Kubrick suggested to Clarke the idea of the novel and he worked on the film while Clarke was writing the book.

What's fascinating about the four books is that Clarke made changes to the plot based on new development in space travel that occurred between the books. 2001 was published before the first moon landing. The second, 2010: Odyssey Two, was written (1982) after Voyager I. So in that novel, he changed the destination from Saturn and Japetus to Jupiter and Europa.

He wanted to write the third, 2061: Odyssey Three, after the Galileo mission, but wrote it earlier in 1987 because of the many delays in that flight. 2061 coincides with the next return of Comet Halley. There is an interesting tie-in to the Beatle's Sgt. Pepper Lonely Heart's Club album in the book. If you are a Beatle's fan, you will recognize the reference immediately.

The final book, 3001: The Final Odyssey, was published in 1997. The series combines Clarke's realistic looks into the future of space flight with unique perspective of other types of intelligence in the universe. I do not know why I waited to read these books before now, but I am glad that I did. You should too. You can get them at the public library.

Highlights of Board Minutes. (Feb. –July, 2010)

Editor's note: Highlights from Board meetings will appear in each issue. Meetings are held at the Hardee's in Northpoint Shopping Center. Committees giving reports will be named and important highlights will appear in () following the committee name.

FEBRUARY, 2010

Minutes from the December meeting were approved with corrections. January's meeting was cancelled due to an ice storm.

The Treasurer's reports for December and January were approved. At this time there were nine new members.

The following standing committee reports were given: Northmoor Observatory, Jubilee Observatory, Inventory, Membership, Light Control, Starlite, Website, Program and Observing. Special Committee Reports were given. Six people visited East Peoria Observatory site. The site is very dirty including the telescope. Discussion took place as to the options the society should pursue with respect to this telescope. More work is needed.

MARCH, 2010

Minutes from February's meeting were approved. Treasurer's Report was approved. At this time 65 members out of 80 have been received. Third mailings were sent.

The following Standing Committees made reports: Northmoor (hosting schedule will be printed in the Starlite), Jubilee (mowing schedules will be printed in the Starlite), Inventory, Light Control, Starlite (printing now will be done on the Hay's home printer to save costs), Website, Education, Program and Observing (March 13 will be a Messier Marathon at Rich's house.).

APRIL, 2010

Minutes from March were corrected and approved. Treasurer's Report was approved. The following Standing Committees made reports: Northmoor (window grates have been painted. PPD has been contacted about installing them. Windows have been repaired.), Jubilee (Star Party was held April 3rd. Bradley attended also, about 60-80 people.), Inventory, Public Relations, Membership (1 new member), Special Committees - Northmoor Restoration, East Peoria Observatory, Light Control, Starlite, Website, Program and Observing.

MAY, 2010

Minutes from the April meeting were corrected and approved. The treasurer's report was approved. The following Standing Committees made reports: Northmoor (window grates have been installed. Rich painted the interior door to the dome.), Jubilee (Eric finished sanding the 14 inch dome on May 18th.), Inventory, Public Relations (Treasure Hunt books are out but unfortunately are the same as last year, announcements will be sent to the Journal Star.), Membership (1 new member), Light Control, Starlite, Program and Observing (Star parties are scheduled for June, July and Aug.), Special Committee –East Peoria- Nerio has a lunch meeting planned with the principal and Board of directors regarding the EP Observatory.)

JUNE, 2010

Minutes from the May meeting were approved with corrections. The Treasurer's Report was approved. The following Standing Committees made reports: Northmoor, Jubilee (Doug Kasel's binoculars were delivered to Doug's house on May 29th. The 14 inch dome has been washed with TSP and masked for painting.) Inventory, Public Relations, Membership (1 new member), Light Control, Starlite, Website, Special Committees – East Peoria- (Nerio met with the Principal and they are proceeding with talking to the board.) Unfinished Business: We still need a box for the plaque for Northmoor. Motion was made and seconded to buy new eyepieces for Northmoor. Unanimous vote approved the purchase at OPT. Each are \$99 except the 36mm which is \$179. Sept. 11 will be the banquet, which may be at Fairview Farms, other locations are still be looked at.

JULY, 2010

The meeting began at Northmoor then moved to Hardee's. Minutes were left home by Perry. The Treasurer's Report was approved. The following Standing Committees gave reports: Northmoor, Jubilee (ICC star party was a success on July 9 with 80 attendees and several Members with telescopes. Eric moved retroactively to purchase 6 tons of gravel for Jubilee for \$160 - Verbal approval had been obtained by the board prior to the meeting.) Inventory (Eric found a list of Barry's inventory items on his old computer.) Public Relations, Membership (1 member was reinstated-Brad Karnes), Light Control, Starlite, Website. Unfinished Business: The Banquet will be at Bernardi's North on Sept. 11. Cost will be \$22 A person with standard banquet menu of two entrees. The Northmoor eyepiece purchase will Have a minor change with a 10mm Hyperion eyepiece purchased instead of 8mm.

2010 Hosting Schedule

Sept 4	Phil Burroughs	Dan Son
Sept 11	Bill Cole	Brandt Bechtold
Sept 18	Tim Lester	Tim McGrath
Sept 25	John Barra	Mike Hay
Oct 2	Steve Wrigley	Jon Wrigley
Oct 9	DeWayne Bartels	Gerald Horst
Oct 16	Rich Tennis	Nerio Calgaro
Oct 23	Terry Beachler	Dan Son
Oct 30	Scott Swords	Calene Fleming

Jubilee Maintenance Schedule - 2010

		< Prep for ICC Astro Class - Date TBD >		
SEPT	4	Scott Swords	Calene Fleming	Bob Pauer
SEPT	11	Dan Son	Tim McGrath	DeWayne Bartels
SEPT	18	John Barra	Brandt Bechtold	Brian Bill
SEPT	25	Gary Bussman	Eric Clifton	Mike Frasca
OCT	2	Dave Grebner	Brian Hakes	Mike Hay
OCT	9	Scott Hay	Jesse Hoover	Cliff Jeske
OCT	16	Scott Swords	Calene Fleming	Bob Pauer
OCT	23	Gerry Horst	Doug Kasel	Tim Lester