



Mingo Creek Park Observatory

The Guide Star

Newsletter of the Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh, Inc.

Founded June 9, 1929 by Chester B. Roe and Leo J. Scanlon

Website: 3ap.org



Nicholas E. Wagman Observatory

May 2010

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AAAP CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR OFFICE 2010-2011

ED MOSS—PRESIDENT



I'm Ed Moss and I am running for president of the AAAP. I don't really believe in campaigning for this or any other elected office in our club, but I believe I should share with my fellow club members my contributions to the AAAP, as these relate to why I'm running for president. When I took over the chairmanship of the Mingo Construction Committee, I had a vague idea of what it was

that I wanted to accomplish with this observatory. Richard Haddad had his vision for the observatory, and I made that vision my own and added a few things I thought would help in accomplishing his vision. As president, I am working to see that vision completed.

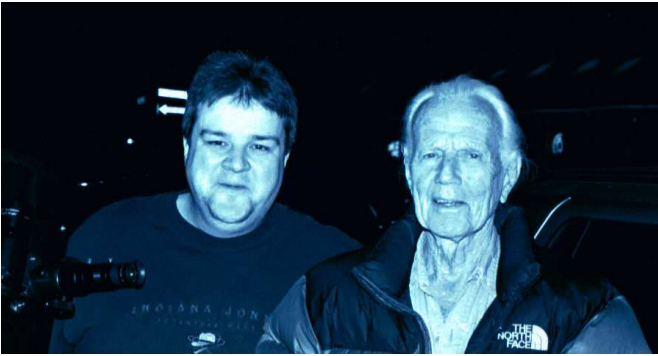
MAY'S MEETING TOPIC

The AAAP general meeting for Friday, May 14th at the Carnegie Science Center at 7:30 PM will feature AAAP member Eric Fischer. Eric will be presenting his astronomical rendering, "Cosmic Convention", which depicts the rare 8-planet alignment of the solar system in January, 1984. In addition to the planets, the rendering features over 50,000 hand-plotted stars. This presentation will wrap up our 2009-2010 season and will surely get everyone warmed up and ready for star parties and observing sessions where they can see more of the planets in Eric's creation.



SEE ELECTION BALLOT ON PAGE 5

CRAIG LANG—VICE PRESIDENT



My name is Craig Lang and I am running for the position of Vice President of the AAAP. I have been a member since 2004, served as the VP in 2009-2010, and as the IT Chairperson in 2005 & 2006. I have been active at Mingo Observatory and Ryerson Station star parties presenting Night Sky Network presentations, planisphere demos, planetarium shows, and was also awarded the George Lindbloom Memorial Award in 2006. Professionally, as a software developer and electrical engineer, I am experienced with problem solving and project management.

I am looking forward to serving the club following in the footsteps of past vice presidents and will continue the tradition of bringing interesting and inspiring speakers to the general club meetings as well as the general duties of the Vice President.

JOHN MOZER— CORRESPONDING SECRETARY



John Mozer was born and raised in Pueblo, Colorado. After completing his graduate studies in civil engineering at the University of Colorado in 1967, John and his wife, Sheila,

moved to Pittsburgh, PA, where they have lived for the past 42 years. During the first six of those years, John taught in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department at Carnegie Mellon University. He then left the academic world to work for GAI Consultants, Inc., a civil engineering consulting firm located in Homestead. At GAI, John worked on projects in Argentina, Canada, Chile, Honduras, Indonesia and the United States. He

retired in May 2009, after 36 years of employment at GAI. John has been a member of AAAP since 2003 and currently serves as the AAAP Corresponding Secretary, a position he has held for the past three years. He owns two telescopes, an 8-inch Dobsonian and a 102-mm EQ mounted Mak-Cassegrain. His favorite deep-sky objects are open star clusters. John enjoys volunteering at star parties, traveling, reading, visiting with his children and grandchildren and becoming involved in politics and environmental issues.

DENNIS DERDA— RECORDING SECRETARY



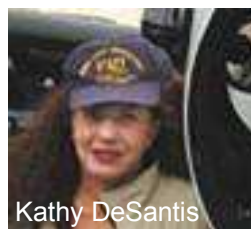
Dennis Derda remains uncontested in his office of Recording Secretary. For you folks who sit at the back of the auditorium at meetings, he is the owner of the voice reading the minutes. He is also Chair of the Optics and Telescope Making Special Interest Group.

JOHN CHENG—GUIDE STAR EDITOR



John Cheng is a retired systems architect whose educational background included graduate level work in philosophy. This year marks his eleventh year as an AAAP member although he's been an astronomical observer for much of his life, having begun his observing career under the astronomy-friendly societies over Philadelphia. While having done some astrophotography (with sheet film!) as an adolescent, he remains a committed visual observer and despite having acquired telescopes in each "flavor" over the years, including an early Russian Maksutov Newtonian, he freely admits to being a refractor bigot. Currently he concentrates on lunar, planetary and double star observing, feeling that the latter targets the most beautiful objects available to a visual observer with moderate apertures.

KATHY DESANTIS (ANN NORMAN)— GUIDE STAR EDITORS



We are eager to co-edit the Guide Star because we want to inform, promote and entertain the AAAP. We are familiar with club members

Kathy DeSantis

and their interests through our participation in many club functions. Kathy DeSantis has been deeply involved in the AAAP where she presently keeps members up-to-date through weekly event posts, the 3ap.org website calendar, the AAAP Night Sky Network Website, and frequent Yahoo User Group posts. After a career as a public school science teacher, Kathy joined the Mingo Committee in 2005. Very involved at Mingo, she has never missed a Mingo Public Star Party since that observatory opened.



Ann Norman was Associate Editor of the *Guide Star* under Eric Fischer from 2002 to 2006 and Vice President three years from 2006 to 2009, and in civilian life is Assistant Editor of the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*.

Kathy received the Nova Award. Kathy and Ann each have received the Lois Harrison Award.

We plan to work as a team. Kathy's name is the one that will be on the ballot and will be the official Executive Committee vote.

DON HOECKER—MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

RICHARD CARRYER
ELENA KONEVA FAMILY
DANIEL MADIA FAMILY
TIM PALUCKA

IMPORTANT DATES

May 1—Morel Madness and private star party at Mingo
May 2-11—Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower
May 4—Venus 6° north of Aldebaran
May 7—Neptune 4° south of Moon
May 9—Jupiter 7° south of Moon
 Uranus 6° south of Moon
May 12—Mercury 8° south of Moon
May 14— 7:30 p.m. Carnegie Science Center Business Meeting and election
 New Moon 1:04 a.m.
May 15—Private Star Party Crooked Creek State Park
May 16—Venus 0.9° south of Moon
May 20—First quarter Moon 11:43 p.m.
 LRO Telecon 9:00 p.m.
 Mars 5° north of Moon
May 21—Mingo Public Star Party
 Wagman Public Star Party
May 22—Mingo Public Star Party
 Wagman Public Star Party
May 23—Saturn 8° north of Moon

May 25—Mercury at greatest elongation (25° west)
May 27—Full Moon 11:07 p.m.
May 29—Ceres 0.9° north of Moon
May 31—Saturn appears stationary
 Neptune appears stationary

June 3—Moon at apogee
 Neptune 5° south of Moon
June 4—Last quarter Moon 10:13 p.m.
June 5—4:00 p.m. AAAP Picnic—Deer Lakes Park
June 6—Jupiter 7° south of Moon
 Mars 0.9° north of Regulus
 Uranus 6° south of Moon
June 9—Venus 5° south of Pollux
June 10—Mercury 5° south of Moon
June 11—8:30 p.m. Mingo Public Star Party
June 12—8:30 p.m. Mingo Public Star Party
 New Moon 11:15 a.m.
June 15—Venus 4° north of Moon
 Moon at perigee
 Mercury 5° north of Aldebaran
June 16—8:30 p.m. Mingo Public Star Party
 8:30 p.m. Wagman Public Star Party
June 17—Mars 6° north of Moon
June 18—Ceres at opposition
June 19—8:30 p.m. Mingo Public Star Party
 8:30 p.m. Wagman Public Star Party
 First quarter Moon 4:30 a.m.
 Saturn 8° north of Moon
June 21—Summer Solstice 7:28 a.m.
June 25—Ceres 1° south of Moon
 Pluto at opposition
June 26—Full Moon 11:30 a.m.
 Partial Lunar Eclipse 4:55 a.m.
June 28—Mercury in superior conjunction
June 29—Cranberry Library Star Party
June 30—Neptune 5° south of Moon

LRO TELECON FROM THE NSN

By Kathy DeSantis

LRO Telecon from the NSN is set for 9:00 PM, EDT, Thursday, May 20. Join this Night Sky Network (NSN) event by dialing the toll-free conference line: 1-888-455-9236, passcode: NIGHT SKY NETWORK anytime after 8:45 PM, Thursday, May 20. When prompted, identify your club as the Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh and give the number of people listening with you.

The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO), <http://lunar.gsfc.nasa.gov/> lets us see the Moon, like never before. According to news release from the NSN: "Brooke Hsu and Brian Day will give us an update on the LRO and tell us why the LRO is so exciting. Brooke Hsu, Education and Public Outreach Lead for LRO at Goddard Space Flight Center, Maryland, is a geologist and educator by training and a science geek at heart. She enjoys sharing NASA science with as wide an audience as possible. Brian Day at NASA Ames in California is the Education and Public Outreach Lead for the Lunar Crater Observation and

Sensing Satellite (LCROSS) Mission.

Download the PowerPoint, available by May 17, 2010, to accompany Brooke Hsu's talk, at:

https://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club/download-view.cfm?Doc_ID=450

OBSERVATIONS

John Cheng: Posted to Yahoo Group on April 11, 2010. The eastern part of the city was blessed with both good transparency and seeing. Here are some highlights:

Vesta, clearly visible in binoculars at about magnitude 7, is little more than a degree to the southeast of epsilon Leonis. Checking on it with moderate magnification over the past weeks, the asteroid can be seen to be slowly moving in relation to the nearby 7.6 magnitude star HIP 48144.

Not a bad pastime, watching an asteroid lope along.

Despite its small ring angle, Saturn is still beautiful with a razor sharp ring shadow and amazingly bright ansae. The American astronomer, E. E. Barnard, noticed the same brightening phenomenon back in the "olden days" and attributed the heightened illumination to concentrated reflection due to the obliqueness of the rings.

R Leonis, having reached its minimum magnitude about a week ago, is now on the rise. I estimated it at magnitude 9.4.

Mars, its angular diameter only about 8 seconds, is quite bright in the eyepiece, with glare drowning out any detail. Resorting to two filters, a 21 Orange and a 23A Light Red, to tone down the globe and increase contrast, I was able to just make out Mare Sirenum.

The 23A did a slightly better job. The scope was a 6-inch Maksutov-Newtonian.

PHOTOS FROM CSC ASTRONOMY WEEKEND

By Bill Moutz



AAAP 2010 ELECTION BALLOT

(CHECK THE LINE NEXT TO CANDIDATE OR WRITE-IN)

PRESIDENT:

Ed Moss
 Write-In: _____

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY:

John Mozer
 Write-In: _____

VICE PRESIDENT:

Craig Lang
 Write-In: _____

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Don Hoecker
 Write-In: _____

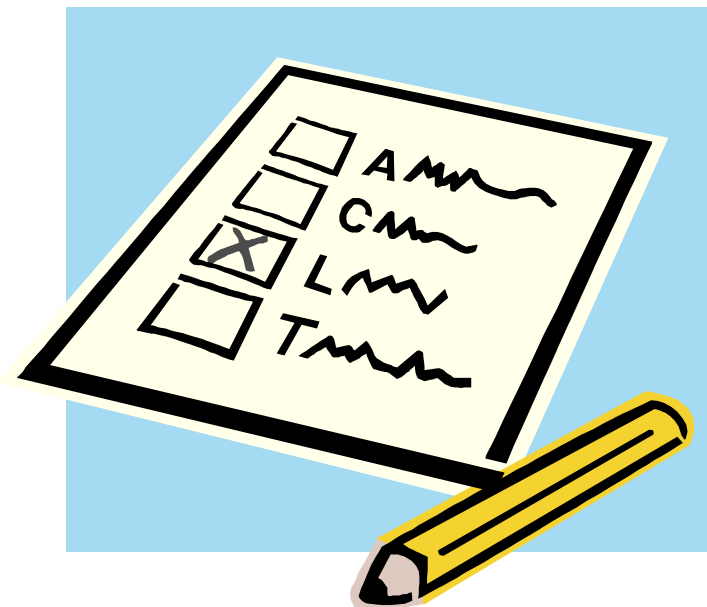
RECORDING SECRETARY:

Dennis Derda
 Write-In: _____

GUIDE STAR EDITOR:

John Cheng
 Kathy DeSantis (Ann Norman)
 Write-In: _____

**Bring ballot to the May 14th AAAP meeting or mail in to:
AAAP Treasurer, 1070 Sugar Run Road, Venetia, PA 15367-1514**



Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh, Inc.

Founded June 9, 1929 by

Chester B. Roe and Leo J. Scanlon

2009-2010 Executive Officers:

- President: **Edward Moss**
president@3ap.org
- Vice President: **Craig Lang**
vicepresident@3ap.org
- Treasurer: **Michael Meteney**
treasurer@3ap.org
- Corresponding Sec: **John Mozer**
correspondingsecretary@3ap.org
- Recording Sec: **Dennis Derda**
recordingsecretary@3ap.org
- Membership Sec: **Don Hoecker**
membershipsecretary@3ap.org
- Guide Star Editors: **Bill & Maureen Moutz**
gseditor@3ap.org

AAAP Member Dues*:

AAAP Dues:	\$24.00
Student Membership (K-12 & full time college student):	\$16.00
Family Membership	\$40.00

***Basic Procedure for Paying Dues:**

1. Make check payable to "AAAP Inc."
2. Send check to Michael Meteney, Treasurer, 1070 Sugar Run Road; Venetia, PA 15367-1514



Please submit any articles for the Guide Star to the Guide Star Editors at gseditor@3ap.org by the 20th of each month.

****Some websites may need to be copied and pasted in your browser to view them****

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