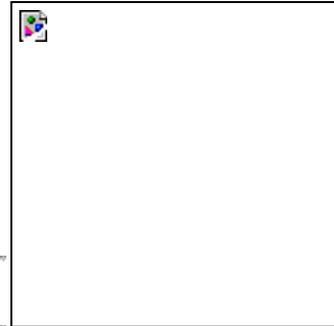


The Guide Star

Newsletter of the Amateur Astronomers Association
of Pittsburgh



A Section of the Academy of Science & Art of Pittsburgh

February 2002

www.3ap.org

Volume 35, Number 11

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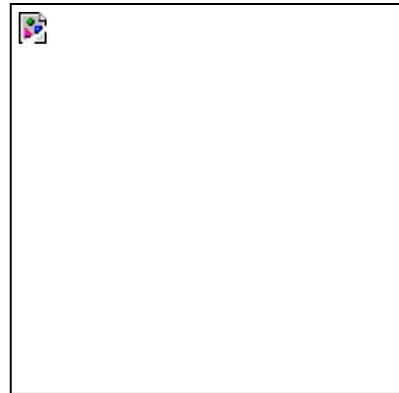
Free Sky Show for AAAP Members

Feb's CSC-Buhl Program Shows How "Women Hold Up Half the Sky"

(Right) Perhaps the leading female astronomer of our day, JPL's Dr. Eleanor Helin, who is leading the tracking of Near-Earth Asteroids.

If you were stopped for a "On-The-Street" TV interview and asked to name five famous astronomers and/or space scientists, you (men and women alike) would most likely refer to Nicholas*, William*, Percival*, Edwin* and Carl*, or some similar set of *male* names. But what would you say if asked to name five famous *female* astronomers and/or space scientists? For most of us, the pause would be long and embarrassing.

At the **February 8, 2002** AAAP meeting (7:30 pm, **Carnegie Science Center - Buhl Planetarium**), club members will discover that many great female researchers have made great discoveries and other contributions to the beyond-earth sciences. As part of the meeting program, we will view the latest production of the Buhl staff: *"Women Hold Up Half the Sky"* in the planetarium theater.



The show covers the role of women in the history of astronomy and space science. Rather than being a complete review of the topic, it is instead a series of profiles connected to important topics in the field. It includes both historic figures, and actual video interviews with some of the most important players today. The Buhl staff promises this program will be quite enlightening to our members, regardless of their relative knowledge of astronomy history.

Members are urged to arrive at the Buhl planetarium entrance no later than **7:00 pm** (7:15 at the latest). Once the planetarium doors are closed, they cannot be reopened until after the program is completed. When arriving at the CSC, you may park in their main front and side lots, and enter the building through the main front ramp. There will be no charge for parking. After entering the building's main concourse, simply tell the CSC staff you have arrived for the AAAP meeting and you be cleared past the ticket collection point. Refreshments will be served outside the planetarium entrance and, during the meeting, Larry McHenry will cover any other meeting room details.

An Important Matter: Buhl Seating Space

As all members know, we have no admission restrictions on our regular business meetings. In fact, AAAP members are encouraged to bring friends, relatives and co-workers who have a budding interest in astronomy, and might want to become AAAP members themselves. For the Feb. 8 meeting at Buhl we must, however, temporarily limit admissions to **AAAP members and their spouses/children who are also club members**. Club meetings at Buhl which include a free planetarium show have always been highly popular and well-attended (even in the days of the old Buhl building). If we exceed the theater's legally-imposed 150-seat limit (160 with portable chairs in the back), the Buhl staff will be forced to leave latecomers out in the lobby. Your understanding and cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

*Famous male astronomers/scientists (from above): Copernicus, Herschel, Lowell, Hubble and Sagan

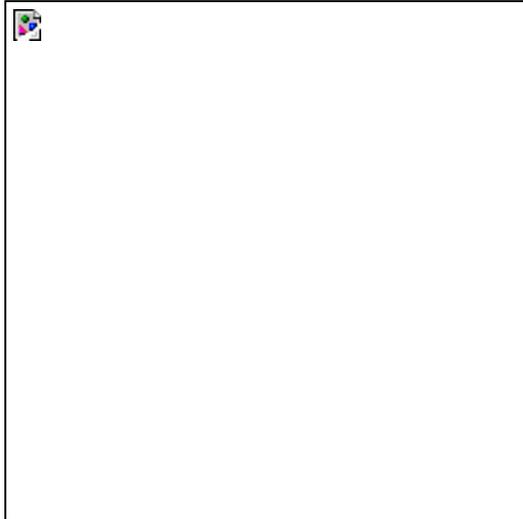
First Wagman S.P. for 2002

Homesick for NEWO By Now? Join Us for "Wagman Winterfest"

At this chilly time of the year, most of us engage in "door-to-door" astronomy: Out the front door, take a quick look at Orion, go in the main door to the mall, grab a glimpse of Ursa Major, back out into the parking lot, check out the Pleiades.

Wagman Winterfest 2002 is a once-in-a-season opportunity to view the marvels of the Winter Sky for as long as you like, naked-eye, binoculars or with the benefit of large telescopes.

Our first public star party of 2002, **February 16 at Wagman Observatory**, starts at **4:00 pm** with solar observing using both the Manka Telescope and Brashear 11 Inch Refractor (with proper shielding, of course). The club's solar observing expert, Larry McHenry, will also set up a scope to view the star Sol. Larry also plans to bring along his astrovideo-graphy equipment for demonstrations.



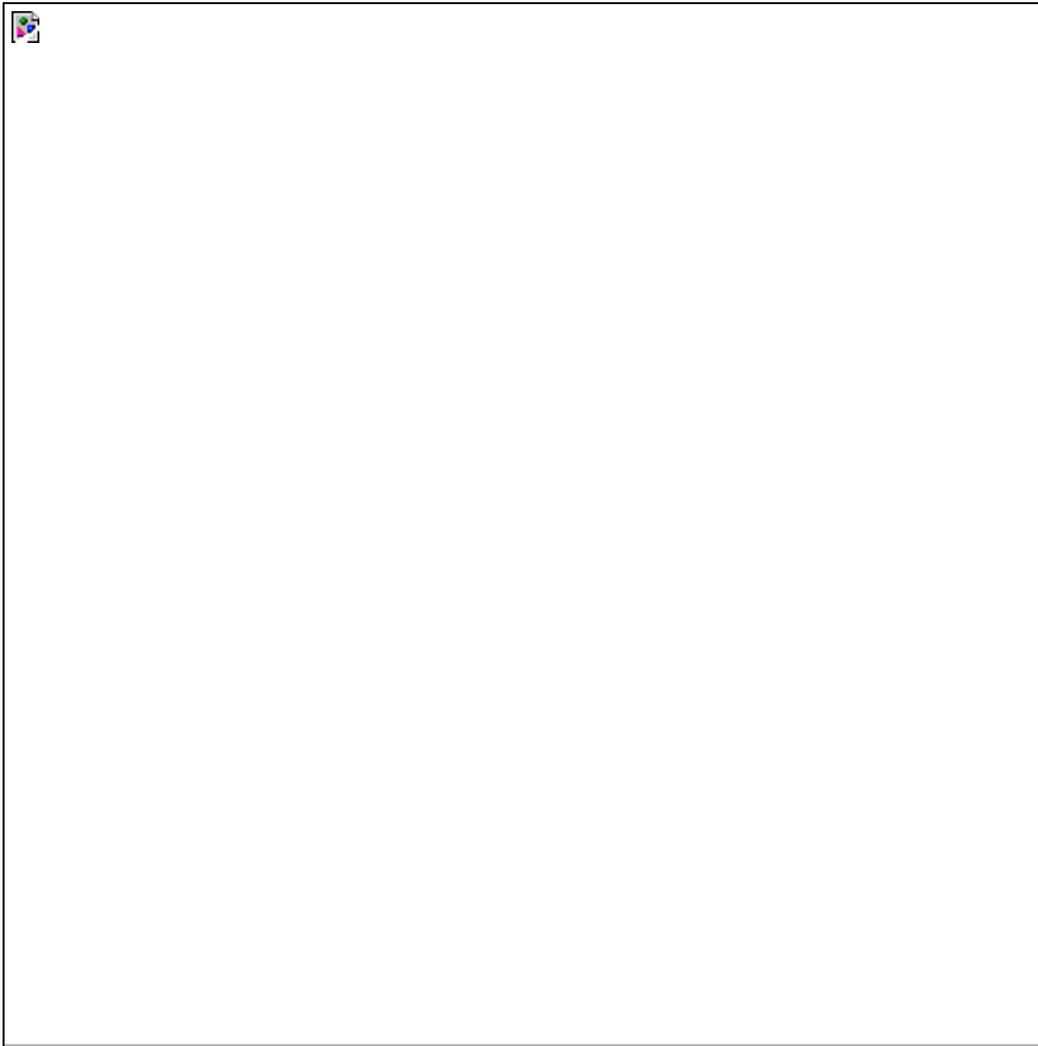
A lot Like the Christmas Party

Wagman Winterfest Founder and Coordinator Pete Zapadka, and his "Fest" staff, always does a superb job of bringing together a truckload of astronomy products for sale, donation, hand-outs as door prizes, etc. Here is just some of the "stuff" we typically dispense at these events:

- Recent back issues of *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* Magazines for those wanting to fill out their libraries
- Astronomy and space science books, and sci-fi novels
- Misc. backyard astronomy aids such as star maps, star/planet finders, red flashlights, eyepieces etc. (exact inventory will be known by star party time)
- Literature and accessories from our members such as Tim Hagen (*Helix*) and Bob Kepple (producer of the popular *Astro Cards* and *Night Sky Observer's Guide*)
- AAAP hats and garments
- Catalogs from Orion and other major suppliers and retailers

Hot Toddies for Cold Bodies

Expect to see hot soups, chocolate, maybe fresh-cooked pasta, cookies and a raft of other refreshments at WW-2002. In recent years, Wayne and Mari-Jo Meyers have helped with refreshments by setting up their fully-equipped trailer behind the building, replete with all the kitchen devices needed to prepare fresh, hot meals. However, Wayne and Mari-Jo want and welcome refreshment contributions from other members. If you would like to help in this regard, give them a call ASAP at 724-339-3447.



Never any shortage of food when the Meyers are in charge.

Telescope and Table Help Needed

Wagman Winterfest 2002 can only be successful with a big turnout by AAAP members. If skies look good, bring your scopes and binoculars. If clouds persist, at least bring yourself to answer questions from the general public and help out with odd jobs as needed. Also, assisting inside the observatory with crowd control, merchandise transactions, etc. will be very much appreciated. We don't want any one member to sit or stand in the same spot hour after hour.

Weather Advisories

Obviously, if the Wagman Observatory is buried under eight inches of snow, or temperatures don't even reach 10 degrees above zero, Winterfest must be called off. If conditions are borderline, call the observatory at **724-224-2510** to get the final go/no-go report. Listserv members are reminded to check e-mails up to the last minute. Cloud cover is not a problem. We have enough stuff going on to make the trip worthwhile for all. Last year, the weather was excellent for mid-February; let's hope history re-"Pete's."

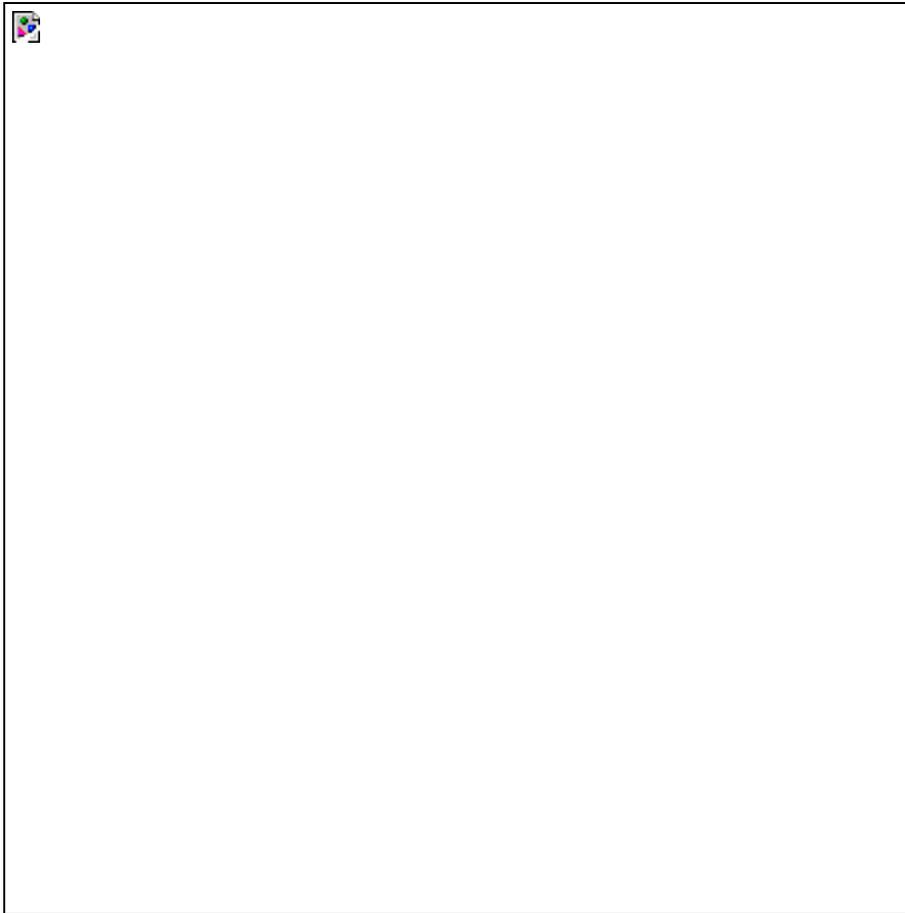
Places to Go and Things to Do

Nature + Astronomy At Jennings Center Event

by John Holtz

Everyone is invited to Jennings Nature Center, near the junction of Routes 8 and 173 near Slippery Rock, on **February 10**. Naturalist Will Taylor will give an indoor presentation starting at 7 pm, weaving folk lore and astronomy. Afterwards, scopes will be set up in the prairie to show the attendees the beauty of the night sky (weather permitting).

AAAP members are encouraged to bring their scopes (that is, we are the "star party dudes"). [Contact me](#) if you can help: 724-352-7596.



The Jennings Nature Reserve is famous for its "Blazing Star" flower.

More Places to Go and Things to Do

Invitation to Help Us with Astro Kids Overnighter At CSC

by George Guzik

At the January meeting, Diane Yorkshire announced the Astro Kids "overnight" program to be held at Carnegie Science Center on **March 8**. The program is for students in grades 7 through 12. Half of the attendants will be from the Gifted Student Program at Plum High School and the other half will be from the AAAP.

Diane requests volunteers to chaperone the students. Admission is \$35 per participant. The AAAP will pay the admission for members who volunteer as chaperones. Contact [Diane Yorkshire](#) (412-793-9552) to learn more and to contribute your time.

Club Meeting Date Rule Change Proposed for AAAP Constitution

You may recall that we conducted a survey several months ago which included a question about desirable dates for club meetings. A majority of members preferred that our regular meetings be held on the Friday closest to Full Moon, so that more "dark sky" Friday nights would become available to members for observing. Toward that end, the club's Executive Committee has voted to present a revision to the Constitution covering the meeting date formula. In accordance with Article IX of the Constitution, we are posting the proposed change in this *Guide Star*, whereupon members attending the March meeting, will vote the revision up or down. Here is the present meeting date formula in the Constitution, and the proposed revision:

Present Article:

Article III: Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held on the second Friday of each month, from September through May, except in conflict with established holidays, or other local conditions. Special meetings for the general membership may be called by the President for specific reasons. Executive Committee meetings (Article VIII) shall be called by the President from time to time as required. No fewer than three (3) Executive Committee meetings per year shall be called.

Proposed Constitutional Change:

Article III: Meetings

Section 1 - Regular Meetings. *Regular meetings shall be held on the Friday of each month whose date is closest to the date of Full Moon, from September through May (meeting year), except when in conflict with established holidays, or other local conditions.*

- A. *Meeting dates shall be selected by the President, with advice from the Executive Committee, if a month contains two Full Moons or if a meeting date is in conflict with a holiday.*
- B. *Each Guide Star shall publish the meeting dates of the issue's month and all succeeding months of the*

current meeting year. The dates of the next meeting year will be determined and published beginning in the current year's May issue of the Guide Star.

Section 2 - Special Meetings. *Special meeting for the general membership may be called by the President for specific reasons.*

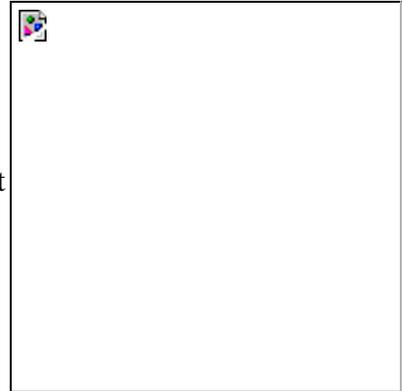
Section 3 - Executive Committee Meetings. *Executive Committee meetings (Article VIII) shall be called by the President from time to time as required. No fewer than three (3) Executive Committee meetings per year shall be called.*

Please take a moment to consider this change in preparation for the vote at the March 8 meeting. Members are welcome to discuss this revision to the AAAP constitution at both the February and March meetings.

Pencil In March 8 for the AAAP Sketching Contest

by Larry McHenry (from AAAP Listserver)

The "Astronomical Sketching Contest 2001" will be scheduled for the March club meeting. We need at least five people entered in order to be able to hold the contest, so if you have any sketches you would like to enter, please get them to me by the end of February. If the number of entries are low, the two categories may be combined. Remember, you don't need to be an artist to enter. You may have a good chance to win (and you'll receive a nice certificate and a prize)! Let's get those entries in! Here are the contest rules:



AAAP Astronomical Sketching Contest

The purpose of this contest is to encourage AAAP members to develop and enhance their observational skills. Sketching requires that you take a few minutes to study the object you're viewing, to learn its overall appearance; size, shape, and brightness. Sketching also helps you become more proficient with the equipment you are using, as you try various eyepieces, and accessories in search of the best view of the object. This will help you become a better observer and increase your enjoyment of the hobby.

Rules:

1. The contest is limited to realistic attempts to record actual "observed" astronomical objects or related sky phenomena. Sky phenomena must be considered 'astronomical' in nature, (solar pillars, sun dogs, etc.).
2. The contest period will be for the past calendar year.
3. Entries must be submitted to the Sketching Contest chairman (multiple entries are allowed).
4. Entries must not have the author's identity visible (please put your name on the back or in a location that can be covered with masking tape).

5. Entries will be judged by the membership (secret ballot).
 6. There are two categories:
 - Naked-Eye (ex: bright comets, meteors, eclipses, lunar/solar sky phenomena)
 - Binoculars/Telescope (ex: Planets, Messier, comets, etc.)
 7. There will be one award per category - 1st place.
 8. Awards will consist of a certificate, and a prize.
-

Tip of the Month

Remember to check with John Holtz or Tom Reiland about the new Wagman Observatory gate and door combinations before you head up.

Shape of Things to Come? *Guide Star* Goes On-Line for the First Time

When your News Editor prepared his first *Guide Star* edition in June of 1976, it consisted of a single sheet (front and back print) that was composed in a manual typewriter, and corrected with good old "White-Out". Since then, technologies and methods have changed a bit, to say the least. The current newsletter is prepared by the News and Features Editors (Eric and Jean) entirely in Microsoft Word with all photos and diagrams electronically embedded (the last physical cut-and-paste was done three years ago). Now that the *G.S.* is all "solid-state", we're experimenting with transferring the newsletter to the AAAP's web site. The December issue has already been formatted by George Guzik.

The impetus for this project is offering members the option of receiving their newsletter via the club's Web Site, or as is done now by hard copy in the U.S. Mail. A Web-posted newsletter would help reduce printing and mailing costs, not to mention the toil of folding, labeling, stapling and addressing 550 pieces, as is done now by Alison Conte, our Corresponding Secretary. No formal decision or proposal to the membership has been made at this point.

If you would like to check out the on-line *Guide Star*, go [here](#). Your comments and suggestions are appreciated. (Talk about self-referential! -ed)

Seeking A New Chairperson for the Valley View Observatory Restoration Project

(Right) Leo and his wife Margaret at Valley View observatory, circa 1940 (from AAAP Archives)



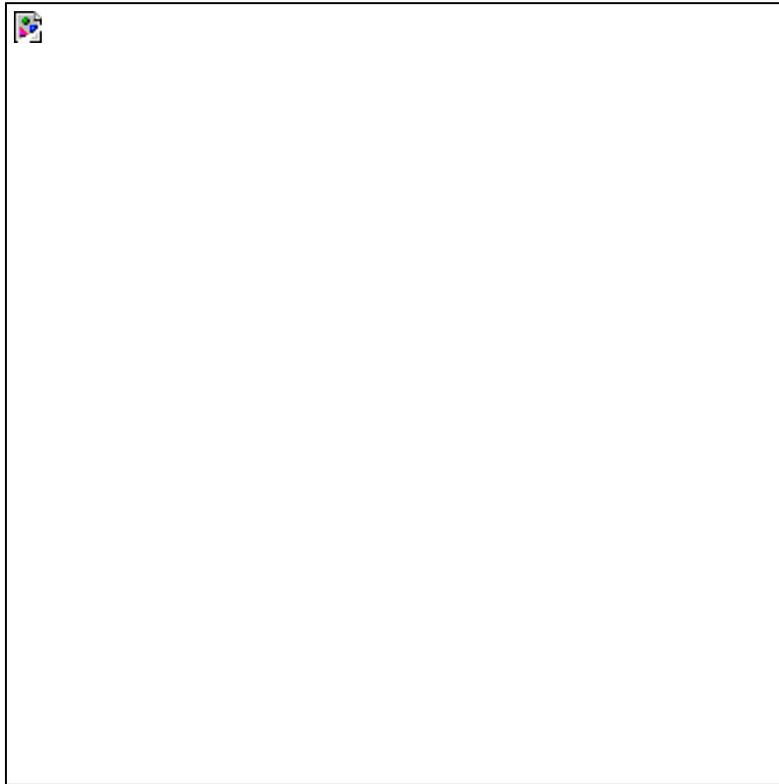
Tom Reiland regrets to report that he must step down as the current Chair of the committee that will oversee the rebuilding of Leo Scanlon's Valley View Observatory (on the grounds of the Wagman Observatory). Tom is involved in several new business enterprises and other activities outside the club that demand a growing percentage of time.

The Valley View Chair will be responsible for supervising (a) the restoration of Leo's original V-V aluminum dome (which is now in storage on John Holtz's property), (b) construction of the new structure to support the dome, and (c) the restoration of the 10-inch Springfield Telescope that was originally housed in the observatory. The Springfield scope is presently in storage at Wagman Observatory. Among the construction project responsibilities is obtaining various county and municipal permits, plan drawings, and negotiating any potential changes to the AAAP Wagman Observatory site contract with Allegheny County.

If you are interested in taking on this important assignment for the AAAP, contact Tom or President Larry McHenry.

Star-Hopping Through The News

- Even though Tax Day is months away, now would be a good time to obtain AAAP donation acknowledgement letters from Treasurer John Holtz. Of course, any financial donation you have made to the club is eligible as a tax-deductible donation to a not-for-profit organization. Check the [Officers Contact Information](#) for John's phone number, address, etc.
- LHSC advanced planning note: We're thinking of arranging a bus to take people from Pittsburgh's North Side to the LHSC site in West Virginia (dates, times, number of runs still to be worked out). If we can amass enough riders, the per-person cost would be about \$20 to \$25. If you are interested in leaving the driving to us, call [Ed Moss](#) at 412-734-0255.
- As we all know, typographical errors and other mistakes magically self generate after a publication has been printed (just ask your *G.S.* editors!). Thus, please check your newly arrived AAAP Membership Directory and report any such errors to Brent Hudock, our Membership Directory. And a note to Brent: You've done another fine job on a very detailed and complex directory.
- Last December's partial Solar eclipse has inspired member Dan Peden to acquire a set of #14 welding filter plates from Jackson Welding Co. As we all know (or should know), these plates are the only absolutely sure protection against eye damage when directly observing the Sun during an eclipse. Dan will be selling these welders plates (at cost) for about \$4 to \$5 each during upcoming club meetings.



- Congratulations to John Radzilowicz upon the birth of his second child, Anastasya Marie Radzilowicz (8 lbs. 4 oz., 19.5 inches long), who arrived on Christmas Day at 4:14 PM!. According to anonymous sources, *"Mother and daughter are doing great! Big brother John Nicholas and Papa are simply dazed and awed."*
- Pete Zapadka passes along his best wishes to the membership for all the calls and cards of support, following his brief hospital stay for a blood clot. Pete is now back to work and slowly getting back up to speed. He plans to attend Wagman Winterfest and the club meeting at the CSC, and fully expects to be observing the cosmos, on his feet, with the rest of us this year.
- We have the remnants of a phonemail message at Wagman Observatory apparently asking for an AAAP guest speaker to visit the Highlands School District. The topic is careers in astronomy. If interested, we recommend that you call that school district for more information.
- We inadvertently left out the name of Bob Schmidt in last month's list of Wagman star party helpers for 2001. Bob often brings his rare and exotic telescopes to the Wagman events, most notable of which is his off-axis Schiefspeigler, which provides almost 3-D views of celestial objects.
- A belated "thank you" to Fred Klein who also helped at last year's Allegheny Observatory Open House. According to George Guzik, *"Fred set up his scope in front of the building and spent the entire blustery evening entertaining guests with views of Pittsburgh landmarks. In fact, he continued long after the precipitation convinced me to put my scope away."*
- **"Duh" Dept. No. 1:** Last month's *Guide Star* incorrectly stated that daylight film developing tank was Mark Arelt's contribution to the door prize smorgasbord at the AAAP Holiday Party. Mark says *"Someone else in the club deserves credit for donating this fine gizmo to the betterment of other*

club members." Will the true contributor please notify the *Guide Star* Editor for proper recognition.

- **"Duh" Dept. No. 2:** Last month's *Guide Star* also failed to recognize Wade Barbin's key contributions to recent repairs and upgrades at Wagman Observatory (January news snippets section). Regarding maintenance work on the Brashear refractor, Flacc Stifel points out *"Wade and I did this job together, both of us being required to disassemble and reassemble the scope. While I painted the tube sections and did maintenance on the focuser, Wade disassembled and cleaned the objective. We then star-tested the scope."* Wade also fixed a few broken shingles on the observatory roof later in December.

Annual AAAP Fiscal Statement

by John Holtz, Treasurer

Following is the AAAP Fiscal Statement for the year 2001, as of Jan 17. Anyone desiring details on a category can contact me directly. In my opinion, the cash flow is right where it needs to be. The income (less donations and Star Cruise) matches the expenses (less Star Cruise) to the nearest hundred dollars! In other words, the membership fees are covering all normal expenses. The generous donations we receive can be used for improvements. Star Cruise, which was self-sufficient last year, is also adding to improvements for the club.

CASH INFLOWS

50/50 Raffle	\$228.00
Class @ Wagman	270.00
Donations:	
Alum Recycle	38.90
Fish Bowl	417.38
Food	528.00
Raffles	50.00
Donations - Other	7323.20
Total Donations	8357.48
Interest	1723.40
keyfee (Wagman use)	420.00
Membership:	
<i>Astronomy</i> Subscription	1798.00
New Member	1507.00
Renewing Member	6884.33
<i>Junior Memberships:</i>	
<i>New</i>	<i>195.00</i>
<i>Renew</i>	<i>312.00</i>

<i>S&T</i> Subscription	6179.70
Stamps	9.89
Sky Watch	29.95
Total Membership	16915.87
Overpayment (mainly Star Cruise)	667.00
Sales:	
Book	30.00
Buttons	71.00
Calendar	256.00
Cash Return	135.00
Glow Sticks	97.00
Hard Hat	40.00
Mouse pad	10.00
Observer Handbook	257.00
Post cards	2.75
Sales - Other	1047.50
Total Sales	1946.25
Star Cruise:	
Cabin Rental	370.00
Camping Fee	2412.00
Day Passes	255.00
Donation	952.00
Family Passes	2370.00
Individual Passes	1810.00
Kites	16.00
Pins	177.00
Raffle	772.00
Rv Fee	458.00
Misc Sales	1013.00
Sweatshirt	673.00
T-Shirt	613.00
Total Star Cruise	11891.00
Stock:	
3M dividend	156.00
Dupont dividend	91.00
JCP dividend	85.58
Kellogg dividend	165.64

Total Stock	498.22
Wagman Fund:	
Dome	20059.99
Wagman Fund	20.00
Total Wagman Fund	20079.99
TOTAL INFLOWS	\$62997.21
CASH OUTFLOWS	
Award:	
Volunteers	\$127.20
Award - Other	121.77
Total Award	248.97
Bank Fee	60.97
Food:	
Christmas	265.94
Food - Other	43.96
Total Food	309.90
Gift:	
Cards	41.85
Christmas Party	194.30
Total Gift	236.15
Guide Star:	
Labels	21.19
Miscellaneous	38.20
Printing	2371.72
Stamps	126.00
Total Guide Star	2557.11
Mail:	
3rd Fee	125.00
Bulk Mail Deposit	900.00
PO Box	45.00
Total Mail	1070.00
Meeting:	
Assets	840.57
Honorarium	100.00
Meeting - Other	373.94
Total Meeting	1314.51
Membership in IDA	200.00

Merchandise:

Books	672.00
Calendar	334.01
Cash Out	135.00
Class Handouts	46.71
Glow sticks	247.17
Total Merchandise	1434.89

NE Wagman Observatory:

Construction Supplies	135.00
Furniture	273.79
Planetarium	359.85
NEWO - Other	15.50
Total NEWO	784.14

Officers:

Corresponding Secretary	101.40
Membership Secretary	278.20
Treasurer	203.23
Total Officers	582.83
Promotion Brochures	244.75
Refunds (mostly Star Cruise)	703.00

Stamps:

Membership Secretary	65.77
Treasurer	301.81
Total Stamps	367.58

Star Party:**Wagman star parties:**

Star Finders	303.85
Other	100.00
Total Wagman star parties	403.85

StarCruise:

Camping	3244.00
Goods	1455.07
Insurance	17.00
Postage/Mailings	28.50
Prizes	611.14
Promotional Info	22.34
Rental	1336.16

Speakers	533.70
Staff Hats	138.00
StarCruise - Other	277.07
Total StarCruise	7662.98
Total Star Party	8066.83
Subscriptions:	
<i>Astronomy</i>	1827.00
<i>S&T: Honorary</i>	119.80
<i>S&T: Regular</i>	6204.64
Other	14.97
Total Subscriptions	8166.41
Utilities:	
Electricity	169.31
Insurance	1908.00
Lawn Care	277.72
Phone	633.23
Porta John	963.00
Total Utility	3951.26
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	\$30299.30
TOTAL GAIN	\$32697.91
Cash and Bank Accounts (2001 Dec 31)	
CD	0.00
Checking Account	4345.74
Cash in transit	230.75
Savings Account	62023.77
Total Cash and Bank Accounts	\$66600.26
Stocks (2001 Dec 31):	
Dupont	2763.15
JC Penney	2501.70
Kellogg	4936.40
3M	7683.65
Total Stock:	\$17884.90
Material Donations:	\$2871.35

Many Thanks for the Lindbloom Award

by Flacc Stifel

I want to express to the Executive Committee, and of course to all the members of the AAAP, how deeply honored and grateful I feel to have been awarded the George Lindbloom Memorial Award for an unprecedented second time. I regret having joined the AAAP too late to have met George as I believe we would have developed a great friendship. Helping the AAAP is its own reward, and the many friends I have made there are very important to me. I appreciate all the talent we have, and the support we give each other helps us all keep going on and furthers our interests in the many aspects of astronomy.

Nova Award Very Much Appreciated

by Steve Brown

I sincerely want to thank you all for the Nova service award AAAP bestowed on Charleen and myself. We were not able to attend the Christmas party as my eldest daughter was returning from college that night. (I spent most of the evening standing in the luxurious waiting facilities at the land side area of the Greater Pittsburgh International Airport since the flight was delayed.) I have found in my ancient wisdom that I have much more enjoyment when I become active in social events such as ours. I would encourage everyone to get involved in some way. I'm sure that all it takes is asking one of the officers how you might help and volunteering when asked. I have met many wonderful people by just participating and forcing myself to be a part of it. Thank you again for this honor. It has truly been our pleasure.

Welcome to the AAAP Universe

The following new members were gladly accepted into the AAAP at the January meeting:

Jo-Ellen Asbury	Phil Hughes	Carl Potenziani
Nemis Barrett	Cecilia Kaminski	Daniel M. Roy
Dr. Ron Conant	Robert Kaminski	Leyda Vakarelov
Bill Dolata	Adam Meddings	Orlin Vakarelov

Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh, Inc.

A section of the Academy of Science and Art of Pittsburgh

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

2001-2002 Officers:

President:	Larry McHenry	412-884-4924
Vice President:	Terry Trees	724-337-3231
Treasurer:	John Holtz	724-352-7596
Corresponding Sec:	Alison Conte	412-741-3216
Recording Sec:	George Guzik	724-863-8008
Membership Sec:	Brent Hudock	724-437-5990
<i>Guide Star</i> Editors:	Eric Fischer (news)	412-487-7011
	Jean Reiland (features)	412-487-8326

2000-2001 Executive Committee (in addition to officers):

Wade Barbin **	724-443-3404	John Radzilowicz	412-388-1562
Bob Kepple	724-295-4128	Tom Reiland *	412-487-8326
Ken Lippert	724-444-1045	Dave Smith	412-390-0870
Ed Moss	412-734-0255	Flacus Stifel **	412-486-8067
Bob Novack	724-538-4242	Bill Yorkshire	412-793-9552

*Wagman Observatory Director

**Wagman Observatory Associate Directors

Group Scheduling Coordinator:

[Paula Meddings](#) (724-745-2447)

AAAP Web Site:

AAAP Homepage: www.3ap.org

AAAP Webmaster: [Kenn Lippert](#)

AAAP Member Dues:

AAAP Dues:	\$18.00
Junior Member (under 18):	\$13.00
Sky & Telescope Magazine:	Add \$30.00
Astronomy Magazine:	Add \$29.00

Basic Procedure for Paying Dues:

1. Make check payable to "AAAP Inc."
2. Send check to:

John Holtz, Treasurer
176 Hidden Hill Rd

Sarver, PA 16055-8907