

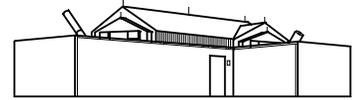
# The Guide Star

Newsletter of the Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh Inc.

A Section of the Academy of Science & Art of Pittsburgh

August, 2003

Vol. 37, No. 5



Nicholas E. Wagman Observatory

## Mars High and Mighty at Five Star Parties for Wagman, Mingo

### August Star Parties: Close Encounters of the Red Kind

When we are flooded with public hoping to see Mars at the August star parties, try out some of these “ooh-ahhhh” perspectives on our guests:

- ✓ Think of the Earth as a spaceship that has gotten to within 35 million miles of Mars after being as much as 235 million miles away.
- ✓ Mars undergoes the greatest change of brightness of almost all distant\* celestial objects (except for stars going nova or supernova) \*Not counting our Moon.
- ✓ This is the closest approach of Mars in recorded history.
- ✓ All the probes that have visited all the other planets have been successful; only 1 in 3 Mars probes have worked.

Perhaps you have a few more Mars “ooh-ahhh” facts for public at the club’s **August 1, 2** star parties at the Wagman and Mingo sites, and **August 16** at Wagman. (In fact, it might help to prepare your own “Mars Facts” cards to answer visitor’s questions.) We’re certain to have bigger than usual crowds because of Mars hype in the general news media. The more scopes we can muster, the shorter the waiting lines at each scope. If you don’t have scope to bring, negative anomalies (i.e. “no problem”); we can always use help with car and crowd control, speaking to any scout groups, helping guests with their scopes, etc. Note: The **August 16** event is also a “Moonrise Special” night at Wagman, adding to the Mars drama. As usual, all star parties kick off at **Sunset**.

#### And A Nifty Occultation To Boot

Reminder from John Holtz: “On August 2, the waxing crescent Moon covers a 6.1 mag star for a nice occultation. Even a small scope will show the star at the time of disappearance -- 9:21 pm EDT.”



### Club’s Equipment Trailer Destroyed by Fire

by George Guzik, President-AAAP

We had a serious incident at NEWO on the morning of June 30 involving the AAAP’s equipment trailer. The trailer was temporarily on the NEWO site after returning from LHSC and prior to being taken to its storage location. The trailer and its contents were destroyed by a fire of suspicious origin. The NEWO building and its contents were NOT harmed. The incident is under investigation by the Allegheny County Police.

### Help Us With Special Groups Aug. 15 and 26

As said here before, one of the key clauses of our Wagman Contract with Allegheny County is to provide educational enrichment to special groups such as the Boy Scouts and classes from local schools. Toward that end, members are urged to help out at Wagman on **August 15**, when we host about 20 people from a New Kensington church youth group, and **August 26**, when students from Point Park College visit. Normally, the observatory’s main scopes provide all the astronomical viewing, but if you can bring your own scope, all the better. No need to call ahead for these events; just show (or no-show if it’s raining).

### See Mars from Mars

In conjunction with the close conjunction of the planet Mars, the Mars (PA) Area Historical Society is sponsoring a star gazing event at Adams Twp. Park on **August 27** and **28**, starting at dusk. Club members are invited to set up scopes for visitors wishing to zoom in on the Red Planet from the famed community of the same name. Here are the directions:

Get on Rt. 228 from Route 8 or the big Cranberry interchange area (includes I-79 and the PA Turnpike). Look for the traffic light near Mars High School. If coming from Cranberry, turn left at the light; if coming from Rt. 8, turn right. Follow the road North about 1.5 miles to the park entrance on the left.

As AAAP members, we need to assist the investigators where we can and to take actions to maintain the integrity of their investigation. We also need to avoid taking actions that might interfere with the investigation.

(continued on page 2, column 1)



Photo by Dave Houggy



## Trailer Fire Recalls Security Measures

by Tom Reiland, Director – Wagman Observatory  
(Adapted from an AAAP Listserver Posting)

The trailer fire incident that occurred late June 29 or early June 30 was one reason why I was at the observatory early on a following morning. I spent as much time as I can there from July 3 through 6 because of the holiday weekend. The warm weather, the use of fireworks and closed schools have a negative effect on the mentality of small minds. When you go up to the observatory and there are three or fewer members, you can close and lock the gate. You can close the gate no matter how many of you are there on New Moon weekends. They're reserved for members and their guests. Please be careful and vigilant when you're there. Record license numbers of any vehicle driven by suspicious characters. If you have a cell phone carry the phone numbers for the County, State and West Deer Police departments with you for any emergency. If you're in the building you'll find the numbers posted next to the phones. If anyone hassles you call the police.

Finally, if anyone asks the value of anything in the building, tell them you have no idea or that we got it used or from a junkyard. Be careful, especially during warm weather and always make sure that you've locked and secured everything in the building and the gate is locked. Thanks for your assistance.

## Trailer Fire Under Police Investigation

(Continued from page 1)

- Members should keep any discussion of this incident within the AAAP.
- Members should not discuss this incident with former members.
- If you wish to use the NEWO site you should first contact the NEWO Director or Associate Directors for further instructions.

If you use the site and the trailer is still present, please stay away from it. The trailer is currently located in the corn field below the north side of the NEWO building. It will remain there until insurance investigators complete their work. As a rule of thumb, stay on the mowed portion of the NEWO observing field and you should be far enough away from the trailer. The police may increase their surveillance of the NEWO site so I strongly recommend carrying your AAAP membership card if you are on the site.

(continued at right)

## AAAP Help for WQED: Serve As A Telephone Solicitor of the Good Kind

by Tom Reiland and Dave Smith (adapted from AAAP  
Listserver)

Karen Potter of WQED-TV has invited AAAP members to serve as on-air telephone volunteers from **August 9 to 31**. They are looking for around ten of our members to take phone calls for pledging on: Saturday, August 9th 6:00 PM to 11:30 PM, Monday, August 11th 7:30 PM to 11:30 PM. Karen says we can wear club shirts, they will be serving some food and drink, and they send out for pizza on Sat. You would be in the background, on air, during pledging. This could help give more exposure for the AAAP. They usually make mention of the group answering the phones. Please give Karen a call at 412-622-1590 if you are interested. Call soon before she schedules someone else. People that do this have a good time.

## Camping/Star Gazing at Raystown Lake August 8-9

by George Guzik

We have an opportunity to hold a public star party at Raystown Lake (in central PA, east of Altoona) on August 9. Dolores Smith, the ranger coordinating the event, is planning to make camping facilities available for participants and she needs to know in the next week how many of our members would be interested in camping overnight after the event. Please let me know if you would like to participate in this event and if you are interested in the overnight camping option. Thanks!

## 40 Members Assist Holiday Weekend Star Party

by Tom Reiland (from AAAP Listserver)

Thanks go out to all the members who helped out at the Wagman Obs. Star Party on July 5. There were almost 40 members in attendance, only slightly less than the number of visitors that showed up Saturday. We probably had about 75 public come out to view the Moon, Jupiter, two Iridium satellites and many other objects. Some of them got to see two large sunspot groups through the 11 Inch Brashear Refractor. I was the last one to leave the hilltop at about 1:50 AM. It's a good thing that we don't hold or cancel our star parties according to local weather forecasts.

Please keep a watchful eye open when at NEWO and report any suspicious activity to the police. Members with any knowledge of individuals who may be involved in this incident should contact me directly. Any media representatives contacting members for information related to this incident should be directed to me or to Tom Reiland, Flacc Stifel, or Wade Barbin. Thank you for your cooperation.

(Editor's note: See page 8 for additional Wagman security recommendations from George Guzik.)

## Finally! An Awesome Wagman/Mingo Star Party Night On July 18/19

### Almost Too Many Things to Observe At NEWO

by Tom Reiland (adapted from an AAAP Listserv Posting)

Thanks go out to the 50 or so members who helped out at the 7-18 Star Party. Everyone had a great time. We had between 250 and 300 visitors enjoy views of Jupiter, Mercury, Neptune, Uranus and Mars later on. There was the beautiful Moon rise that Pete Zapadka mentioned at 12:21, many satellites, a few meteors, the Milky Way, double and variable stars, deep sky objects and a nice sunset with crepuscular and anti-crepuscular rays. Many members stayed until 2:00 or 3:00 AM and a few of us stayed even later. Phil Hughes and I were that last to leave at 5:30.

I hope all who were there had a great time, too. It was fun meeting some of yinz for the first time and getting to know you. It's a night I won't forget for a long time. I'm glad that many of you were there to share it with me and increase my enjoyment and that of our guests. It's the most fun I've had at and after a star party in a long time.

### Super Saturday Follows Foggy Friday At Mingo

(Adapted from AAAP Listserv Postings)

John Diller: "My first visit. What a spectacular view of the southern horizon, Scorpius and Sagittarius 'n' 'at! My best views of Mars ever! It was the night I've been waiting all year for. One head count gave about 85 people, but I'm not sure. I showed galaxies M 94, 63 and 51 and various globs and the Lagoon and Trifid nebulae to the visitors. Mingo is a wonderful site! It was the best I've seen since Starcruise '02 and not because of or recent crappy weather. Around midnight I gave my doggies a break and just sat back and gawked at the clouds of stars and dust arching over us. It showed that 3-D effect of the nearer, visible stars stretching into the distance to become clouds, like a freeze-frame of snowflakes passing by your car windows as you plunge into a blizzard...."

Vern Cox - "It was fantastic. While there are two point light sources and a dimly lit Equitable Gas facility far off on the Southern horizon, it is still a fantastic Southern Horizon. Sagittarius, Scorpius and the other southern constellations were very high off the horizon with M8 easily visible to the naked eye."

(continued at right)

### AAAP Executive Committee At-Large Members Announced

by George Guzik (from AAAP Listserv)

I'm pleased to announce the formation of our AAAP Executive Committee for this new year. In addition to our Officers, the Committee will include these members:

Larry McHenry\*  
Dave Smith  
John Radzilowicz

Bob Novack  
Ed Moss

\*Our immediate past President



Member Phil Hughes caught this dazzling Iridium flare in the wee hours of the great July 18/19 star party night.

Shawn van Mastrigt: "Last night made the intolerable fog from Friday a distant memory. The skies were awesome, despite having my telescope set up at the pavilion, we had some great views of various star clusters and nebulas. I could even see the lagoon nebula naked eye, despite not being dark adapted from the lights at the pavilion."

Larry McHenry: "Yes, last night was a very good night. Haven't seen the Milky-Way locally like that for a long time (you would have to go to the StarCruise site, or Oil City to find better skies). We had about 85 - 90 total attendees, with about 20 - 25 being members....a pretty good turnout for our new starparty location. The public really liked our setting up the astro display boards and computer AV in the pavilion. They also liked all the free handouts, including a bunch of neat SOHO solar stuff. I would like to thank all the members who helped out, especially **Shawn van Mastrigt**, **Dan McKeel**, who helped me work the pavilion."



Vern Cox's Celestron Pacific SCT grabbed a great deal of attention at the Mingo Star Party July 18-19.

## 2003 LHSC: One of the Best Gets Even Better



Member Charlie Pritt pieced together this interesting digital photo mosaic of the Star Cruise site.

**Laurel Highlands Star Cruise** may not yet be as well known as, say, the Texas Star Party, but it's reputation for fun and rewarding activities improves with each year. Heaps of praise and thanks to all those who helped make LHSC 2003 the best yet (sorry, no time to list all the helpers in this [GS](#)). We had over 300 visitors for the entire event, which included folks from Canada, California, New York, Connecticut, Georgia, Michigan and other states. AAAP members mingled with amateur astronomers from other regional clubs based in Norfolk, the Virginia Tidewater area, Harrisburg and points around West Virginia. All of the guest speakers were able to make their schedules (Hubble updates was again the biggest hit), and we had no major equipment failures or flubs. Weather conditions were better than last year and, except for one brush-by thunder storm coming out of the southwest. Puddles, mush and mud were not a problem. Although clouds wiped out some nights, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday provided outstanding views of the Milky down through Scorpius and Sattitarius.

To get a sense of the variety of scopes on hand (including an incredible dual-refractor "binocular" instrument), log on to the upcoming [GS](#) Web Features section at the AAAP web site. Also check the Star Cruise Web Site ([www.lhsc.org](http://www.lhsc.org)) for more pix and comments from visitors. In addition to telescopes, you will see the faces of just some of the hard-working folks who pulled it all together. Once again, to these diligent AAAP members we say "thanks".

### Despite Full Moon, NEWO Scout Group Visit Goes Swimmingly

by Tom Reiland

Our thanks go out to all the members who helped with the Scout Group at Wagman Observatory on July 12. We only had one-third of what we were expecting because the others got scared off by another bad weather forecast. Their mistake. We were able to show the scouts Jupiter, the Moon, some clusters, bright stars and double stars. **George Guzik, John Diller** and **Bill Hayeslip** brought their scopes while **Pete Zapadka, Bill and Jean Roemer** helped me with the 20 inch Manka and the 11 inch Brashear. We entertained some other families who showed up because they thought that there was a public star party. After most of the people left, I had some guests from England come up to look and Mars, Neptune, some clusters and nebulae and their favorite object, Uranus: ☺ **John Cheng** and I left at 3 AM. Too bad all this nice weather was wasted on a Full Moon weekend.

### LHSC: Observing with Children (Aged 12)

by Ann Norman

*(Editor's note: This is an excerpt from longer LHSC story submitted by Ann. Look for the complete article in the upcoming GSOL Features for August.)*

.....Late afternoon my kids divided their time between playing catch, reading Harry Potter, and hanging out on the air-conditioned NASA space bus, full of lounge chairs and wide screen TV that continuously played shows about NASA and its missions. By evening they were quizzing me on space trivia they had learned by osmosis.

Around 8:30 my son Paris pulled up a camp chair and announced he would watch the sun set "because I've never seen it before." Minutes later he had accomplished this, remarking on how fast it went, and both Paris and Chris began begging me to get out the telescope so they could wait for the stars. Though it was way too early for stars I let them use the telescope and they played for an hour, discovering they could use it to read the license plates off of cars parked across the field. As the first stars appeared, so did the clouds, which made the star search all the more exciting as they had to aim and look before the star was covered up. We got a quick glance at Jupiter and, then, fortuitously, a fireworks show began, sending up smoke in the vicinity of a hopelessly clouded over Sagittarius.

On the way home we stopped (in Scottdale?) for some go-cart racing! And we hit a bucket of golf balls. Now THAT'S how you do "Observing with Children"!

### Mom Is A Top-Notch Observer at Star Cruise

by Mary Jean Kancel (from AAAP Listserver)

Just back from a great Star Cruise, where I dragged my Mom. For some time this evening she has been reading the Messier Marathon book (featuring Tom Reiland) I purchased there. She yelled to me "Did you know there are Messier objects in the Big Dipper?" You could find those." I hear "Did you know this...? did you know that...? This is really interesting!"

Observing Friday night, she asked what the kite-shaped constellation was. I assumed she meant Cygnus as it can look like a kite on it's side. As she's reading the book now she excitedly pointed and said this was what she saw - it was Scutum. Sigh. I should have put in raffle tickets for one of the scopes - looks like I'll have some competition now for mine!!

## AAAP News Bytes

➤ The Moon/Mars close duo did not disappoint (nor did the weather) on the night of July 16/17 when the two passed within xx arc minutes. As Joyce Osborne-Fischer put it, "Mars looked like a Moon of the Moon". **Jerry Zhu's** image below was one of many fine captures of the conjunction; **Phil Hughes** also had some splendid images. If you missed this event (as did your G.S. Editor), a thousand lashes with a wet star chart.



➤ **ALPO News from John Holtz** - "The AAAP has received notice that the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers (ALPO) will hold their 54th Annual Convention in Boardman Ohio. Since this is a short ways away via turnpike (just south of Youngstown OH), some of us may want to think about attending. The convention is on **August 7-9.**"

➤ Congrats to AAAP member and colleague **John Radzilowicz** for his well-done interview recently aired on "Comcast Newsmakers", which appears on the CNN Headline News cable channel. John succinctly described the process for naming an asteroid after the late Fred Rogers, and also gave a preview of the upcoming Mars close approach.

➤ "Can you hear me now?" Wagman Director **Tom Reiland** has purchased a cordless phone for the observatory. It will have emergency numbers programmed on the speed dial memory; they will be listed next to the phone. In addition to enhancing security, the cordless will allow a given member to describe an ongoing celestial event (such as an Aurora) to the person on the line.

➤ Speaking of Wagman Observatory, all members are reminded to contact Tom Reiland or Flacc Stifel if you have any questions about accessing the observatory with the new combinations and security system updates.

➤ No breaking news on the Mingo Observatory front. Ed Moss and his team continue to press forward on multiple tasks such as design drawings, telescope repairs, permits and additional funding. Even though we are pursuing large-scale funding from foundations, corporations etc., members are welcome and urged to make their own personal contributions.

➤ Speaking of Mingo, we now have a nice tri-fold brochure available for site star parties at that park. The brochure was put together by **Becky Nichols** and includes a detailed district map to the Mingo site. This brochure will be available at all club venues in the coming months.

## Take Note of Sky & Telescope Subscription Increase

by John Holtz

The rate for a club member subscription to Sky & Telescope magazine will be increasing on September 1 from \$30 to \$33. If your subscriptions expires in 2003 and your AAAP membership is due, please send your renewal before August 21 (to give the Treasurer time to process it.) You can also add a subscription to your membership at this rate prior to Sept. 1. The subscription price outside of the club is \$43. If your subscription expires with a 2004 issue, you will have to pay the higher rate regardless of when you renew.

## Semi-Annual Fiscal Report

by John Holtz

For what it's worth, here is the semi-annual fiscal report. This is not nearly as complete nor as definitive as the annual reports which appear in the February issues. For example, I did not try to "end" the fiscal period by paying all bills related to the income in the first half of the year, etc. The income and payments for Star Cruise are not complete, the Mingo Creek project is on-going, and so on. Use these values, accurate as of July 10, as an approximate indication of our fiscal health.

(continued on page 6, column 2)

### 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

#### 2003-2004 Officers:

|                     |                     |              |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| President:          | George Guzik        | 724-863-8008 |
| Vice President:     | Bill Yorkshire      | 412-793-9552 |
| Treasurer:          | John Holtz          | 724-352-7596 |
| Corresponding Sec:  | Charlotte Tunney    | 412-441-3958 |
| Recording Sec:      | Dennis Derda        | 724-224-4688 |
| Membership Sec:     | Brent Hudock        | 724-437-5990 |
| Guide Star Editors: | Eric Fischer (news) | 412-487-7011 |

AAAP Homepage: 3ap.org

AAAP Webmaster: Kenn Lippert (lippert@nauticom.net)

#### Guide Star Associate Editors

Ann Norman (412-242-6806) Cathy Rivi (412-782-4605)  
Guide Star Classified Ads: Cathy Rivi (crivi@mindspring.com)

#### AAAP Member Dues\*\*\*:

|                                      |                     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| AAAP Dues:                           | \$18.00             |
| Junior Member (under 18):            | \$13.00             |
| <u>Sky &amp; Telescope Magazine:</u> | (See Article above) |
| <u>Astronomy Magazine:</u>           | 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



*This fascinating image of Mercury creeping in on the Sun's surface from the right is one of many that will appear in Jerry Zhu's August GSOL Gallery*

**Plan Your Own Spread**

**Guide Star Photo Gallery the First (We Hope) of Many**

Sky & Telescope Magazine has one; why not the Guide Star? We're speaking of a periodic gallery of best astronomical photos. With digital imaging and scanning of old prints/slides into electronic formats, it is now easy to lay out several pages of your best shots of the Solar System and the Cosmos. The first edition of the GS Gallery features the always-prolific **Jerry Zhu**, who regularly posts links to many fine images on the AAAP Listserv. Now the catch: The GS Gallery will only appear in the GSOL on-line features section on the AAAP web site. We're doing this, in part, because most astronomical photos are utterly ruined in hard copy printing; details and fine features are lost or smeared by even first-generation copying. In contrast, you can zoom in on image details with the web site version. If you would like to be featured in a future GS Gallery, here are some points of order:

- ◆ Images can be anything in the sky, from rainbows to distant "fuzzy patch" galaxies.
- ◆ 10 to 12 images typically fill a page or two
- ◆ Please submit shots as .jpg, .tif or .bmp images to emfischer@switch.com. Images can also be submitted on CD or 3.5" diskettes.
- ◆ Video stills are also welcome.
- ◆ Please also provide a brief caption with each image (your choice of description)
- ◆ Scanned versions of old prints and 35mm slides are welcome; Gallery images do not have to be recent vintage.

**Visit the Future – Now: GSOL**

Many AAAP members have now converted to Guide Star On-Line subscriptions, saving the club much money each month. However, many others of you out there have not yet made the transition. If you would like to enjoy all the benefits of on-line access (access from any PC, print yours in color, high-resolution astro-images, etc.), contact our new Corresponding Secretary **Charlotte Tunney** at [tunneyc@carnegielibrary.org](mailto:tunneyc@carnegielibrary.org) or call her at 412-441-3958.

**Our Sympathies to Wayne and Mari-Jo Meyers**

Our deepest condolences go out to Wayne and Mari Jo Meyers on the unexpected death of Wayne's son, Scott. We all know Wayne as Mari-Jo's Right-Hand-Man behind the club's merchandize table at Wagman, LHSC and other events. Wayne helps the club in many other ways as well.

**Club Financials Updated**

*(continued from page 5)*

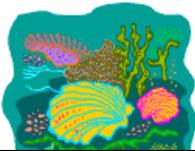
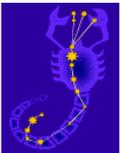
**INFLOWS**

|                             |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 50-50 raffles.....          | \$176.00           |
| Donations.....              | \$1,327.30         |
| Interest.....               | \$486.16           |
| Keyfee.....                 | \$250.00           |
| Memberships.....            | \$4,280.00         |
| Astronomy Subscription..... | \$986.00           |
| S&T Subscription.....       | \$2,699.90         |
| Overpayments.....           | \$321.50           |
| Sales.....                  | \$1,174.71         |
| SHO.....                    | \$55,500.00        |
| Star Cruise.....            | \$14,188.50        |
| Stock Dividends.....        | \$153.07           |
| Wagman Fund.....            | \$706.44           |
| <b>TOTAL INFLOWS.....</b>   | <b>\$82,249.58</b> |

**OUTFLOWS**

|                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Awards.....                  | \$402.80           |
| Bank Fee.....                | \$66.30            |
| Gifts.....                   | \$518.00           |
| Guide Star Production.....   | \$2,278.55         |
| Mailings.....                | \$279.00           |
| Meetings.....                | \$392.23           |
| IDA Membership.....          | \$200.00           |
| Merchandise.....             | \$205.99           |
| Mingo Creek project.....     | \$2,823.50         |
| Wagman Observatory.....      | \$340.72           |
| Treasurer supplies.....      | \$163.89           |
| Promotion.....               | \$221.05           |
| Refunds.....                 | \$165.50           |
| Stamps.....                  | \$162.41           |
| Star Parties: NEWO.....      | \$450.60           |
| StarCruise.....              | \$11,154.46        |
| Astronomy Subscriptions..... | \$870.00           |
| S&T Subscriptions.....       | \$2,575.70         |
| Tax.....                     | \$2,111.68         |
| Trailer.....                 | \$390.50           |
| Electricity.....             | \$82.68            |
| Wagman lawn care.....        | \$84.86            |
| Wagman phone.....            | \$218.79           |
| Wagman porta john.....       | \$481.50           |
| <b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS.....</b>   | <b>\$26,640.71</b> |

# August 2003

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday  | Saturday   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| <b>QUIZ: What astronomical event signals the advent of mass spawning in Flower Garden Banks</b> , a national marine sanctuary in the Gulf of Mexico? It is home to 21 types of corals, more than 250 reef invertebrates, and over 200 species of fish. The area contains the northernmost coral reefs in the US. Here, the ruby brittle starfish awaits an underwater snowstorm of eggs, which occurs just once a year. Answer below. |   |   |   |      | 1<br>Star Parties at Wagman and Mingo Park  | 2<br>Star Parties at Wagman and Mingo Park   |
| 3   | 4<br>    | 5<br>                            | 6<br>                         | 7<br>Beginning Astronomy Class<br>John Holtz<br>Aug 7 – Sep 4                           | 8<br>Raystown Lake star party (see page 2)  | 9<br>Raystown Lake star party (see page 2)   |
| 10<br>   | 11<br><b>Perseid meteors</b><br>Asaph Hall discovers Deimos, moon of Mars<br>1877         | 12<br><b>Perseid meteors</b><br> | 13<br><b>Perseid meteors</b><br>Christiaan Huygens discovers the Martian south polar cap<br>1672                | 14<br><b>Perseid meteors</b><br>J. Holtz Astronomy Class                                | 15<br>Lecture: Studying the Gas that forms Galaxies - AO<br>7 p.m. Reservations: (412) 321-2400 | 16<br>Dark Sky/Moon Rise Star Party (Wagman)   |
| 17<br>Asaph Hall discovers Phobos, moon of Mars<br>1877   | 18  | 19<br>                           | 20<br><b>Hot word:</b><br>canicular... "of or relating to the dog days of summer"...                            | 21<br>...from the Latin "canicula" or "small dog," also the name for Sirius, the hound. | 22<br>Because the first visible rising of Sirius occurs during the summer, the days...          | 23<br>...from early July to early September were called "dies caniculares," or dog days. |
| 24  | 25<br> | 26<br>Special group star party at Wagman (also Aug. 15.) See front page.  | 27<br> Mars closest to Earth | 28<br>J. Holtz Astronomy Class  | 29<br>     | 30   |
| 31  |   |   |   |   |   |  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Looking ahead:</b> Star Parties Sept. 5, 6 (Wagman and Mingo Park)<br>Dark Sky/Moon Rise Star Party Sept. 20 (Wagman)<br><b>AAAP Business Meetings resume SEPTEMBER 12!</b><br><b>Answer to quiz:</b> The full moon in August signals mass spawning at Flower Garden Banks. Source: Sierra Club, "Littorally Speaking," 8 <sup>th</sup> Annual Sierra Magazine Contest 2003 | <u>AAAP Long-Range Meeting Schedule</u><br>Sep. 12                      Jan. 9, 2004<br>Oct. 10                      Feb. 6, 2004<br>Nov. 7                        Mar. 5, 2004<br>Dec. 5                        Apr. 2, 2004 |
|--|---|

# Simple Actions Can Help Keep NEWO A Secure Site

by George Guzik

Although we had a serious incident with last month's trailer fire at the Wagman site, we don't want members to think the site is in constant danger from trouble-makers. Since the original building was constructed in 1987, we've only had a handful of minor incidents. Nonetheless, it is best if AAAP members are vigilant when they use the site and follow a few basic security guidelines. If you encounter any kind of problem person (intoxicated, belligerent, etc.,) keep these points in mind:

- Call the police; do not try to deal with the person yourself. Police officers are our first line of defense. Have an officer deal with the offender if possible.
- Get the offender's license plate number, if possible. That will help the police greatly.

Here are two additional items from the NEWO County contract and training booklet that can also guide your actions:

- From Contract: "AAAP shall not permit any person or persons to be visibly intoxicated, or under the influence of drugs, in or about the observatory, but AAAP's obligation in this respect shall be limited to a reasonable request to offenders to cease such violations and remove themselves from the facility. This stipulation shall not impose upon (continued at upper right)

*AAAP the duty and obligation of exercising powers and duties of a peace officer. Violators of Commonwealth laws or regulations shall be brought to the attention of the County."*

- From Training Booklet – "The AAAP is not expected to exercise police duties. If members of the public misbehave or are intoxicated, you may make a reasonable request for them to leave, but do not do so if you feel this would be unsafe. Call police (emergency numbers are posted by each phone) or, if necessary, leave and get help."

## Classifieds- For Sale

- 1) TeleVue Everbright 2" Diagonal. Used, but in good condition; older style (no compression ring). \$50
- 2) LaserMax 2" Collimator. Used a few times; very good condition. \$50
- 3) TMB-105 f/6.2 Triplet Apochromatic Refractor. Two years old; only used five or six times; very good condition (tube's finish coat has a couple of thin gray streaks [like pencil lines] about 1" long that were present when purchased new). Rugged OTA with very nice optics, includes fitted hardcase, finder scope, and 2" to 1.25" adapter. Very good review of this model at the Cloudy Nights web site. \$1,500

Contact John Peak at 412-821-5180 or Peak\_John@msn.com

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