



The Guide Star



Mingo Creek Park Observatory

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

June 2006

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A Year of Thanks!

By Rich Bailey

After one year in the office of President, I am leaving with good memories. Serving as your president has been a pleasure. During this time my notions were reinforced about how wonderful the people are in this club. I remember just after being elected hearing some thoughts like "Do you know what you're getting into?" Well, George passed me the gavel at the annual picnic and I started to hear how hard it was to get someone to run for this office. Then the time came for the first event for me to attend as president, a meeting of the Academy of Science and Art of Pittsburgh.

This was in Oakland at an expensive restaurant with a private roomful of people. Only one of these people had I ever met before. You might say I was a little nervous. This meeting lasted about twenty minutes. The meeting culminated with me standing before this group to accept a check for our club to the tune of one hundred thousand dollars. I believe this is the largest check I ever held in

my hands in my life! Then I had a free meal that was outstanding! After about an hour and a half of enjoyable conversation and saying "Thank You" as often as I could fit it in, I left to meet my family at the museum and enjoy the rest of the afternoon. Well, I guess I didn't know what I was in for, but it has been a very positive experience.

Of course it is not always parties and people throwing money at you; much work needed to be done, and the work never ends. This can be said by most of the members volunteering in the club. I believe each can reminisce about enjoyable experiences they have had working on club projects. The past year has presented the opportunity for me to meet so many of the friendly and helpful people in our organization. This is what I have enjoyed most.

Considering this, you might wonder why I did not run again. Actually I would have enjoyed remaining on as president if the membership had liked me to continue. The reason I decided not to run is due completely to outside concerns. With recent developments in my family and work, the time I have to spend has been limited during the past year. It seems this will only continue. Although I have not heard complaints, it is not fair to the club. The president needs to provide significant time to the club's projects.

In spite of this, I do not plan to disappear. The two committees I started during my term, Information Technology and Development, I will continue to work with as an active member. Both are still in their early stages and both are too important for me to walk away.

In summary, I thank everyone for giving me this opportunity. I thank the many members who worked with me on the Executive Committee, (particularly the at-large members who served at my request), the Mingo Creek Park Observatory team, the Information Technology Committee, the Wagman team, and more recently, the Development Committee. I thank those continuing to put forth tremendous effort at AAAP events, particularly the events that I was not able to attend. Thank you so much. I look forward to continuing our work together and encourage others with a little extra time or resources to become more active members.

THANKS TO YOU RICH!

Winterfest X Star Cruise — Entry Fee = Summerfest 2006! by Ann Norman (Pictures from Larry McHenry's Mingo website)

What do you get when you cross Wagman Winterfest with Star Cruise and take away the registration fees? Summerfest 2006! Summerfest is a camp-out/star party that will be held at Mingo Creek Park Observatory the weekend of June 23, 24, and 25.

Get to know your new Mingo Observatory and hang out with your AAAP buddies on this new moon weekend. We have a huge field reserved for camping. Bring your tents and trailers.



For those who haven't been down to Mingo Creek Park Observatory—be warned: we put the “party” back in “star party.” With two telescopes, a planetarium, videos playing, and slide shows running simultaneously, Mingo Observatory is a five-ring circus. And don't forget to check out our luxury member-room accommodations (AAAP members only!), where there's always a pop in the fridge! Best of all, Mingo Creek Park Observatory offers front row seats to the Summer Milky Way. See the “steam” pour out of the Sagittarius teapot! Watch the Star Cloud sparkle! See the Swan Nebula float through the eyepiece!



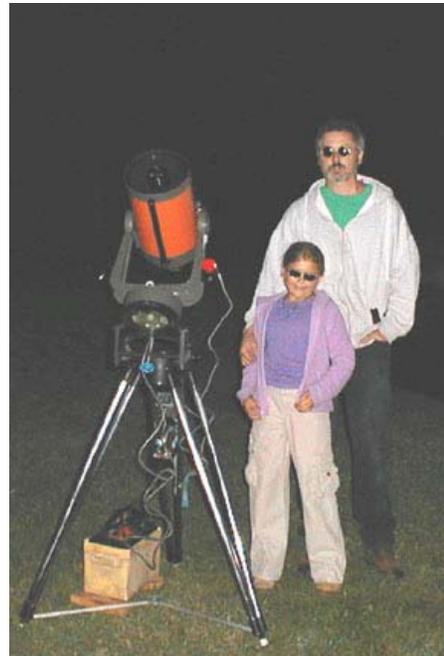
Be there for the First Light Ceremony for the new 24-inch reflector!

The Boy Scouts have the food concession with refrigerator and stove and will be open 24 hours! There will be speakers and children's activities, movies, and maybe rockets. Take a side trip to the Spring House Country Market working dairy farm (ten minutes from Mingo and \$5.00); Yough/Ohiopyle for water activities/biking (45 minutes from Mingo); or to the



prehistoric Meadowcroft Rock Shelter (50 minutes from Mingo, \$20.00 for an insider tour, \$6.50 for the regular tour). There will be biking led by Dave Smith and a mushroom walk led by Jim and Charlotte Tunney! Rain or shine there will be plenty to do at Summerfest!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR. No reservations necessary, but if you plan on camping, send me an e-mail so we can get a count. (Ann Norman's e-mail: redmarsmom@aol.com) Also let us know if you are interested in the dairy farm or Meadowcroft Rock Shelter. Star Cruise begins at 3:00pm on Friday.



Late breaking news: We just got Summerfest reservations from 150+ Boy Scouts. Summerfest is going to be **BIG!** Don't miss out.

We will have a speaker on Cosmological Simulations and a new supply of Hubble Space Telescope pictures, posters, and souvenirs to give away.

CONGRATULATIONS!

These officers will take office officially on June 1st, 2006 (as specified in the AAAP By-Laws)

President: Ed Moss
Vice President: Ann Norman
Treasurer: Harry Noss
Corresponding Secretary: John Mozer
Recording Secretary: Dennis Derda
Membership Secretary: Mark Schomer
Guide Star Editor: Maureen and Bill Moutz (team with one executive vote)
and the Motion to Update the Articles of Incorporation passed.

INFORMATION ON CCD IMAGING CONFERENCE

Scheduled for August 11-13, 2006 in Philadelphia. It should appeal to all levels of CCD imagers, and to all types of imagers including deep sky, solar, and planetary. The conference kicks-off with a workshop on Friday afternoon specifically designed for the beginning student in image processing. We even have included a lecture on the hot new topic of DSLR imaging. The event will offer the unique opportunity to:

- Learn advanced imaging techniques from some of the most advanced astroimagers and astrophotographers.
- Improve your processing skills through hands-on workshops taught by the best.

- Meet some of the most renowned astroimagers and astrophotographers in the world.
- Visit our exhibitor booths to see some of your dream toys firsthand.
- Most important of all, come and have some fun with us.

Please visit our website for the agenda and registration form:

www.pennastroimaging.com/eccai

Steve Mazlin, MD

www.fourthdimensionastroimaging.com

215-860-9046



Fred Klein's Markarian's Chain

WAGMAN OBSERVATORY NEWS

Star Party Dates: June 2, 3, 30 and July 1

AAAP Annual Picnic will be **Saturday, July 15** starting around 3 or 4 PM and lasting until sunset. Members and guests are all invited to Wagman Observatory for a private star party after the picnic, weather permitting

Here's an updated list of all the members who helped at Wagman Observatory for the first five star parties.

2006 Star Party Volunteers at Wagman Observatory

Rich Bailey	2	Ann Norman	2
Linda Bailey	2	Bob Novak	1
Wade Barbin	4	Frank Pastin	3
Phil Breidenbach	1	Mike Petro	2
Shirley Caseman	3	Rowen Poole	4
John Cheng	2	Dan Reed	1
Rick Clare	2	Tom Reiland	5
John Close	2	Glen Rockhill	2
Tim Colbert	2	Sheri Rockhill	2
Ken Coles	3	Bill Roemer	4
Kathy DeSantis	1	Jean Roemer	1
Mary DeVaughn	2	Brent Samay	3
John Diller	1	Judy Schomer	1
Eric Fischer	2	Mark Schomer	1
Joyce Osborne-Fischer	2	Michael Skowvron	1
Kelly Fletcher	1	Allen Sluder	1
Chris Genovese	1	Dave Smith	3
George Guzik	2	Gary Snodgrass	1
Bill Hayeslip	5	Larry Sneider	5
Eric Heckathorn	2	Flac Stifel	3
Don Hoecker	3	Joanne Trees	1
Les Johnson	3	Terry Trees	1
Bob Kalan	3	Charlotte Tunney	1
Fred Klein	4	Jim Tunney	1
Ed Kuzemchak	1	Allen Tracht	3
Gene Kulakowski	1	Kevin Van Horn	1
Tim Manka	1	John Wilson	2
Ed Moss	2	Bill Yorkshire	3
Dennis Morton	1	Diane Yorkshire	1
Bill Moutz	1	Pete Zapadka	2

As of 5/19/06 there were 5 star parties. Sixty members volunteered 124 times. Thanks for your assistance thus far. Hope to see many of yinz June 2 and 3.

Tom Reiland, Director
Wagman Observatory



Telescope Loan Information Package

Eligibility:

Anyone who is a current member of the A.A.A.P. and has been in good standing for at least three (3) months is eligible to borrow a telescope and/or equipment. Certain telescopes or equipment may require special skill or knowledge; the prospective recipient will need to demonstrate the necessary qualifications before such items will be loaned.

Loan Period:

The *Telescope Loan* should not be considered as a long term, permanent loan. The intent is to allow the recipient to try various telescopes and equipment to help define their interest in a particular aspect of the hobby. For this reason, the period of the loan shall be limited to two (2) months, subjected to the qualifications stated below.

If there is no other interest for the telescope or equipment at the end of the two (2) month period, the current recipient may continue to borrow the equipment. However, after such time and if a future recipient expresses an interest in the telescope or equipment, the current recipient will return the equipment in a timely fashion, but not to exceed two (2) weeks. Exceptions can be made with the agreement of the *Loan Officer* and the future recipient.

The telescope and/or equipment borrowed will be immediately return to the A.A.A.P. in the event of any of the following conditions:

- a. If the recipient terminates their membership with the A.A.A.P.
- b. If the recipient's membership dues are not paid within one (1) month of their due date.
- c. If the recipient is not in good standing with the A.A.A.P.
- d. If the recipient intends to move out of the immediate area so that return of the equipment becomes a problem.
- e. At the request of the *Loan Officer*.

Loan Procedure:

Approval for a loan is the discretion of the *Loan Officer* and designated staff. After approval is given, the steps described below shall be followed:

Pickup & Inspection: The intended recipient must pick up the equipment at its current location, unless other arrangements are made in advance. At such time, operating instructions will be given (if required) concerning the use of the equipment.

The equipment will be inspected by the intended recipient and *Loan Officer* (or designated staff), and the results will be recorded on the appropriate form (see "Inspection Report"). Both parties will acknowledge the pre-loan condition by signing and dating the form.

The intended recipient must present positive identification before the equipment will be entrusted to them.

Use of Telescope or Equipment: While in the possession of the recipient, the telescope and/or equipment will not be loaned to a third party. Any problems or required maintenance will be reported to the *Loan Officer* or designated staff.

Return & Inspection: At the end of the loan period (see "Loan Period" above), the recipient will return the equipment to the storage site, unless other arrangements are made in advance. At this time, the telescope or equipment will be inspected and compared to the original condition at the time of the loan. The results will be recorded on the appropriate form (see "Inspection Report"). Both parties will acknowledge the returned condition by dating and signing the form.

Fees & Charges: There is no fee for the *Loan Procedure*. However, if the equipment is lost or shows signs of abuse or other depreciation beyond the normal wear and tear, as determined by the *Loan Officer* or designated staff, the recipient will be required to pay for the repair or replacement of the equipment.

Disclaimer:

The A.A.A.P. does not assume any responsibility for damage or injury incurred during the loaning of its equipment.



A.A.A.P. Telescope Loan Procedure
Inspection Report

Page ____ of ____

Recipient: _____ phone number: _____

Address: _____

_____ I.D.: _____

Equipment on Loan and Value: (use inventory designations, or be specific)

Pre-Loan Condition: (be specific)

Acknowledgements upon Loan:

Recipient: _____ Date: _____

I hereby acknowledge the loan of the above equipment and understand that if it is not return in the condition indicated above (except for normal wear and tear), I am financially responsible for the repair or replacement.

Loan Officer: _____ Date: _____

I have conducted the above inspection and approve of the loan to the recipient.

= = = = =

Returned Condition: (record any changes in condition; be specific)

Charges for damage / will / will not / be imposed. (circle one)

Acknowledgements upon Return:

Recipient: _____ Date: _____

I hereby acknowledge the above condition and, if indicated above, agree to pay for loss or damage incurred during my possession.

Loan Officer: _____ Date: _____

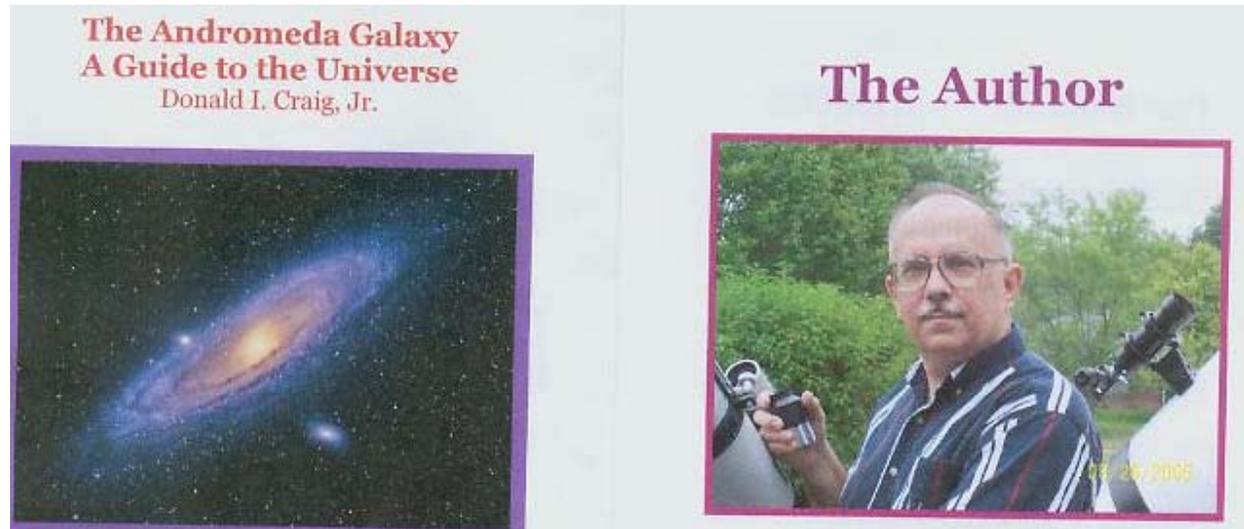
I have conducted the above inspection.

The Andromeda Galaxy

A Guide to the Universe

By

Donald I. Craig, JR.



The Andromeda Galaxy A Guide to the Universe has just been published and the author has put together the most complete review of the history and research of this nearby galaxy ever written. The discovery of the true distance of the galaxy is discussed. The new secrets of the triple core of Andromeda are revealed. The information being discovered from the satellite galaxies of Andromeda are reported. Read about its globular clusters and the stars in the halo, the amazing size of the spiral arms, and the alignment of its satellites. It's all here in one comprehensive source. To order go to: <http://www.lulu.com/andromedia>. It is written in a relaxed and informative style with the latest research from astronomers around the world. The 96-page 8 1/2" x 11" book is filled with beautiful color astrophotographs from every level of the spectrum as well as detailed drawings. "Andromeda has been a continuing target of professional research by all kinds of astronomers for several years, but no one has put it all together in one place", says Craig. "The new

information will astound the public and will explain why we continue to research Andromeda to find the secrets to our origins. Also, for the first time ever, a complete collection of photos which reveal the entire electromagnetic spectrum of Andromeda and detailed drawings which illustrate all areas of the galaxy.

Don Craig is a Purdue University graduate and has retired after serving the Indiana State Department of Health for over 20 years. He practices his hobby of amateur astronomy in Indianapolis, Indiana and is a member of the Indiana Astronomical Society, the Astronomical League, and the American Association of Amateur Astronomers.

The Andromeda Galaxy A guide to the Universe is on sale now through the on-line content marketplace of Lulu.com, the world's fastest growing provider of print-on-demand books.

LECTURES

The public lectures at Allegheny Observatory are held on the 3rd Friday of every month, excluding December. The next lecture is June 16, "Astronomical Events that changed History" by John Radzilowicz, Buhl Planetarium, Carnegie Science Center. For a complete list of lectures go to:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~aobsvtry/>



Classifieds

FOR SALE:

Oberwerk Lightweight 20 X 80 Binoculars see www.Bigbinoculars.com used once. \$179 includes shipping. CONTACT: Bermadeast@aol.com

12.5" Starsplitter Dobsonian Telescope with superb Nova mirror used only a few times, built in 1995, comes with all manuals and additional collimation tools. \$1600 obo. Also: 21 Back issues of Astrograph, \$10 obo. Contact: Bill Fusfield at fusroy@pitt.edu

Welcome to the new members voted in at the May 12 AAAP meeting:

NATALIE M. BACA
 DAVID GODLEWSKI
 IVAN HALL, JR.
 TIMOTHY HOFFMAN
 DEBORAH KANIA
 JOSEPH KANIA
 RICHARD KANIA
 JIM LAURENT
 JAMES SCHULTHEIS
 SUE SCHULTHEIS
 LANA ZALAKAR

Σ Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh, Inc. Σ
Founded June 9, 1929 by Chester B. Roe and Leo J. Scanlon

2006-2007 Executive Officers:

President:	Edward Moss edward.moss@verizon.net	412-734-0255
Vice President:	Ann Norman redmarsmom@aol.com	412-242-6806
Treasurer:	Harry Noss hnoss@verizon.net	412-367-0555
Corresponding Sec:	John Mozer jdmozer@aol.com	412-731-6297
Recording Sec:	Dennis Derda derdad@capa.net	724-224-4688
Membership Sec:	Mark Schomer mark9@zoominternet.net	
Guide Star Editors:	Bill & Maureen Moutz gseditor@3ap.org	412-795-1730

AAAP Member Dues*:

AAAP Dues:	\$18.00
Junior Member (under 18):	\$13.00
<u>Sky & Telescope Magazine:</u>	Add \$33.00
<u>Astronomy Magazine:</u>	Add \$34.00
<u>Night Sky Magazine:</u>	Add \$18.00

***Basic Procedure for Paying Dues:**

1. Make check payable to "AAAP Inc."
2. Send check to Harry Noss, Treasurer,
1542 Daffodil Lane, Pittsburgh, PA 15237-1620

★ For a copy of the June calendar go to www.3ap.org/calendar ★

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