

PAStimes

Phoenix Astronomical Society
www.pasaz.org

Summer 2011
Volume 62 Issue 10

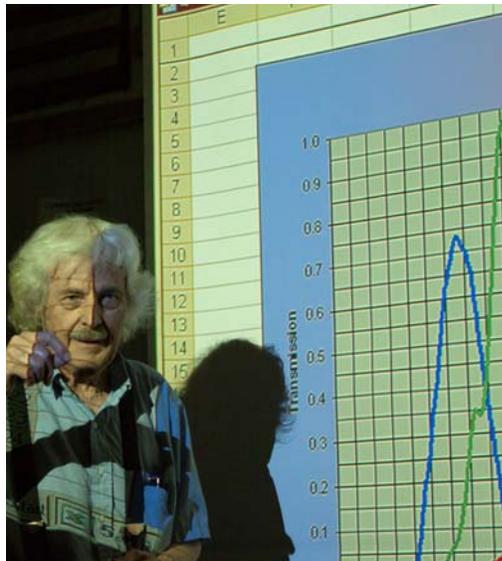
PHOENIX ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY — ESTABLISHED 1948

PAS Meeting of May 5 in Review

By Terri, Event Coordinator

Our original plan for this meeting was to have the awesome Dolores Hill doing a presentation on “Touchy – Feely Meteorites”. But on May 3 she contacted me and said she would need to cancel, since her husband, Rik, needed to go to the doctor. I frantically sent out an email searching for speakers. I wish to thank Chet Schuler and Mike Marron for coming through at the last minute. I have rescheduled Dolores for Oct 6, 2011.

We opened the meeting with pizza. This is our pizza party and elections meeting. We had a great turnout of about 30 people. The pizza was good. I need to thank those who brought snacks to share. Bruce and Sherry Myers brought a most delicious brownie, home-made. Ed Wurst brought some cookies. Sam brought the popcorn.



Chet Schuler



Mike Marron

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Meeting of the Minds Review of May 26

By Terri, Event Coordinator

This was a long meeting. We were there until 9:55pm. However, we did cover all the topics that were on the list, some better than others. In attendance were: Chet Schuler, Sonny Schug, Chris Johnson, Steve Palmer, Judy Wolf, Sam and Frank Insana, Bob Senzer, Don Boyd, William and Terri Finch, Joe and Renee Collins, John Pulis, and Kevin Harcey. Here's an idea of the discussion we had...

The first topic we talked about was a repeat from a previous MOM's (Meeting of the Minds). We discussed the idea of how to resolve the issue of how many scopes should be at an event, based on the number of attendees (school kids, their parents and siblings). We didn't really reach any agreed-upon resolution for this topic. The

discussion centered mostly on: “what are the main reasons that PAS members don't attend events as often as we would like them to.” William raised this question, and some of the answers were: 1) the economy, 2) gas prices, 3) scheduling. It was decided that in the booking doc, or another location, when setting up school events, we should limit when they can do their events. Such as: schedule the events for younger children and grade schools during the winter months, when the sun sets earlier; whereas for the high schools, we can do events in the spring when the sun sets later, i.e. when the star party will need to begin and end later than it does in the winter. Another idea was to limit how many schools can have events in one week. For example, this past May, the first two weeks of the month were jam-packed with events. The suggestion was

raised that we should do no more than two events per week, so that those of us doing events would be able to attend all that are available, and not feel overwhelmed having to do so. (For example, Mike tries to attend every event with his meteorites, which is greatly appreciated, and he is a real hit with the kids. But it's difficult for him if there are too many events per week.)

Another idea for improving our events was to be sure to inform schools, not only of the sprinkler situation, but also regarding lighting around the campus. We were discussing the situation at Rancho Gabriela school, where a neighbor of the school had four large floodlights that just happened to be pointing in the direction of the school where we were set up for the star party. A notice could be sent out by the school ask-

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PAS Upcoming Summer Events

By Terri, Event Coordinator

Jul 10: Bookmans Telescope Workshop. RSVP with Terri. 3:30 to 5:30pm in Bookmans backroom. Volunteers are needed. Bring a friend!

Jul 12: Cancer Treatment Center paid star party, 8:30pm to 10:30pm. RSVP with Joe. PAStimes Star Tour members only.

Jul 26: CTCA backup date for Jul 12.

Jul 28: PAS Meeting of the Minds. This is the business portion of PAS. Everyone is welcome, no children please. Bring snacks to share, make it a party. Check with Terri as to whether meeting will take place, as meeting will be cancelled if there are not enough topics to discuss. Meet at PVCC in Rm G-147, 7pm to 10pm.

Jul 30: Potluck and star party at Mike's in Carefree. 4pm is potluck followed by star party. Everyone welcome, bring a friend,

RSVP is required with Mike.

Aug 2: Cancer Treatment Center paid star party, 8pm to 10pm. RSVP with Joe. PAStimes Star Tour members only.

Aug 12: Perseids Meteor Shower Peak. No PAS event scheduled, yet. Full Moon will be in the way of a good view.

Aug 13: PAS Moon Marathon at Cow Track Ranch in Carefree. 4pm Potluck followed by Moon Marathon after sunset. RSVP required with Mike. Prizes awarded for participation.

Aug 14: Bookmans Telescope Workshop. RSVP with Terri. 3:30 to 5:30pm in Bookmans backroom. Volunteers are needed. Bring a friend!

Aug 16: CTCA backup date for Aug 2.

Aug 25: PAS Meeting of the Minds.

This is the business portion of PAS. Everyone is welcome, no children please. Bring snacks to share, make it a party. Check with Terri as to whether meeting will take place, as meeting will be cancelled if there are not enough topics to discuss. Meet at PVCC in Rm G-147, 7pm to 10pm.

Sep 1: PAS Meeting in Library – MEMBERS NIGHT. Bring a friend! Sign up with Terri to do a 10-15 minute presentation. (Longer times may be available if fewer members sign up.) Call or email by August 25 (Meeting of the Minds). If no one signs up, an email with request for astronomy videos will be sent out the day after MOM's. If you have a video you'd like to share with the members, send the info to me today. We want to fill one hour of time with presentations or videos. Send ideas.§

Spectacular Planet Gathering May 11

Original email from SpaceWeather.com

MORNING PLANETS: Set your alarm for dawn on Wednesday morning May 11th. Jupiter and Venus will be in conjunction, shining through the eastern twilight only half a degree apart. It's a spectacular way to begin the day. Visit

<http://spaceweather.com> for photos and more information.

Joe Collins writes: It was a spectacular sight, for sure! I was tired out from the CTCA event so I didn't re-setup my telescope...instead I viewed the conjunction from my backyard with binoculars.

Leah Sapir writes: I missed it on May

11, but was able to see it on May 12, when the planets were almost as close. Due to trees and houses on my eastern horizon, I needed to wait till the two planets were high enough to view, and by that time the dawn sky was beginning to brighten. But the two planets stood out brilliantly, and were a treat to see! I didn't set up my binoculars or scope, but just viewed them visually.§

Messier Marathon at Mike's - April 30

By Sam Insana, PAS Member

This was a 24-hour event, from 4 pm on Saturday April 30, until Sunday afternoon. Frank Insana, Mike Marron, Bob Senzer, and Judy Wolff stayed the whole time. I was only there from 6 pm until 11 pm. Lou Roberts, Kevin Harcey, Dewell Howell, and Dewell's friend Rod Glaze also attended this event.

When I arrived, Frank was showing solar flares with the PST. There were about five telescopes and we only got about one hour of decent observing because the strong winds came up sooner than expected, and made it impossible to see much. We saw the sci fi movie " The Watchman" and had some good food and drinks. Mike tried to set up the new 10-inch scope that had been

donated to the club, but without much success. It apparently has some major problems. Dewell and Rod asked several observing questions, and we all tried our best to help them out. It was a fun time, but not good observing. However, Lou had a goto scope, and he saw several Messier objects.§

Messier Marathon Results

By Lou Roberts, PAS Member

At the Messier Marathon on April 30 at Mike's house, I was able to identify 52

objects out of those I looked for. I probably could have seen a few more, but the chilly wind was finally too much. I also located

galaxies M90, M101, and M61 on my Goto scope, but could not see anything through the eyepiece. §

Benchmark School Star Party Review May 13

By Terri, Event Coordinator

It was a nice evening, with a comfortable temperature. We arrived at Benchmark School to find Don Boyd and Dewell Howell already munching on pizza and pop with Robin Soare, our contact at the school. We (William and Terri Finch) joined them for pizza. Mike Marron arrived a bit later. He sat down to eat pizza as Dewell and Don went to set up their scopes.

The sun was still up. The event was to start at 6:30, and it was around 6pm when we were setting up. Several folks showed up way early so we showed them the Moon, and Don did a little solar viewing before the Sun went behind a building. We were set up on the basketball courts. The sprinklers came on before the crowd showed up, so Dewell and Don had to move in closer due to the sprinklers getting dangerously close to their scopes.

It didn't get dark until about 7:30, so in

the meantime we showed the Moon, then Saturn when it became visible, and I did Q & A with the kids. Several of the school kids hung around from the start of the event clear to 9:30 for Q & A to get prizes from me. I believe there were three in the end who had at least one of everything I was giving away that night.

It was a very enjoyable event. There weren't many in attendance. The estimate was 100+ but I think we only saw about 35 at most. There were a number of teachers helping out. Mike had a crowd, as usual, for the whole night until about the last half hour. The weather was perfect for this event. Skies were clear and I believe everyone who attended enjoyed the event.

Many thanks to Robin for the pizza and drinks. I'd like to also thank Dewell, Don and Mike for doing this event with me. The school wants to set up for a Fall event. Watch for an announcement so you may

attend this fun event. One interesting thing, we drove up on the basketball court, and were able to leave our vehicle there. This is something to make a note of, for those who do not attend events because they need their vehicle near them during the event, whether for electricity, or accessories for the telescope. We hope for a bigger turnout next time around.

THANKS FROM BENCHMARK SCHOOL

By Robin Soare

It was so great to finally meet you. Your team was fantastic to come out and show us the sky. We LOVED your telescopes. We want to expand it for next year. So, any suggestions about times and ideas, that would be great. Also, we would be willing to pay for more telescopes. Thank you again for taking the time out of your Friday. The kids loved it. ***§

Bookmans Telescope Workshop Review May 22

By Terri, Event Coordinator

In attendance at this event as Telescope Teachers were: Don Boyd, Bruce Wurst, and Terri Finch. Helping out with the event were Bette and Ed Wurst, William Finch, and Bob Senzer. In attendance as students were John, Jose, Gwen, her daughter Denise, and Dave. Photos of this event can be seen in the PAS Photo Gallery on our website. (Denise escaped my camera.) Enjoy!

The Telescope Workshop opened with John setting up his huge but awesome telescope, as seen in the photos. It took him a while to get it all set up. While he was setting up, Jose arrived. Jose is a friend of Sam Insana. He had questions, but no scope. We talked a lot and gave him plenty of ideas on how to choose a telescope that fits his needs. He admired John's scope (as did all of us). Then Gwen arrived with her

daughter Denise. Denise vanished into Bookmans to find books. Gwen was setting up her scope when her friend Dave came to help. Gwen had two smaller scopes, and Dave helped get both of them set up. We then helped her to understand how to use them, and what they can do. I was very pleased that Gwen was taking notes. The afternoon progressed and the students hung in there, while we took turns helping each student, individually. Bruce was an awesome help. Don, as usual, was also extremely helpful. Even William got into the helping part of the workshop.

One really cool thing happened with Gwen's scope. We were explaining how the Barlow lens helps zoom into an object, but also dims down the images as less light can get through the Barlow lens. This didn't

seem to click until we showed her, through her scope (as seen in the photos), how this works. Bruce found a sign outside the Bookmans window that wasn't visible without the scope. We first looked at it through the 25mm eyepiece. Then after Dave and Gwen experienced the 25mm eyepiece, we added the Barlow. This definitely showed them a visual representation of how the the Barlow was able to zoom in and make the object appear closer, but it also cut the light-gathering abilities of the eyepiece.

The Workshop was a great success. It was fun and I do hope to see more of the students who attended this event. Enjoy the photos on line. We hope to see more PAS members involved in the next Bookmans Telescope Workshop. Check our calendar for dates, and see you there! §

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST STAR TOURS MEMBER

By Terri, Event Coordinator

Recently, Dewell Howell joined PAS. Then, after we saw his abilities to do star parties with us, we invited him to join the

PAStimes Star Tours TEAM. This team of PAS Members is a SIG (Special Interest Group) in which we do star parties for \$\$\$.

If you are interested in helping at paid star

parties, contact me via email (Events@PASaz.org) and we can add you to the team. Congratulations Dewell on joining the Telescope TEAM. §

Members' Night at September PAS Meeting

By Terri, Event Coordinator

The September PAS meeting will have a collection of PAS members who wish to share something astronomy-related in a

short 10-15 minute presentation. The topics and PAS members doing these presentations will be announced at the meeting, and possibly through email prior to the meeting.

We shall see you in the Library of Paradise Valley Community College for this awesome night. Meet at 7pm, and we will begin the meeting at 7:30. Bring a friend! §

Meeting of the Minds Review of May 26

From page 1

ing neighbors to turn off their lights until 10pm the night of our event. And we should put this in the booking doc.

The topic then turned towards the repetition of events. For example, when there is always an event on the 1st Friday of the month, as we used to have when doing the AZ Science Center event, it was easier to plan for it, knowing it was coming up in the schedule.

Some great ideas of where to have more public events came up in this discussion, as well. Some ideas were: Arrowhead Mall has a park nearby that might be a good location, Challenger Space Center (but then it was noted that Tony La Conte is already doing star parties at that location), at a movie theater (set up for the lines of people waiting to get in to see their movie), Desert Ridge, or 1st Friday downtown for the Art Walk.

The next topic was: Should school star parties be public events? This topic didn't go over very well, and it appears that everything will stay as it is... but some good ideas came of it. The teachers who were present at this meeting, i.e. the PAS members who are also teachers, all agreed that for the safety of the kids we should not make any school events open to the public. SAC and EVAC post their school events as open to anyone who wants to attend, however, there are liability issues that have to be considered. So, for now, PAS will continue to make school events PRIVATE, open only to the school attendees and those whom they invite, and PAS members. Currently the PAS calendar is set up so that the Public Calendar has only the name of the event, which is usually the name of the school. (However, as a matter of policy we use an abbreviated version, so that the general public would not know which school we are referring to.) The full information about the event is listed only in the Private Calendar. ONLY PAS members with status of "PAS Member" on our site, can access the info in the Private Calendar and in the Private Forums as to the address, the plans for the event, etc. We agreed to continue to post school events this way.

Then the topics turned to PAS T-shirts and PAS Polo shirts. This topic had a lot of discussion, but I will give you the brief version. In short: it was discussed that we might want to take orders, collect money up front, and have polo shirts made for the Star Tours group, and members of that group

could purchase the shirts, if they desire to do so. It would look more professional if we had polo or collared shirts to wear to an event, rather than showing up in T-shirts. It was also discussed that we might want to put a poll online as to what type of shirt people of PAS would be interested in having, to use for events: whether a polo shirt, T-shirt, both or neither. We may put that poll online tied to the Forum discussion about this topic. Watch for it to become available so you may put your vote in. Another thought was, should the shirt have a pocket, for the men? And what size do we order? And what about the PAS Patch idea we had a few years ago? All these ideas were shared, but nothing was concluded, so this topic will probably show up again at a future MOM's. However, another idea was, we all have PAS Name Badges, and they look professional, but one member was saying that in the dark, they are not that readable. So, the PAS Patch idea came up again. The original idea behind the patch was that you could buy your own polo shirt, any color you want, as long as it is a solid color, and then with a magnet, add the PAS Patch to the shirt so that you match the rest of the Telescope Team. This will definitely need to be researched and talked about some more.

Joe then took over for a moment and discussed the Meade 12" scope he had donated to PAS. The scope is currently residing with our Librarian, Rod Sutter. The idea that Joe had was to house the scope in a location where it can be set up and used by PAS members. It's heavy and bulky, and needs two people to set up, so it was discussed that maybe we could mount it someplace. Ideas were to mount it at Paradise Valley Community College, in a dome that is separate from PVCC's 11" scope "Bubba"; or to store it at Mike's home (but we were reminded that Mike had already tried to add an observatory there and the town of Carefree wouldn't let him). It was also discussed that for the PAS members, a list of what is available in the PAS Library should be updated and made available to all PAS members. That list is currently on line, but does not include the donated scopes. The discussion then turned to public star parties at PVCC and the fact that we don't always get the needed number of scopes there to hold events, which is why "Bubba" and two other scopes are always ready for use at PVCC. PAS Members do not have to bring their own scopes when three scopes are

already available, and if we now put Joe's scope on campus, there will be four scopes available to use. Maybe this will increase the number of volunteers who come to PVCC to help with the public events, as there are already scopes there, and you need only bring eyepieces, or yourself to run the scope. We had a very good discussion on this topic, and I'd like to see this happen for PAS and PVCC. The end result would be to have more PAS Members attending the public star parties, since they will not have to haul their own scopes to the location to do the event.

Joe then took us through an update of the CTCA events (Cancer Treatment Centers of America) and asked if more volunteers may be interested in being paid to be there. He also talked about upcoming weekend events that would be on a volunteer basis, not paid. This led to a discussion of maybe contacting the Mayo Clinic and seeing if they want to hire PAS to do star parties for their patients, as well. These events are open to any PAStimes Star Tours member who can attend, but you must RSVP prior to the other PAS members who might want to do the event. You can sign up to be paid for the event, or as a volunteer (free). If you are going to be paid, be sure to confirm with Joe that you have the job. You can also sign up as a back up worker (paid) whereby you inform Joe that if there aren't enough PAS members to cover the event on a particular night, you would be interested in filling in, but only if there aren't enough people. This allows other PAS members to get in on the fun of this event. The food is definitely worth it. The people are awesome and what else are you going to do on a Tuesday evening?

Then Joe moved the discussion to the Handouts he makes for PAS, to distribute at CTCA events and other events he happens to attend. It was decided that the handouts will be more general and cover 1-2 months of objects, so that they can be used over a longer period of time, rather than being specific just to one night of observing. It was also discussed that Joe could make the document and send it to me, and I can post it in our "downloads" section as informational items for the public to download, or for PAS members to make copies of, to use at events. The handouts are very well done, thought through, and planned very nicely. I think they are worth having available to the public. If Joe wants to make this a

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Meeting of the Minds Review of May 26

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project of his, whereby he makes a general handout for a 2-month span, and makes it available for anyone to copy and give out, that would be great. Don or Leah can do the copies in black-and-white, and bring it to the next event.

Dan Heim of DFAC (Desert Foothills Astronomy Club) wants to do a joint star party, by his club and PAS, at the Pioneer Living History Museum. So, at this meeting, I took a tally of who might be interested in doing this event. I emailed Dan the next morning to tell him of the tally, and we hope to hear back from him as to the date of the event in Fall 2011. Watch for a notice about this via email and on the PAS Calendar.

Planetary Line-up for Spring 2012: This topic came up because in 2012, from February to April, we will have many planets available to enjoy in the night sky for star parties, public and private. I wanted to get an idea of where to set up a public star party for such an event. In the discussion, it was discovered that the curator of the museum in Carefree has passed away, and Mike will check who is now in charge of that location, so that we might set up an event there for the public. Picket Post was another idea, or Black Canyon City park. We will have to research these ideas and plan a great public event for this planetary line-up – and

get the word out to the public!

We then heard from Sam with an update of what he found out about using Spur Cross Ranch as a viewing location for PAS star parties and/or public star parties. He made some phone calls and found out that Spur Cross Ranch requires a permit to use their location, plus a fee. So, after finding that out, he asked about using the parking lot outside of Spur Cross Ranch and was told there would be a \$100 charge. What a disaster! They want us to have a permit plus pay to use the location for a star party. That's a bummer.

We then turned the meeting over to Chris, who had something fun to share with us. Chris is our webmaster. He is also into astrophotography, remote accessing of telescopes such as his own in Mayer, and is now involved in ham radio. Chris showed us how to connect a ham radio to the ISS and other satellites flying overhead to be able to talk to the astronauts. He can also talk with other astronomers about various astronomy topics, such as what they are currently viewing. After seeing his demo, it was decided that we would like to have him do a presentation on this to the club, at a future PAS meeting. It was very interesting and great idea for a special interest group (SIG). Those interested, could form a SIG for the purpose of enjoying listening to

discussions with other astronomers and with people on the ISS. Watch for the announcement of Chris's presentation to PAS about this, and see the discussion at: <http://www.pasaz.org/forums/showthread.php?p=1446#post1446>.

I wish to take a moment to thank everyone who brought snacks. We had a great turnout of members, and an abundance of snacks. Ed Wurst donated the bottled water, even though he was not able to be at the meeting himself. Bob Senzer brought baguettes with cheese to put on them. Sam provided the popcorn. Many other snacks were provided and enjoyed. It was a good party. We hope to see you at the next MOM's for some more good discussion, great friends, and yummy snacks. Not in attendance was Mike, who became ill with an upper respiratory infection after his birthday party, and could not make it to this meeting. We hope he gets well soon. If you wish to add anything to these topics, feel free to visit them, and the reviews you just read, on our website in the Private Member Discussion. Add your ideas there to be shared. And if you have a topic to be discussed at a future Meeting of the Minds, send it to me ASAP at Events@pasaz.org. We only hold these meetings if there are enough topics for a minimum of one hour of discussion. §

PAS Meeting of May 5 in Review

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The water and pizza were provided by PAS and required an RSVP to reserve some. Remember that for next year. RSVP your two slices of pizza ahead of time, so you may enjoy your hot, fresh pizza when you get to the meeting.

We opened the meeting with a few announcements. Notice, I didn't say brief, however, we did manage to get it all covered, 20 minutes into the meeting. We talked about upcoming events. Mike did a treasury report. PAS has just over \$13,000 in the bank. The amount hasn't changed since last report, which means we are keeping ahead of the expenses. Dave announced his Portal event on May 30 and gave brief instructions about attending, as well as how long it takes to drive there. Then we moved to the elections. We have a change in officers. All the officers stayed the same except for the President: Bruce Wurst offered to be PAS President for a year while Rod is unable to attend meetings due to his crazy work schedule. Rod has been doing 11 hour

shifts at 7 days a week with no days off for the past few months, and with probably a few more months like that to come. Rod said he probably won't be available for another year, so with that in mind, Bruce agreed to take the Presidency. The rest of us kept our positions. Congratulations to Bruce! Rod is now Past President and will have that name badge given to him as soon as we can catch up to him and get the President name badge from him, as well.

Then we turned the floor over to Chet, who did an awesome presentation on "Filters, Color Cameras, and Light Pollution." It was a brief presentation of about 30 minutes, and everyone seemed to enjoy it. Then, Jerry asked if he could talk for two minutes prior to Mike's presentation, and so we gave him the floor. And this time, I have to congratulate Jerry for keeping it to about two minutes. Thank you so much! Jerry talked about a piece of glass from the Mirror Lab and taking a tour of the Mirror Lab in the future. Then it was Mike's turn, to

talk about meteorites. Most of the people there have probably heard Mike speaking about meteorites and the formation of the universe, etc... But I asked him if this time he could speak about the meteorites he carries with him to the events. What is so special about them? And what does he share with the school kids about those particular meteorites? That is what he did, and it was very interesting and informative, and one of Mike's better, off the cuff, presentations. I named Mike's presentation for him as "The Story behind the Meteorites."

Four new folks joined us at the meeting: Kurtis, Briana, Russel and Rod. I welcomed them to the club after Mike had finished his presentation. The 50/50 was won by Bob Senzer, and \$37 was raised for that split. It was an awesome meeting and a great success. Many, many thanks to Mike and Chet for doing their presentations at such a short notice. Thank you all for attending! §

Orders for PAS Name Badges

By Terri, Event Coordinator

About once a year, we put in the order for PAS name badges. I haven't figured out what is the best month for having that done. We tend to get new members around the winter months, and then just before or during the summer months. So, I would like to place the next name badge order in January 2012. If you don't already have a PAS name

badge and you'd like to have one, please get your \$\$\$ to Mike by way of a dues sheet. Take a moment to download the dues sheet, give Mike the \$15 for the name badge, and then he will inform me that you need one made. I will submit the order in January and deliver them at the February PAS meeting. I prefer to wait until I have at least three

orders before submitting the order, as the location where I get the badges made isn't in my normal traveling route around Phoenix. So, order your name badges today. The link to the dues sheet is: <http://www.pasaz.org/forums/downloads.php?do=file&id=18>. Thank you for your orders. §

Nocturnal

By Dan Heim, Desert Foothill Astronomy Club

We had a solar viewing event planned for an elementary school in Phoenix, and had to cancel three times due to clouds! The fourth time was the charm though, and it went well. It was a "gifted" class, and they asked some really good questions and sent us personal thank you letters, many of which were really cute.

Speaking of cute, you'll love this ... one

of the fourth-grade girls raised her hand to ask a question. She wanted to know if we could see Venus. I explained that, yes, when it's not too close to the Sun, and with the right filters, and if you know exactly where to look, you can see Venus during the day. But I said it's always better to see Venus at night, right after sunset or before dawn. Then she says "Oh, you mean Venus is nocturnal?" And I said (surprised by her

vocabulary) "That's very good, yes, I guess you could say Venus is "nocturnal," but where did you learn that word?" And she said "Well, we were studying bats last week and learned they were nocturnal, so that's how I know that word, and it seemed to apply to Venus too." Gotta love it. That's why I keep doing the school events. Always fun, especially with the "gifted" students. §

Mike's Birthday Party May 20 Review

By Terri, Event Coordinator

Some time before Mike's birthday, he happened to mention something to me about his birthday falling on a Friday. Then Joe wrote in an email to me: "We should do something for Mike. He has been very generous with his time and his place for PAS members and activities." So we decided to hold a birthday party for him at Bad Donkey in Carefree, and it was a really fun event. In attendance were Don Boyd, Joe and Renee Collins, Sam and Frank Insana, Pete and Sue Morrissey, Judy Wolff, Dan and Rose Evander, William and Terri Finch, Kevin Harcey, and John Pulis. And of course Mike Marron (we hope he was there for his own party).

I had asked Mike to arrive "fashionably late". My plan was to decorate Bad Donkey with appropriate decorations before he arrived. I had asked the attendees to each bring an astronomy-related item - something that would be small and easy to carry, and which they would take home with them after the party. But when we arrived at the restaurant, we found that they had scheduled another large group in the same room with us - a baseball team party. So we didn't have the room, we couldn't talk over the noise level, and we couldn't decorate.

However, when Mike arrived, we sang Happy Birthday to him as he walked into

the door. We started out having dinner at Bad Donkey, but due to the conditions in the shared room we ate quickly and then moved the party to Mike's home. Several members had brought extra items for munching after dinner, so there were snacks back at Mike's place. Sam proposed a toast to Mike. It was an awesome toast. Sam had brought a star projector (the type that projects the constellations on the ceiling of a dark room). He had the lights turned out, and using his green laser to point out items in the star projection, he told a story of Mike which was entertaining and heart warming. It was a very good toast.

Then Mike opened his presents. You can enjoy the photos of this event in the PAS Photo Gallery on our website. The gifts were very interesting.

We then enjoyed some cup cakes that Rose had made, along with ice cream that was brought by Pete. Judy helped dish out the ice cream. Rose had written Mike's name on one of the cup cakes. Sam brought two number candles, which could have read "57" or "75," but we didn't use those. Instead, Pete had a special candle. When lit and turned on, it played music. So, we used that candle for Mike's cup cake.

The party continued with everyone chatting, socializing, and having a great time. John Pulis mentioned something

about a chemistry set, so he, Kevin and Mike were checking out an old, ancient chemistry set. The topic changed after that to the donated scope. PAS had been given a 10" scope that needs some work. Joe, Don, William and I checked it out, worked on it, and found out some things that required repair. The party then moved to the living room, where Mike had set up to watch one of the DVD's from Robert Piccioni, our guest speaker of May 19. Kevin had bought the set of four DVD's. Some of the guests stayed to watch the DVD's, but some of the guests went home at that point, including William and me.

It was a great party. I'm glad we all got the chance to spend some time with one of our favorite PAS Members, in his home, celebrating another year of life. One PAS member suggested that we should do this type of party more often, for other PAS members, when their birthdays fall at a convenient time to host a party.

Thank you Mike for hosting the "after the party" part of the "Bad Donkey" party we put together for you. And thanks to everyone who participated, and who brought the refreshments and other items mentioned above.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MIKE!!! Best Wishes for many more birthdays to come. §

Achieving the A.L. Messier Club Goal

by Stan Spielbusch, PAS Member

I'm relatively new to observing with a telescope, at least in earnest -- I finally got a good scope in October of last year, a Celestron CPC1100, and had fun for a while using its "Tour" function. But I wanted to see more. I tried several observing books, but they start repeating each other after a while. I felt like they were all just skimming the surface, and I wanted to go deeper. Sure, I could try to find every NGC and IC object, but that left me with no real sense of achievement (especially since many are not visible from my home, so I would never "complete the list"). When I found out about the Astronomical League observing clubs, my "collector's gene" kicked in and I wanted to complete as many of the observing clubs as possible. They've already done the work of organizing observing lists according to interests and/or difficulty, with clearly defined goals. Besides, who can resist official certificates of achievement and those cool shiny pins?

Being a bit of an organizational nut, the first thing I did (after joining the P.A.S., of course) was to download the club materials and print out observing logs for all of the clubs I was interested in. A few clubs require that you buy official observing guides, but those are mostly the advanced clubs, and they're not very expensive in any case. One of the most popular clubs is the Messier club. Anyone who is familiar with the 110 Messier objects knows that they make up a sort of "required viewing list" for telescope owners.

One thing I found out is that there is quite a bit of overlap in some of the clubs. For instance, they also have a Binocular Messier club, and any Messier objects viewed with binoculars count toward both the Binocular Messier club and the regular Messier club. Many also count toward some other clubs, like the Urban club. So it makes sense to try to find an object with binoculars first, and then follow up with the telescope if you can't find it with binoculars (or if you want to see the additional detail visible in the telescope).

So the Messier club seemed like a must-do. The next step was to decide how to start. There are lots of options for this -- Messier guides and many other observing books are organized by month or season, so that's a good starting point. The club's list is already organized by season. But since I was trying to work on several clubs at once, I decided to get the program SkyTools.

Among other features like charting and log-keeping, this shows you which objects are positioned well for observing each night, and it even has ready-made observing lists for the most common A.L. clubs.

One requirement of the Messier club is that you find the objects without the use of a "GoTo" scope or setting circles. Whoops, my scope has GoTo! No problem, they said, as long as you do actually locate the object via star-hopping. So I can just use GoTo to get to a nearby bright star (using the Named Stars list in the controller), and then hop from there. At first I felt that star-hopping was a major chore, and I would tend to put off the Messier club objects in favor of the clubs that allow GoTo, like the Urban Club and the Double Star Club (both highly recommended, by the way). Part of my reluctance to star-hop was because my scope is Alt-Az mounted, making it confusing to know which way to move it (which way is North this time???)

However, I knew I wanted to complete the Messier club, since it's a rite of passage in a way (and required for the Master Observer certificate), so I kept at it. I have a lot of observing books and atlases, even one specifically designed for Messier marathons, but the one I ended up using the most is "Illustrated Guide to Astronomical Wonders", by Thompson and Thompson. It seems designed just for the A.L. observing clubs, including all of the objects in all of the clubs I've mentioned above, plus the Deep Sky Binocular club (and it shows you which club each object is needed for). It has a variety of good finder charts, photos of every deep sky object, and descriptions of how each one looks in both the telescope and binoculars, assuming it's possible to find in binoculars. This last bit was very helpful in knowing whether to even bother trying to find an object in binoculars before going to the scope. Eventually I got used to the star hopping, and I'm especially happy to be able to look up in the sky and have a good general idea where most of the Messier objects are located.

Eventually I exhausted all of the Messier objects visible in the fall (including ones requiring a 3AM wake-up call for early morning observing), and took a couple months off in the winter (stupid clouds...). Spring came around, and with some finally decent weather I started in again. Hello galaxies! The list of Coma-Virgo galaxies looked daunting at first, especially since I didn't expect to be able to see many galaxies

from my urban/suburban skies. I put this chore off for a while, going back to my Urban club and Double Stars club lists (and the cool new Carbon Stars club). I also used the excuse of needing a dark moonless night, and I also wanted it to be a long session so I could try to get all of the galaxies done at once. Finally that night came, and I was pleasantly surprised how easy they were -- I guess Messier couldn't see the dim ones anyway! You can easily hop from one galaxy to another in most cases, so "galaxy night" went rather quickly. There is one that I still cannot find, though - that darned dim M101.

Hooray, after adding the spring galaxies to my score, I now have the 70 objects required for the basic Messier club certificate and pin. The A.L. usually has someone in your local society review your logs and then request the certificate, which can then be presented at a club meeting. I'm not able to attend the P.A.S club meetings, but I found that I could also send copies of my logs directly to the club chairman and get the certificate and pin sent to me directly. So, it's in the mail! I'm not done, of course -- after completing all 110 Messier objects, you graduate to the Honorary level and can get an additional certificate and another nice shiny pin. I guess I've got to keep trying for M101! I also need a few more to complete the 50-object requirements for the Binocular Messier club, since most of the galaxies were too challenging for binoculars. So the hunt continues!

This has been a fun and rewarding experience, and I learned a lot along the way. Besides a great feeling of accomplishment, the observing clubs can serve as a guide to learning the sky and finding out what's up there. I highly recommend that anyone with an interest in astronomy start on some observing clubs. There are ten clubs that can be done with naked-eye observing only (including a couple with kids in mind), and ten more that can be done with just binoculars. The telescopic clubs cover just about every interest -- you may even find out that your primary interest changes while working on a club. I used to think I would focus on double stars, since those are easy under light-polluted skies (and have pretty colors), but now I'm getting more interested in galaxies. I have yet to start on some of the more specific clubs which I plan to complete, including Planetary Nebulae, Globular Clusters, Open

Rancho Gabriela Career Day Astro Event of 5-26

By Terri, Event Coordinator

It was a blustery day (and I'm not referring to Winnie the Pooh's "The Blustery Day," but it sure was similar). Don Boyd, William Finch and I left our home around 5:45am. (Don traveled in his own car, but he had spent the night at our home to make his trip shorter in the morning.) We headed to Surprise to pick up Matt Kohl from his home to assist with this event. We arrived at the school around 7am. We were greeted by a most awesome lady, Leslie, who let us in through a main gate to the area in which we were to set up for the event. We got right on it, putting up the two canopies. It was forecast to be 90 degrees, so we wanted some shade to hide under. Shortly after, Sam Insana arrived and set up near us.

Sam came and Mike Marron was nowhere to be found. Luckily breakfast was being served as a buffet, and you go into the closest school room, which happened to be Stephanie's, and you help yourself to muffins from Sam's Club and drinks and bagels. I had my favorite, poppy seed muffin. Mike arrived about 10 minutes after I called to find out if he had gotten lost. Then about 8:30 the kids started to arrive at the telescopes.

The event was set up so that one grade at a time drifted through the many vendors. The list had about 50 vendors on it, and most were hiding/set up in the auditorium. Lucky for them... as we were out in the wind. We never got a chance to check out the other vendors; however, the vendor that was to be set up across from us, never showed, and it was shadier and cooler over there, so Mike set up over there. Sam shared the shade with Mike during breaks, and Don kept Matt, William and me company on the other side of the sidewalk. The Army was set up near us with a loud radio playing music, and a Hummer. They tried to put up a canopy like ours, but the wind was too much and they discovered their canopy was broken. I was talking to one of their people about it.

During the morning hours, we showed the Moon. Don displayed it with his scope, and William worked the Astroscan and kept the moon in view. The kids really liked the look of the Astroscan - a small, very portable, 4" reflector. Several of the kids wanted to take it home with them. When the Moon left us around 12:30, we changed what we were showing and used the Astroscan as a display on the handout table. We showed

the Sun for the whole day. Sam displayed the Sun with his PST and his 10", which show different features than Don's 6" with the solar filter. When the Moon went behind the building, which was earlier than we anticipated we would be without it, Don tried once again (as he had done in the morning hours) to find Venus, but didn't succeed. So, he did solar the rest of the day.

We saw the 8th grade, then 7th, 6th, 3rd, 4th and 5th (in that order) before lunch. Matt decided to hang on to the blue handout bags for the younger grades, as this way we could just hand them a blue bag instead of fighting to undo our paperweight (a rock) long enough to grab them a handout. That idea worked very well. We had about an hour for lunch. Lunch was Subway, plus some other things. There were veggie trays, and potato salad, and sub sandwiches, and drinks, and the bagels and cookies were still out there from the morning. There was plenty of food for everyone.

After lunch the wind picked up even more. The kindergartners were lucky that they came out to look at the scopes when they did. Matt said that if they had been about half an hour later, the wind would have blown them over as they made their way around to our handout table, Mike's meteorites, Don's scope, and Sam's scope. In the afternoon, the winds were really rough and pulled on the canopies. Matt and William spent a lot of time hanging on to the canopies so they didn't take off.

For the morning hours, we were given two 8th grade helpers who did various things for us. I'd like to thank Andrew and Kameron for their help. We had them find us rocks to put on top of our handouts, and catch the handouts when they took off flying. That was great help for us. When we didn't have a crowd, between grades, I told them they can hang out by Mike and learn about meteorites. Andrew was very interested.

Then, halfway through the day, I think it was about lunch time, they gave us two other 8th grade helpers, Cameron and Jared. Cameron was tall, so I asked him to do the stickers for the kids. As the kids came to each vendor, they were to collect stickers to say they were there. I never did find out what the stickers said, but the kids made sure they got their stickers. Cameron did a good job making sure all the kids had their stickers, as well as chasing papers.

The kids were all walking around with armfuls of stuff they collected from other vendors. Sometimes they dropped things, and the wind would have them chasing those items all over the place. But when they got to us, the younger grades got blue bags from us and used them to hold their collection. I had Jared passing out the blue bags and it was a great help. He would walk around with a bunch of blue bags in his arms and make sure all the younger grades that we saw after lunch, got a blue bag. We saw Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades. Our 8th grade helpers also helped the younger kids catch and bag the items that blew in the wind.

The event was a great success! I think the kids enjoyed it as much as we did. And while we were there, we made it a point to talk about the event we are doing on the evening of May 6th for the school. We told everyone where we will be setting up and what to expect. By the time William and I got home, after dropping off Matt, we were completely exhausted. We shared a half a can of energy drink just so I could go teach that night. The energy drink ran out about 10:30, we were both passing out, and we were in bed by 11pm.

I had a great, exhausting time. Many thanks to the four helpers, and to Stephanie, Leslie, the many teachers that swung by to ask questions and check on us, and to the school for inviting us. We noticed this was their 3rd Annual event like this, so I asked if they were going to want us back again next year, and they said yes. If you missed this event, PAS Members, you might want to watch for its announcement next year, around this same time. It was so much fun, and we could have used a little more help, more scopes, just to help the lines be quicker. The kids only had about 35 minutes to quickly run through the 50 vendors. They were with us, at the most, for 10 minutes. That isn't easy when you have a whole grade visiting your area in 10 minutes, rushing them through to see the Sun or Moon, plus talk to Meteorite Man, and grab handouts. If we do this next year, I want to have bags already prepared, stuffed, and just hand them one quickly, as they pass by. Then they can spend more time talking with Mike, and looking through the scopes.

I did get a few demos in during the day. I started showing the Moon demo, the phases of the Moon. I gave the Moon page for their participation. This was with the older

Rancho Gabriela Career Day Astro Event of 5-26

From page 8

kids, 8th, 7th and 6th grades. They'd ask about my play dough moon, so I'd talk about it, and then we'd insist that they look through the scope at the moon. When the moon got a little lower, and closer to the building, I changed over to Q & A about the Moon for prizes. When the Moon went away, I did Q & A on the Sun, and handed out this neat Sun circle thing that NASA

Space Place sent us for Astronomy Day. When I ran out of those, I did the PAS bookmarks, and then moved to the constellation cards. A lot of stuff was given away, and more will need to be made. We all had a lot of fun. Some of us got sunburnt and I think I got both sunburnt and windburnt. But, I think we reached out to the kids and they walked away with info about both

astronomy and PAS, and I think it was a great success for PAS and for the school. We hope to get more PAS members involved for the next Daytime Event. Thanks again to Rancho Gabriela, for inviting us to this awesome event! Some photos were taken of our setup. Feel free to view them in the PAS Photo Gallery.§

PAS-CTCA SkyTour Event Report 5-10-2011

by Joe Collins Phoenix Astronomical Society member & CTCA CancerFighter

We had another successful PAS Sky Tour Event last night at CTCA (Cancer Treatment Centers of America) in Good-year for about 20 attendees: 16 adults and 4 children. PAS members participating were: Don Boyd, Steve Palmer, and myself (Joe Collins). Renee Collins volunteered for an hour prior to the start of the event.

Weather: We considered cancellation just prior to the start of the event, due to wind and cloud cover. We rightly decided to go ahead. Although clouds interfered with solar viewing, AccuWeather.com proved to be correct for the evening sky viewing - it was definitely a 10 out of 10, spectacular for this urban venue. The winds died down, and the clouds went from cumulus to cirrus to nothing. The temperatures were comfortable, though a little chilly by the end of the event.

Early Solar Viewing: Don and I set up early for solar viewing at 6pm. We had only a few customers, and visibility was not good due to westerly clouds on the horizon. I tried a new solar filter on my C-11 but didn't have the right eyepiece or solar sight for viewing alignment before the cloud cover made it impractical, so I switched over to early lunar viewing.

Nighttime Sky Tour: The evening program started at 8pm and ended officially at 10pm, though Don and Steve stayed until around 11:30pm, and I stayed until about 1am. So even the security guards got a chance to do some quality star gazing and lunar viewing. Steve brought his 6" APO refractor, I brought my Celestron 11" SCT, and Don brought his Celestron 6" reflector. We viewed the Moon, Saturn and five Saturnian moons, three galaxies, three planetary nebulae, five globular clusters, four

open clusters, an interesting asterism, fifteen binary stars, two triple stars, and two quadruple stars. In all, we viewed 42 objects: the Moon [pretty bright: lunar filter recommended next time for me. Steve used a lunar filter]; Saturn, Titan, Enceladus, Rhea, Tethys, Hyperion [Steve used a planetary filter for Saturn];

M94 Galaxy Core, Sombrero Galaxy Edge, Black-Eye Galaxy [These were faint]; the Ring Nebula, Cat's Eye Nebula, and Eskimo Nebula [These were faint];

Globular clusters M80, M53, M3, M4, and M5 [These were faint];

Open clusters: Praesepe (the Beehive), M23, M35, and M34 (aka "Spiral Cluster"); Stargate asterism;

Binary stars: 54 Leonis, Iota Cancri, Castor, 19 Lyncis, Polaris, 17 Cygni, Albireo, Zeta Lyrae, 95 Herculis, Nu Draconis, Porrima, Cor Caroli, Xi Bootis, Mizar, and Kappa Bootis;

Triple stars: Graffias and 35 Comae Berenices;

Quadruple stars: Tegmen (Zeta Cancri) and Epsilon Lyrae;

During the viewing, Don, Steve, and I each discovered mechanical problems with our scopes through the course of the evening; but after we resolved these problems, our alignment accuracy improved tremendously, after a second or third star alignment.

I showed customers what many of the fainter objects would look like from Hubble/Web telescope images on my iPad, and identified Saturnian moons by using StarWalk, StarMap HD, and Gas Giants iPad apps. The moon was first quarter phase. Steve had a good 'custom' general field lunar map and I had a laminated inverted lunar map and Lunar Atlas HD on the iPad that helped with lunar feature identification. Marisa Benincasa of CTCA pro-

vided color two-sided copies of the handouts that I had prepared (the same object list we had used a few days earlier at the Desert Botanical Garden event). Steve also used the StarMap HD "tonight feature" to see what other targets of opportunity were up for viewing tonight.. We decided for the future that the best way to make a viewing list is to preview the "Tour" Objects highlighted the night before using our SkyTour programs on our respective Celestron and Meade hand controllers. I am wondering if there is a software out there that simulates these controllers on a desktop? I could not find one after a fast internet search.

We did not see the granddaughter of R.J. Trumpler at the event, which was too bad. We could have shown her maps of Mars and the Moon with craters named after her astronomer grandfather. Unfortunately we would not be able to view them directly. The lunar crater Trumpler is on the far side of the Moon, and we would not be able to resolve the craters on Mars even if Mars were currently visible. (Currently Mars is an early morning object, visible only before dawn.)

Even though the moon was bright (i.e., not the best conditions for deep sky objects), the air was non-turbulent, so it was great for resolving binaries and a few fuzzy DSO's/galaxies. This really surprised us because we were concerned about smoke and particles from fires to the east; Steve was especially concerned because he had photographed fires prior to the event. Our consensus was that we were able to see much more than at DBG a few days earlier. Patients, caregivers, and a few children this time enjoyed the views. Many of the participants viewed objects for over an hour and hung out to chat. A great time was had by all!§



Finding Planets among the Stars

by Dr. Tony Phillips

Strange but true: When it comes to finding new extra-solar planets, or exoplanets, stars can be an incredible nuisance.

It's a matter of luminosity. Stars are bright, but their planets are not. Indeed, when an astronomer peers across light years to find a distant Earth-like world, what he often finds instead is an annoying glare. The light of the star itself makes the star's dim planetary system nearly impossible to see.

Talk about frustration! How would *you* like to be an astronomer who's constantly vexed by stars?

Fortunately, there may be a solution. It comes from NASA's Galaxy Evolution Explorer, an ultraviolet space telescope orbiting Earth since 2003. In a new study, researchers say the Galaxy Evolution Explorer is able to pinpoint dim stars that might not badly outshine their own planets.

"We've discovered a new technique of using ultraviolet light to search for young, low-mass stars near the Earth," said David Rodriguez, a graduate student of astronomy

at UCLA, and the study's lead author. "These M-class stars, also known as red dwarfs, make excellent targets for future direct imaging of exoplanets."

Young red dwarfs produce a telltale glow in the ultraviolet part of the electromagnetic spectrum that Galaxy Evolution Explorer can sense. Because dwarf stars are so numerous—as a class, they account for more than two-thirds of the stars in the galaxy—astronomers could reap a rich bounty of targets.

In many ways, these stars represent a best-case scenario for planet hunting. They are close and in clear lines-of-sight, which generally makes viewing easier. Their low mass means they are dimmer than heavier stars, so their light is less likely to mask the feeble light of a planet. And because they are young, their planets are freshly formed, and thus warmer and brighter than older planetary bodies.

Astronomers know of more than five hundred distant planets, but very few have actually been seen. Many exoplanets are detected indirectly by means of their

"wobbles"—the gravitational tugs they exert on their central stars. Some are found when they transit the parent star, momentarily dimming the glare, but not dimming it enough to reveal the planet itself.

The new Galaxy Evolution Explorer technique might eventually lead to planets that can be seen directly. That would be good because, as Rodriguez points out, "seeing *is* believing."

And it just might make astronomers feel a little better about the stars.

The Galaxy Evolution Explorer Web site at <http://www.galex.caltech.edu> describes many of the other discoveries and accomplishments of this mission. And for kids, how do astronomers know how far away a star or galaxy is? Play "How Old do I Look" on The Space Place at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/whats-older> and find out!

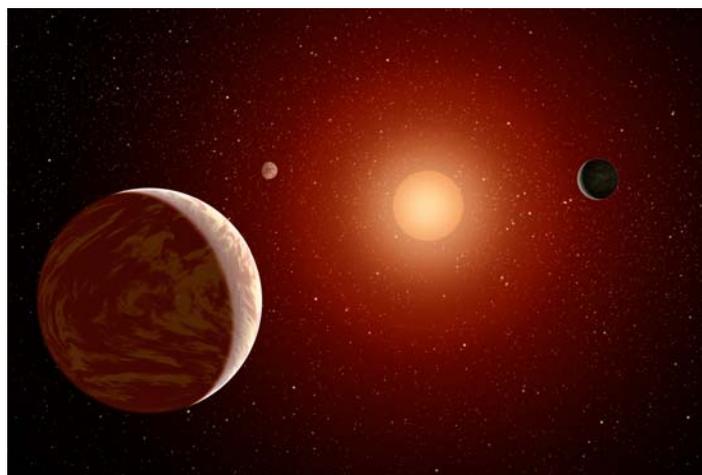
This article was provided by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

THANKS FOR NEWSLETTER HELP

By Terri, Event Coordinator

I wish to take a moment to thank those people who have made the 2010-2011 PAS season a success by submitting reviews and articles to the newsletter. It is nice when members contribute articles they have written, so that the reading isn't all my point of view. Sam Insana, Mike Marron, Leah Sapir, Bob Christ, Lou Roberts, Stan Speilbusch, Rod Sutter, Dennis Young, Pete Morrissey, Joe Collins, and a few others have made this past PAS season much more interesting to read about in your newsletter with their submissions. Moreover, the reviews of PAS events serve to document the activities of PAS during the year. We hope to see more submissions by PAS members this PAS season (2011-2012). Thank you so much for your continued assistance in writing the reviews needed to keep the history of PAS alive within our newsletter.

I'd also like to thank Don Boyd, Matt Kohl and Leah Sapir for all their hard work. Let me tell you how much effort goes into the PAStimes newsletter.... I start with an article that either I wrote, or someone else has written. I format it to match the rest of

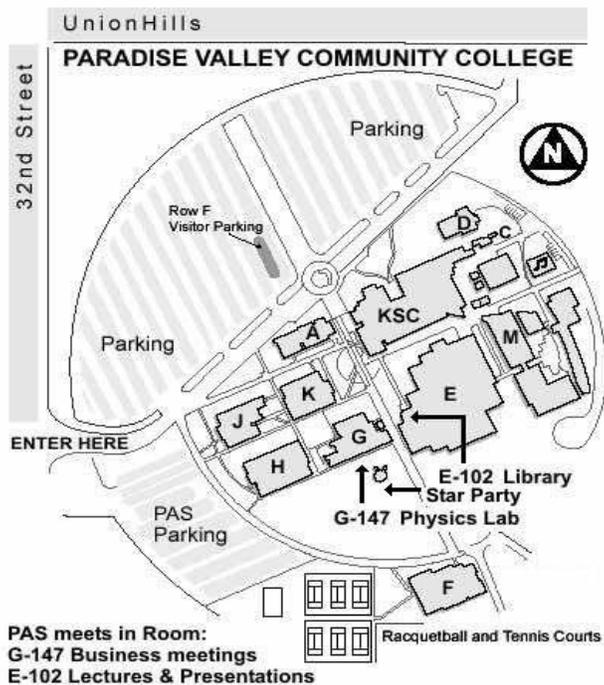


Exoplanets are easier to see directly when their star is a dim, red dwarf.

the articles being submitted to the newsletter, then forward it on to Don and Leah. Don puts the article into the newsletter as a place holder, arranging the articles and pictures in a suitable way. In the meantime, Leah edits the article, checking the grammar, spelling, "readability", etc. It isn't an easy or glamorous job to edit each article, one by one, as they come in, but Leah really does a great job of finding those errors and fixing them before the newsletter goes to print. She then forwards the finished copy on to Don, who adds the final formatting and puts the article in the newsletter as the final version.

Of course, after the newsletter is all assembled, then Matt and I go back through it, looking for more errors and formatting issues. Sometimes, these types of errors can take quite a bit of time, effort, and patience to locate and fix, getting the newsletter into its finished version as you see it online or in print. Many thanks to everyone I mentioned in this article. Thank you all! Together we can make a newsletter that PAS can be proud of!!! A lot of hard work goes into each issue. And many, many thanks to those who make it happen. Send those submissions to me at Events@pasaz.org to make the next issue of the PAStimes newsletter that much more interesting to read. Thanks! §

Map to PAS Meeting Location



A.L. Messier Club Goal

From page 7

Clusters, Asteroids, Comets, Earth Satellites, and Sunspots, so who knows what I'll fall in love with next.

Go check out the clubs (<http://astroleague.org/observing>) and see what tickles your fancy!

By the way, I found a great resource for printable observing log books, which I used for most of the clubs:

<http://10minuteastronomy.wordpress.com/logbooks-for-al-observing-clubs/>

These logs are free to download, and helped me fill up nine binders with club-specific log sheets ready to be filled in. Clear skies!§

Many Thanks To Terri

Don and Leah write: While Terri is thanking everyone else, we want to thank Terri for all the work that she does for PAS - organizing PAS activities, and then writing the articles about both past and upcoming PAS events, and proofreading the final version of the newsletter before it goes on line and into print. Each and every one of these tasks is time-consuming, and Terri does all these things month after month. Many thanks to Terri for everything she does for PAS! §

Desert Botanical Gardens Star Party Review May 7

By Terri, Event Coordinator

This was one fantastic event! In attendance were Sam Insana, Don Boyd, William and Terri Finch, Joe and Renee Collins, Bruce Wurst, Steve Palmer, and Mike Marron. We arrived earlier than planned, and were shown where to set up in the pumpkin patch. We got all set up just as the first family arrived. This event was for Intel employees and their families. So, we had Mom, Dad and a few kids traveling together to the different scopes and events throughout the night. This was a very successful event and it was totally enjoyed by both the PAS members and the Intel group, and even by the workers at DBG who helped set it up and make it special for everyone.

Our setup location in the pumpkin patch was near the port-a-john. You never saw this type of port-a-john... Wow, that was luxury. I appreciated it so much. It was lit inside, flush toilet, water in the sink, pictures on the wall just like a regular 1/2 bath inside a private home. I was very amazed by it. The generator to run it ran all night but the volume wasn't that loud. The jets taking off from the airport were louder than the generator for the bathroom.

Each scope tried to be on something different but we all ended up showing Saturn and the Moon. In fact, before it was dark enough I managed to locate the Trapezium. That's the four stars in the center of the Orion Nebula, but I never found the nebula, as the sky behind the four stars was

still blue when the first group showed up, and so I quickly switched to the Moon and never had a chance to move anyplace else. Bruce took Saturn and showed it for the whole night, because once he had Saturn and a line of customers waiting to see it, he was booked the whole night. That 20" scope had a non-ending line. Joe and Sam and Steve moved between objects through the night. Don tried to find Hercules and said it was too bright out. I think he showed the Beehive Cluster for a while, too. But what I heard the people say is that Saturn and the Moon were their favorite objects.

So, I aimed my scope at the Moon, with a moon filter and a red filter, because even though it was only a crescent moon, it was way too bright to view for any length of time. Everyone loved the view and stayed to chat while viewing the red filtered Moon. The kids learned that I was doing Q&A, so they would come over with some piece of info and try to win a new prize. I had about ten different things I was giving away. The breezes made it hard to keep stuff on my table, so I had the items in boxes for easy access. Four boys spent a lot of time going between the scopes and my table, to get awarded a new prize. They each got a whole set of constellation cards, by the time they were done. They had posters, and info about the Moon and info about Saturn. One boy, separate from that group, was saying he had a telescope at home and wanted to have his Dad take it out so he can study the moon. So, I gave him a Moon pamphlet. That way,

he could study the Moon and know what he was seeing.

I totally enjoyed this event. But, about halfway through, I was getting rather hungry. William brought me some snacks from the refreshments table - animal crackers, trail mix, goldfish crackers, dehydrated apples, and lemonade. Kate walked around and provided cups of water, which was nice. As we were packing up, the group briefly discussed the idea of going out together to eat, but since it was late and we were all driving home in different directions, we decided to postpone that idea for another time.

It was a fun event. The time flew by and we didn't even have a chance to take photos. We talked with Kate after the event, as we were cleaning up, on ways to improve the event a little, such as moving the port-a-john to the other side, where the lights were. But overall, the event was fantastic, enjoyable, exhausting, and lots of fun. It was a very fun group of people to do the event for, and I appreciate everything that DBG did for us that night. Also, we made sure everyone working at DBG that night got to see through our scopes before we packed up. Thanks to Kate and the many others who helped make the event a success, and to my wonderful Telescope Team.

Thanks from Desert Botanical Gardens
By Kate Salameh

Glad you guys enjoyed the event. From what I have heard so far from the Intel folks, they also enjoyed the event! §

Don Boyd
PAStimes Editor
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To:

Changes at Paradise Valley Community College

Information was received Dave Hellman and was edited for newsletter.

There are a few changes happening here at campus. The astronomy deck may be moved to the Black Mountain Campus soon, or it might be disassembled, or it might be kept and turned into a planetarium. There are plans to put a Nursing building on or near the deck. Obviously this would affect the observing here. The star parties might have to be done up at Black Mountain or another spot on this campus. Meeting locations will not change, however. §

"PLANET": Posters for Learning Astronomy and Natural Science for Educators and Teachers

EEditor's correction: This article ran in the May 2011 issue on page 5. The school mentioned by Bob Senzer was later corrected. It should have read "Hillcrest Middle School", not "Hillsboro Middle School". §

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What's Up For July

By Rod Sutter, PAS Past President

Name	Date	Rise	Set
Mercury	07-15-11	07:37	20:59
Venus	07-15-11	04:48	18:58
Mars	07-15-11	02:51	16:59
Jupiter	07-15-11	00:35	13:43
Saturn	07-15-11	11:40	23:32
Uranus	07-15-11	23:05	11:15
Neptune	07-15-11	21:27	08:28
Pluto	07-15-11	18:01	04:25

All Times Arizona Time

July 15 2011

Sunrise: 05:26

Sunset: 19:33



New: July 1



Q1: July 8



Full: July 15



Q3: July 23