STARLITE

The Official Publication of the Peoria Astronomical Society, Inc.

Spring Issue No. 153 *March 2003*

PEORIA ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY, INC.
P.O. BOX 10111
PEORIA IL
61612-0111

Dr. Decker's Generous Gifts

by Eric Clifton

Every dozen years or so, Dr. Sam Decker, in a display of extreme generosity, has caused a major change, maybe even an upheaval, in how members of the Peoria Astronomical Society view the Universe. Well, folks, Sam has done it again!

Back in the late 70's, it was basically Sam's initial donation that got the project to build the 24-inch telescope off the ground.

Sam's contribution really goosed the Society into action. Van and Art got busy grinding the optics and building the mount. The rest of us tackled the jobs of cleaning up a weed-strewn hilltop and erecting the 24-inch dome. It turned out to be a 4-year job, but when the telescope became fully operational in 1981, it was one of the largest amateur-built telescopes in the nation in its own park for astronomy— and the 'Brimfield site' became the Decker-Grebner-VanZandt Observatory.

When Jubilee was first founded, it consisted mostly of a barely remodeled pig-shed and a 14-inch Newtonian telescope. When the telescope was used it had to be rolled outside and polar-aligned every time. On a German equatorial mount, the 14-inch was very top-heavy and, frankly, scary to move. With the 24-inch tasks complete, we turned our attention to permanently mounting the 14- inside the fiberglass 10-foot diameter "VanDome", which had been moved earlier from North-Moor.

Even then, the 14- didn't get a lot of use. Both optically and mechanically challenged — at least initially — it was a big scope in a small dome, difficult to aim and pretty clumsy to use visually —it never did get used for photography.

Then, — Dr. Decker stepped forward — again!

This time it was a Celestron C-14 Compustar. Again, Society members (mainly electronics wizard Barry Redenbo, Celestron guru Scott Swords and yours truly) responded to take full advantage of Dr. Decker's

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Tragedy Strikes Columbia Crew

By Jeff Pittenger

January 16 2003 10:39 a. m. EST — It was a perfect clear day at Cape Canaveral. The Columbia spacecraft complete with its Spacehab module — home to hundreds of experiments ranging from the study of Mediterranean dust storms to osteoporosis research — lifted off for it's 28th mission into space. There were tens of thousands of spectators present to witness the launch commencing the 16 day research mission. Hurtling through space at 17,000 miles/hour at an altitude of about 200 miles the astronauts onboard knowingly and willingly faced the dangers of space travel in order to serve humanity.

Onboard mission STS-107 were seven outstanding individuals; as it is with astronauts, they are the 'cream of the crop'. This crew was no exception. They were individuals whose intelligence,

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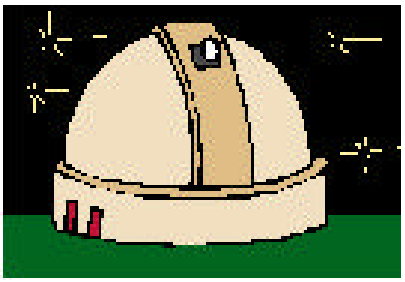
Needles from the Hay Stack

by Scott Hay

A few things are on my mind right now in no certain order...thanking lots of folks, beginning with the folks who come to the board meetings. If you're new, you don't have to be an elected board member to attend, only to vote. It is a good way to get to know more about your fellow members and have some fun with us. If there is a particular area you want to hear more about, say visual observing, or photography, whatever, chances are it will be mentioned at the meeting. After the meeting, several folks linger and visit and you are always welcome. They are at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month at the Northpoint Hardees near Mt Hawley Airport and the Taco Bell on North Knoxville in Peoria.

NorthMoor Fundraising:

PAS is very lucky to have a friend in Bert Princen, 2003 President of Peoria Academy of Science. Because of Bert's efforts, we have optimism that we can succeed. In anticipation of his future fundraising efforts on our behalf, the average and below average income members should participate if at all possible. Even if it is only $5 or $10 dollars, because everyone realizes that $1000.00 for one person might be like $100 or $10 dollars for another. I am just requesting that each member give only what you can afford. It is important for you to do so because it shows outside benefactors that you really believe that this PAS project has merit. As we ask potential donors to join us in our efforts,



one of the things Bert and I will be asked is "What percentage of your membership has given to this cause?" At the December meeting, Treasurer Mike Shelton stated that only 9 members of 119 had contributed. The encouraging part was that the total funds raised by just those first nine folks and their matching funds totaled approx. $10,000.00 Several PAS members have come through in a big way to help pay for NorthMoor Observatory's much needed renovation, people mentioned in Mike's article elsewhere in this issue and their employers have come through in a big way. Currently, assuming all the matching funds come in, we are between $14,000.00 and $15,000.00. Thanks to the Peoria Park District, Bonnie Noble, Tim Cassidy, Mike Baietto, and Roger Allen for putting together a nice packet showing the history of the scope and the observatory. Bert is writing a summary that ties all of these exhibits together. With a little more support internally from PAS, we will be ready to go to work raising money. Currently, only three folks are on the fundraising committee (Bert Princen, Helen Ware, and myself) and more help is needed.

...a good way to get to know more about your fellow members ...

Sam Decker's gift to PAS:

It is a real pleasure to bestow a special PAS thanks to Dr. Sam Decker for transferring complete and unrestricted ownership of a state of the art TMB refractor and Losmandy GM8 mount and incorporated Losmandy Gemini system.

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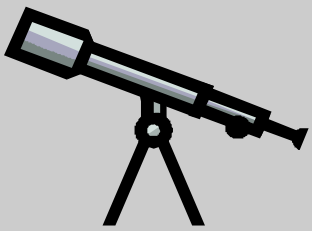
Starlite is published quarterly during the months of March, June, September, and December by the Peoria Astronomical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 10111, Peoria IL 61612-0111. Deadline for submission is the third Wednesday of the preceding month. Submissions should be directed to Jeffrey Pittenger, 721 Fillmore St, Morton IL 61550, or e-mailed to <starlite_editor@yahoo.com>. Any materials submitted to *Starlite* become property of the Peoria Astronomical Society, unless other arrangements are made beforehand.

Editors-in-Chief
Jeffrey Pittenger <starlite_editor@yahoo.com>
Contributing Editor
John Barra <jbarra31@cs.com>
Production Editors
Calene Fleming
Scott Swords
Michael Frasca <frasca@uic.edu>
Jessica Frasca <frasca@att.net>
Layout and Copy Editor
Jeffrey Pittenger <starlite_editor@yahoo.com>
Production Assistant
Alex Frasca
Visit our site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.astronomical.org>



PeoriaAstro@yahoogroups.com

compiled by Jeff Pittenger

Here are some highlights from the Peoria Astronomical Society's e-mail group. If you are an active member of the PAS and would like to subscribe to PeoriaAstro, send an e-mail message to Michael Frasca <frasca@uic.edu> with the following information: name, snail-mail address, and e-mail address. You will be added to the group.

@ @ @

From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
Date: Wed Dec 4, 2002 11:00 pm
Subject: Markarian's chain
Well, the snow has started falling:-(I was digging through some old images and found a couple of what I believe is the Markarain's chain in Virgo. The Provia really does well on enlarging this galaxy region. These were taken last February during a trip to Chiefland. I have counted around 30galaxies in the image. This is a two stack of 60 minute exposures on theAP130 at f8 with 120 Provia. Comments/suggestions welcome.

small version (113kb)
http://www.astro-photography.com/markarian_small.htm

larger version(400kb)
http://www.astro-photography.com/markarian_large.htm

@ @ @

From: Tim McGrath <astropunk_2000@y...>
Date: Thu Dec 12, 2002 11:26 am
Subject: A comprehensive list of amateur observatories

http://www.seds.org/billa/obs/obslist.html

@ @ @

From: "Cheryl Criss" <ccriss@c...>
Date: Wed Jan 8, 2003 8:54 am
Subject: New Web Page

I just had a chance to check out the new Web Page. Great work for all of you who contributed to its creation I finally got out at least in my front yard the other night to star search after my busy schedule and our endless cloudy skies. The neighbor young man is finishing his final class at Bradley before graduating, and it happens to be an astronomy class. He came over and really enjoyed looking through my Dobsonian10" using my 2" Nagler eyepiece. I did have some fogging problems, so I finished my evening of viewing around 10 pm with my Pentax 20mm x 60mmbinoculars.

@ @ @

From: Tim McGrath <astropunk_2000@y...>
Date: Thu Jan 9, 2003 12:45 pm
Subject: Jupiter

I found a computer program called "Jovian Moon Events3.0, High Accuracy" You can download it here:

http://www.physics.sfasu.edu/astro/dansoftware.html

It is a DOS program, and computes all moon transits in a given month. It takes a while to compute them all, but it outputs the results to a printable text file.

@ @ @

From: nerio2@a...
Date: Thu Jan 9, 2003 4:16 pm
Subject: mentor for senior project

I have a student who would like to grind a 6" mirror, and create a telescope as her required senior project at East Peoria High School. One of the requirements is that she locate and work with someone outside the school, and knowledgeable in the chosen subject to act as a mentor. I told her that I would check with the membership to see if there might be such a person. She is very bright and conscientious. It would require some time committment from the person who chooses to do this, but,as she is a joy to have in class, I believe it would be a rewarding experience. If you might be that person, please e-mail me, and I'll get the two of you together.

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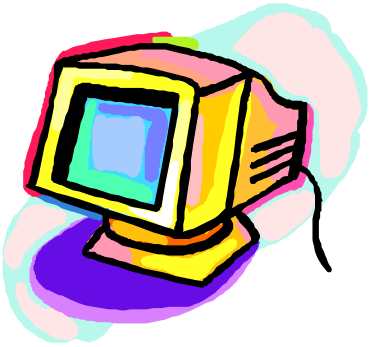

From: "Richard Tennis" <mtennis@m...>
Date: Fri Jan 10, 2003 7:04 am
Subject: Re: [PeoriaAstro] mentor for senior project

I already have a student, Jacob Hilton, senior E. Peoria High, who I am mentoring on a similar project, but not grinding a mirror, but one of observing the heavens with his 10 inch dobsonian telescope. It has been enjoyable, even though we have had few good nights of viewing. I would recommend the program to anyone who can help this student. If I helped, I would be the one needing the guidance in grinding out a mirror.

@ @ @

From: "JoeMtnBike <joemtnbike@y...>" <joemtnbike@y...>
Date: Fri Jan 10, 2003 9:06 am
Subject: Re: Jupiter

I have come across some software that I also want to share with the group. Meridian v. 4.7 I've been really impressed by it and of all things its freeware. You can find it by visiting the following link and clicking on the Download Meridian Link

http://www.merid.cam.org/meridian/english.html

Jeff

@ @ @

From: "Stephen E. Russell" <sjruss55@d...>
Date: Fri Jan 10, 2003 2:17 pm
Subject: Re: [PeoriaAstro] Re: Jupiter

Thanks for the link Jeff.

I have an older version of Meridian and found it very useful. IIRC it was quite accurate. Looks like I need download the newest version. The best freeware program for observing Mars that I've seen so far is called Mars Previewer II. Here is the link at Sky & Telescope

http://skyandtelescope.com/resources/software/article_328_1.asp

This was very accurate when observing Mars last opposition. Another freeware program for Jupiter is called the Planets version 2.02. It also is very accurate. I like it the best for tracking Jupiter's moons. Here is the link

http://www.cpac.freeserve.co.uk/

I have version 1.0, so time to update again <g>.

@ @ @

From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
Date: Thu Jan 16, 2003 5:27 pm
Subject: New Erik Ng Jupiter Io Avi (WOW)

http://www.pbase.com/image/10904388

@ @ @

From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
Date: Tue Jan 21, 2003 8:45 pm
Subject: Web-based Mars simulator
http://www.exploremarsnow.org/

@ @ @

From: <heyhay@b...>
Date: Thu Jan 23, 2003 5:51 pm
Subject: Dr. Bernard Jackson, a local product, doctorate in astronomy to speak in Peoria April 11th.

Excellent News! Dr. Bernard Jackson, one of the Peoria Academy's own, will return to Peoria on April 11 to share some of his Astronomy research with us. A quick yahoo search turned up some interesting links that I've included below so that you can start thinking up those questions. -Scott Hay

http://casswww.ucsd.edu/solar/crew/bjackson/index.html

http://solarmuri.ssl.berkeley.edu/institutions/ucsandiego.html

http://itss.raytheon.com/cafe/qadir/q2924.html

http://casswww.ucsd.edu/personal/bjackson/smei.htm

@ @ @

From: <heyhay@b...>
Date: Fri Jan 24, 2003 4:37 pm
Subject: here's link to some awesome Dr.

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Of Starlites Past

by John Barra

40 Years Ago
Spring Newsletter 1963

"As mentioned in the January issue, we have obtained the good services of one our most active members, Martin Hackett, as our Editor (Co-chairman of the Publicity Committee headed by Mrs. Elizabeth Evans). Martin has accepted this job with considerable enthusiasm and is willing to go along with our need for more frequent issues."

The newsletter then and now continues with the passing of the guard. This issue, like 40 years ago, begins the process of the changing of editors for the Starlite. Like then, the news of the Peoria Astronomical Society will continue to be printed.

"This year we will be the host Society for the seventeenth annual convention of the North Central Region of the Astronomical League… Our observatory will be represented by four senior papers given by Don Jackson, Bernard Jackson, Dave Williams, and Martin Hackett."

He may have been called Bernard Jackson then, but now he is known as Dr. Bernard Jackson—of the University of California at San Diego. Forty years later, on April 11 at 6 p.m. at the Cater Inn, he will be the guest speaker at the Peoria Academy of Science Annual Banquet!

25 Years Ago
March *Starlite* 1978

"Messier Club… These sessions are all to be held at Grebner Observatory near Metamora; 1.6 miles east of the State Police Building on Illinois Route 116, exactly 1 mile east of Schumacher Chevy-Buick—watch for the observatory dome in a field behind a brick house on the south side of the road.

I can remember many years ago as a kid growing up in Roanoke that I drove by that 'dome in a field' many times on my way to Peoria, thinking that I should stop to check out it. Then one day, it was gone! It was not until many years later, when I joined the PAS; I learned that same dome had been move to the Jubilee observatory site.

"FLASH! As soon as you receive this issue, run out into the pre-dawn and look, with binoculars, for Comet Bradfield: about March 15-16, it will be between Alpha and Gamma Aquarii...."

It seemed, for many years, the best we could hope for was to see occasional glimpses of comets in binoculars. Then suddenly we were blessed with the naked-eye Comets Hyuatake and Hale-Bopp. It seems we are again in a lull period, when the best we hope for are binocular comets. Who knows, there may be another bright one just around the corner (or Sun)?

Astronomical Calendar

March 2003

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

April 2003

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2003

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

March 1
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

March 2
New Moon

March 5
PAS Members Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Lakeview Planetarium

March 7
NorthMoor - Church group 7-9 p.m.

March 11
First Quarter Moon

March 18
Full Moon
PAS Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Northpoint Shopping Center Hardees

March 21
Vernal Equinox, 7:00 p.m.

March 24
Last Quarter Moon

March 26, 5:00 p.m.
Asteroid Vesta is at opposition

March 29
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

April 1
New Moon

April 2
PAS Members Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Lakeview Planetarium

April 5
Spring Maintenance NorthMoor Observatory
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

April 6
Daylight Savings Time Begins

April 9
First Quarter Moon

April 11
Peoria Academy of Science Annual Banquet
Barrack's Cater Inn, 6:00 p.m.

April 12
Work Party at Jubilee Observatory, 10:00 a.m.

April 16
PAS Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Northpoint Shopping Center Hardees

Mercury is at greatest elongation
(13º altitude @ 30 min after sunset)
Full Moon

April 22
Lyrid meteor shower peaks

April 23
Last Quarter Moon

April 26
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

April 31
New Moon

May 3
Asteroid Juno is at opposition
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

May 5
Eta Aquarid meteor shower peaks

May 7
PAS Members Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Lakeview Planetarium

(Continued on page 5)

The Bulletin Board

New Members

Welcome to:

David Tybor

☾ ☾ ☾

Shirts for sale

PAS has a nice black heavy cotton T-shirt with PAS in white letters on the front and the Journal Star artwork from the Mr. Cernon editorial on the back. A change has to be corrected first before production begins with the name Cernon being taken off the art work. The price for a shirt is $12 for sizes S, Med, L and XL. If you want an XXL or XXXL Please add $2 to the price. Dan Son is in charge of this work and can be phoned at 698-8611.

☾ ☾ ☾

PAS Webmaster Steps Down

If you did a web search from Yahoo! or Google for an astronomy topic, chances are one of the top 5 hits would take you to the Peoria Astronomical Society's own web site, www.astronomical.org. This is because our website is ranked as one of the best astronomy-related sites in the world. And the one we have to thank for it all is our webmaster, Don Ware. You may remember Don as a former PAS President. His term was cut short after accepting a new job in Texas. Don has continued his membership with the PAS, and has done a terrific job in keeping our website among the best on the web.

Recently, Don has announced that after 10 years of loyal service, he is resigning from his position as our webmaster. The responsibility of maintaining our website will now fall on us. Therefore we are looking for one or more people to fill in as our new webmaster. If you have any knowledge or experience in web page design, and you are willing to help out, we could use your help. If you are interested, contact one of the board members, or join us at the next board meeting.

☾ ☾ ☾

Work Parties

There are three 'work parties' scheduled already for 2003.

NorthMoor Observatory
April 5 9:00 a.m.

Jubilee Observatory
April 12 10:00 a.m.
May 17 10:00 a.m.

☾ ☾ ☾

Mark Your Calendars

The Peoria Academy of Science Annual Banquet is scheduled for April 11th 6:00 p.m., at Barrack's Cater Inn. For reservations, call Greet Princen, 691-0519. Program: Recent astronomy research, presented by the Academy's alumnus, Dr. Bernard Jackson from the University of California at San Diego. Also, presentation of Memorial Scholarship Award winner. Reserve your Friday evening for this special event

☾ ☾ ☾

Extra! Extra!

On Feb. 7 2003, The *Peoria Journal Star* covered the informative meeting provided to citizens in the pilot area where the new full cutoff streetlights are installed. This positive press reinforces how the PAS and the Light Control Committee have a constructive influence on the community.

☾ ☾ ☾

Calendar...

(Continued from page 4)

May 9
First Quarter Moon
Jubilee Observatory Cub Scout Group

May 15
Full Moon
Total Lunar Eclipse, 10:40 p.m. mideclipse
Totality: 10:14 – 11:07 p.m.

May 17
Work party at Jubilee Observatory 10:00 a.m.

May 21
PAS Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Northpoint Shopping Center Hardees
Deadline for June Starlite

May 23
Last Quarter Moon

May 24
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

May 30
New Moon
Annular Solar eclipse 11:00 p.m. CDT
(visible from Scotland, Iceland, & Greenland)

May 31
Star Party at Jubilee Observatory

Monthly Program Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, meetings will be held in the Lakeview Museum Planetarium, with all programs beginning at 7:30 p.m.

March 5, 2003
Video: The Unfolding Universe

April 2, 2003
Dr. Linda French
Illinois Wesleyan Physics Professor

May 7, 2003
TBA

June 4, 2003
TBA

Can You Spot This?

NGC 2392 Eskimo Nebula

by John Barra

Can You Spot This? *premiered in* Starlite *Issue #144, December 2000.*

Locating NGC2392, the Eskimo Nebula, can be challenging. Although it may be easy to find the target nearby star, starhopping to the nebula itself and then identifying it among the stars in the field is not an easy task. Yet, with a little patience, most amateurs should be able to find it.

First, take a good look at the constellation Gemini as shown in the low-power Chart 1. I think it is easier to find objects in Gemini if your ignore the stick-figure twins. Instead, concentrate on the rectangle formed by the four brightest stars in the constellation: Castor and Pollux to the left and Mu and Gamma to the right

Our target star will be Delta, which is the brightest star between Pollux and Gamma. Do not confuse it with nearby Zeta to the right, which is about a half-magnitude fainter. With a low-power eyepiece in your scope, aim your Telrad or other finder at Delta. Look in the eyepiece and center this star.

Now it gets trickier. Check the high power Chart 2. Notice the star just above and to the right of Delta. Begin starhopping by moving your scope away from Delta in the opposite direction of that nearby star. With a low-power eyepiece, you should soon pass what I call Hook 1 and Hook 2. Hook one includes 5.2 magnitude 63 Geminorum. Notice its position with stars 56 (5.1) and 61 (6.0) for reference.

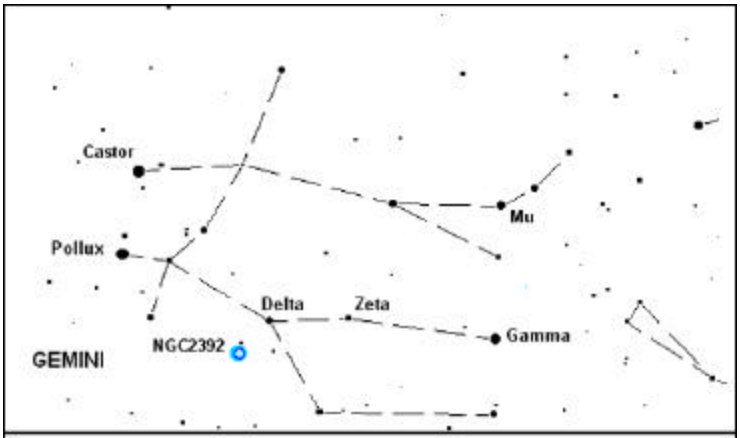

Chart 1: Low Power

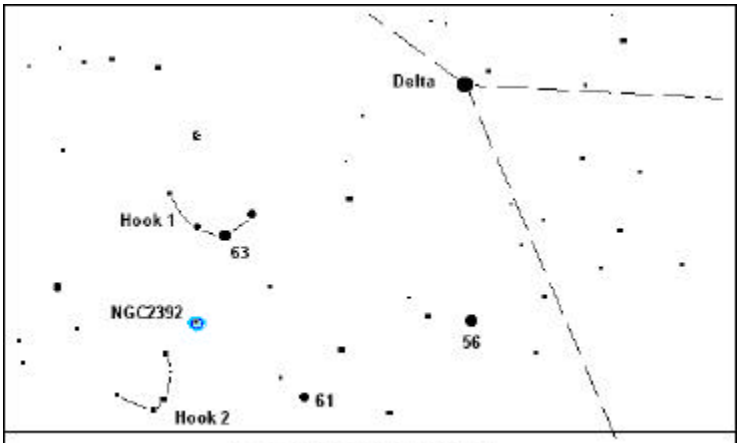

Chart 2: High Power

Once you definitely can locate the two hooks, you should be able to find NGC2392 in relation to them. Like most planetary nebulae, this one will appear to be an out-of-focus star. Once you have what appears to be it, center the "star" in your eyepiece.

...it will get larger as you increase the power....

Steadily increase your power. If you indeed have the nebula, it will get larger as you increase the power, unlike a star or even a central star, which will not get bigger with power. You might be confused with a nearby star of approximately the same magnitude, so you may have to try them both.

You should not have difficulty confirming the nebula in this manner. The central star might even blink off and on for you, as did NGC6826, the Blinking Planetary. As you increase power, you should be able to notice an irregular or fuzzy outline in this nearly circular nebula.

The name of this nebula comes from good quality photographs, which show a rough face surrounded by a circular, furry hood similar to the coat worn by Eskimos. It takes a very good telescope at high power to begin to notice these features. Yet, even modest telescopes will make it obvious that you have a planetary nebula—if you actually find it. If you do, send me your comments. I will reprint them in the next Starlite.

OBJECT STATISTICS:
Name: NGC2392
Eskimo Nebula
Type: Planetary Nebula
Magnitude: 9.2
Size: >15"
Coordinates: 07 hr. 29.2 min.
+20º 55 min.

Minutes of the Board of Directors

by Dan Son, PAS Secretary

Board meetings take place on the third Wednesday of the month. Those referenced below were held at the Hardee's of Willow Knolls Court in Peoria. Future PAS Board meetings will be held at the Hardee's of Northpoint Shopping Center in Peoria. Meetings start at 7:30 p.m.

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November 20, 2002

Treasurer's Report: (Mike Shelton) Mike presented the Treasurer's report (copies attached) for the month of October.

Academy of Science: (Scott Hay) The slate of incoming officers is complete.

Education: (Scott Hay) Don Hill's Astronomy classes at NorthMoor Observatory through Peoria Park District ended November 17th. Scott Hay will be teaching two astronomy classes for Bradley's Continuing Education Jan 7th and 9th.

Jubilee Observatory: (Eric Clifton) A 4H group will be coming out on November 22nd at 7 p.m. with a rain date on the 23rd at 6 p.m.

14 Inch: (Mike Shelton) Plywood ring is almost done. Ed Reid donated some coating material for the ring.

24 Inch: (Eric Clifton) Eric made a motion to make keyholders of the following people: Tim McGrath, Tim Lester, Dan Son, Steve Russell, Rich Tennis, Scott Hay. 2nd by Mike Shelton. Motion passed.

CCD: (Stephen Russell & Tim McGrath) Bradley University students want to do CCD work using PAS scopes.

Light Pollution: (Rich Tennis) Rich has done the filling out of forms for a grant application from Academy of Science. He is seeking $1077 for the cost of testing full cutoff lighting in Peoria (map included of area to be tested). Sheldon Schafer will have a dark sky program for 1 month in 2003. Rich Tennis will be a Section Leader for the IDA for the Central Illinois area.

NorthMoor Observatory: (Bill Cole) Wal-Mart had 4 people show up for the Leonids Event at 5 p.m. Used light sticks for a walkway path to the dome. Chuck Collins from WMBD talked on TV about NorthMoor being open for the event. 40 people showed up for the event. Everyone was gone by 5 p. m.

NorthMoor Restoration: Next meeting with Peoria Park District is Dec 3rd at 9 p.m. at Glen Oak Park Pavilion. Eric Clifton will present current project costs (copies attached). Group to set up fundraising committee. Bill Cole made a flyer and put them out at NorthMoor with stamped envelopes for those wishing to donate monies.

Observing Club: (John Barra) Great meteor shower.

Program: (Dan Son) December Show and Tell January no meeting. Eric Clifton made motion to cancel meeting. 2nd by Tim Lester. Motion passed. February Gene Hodel with Astro-Bowl. March TBA

Public Relations: We have the original letter from Eugene Cernan to the Journal Star.

***Starlite*:** (Mike & Jessica Frasca) Deadline for *Starlite* will be February board meeting. Mike & Jessica will be retiring from the *Starlite*. We will be looking for people to replace them and will make announcements in the *Starlite*, members meeting and e-mail group. Your work has been truly outstanding and you both will be missed. Steve Wrigley made a motion to include Observatory Fund drive information in the *Starlite*. 2nd by Bill Cole. Motion passed.

Membership: (Scott Swords) 2 new members, James Martin and Jeffrey Pittenger.

www.astronomical.org: (Tim McGrath) Will try to update officers and the map to NorthMoor Observatory.

New Business: Calene Fleming made a motion to participate in next years, Interplanetary Bike Ride on August 9th, 2003. 2nd by John Barra. Motion passed. Eric Clifton made a motion to get F off the key legend list of the General Members list. 2nd by Mike Hay. Motion passed.

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December 18, 2002

Treasurer's Report: (Mike Shelton) Mike presented the Treasurer's report (copies attached) for the month of November. Good start in the PAS Observing Fund.

Academy of Science: (Scott Hay) In a speech given to us by Bert Princen of the Peoria Academy of Science, he pointed out a few things we can do to help get the new dome to be a reality. Need to have the PAS Board financial support this project. Get Bert copies of our records to show we are Non for Profit group (501 C3). There are 3 types of donor's a) Board and owners, b) Institutions & Companies, c) Private people and we need to be actively seeking all 3 groups support. Peoria Park District will rewrite the papers so the Building will be ours, subject to Board review, negotiation and approval. Eric made a motion after Bert was finished to have all Board members financially support the Observing fund. 2nd by Rich Tennis. Motion passed.

Education: (Scott Hay) Scott Hay will teach Institute for Learning in Retirement at Bradley University on Jan 7th and 9th.

Jubilee Observatory: (Tim McGrath) All books have been inventoried. Installed white lights in warm up room. Tim has made a packet for members to use when bringing out-groups to Jubilee. Bill Kapitko: Site Superintendent for Jubilee Park and is moving to Rice Lake Conservation Area. He has been very good to PAS at Jubilee.

14 Inch: (Mike Shelton) Need to finish this project before work can begin on the 24. Copies attached for next steps. The ring has been put together at Tim Lester's house and is at the observatory now.

CCD: (Stephen Russell & Tim McGrath) We have received the CCD New Astronomer book and have access for support at the web site. Will send a thank you letter out.

Light Pollution: (Rich Tennis) Rich received $670 from Peoria Academy of Science for the Light Pollution test. Rich has 2003 work schedule made-up (copies attached).

NorthMoor Observatory: (Bill Cole) Walmart left us a coffee maker in the warm up room. Bill gave an example of possible PAS business card's and will have prices at a future time.(copy attached)

NorthMoor Restoration: We need to investigate the cost of insurance, tax's etc if we own the building. What will our costs be. Report from the Dec. 3rd meeting with PPD. Bonnie Noble said she would help and even go with us to Institution donors. We talked about wanting the dome and building to be PAS property.

Program: (Dan Son) Feb will be Astro-Bowl by Gene Hodel March will try to get a video April will try to get Prof. Linda French

***Starlite*:** (Mark Koonce, Mike & Jessica Frasca) Deadline for *Starlite* will be February board meeting.

www.astronomical.org: (Tim McGrath) Tim would like to let someone else work with Don Ware on the web site. Will post to *Starlite* and members meeting if not filled before.

New Business: Asked to get in writing the ok to use the PJ Star cartoon on shirts. Dan Son made a motion for him to be allowed to use the artwork and Peoria Astronomical Society on shirts to be sold. 2nd by Tim McGrath. Motion passed

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January 15, 2003

Treasurer's Report: (Mike Shelton) Mike presented the Treasurer's report (copies attached) for the month of December. Steve Wrigley made a motion to accept. 2nd by Calene Fleming. Motion passed. Motion made by Steve Wrigley to list all people who have contributed to date & matching funds companies names in the *Starlite*, with a year to date funds received. 2nd by John Barra. Motion passed

Education: (Scott Hay) Bradley University's Division of Continuing Education's Institute for Learning in Retirement wishes to thank PAS members Scott Hay, Rich Tennis and Brian Hakes for their commit-

(Continued on page 13)

Jubilee Observatory Notes

by Tim McGrath

This is my first year as the new Jubilee Observatory chairman, and I am excited to be a part of one of the finest amateur observatories in the Midwest. How many other astronomy clubs can claim they have a 24-inch motorized telescope? I hope to share some fresh ideas and create a renewed interest for our members and guests.

Already I see challenges ahead of me. Like NorthMoor, Jubilee Observatory will soon be facing a crisis if things are not done soon to prevent it. The 14-inch telescope has been inoperable for more than a year. A replacement Compustar computer had to be purchased for it. The dome was disassembled, and given a fresh coat of paint. We are in the process of replacing the deteriorated wood supporting the dome and the shutter doors. Unfortunately it has been a long and slow process.

The dome housing the 24-inch telescope is also showing signs of deterioration. The entire dome needs to be brushed and primed, and given a fresh coat of paint. The 24-inch telescope itself also needs of repair. The scope only slews at high speed in Right Ascension.

On a more positive note, Dr. Sam Decker donated a brand-new state-of-the-art computerized telescope to the PAS. It was given to the society as a gift, with the stipulation that it will be kept at Jubilee Observatory for the membership to share. However, this also presents us with the challenge of keeping it protected and secure, and installing a permanent pier on which to mount it. In the coming months, I will announce the final decision governing its storage and use. It is a fairly complicated computer-controlled telescope, so members wishing to use it will likely have to get individual training to become key holders.

This is an aggressive list of tasks, and with a little help from everyone, I am confident that we can get it all done. That is why I am taking this opportunity to personally ask for your help. I will be scheduling work parties one weekend a month. The first two will be April 12th and May 17th at 10:00 A.M. The rest will be announced in the next Starlight. There is much to be done to prepare for the 2003 observing season, and it can't all fall on the shoulders of a few individuals. If you are already a Jubilee key holder, then you are obligated to attend at least one work party. If you are a new member or wish to become a key holder, then this is the perfect opportunity to get involved. Every PAS member is entitled to become a key holder. Just ask!

Watch the Starlight and website for dates of upcoming events. I will post dates of work parties, star parties, key holder training, and private group observing events to the website as they become available.

New Logo Design Contest

by Tim Lester

For over 50 years the Peoria Astronomical Society has had only two logo designs, so in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the site selection for NorthMoor Observatory, a logo redesign is being considered. Any designs submitted should reflect who we are and what we stand for and may have a primary and secondary image, though secondary images are not a requirement. The primary logo will be used on letterhead, t-shirts and banners; the secondary logo could be used for a business card idea presented at a board meeting, mailing envelopes or shirt embroidery. The primary logo must contain the words "Peoria Astronomical Society" in the image and any secondary images must include the words "PAS" or "Peoria Astronomical Society".

Original PAS Logo

From all of the images submitted, the Board of Directors will select final images for the entire membership to vote on as the new logo for the Peoria Astronomical Society. The final image(s) will become property of the Peoria Astronomical Society. The individual responsible for the winning design will receive a 1-year membership.

Requirements:

1. The logo should not have more than three colors.
2. The design should be a maximum size of 2"h x 6"w.
3. The logo should be simple, so that it can be scaled to various sizes without major distortion of the image.
4. The logo should be suitable for grayscale or as a black and white image (usable in color and black and white).
5. The logo can be computer generated or hand drawn; if hand drawn, then someone will create

(Continued on page 11)

Columbia….

(Continued from page 1)

dedication, endurance, and discipline set them above the rest, leading them on a trip to the heavens. The Columbia crew consisted of Commander Rick Husband, Pilot William McCool, Payload Commander Michael Anderson, Mission Specialists: David Brown, Kalpana Chawla, Laurel Clark and Ilan Ramon.

Col. Rick D. Husband, 45 — dreamed of being an astronaut from the age of 4. He spent the remainder of his life pursuing that dream. After learning to fly at age 18, he earned a bachelors degree in mechanical engineering. Husband became an Air Force test pilot and earned his masters degree. After 3800 hours of flight time in 40 different aircraft he was accepted into the NASA astronaut program on his fourth try. In 1999, Husband piloted the shuttle Discovery to its 1st docking with the International Space Station.

Cmdr. William C. McCool, 41— born to a Navy aviator, developed an interest in flying at a very young age. McCool graduated second in his class of 1000 at the Naval Academy and earned masters degrees in both computer science and aeronautical engineering while pursuing his interest in flying. 'Willie' became a test pilot in 1986. 10 years and 2800 flight hours later he was chosen for NASA's astronaut program.

Lt. Col. Michael Anderson, 42 — grew up on Fairchild Air Force base, dreaming of being a pilot. Anderson earned a bachelors of science degree in physics and astronomy. He joined the Air Force and continued to earn a masters degree in physics. He was selected for the astronaut program in 1994 from nearly 3000 applicants. Anderson flew on the shuttle Endeavor in 1998 on a docking mission with the Russian space station Mir.

Dr. Kalpana Chawla, 41 — was born in Karnal, India where she earned an engineering degree, despite her father's objections. Chawla moved to the United States and earned a masters and doctorate in aerospace engineering. NASA selected her for the astronaut program in 1994. Dr. Chawla became the 1st Indian-born woman in space on a 1997 Columbia mission making her a national hero in her homeland.

Capt. David Brown, 41 — took a less likely path into space. Brown, a skilled gymnast, took a job with a circus while working on a biology degree. David became a Navy surgeon and later served on an aircraft carrier where he developed an appetite for flying. In 1998, he was chosen for flight training. Brown graduated 1st in his class and logged 2700 flight hours. NASA chose Brown for the astronaut program in 1996 after 3 attempts.

STS-107 Crew

NASA photo

Dr. Laurel Salton Clark, 41 — grew up in Racine, Wisconsin. She earned a bachelors degree in zoology and went on to complete medical school. Serving the Navy for 10 years as submarine medical officer and flight surgeon Clark attained the rank of Commander. NASA accepted Clark for astronaut training in 1996.

Col. Ilan Ramon, 48 — son & grandson of holocaust survivors grew up near Tel Aviv. At 16 he fell in love with flying when allowed to take the controls of a neighbor's Cessna. Once high school was behind him Ramon joined the Israeli Air Force and logged 4000 hours in combat aircraft as a fighter pilot. Ilan earned an electrical and computer engineering degree in 1983. Ramon now a decorated war hero decided to return to the Air Force. In 1997, he was approached about becoming Israel's 1st astronaut.

On February 1 2003, friends and family of the crew anxiously awaited the return of their loved ones at Cape Canaveral in Florida. The scheduled arrival time of 9:16 a.m. passed without sign of the shuttle. Before long, the relatives were called aside and privately briefed that the worst had happened. Only 16 minutes from home the shuttle Columbia had broken up above Texas upon reentry at an altitude 200,000 feet at a speed of 12,000 miles/hour spreading debris across an area of 500 sq. miles. There would be no survivors.

This day, expected to be one of celebration, instead became one of mourning for the 12 children, 4 wives, 2 husbands, countless friends and relatives of the crew and the entire NASA 'family'. As news of the tragedy spread people from nations around the globe mourned with them.

These brave astronauts represent a cross-section of the best the world has to offer. We can only hope that NASA can determine the root cause and correct it in order to continue with the scheduled manned space missions. Otherwise, the ultimate sacrifice of the Columbia crew and others before them will have been in vain. After over 110 successful shuttle missions the public has become accustomed to the idea of space travel and is desensitized to the dangers. The crew of STS-107 knew of these hazards and risked their lives selflessly in the name of science and exploration for the benefit of all humankind.

Astronomer's Paradise

Photos courtesy of Steve Russell

A great way to escape winter's cold and snow is to attend Florida's Winter Star Party. The 19th annual 2003 Winter Star Party was held February 3rd through the 8th in the Florida Keys. I had the good fortune of attending the WSP for the first time. My observing buddies from Chicago purchased WSP tickets and asked if I could join them. They had busy schedules, which called for some clever scheduling. They could swing it only if they stayed two nights. Thursday morning, the three of us flew from Chicago O'Hare to Fort Lauderdale. We had less than 48 hours to experience the 2003 WSP.

The WSP is hosted by the Southern Cross Astronomical Society (SCAS). The WSP is held at one of the southernmost dark sky sites in the contiguous United States at 25 North latitude. This annual event occurs each February in the tropical paradise that is the Florida Keys. Right on the beach, at the Atlantic Ocean, it is held at a Girl Scout camp located in West Summerland Key, a 3-hour drive south of Miami. Attendance is limited to 600, and the tickets sell out quickly the preceding fall. The WSP offers views of the far-southern jewels of Omega Centauri and the Southern Cross. At this latitude, Jupiter and Saturn are near the zenith.

Daytime activities included lectures by Tippy D'Auria on the Milky Way, Terry Mann on the ISS-AT and Yuri Petrunin on designing a Maksutov telescope. There was a four-day workshop on image processing taught by prominent astrophotographers Scott Ireland, Tony Hallas, and Donald Parker. To compliment the workshop were lectures on CCD imaging that included Roland Christen, Mark Jenkins and Trent Kjell's CC*D Imaging from the Ground Up*. There was a full line up of vendors who donated over 80 door prizes that were given away on Friday afternoon.

We arrived at our motel around 5 a.m. after a 4-hour drive from Fort Lauderdale. Big Pines Motel was a place right out of the 60's. Though it was not a five-star rated motel, the accommodations were clean. Since we had little time for shuteye, it was of no consequence to us. Next, we joined several friends for dinner. Everyone enjoyed great seafood and, my favorite, authentic key lime pie for dessert.

The sun had now set and it was time to head over to the WSP site. With the Atlantic Ocean in the background, the silhouette of palm trees surrounded by a plethora of telescopes was awesome. I practically had to pinch myself to make sure I wasn't dreaming.

What can I say, the evening temperature was still in the 70's, we were in shorts, and it was February! It was a drastic change from the temperatures back home where the lows were in the single digits. As fortune would have it, we managed to hit the best night for viewing. What were the odds? Astronomical if you will excuse the pun. The seeing was rated an 8 by Florida standards, which corresponds to a 10 or 12 back home in Central IL. The humidity was already in the low 90's percent range. It was indeed going to be a perfect night for viewing planetary detail at stupid powers. We were not disappointed, the views through the vast array of telescopes was worth the price of admission.

Tropical accommodations. Has anyone seen Gilligan?

The seeing allowed planetary viewing at magnifications ranging from 300x to over 1000x power in the larger scopes. The new TEC 140 APO gave beautiful views of the moon. Markus Ludes brought a 10" Triplet folded APO refractor and a 10" f/8 Mak-Newt from Germany. They provided wonderful views of the planets. The highlight for me had to be the "jaw dropping" views of Jupiter and Saturn through the Astro-Physics 10" f/14.6 Mak-Cass. The level of detail I observed was so outstanding, it was difficult to absorb so much information at once.

PAS Member Dan Joyce getting his award. Congratulations, Dan

I made a few sketches to record the detail I was viewing through the AP 10" Mak-Cass. I sketched Jupiter and Saturn, but could not capture all the detail that was visible at the eyepiece. I had my first view of the companion to Sirius, the "Pup" and sketched it. I was hearing reports of details on Ganymede. To view this, I went over to the AP 10" Mak-Cass which was now cranked up to over 900x power. At the time I made my rough sketch of Ganymede at the eyepiece, I wasn't really sure if my eyes were playing tricks or not. During my observation I noticed two very bright white spots at the 11 and 5 o'clock positions. They only

popped into view for an instant once or twice during my observations, but I noted them on my paper. An "s" shaped darker marking was more steadily viewed. In order for my sketch to be unbiased, I made sure that I was not influenced by comments from other observers. I was ecstatic to see that my observations were valid. I can now add this to my observing highlights "Top Ten" list, seeing details on Ganymede.

My sketches are posted on the Yahoo Astro-Physics User's Group newsgroup in the WSP 2003 files section. Thanks to the excellent seeing at the WSP compared to the past 4 years at Astrofest, it was a real treat for me to finally see the AP 10" f/14.6 Mak-Cass reach its full potential visually.

The prototype 12mm triplet ocular from Aries that Astro-Physics brought down for testing proved to be an excellent planetary eyepiece. It was superior when compared to a 12mm ortho. The contrast was slightly better then the famous Zeiss Abbe orthos which many regard as the best planetary eyepiece made.

Tele Vue introduced several new products to its lineup. Al Nagler was there to demonstrate the new NP127, the big brother to the NP101. He also had new eyepieces, the 41 Panoptic, along with 11, 3.5 and 2.5 Nagler Type 6.

Al Nagler with his new Televue NP 127

Thursday night I noticed a film crew walking around, but did not realize who they were. It turns out that the CBS Morning News Show had a crew at the WSP for 2 days and nights filming and interviewing for a segment they plan to air in March.

By the time the door prize drawings got underway Friday afternoon, the temperature was in the upper eighties. During this event Peoria Astronomical Society club member Dan Joyce was given a plaque to honor his mirror making classes he has given at the WSP.

Tippy D'Auria: Founder of the Winter Star Party.

Friday night the seeing was not as great, but the views were still better than back home. We had the pleasure of a personal tour of deep sky objects given by Al Nagler. He had us compare the 31mm Nagler with the new 41mm Panoptic. Everyone liked the new 41mm Panoptic, as it's a very comfortable eyepiece to use. The NP127 amazed us with its flat field and stars that were pin point right to the edge of the eyepiece. Al then aimed the NP127 toward Jupiter and Saturn and let us try the new 3.5 and 2.5 Nagler Type 6 eyepieces. They were again a crowd favorite.

We went back to the motel around 11:30 a.m. for some shuteye before the trip back home. We had to head back to Fort Lauderdale by 2:30 a.m. to catch our flight. The drive back to the airport only took 3 hours since there was no traffic to contend with.

This was the 11th star party I've attended. Without a doubt it has to be my favorite so far. No wonder the WSP is such a popular event. I must thank my two good friends who invited me to join them for this adventure. They are Brian Sledz and Allister St. Claire, the webmaster of the *Cloudy Nights Telescope Reviews* See http://www.cloudynights.com/index.htm for details.

Here are a couple of the links to the WSP. The first link is from the Southern Cross Astronomical Society, see http://www.scas.org/wsp.html for details. The second link is from the *Sky & Telescope* website, see http://skyandtelescope.com/news/current/article_873_1.asp for details.

The 20th annual 2004 WSP will be held February 16th through the 21st. Next year I plan to be able to attend the WSP for the entire week. Hope to see you there.

Contest….

(Continued from page 8)

a digital image for future use. If computer generated, the file format needs to be supported by standard Microsoft Windows, without special programs or applications. If a hand drawn design is selected then the image creator will review the computer redrawn image prior to release and request changes to meet the original design intent. Graphic designers (volunteers) are welcome to generate computer images from hand drawn entries.

The requirements are needed to help cut the cost to develop t-shirts, banners and other materials used by the members for publicity. The image that meets these requirements will be faster and easier to reproduce.

The completed artwork must be completed and submitted by May 1, 2003 to pas-mail@bitwiser.com or mailed to: PAS Logo c/o Tim Lester 10129 North Voorhees Road; Edwards, IL 61528.

PAS Light Control Program 2003

Compiled from information provided by Rich Tennis

The LCC of the Peoria Astronomers Society (PAS) meeting was held at the home of Rich and Margo Tennis next to "Star House", and attended by Scott Hay (who brought his good friend, Terri), Steve Wrigley, Jon Wrigley, Eric Clifton, and Chairperson, Rich Tennis.

The meeting began at 7:20 p.m., Saturday January 11, 2003. There was a short gathering after the meeting in Star House, Rich's 6 x 8' roll-off roof observatory. Views of Jupiter, Saturn, and moon were enjoyed. Being cold and slightly windy, the attendees adjourned about 10:30 p.m..

Below is the proposed 2003 agenda for the Light Control Committee.

Action items:

1. Schedule Dark Sky Month with Lakeview Planetarium, May, June, July, August, or November. Sheldon Schafer and I will discuss the details.
    a. Develop 10 – 15 minute presentation to be given at Saturday shows.
    b. Handouts of how to reduce outdoor lighting glare.
    c. Show pictures of demonstration streets of full cut-off (FCO) streetlights, and list businesses with FCO lighting in parking lots.
    d. Have the Dark Sky Month declared by proclamation at the City of Peoria Council meeting at the beginning of that month.
2. Installation of FCO streetlight on Christine Avenue, Marlene Avenue, and Nelson Drive. These streets are just west of University Avenue and between Lake Avenue and Glen Avenue. **Target date for installation – March 1, 2003** (See item 4)
    a. Purchase the FCO shields for the NEMA light fixtures, 15 $395 (15 x $25/ea plus $20 shipping) Undetermined if PAS will purchase or CILCO with purchase and bill PAS or City of Peoria.
    b. Change from 100W to 70W HPS on FCO fixtures. The ballast for these needs to be changed unless the ballast is a multi-voltage variety. If not, the cost of the change to 70W may require more funds. CILCO will need to be contacted on wattage changeover.
3. Residents on selected streets – meetings
    a. Meeting before the installation to inform what is being done to the street lighting. Letter of invite…Lakeview Planetarium or ???.
    b. Survey after installation of FCO's of resident's opinion of the FCO streetlights. Review luminance readings before and after FCO installation.
    c. Report generated on results of luminance and resident opinions.
4. Heart of Illinois Mayors Association presentation on March 19, 2003. About forty representatives of communities in the central Illinois area will be attending…mayors, city managers, etc.
    a. Explain how to reduce street lighting cost, improve visibility on streets…safety, elderly vision with cataracts, reduce light trespass, and better efficiency of usable light.
    b. Have report on demonstration streets with FCO streetlights available. Have any of the attendees visit the FCO demonstration streets.
5. Give a report of all the expenditures for the light control project to the Peoria Academy of Science in or about December 2003.
6. Be available to any community on FCO streetlights.
7. Begin talking zoning ordinance for FCO lights for new facilities in Woodford, Peoria, and Tazewell.
    a. Talk to the Tri-Count Planning Commission to have a master-zoning ordinance to act a template for the area communities and counties they serve. One effort, rather than three different county ordinances.
    b. Talk to communities about the adopting a community light ordinance that is close to that of the Tri-county Planning Commission's format. Some latitude of language, penalties, etc. could be made to the pleasure of each community.
8. Talk to Wildlife Prairie State Park about making it a dark sky preserve.
9. Talk to the Illinois Department of Transportation about FCO lighting at highway intersections. Iowa is adopting such a program.
10. Talk to the Illinois Department of State Parks to have select State Parks or Wildlife Refuges declared a dark sky preserve.

Rich Tennis
Chairperson – Light Control Committee

Needles….

(Continued from page 2)

Eric Clifton called my attention to an Internet review http://www.cloudynights.com/reviews/tmb105.htm for another owner's perspective of the TMB-105. Tim McGrath called my attention to a yahoo group devoted to TMB users: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tmboptical/ Thank you, Sam!

PAS clothing:

Thanks to Dan Son and everyone who are working so closely together to come up with a suitable clothing offering. A lot of us have probably thought to ourselves that we'd like to have PAS clothing, but Dan has settled on a design and is going for it. If you are interested, please email Dan at sunshine92@insightbb.com for more info. I think Dan has commitments from 20 folks and needs a minimum order of 25.

Peoria Academy of Science Banquet:

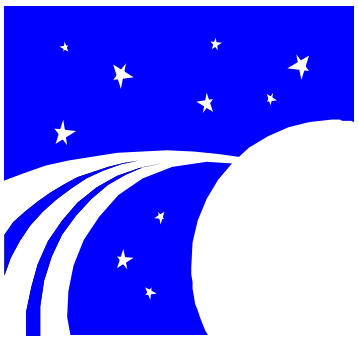
In the past, the Peoria Academy of Science has paid to have top astronomy speakers such as Dr. James B. Kaler to be banquet keynote speakers, but it was a shame to see only 2 astronomy members attend. Last year, closer to a dozen members showed up at the Cater Inn for John Dobson. I'm hoping to see many people welcome home one of Peoria Academy of Science's own, Dr. Bernard Jackson. The Annual Banquet starts at 6:00 p.m. at Barrack's Cater Inn, 1224 W. Pioneer Parkway, Peoria. For reservations, call Greet Princen, 691-0519. Program: Recent astronomy research, presented by the Academy's alumnus, Dr. Bernard Jackson from the University of California at San Diego. Also scheduled is the presentation of the Memorial Scholarship Award winner. Reserve your Friday evening for this special event. If you don't want to pay for a meal, just show up between 7:45 and 8 p.m. The program is free and will begin at 8 p.m.

Thanks to the Light Control Committee:

Largely due to the efforts of Rich Tennis, the City of Peoria now has 10 more full cut-off streetlights.

Help for *Starlite*:

We are seeking folks to help on the *Starlite* team. PAS thanks Jeff Pittenger for taking the reigns of the *Starlite* beginning with this current issue. PAS extends its sincere gratitude to Mike and Jessica Frasca and John Barra for carrying the paper to award winning levels.



We need help for our Website:

Don Ware, past PAS President and award winning graphic artist and astronomical.org webmaster is stepping down in March. We are looking for a new webmaster as well as folks to assist in the transfer of these duties that Don Ware excelled at over the past ten years. Don kept this job for many years, even after relocating to Texas. The website can have from 50 to 250 concurrent users. We will have to decide how we can keep this site functioning. Think of all that Don has done to foster an appreciation for astronomy through his efforts on behalf of PAS. Don, I am certainly privileged to extend to you PAS's greatest appreciation.

Take care and clear, dark skies to you all,

-Scott Hay

Minutes….

(Continued from page 7)

ment to lifelong learning. PAS taught 35 students at Bradley on Jan. 7th and 9th. Approx. 15 students want to schedule a NorthMoor visit and approx. 15 students want to observe from Jubilee Observatory. The times will be setup at a later date.

Jubilee Observatory: (Tim McGrath) A picture of comet Hale-Bopp was given to Bill Kapitko for his help with PAS at the Jubilee Observatory site. He was Superintendent for Jubilee Park and has moved to Rice Lake Conservation Area. The Maintenance Schedule (formerly mowing schedule) will be ready next month. Looking at replacing 3 outside outlets with GFI type outlets. Scott Swords made a motion to allow Tim to replace outside outlets. 2nd by Jon Wrigley. Motion passed. I have thrown away the old coffeepot. With the new scope given to us by Dr. Sam Decker we will install it on a pier. Will send Dr. Sam Decker a thank you letter for his generous gift.

14 Inch: (Mike Shelton) Ring is on the wall with bolts running through it.

Light Pollution: (Rich Tennis) March 19th will be the Mayors Association meeting and the Dark Sky Association will be there. PAS will be paying the labor for putting up the shrouds on the lights for the Light Pollution test. The month of May will have a Dark Sky program at Lakeview Planetarium. Talked with Rita Solis, will write a work order for all parts needed and will purchase the light shrouds.

NorthMoor Observatory: (Bill Cole) Will have a schedule for next month. I have noticed a hang-up when the dome is turning will look into the cause.

NorthMoor Restoration: (Scott Hay) Money is coming in. Enough people believe in this old telescope that we just might save it. Our group is beginning to show the support that is necessary for this committee to be able to show outside benefactors that this is a worthy cause.

Observing Club: (John Barra) Messier Marathon will be the last weekend in March.

Program: (Dan Son) Feb Astro bowl March Video April Dr. Linda French IL Wesleyan University Physics Professor

Public Relations: Will hold off getting any business cards made up until a logo design is approved.

***Starlite*:** (Mark Koonce, Mike & Jessica Frasca) Deadline for *Starlite* will be February board meeting. Jeff Pittenger and Kellie Lester will help co-edit the *Starlite*.

Membership: (Scott Swords) The roster has been changed and will look a lot better.

www.astronomical.org: (Tim McGrath) Web site really needs some updating in some areas. We may need to look for someone to take over this duty, as Tim is very busy with Jubilee.

New Business: Scott Hay made a motion to adjourn. 2nd by Steve Wrigley. Motion passed.

Sam's Scope….

(Continued from page 1)

generous contribution. The 14-inch Newtonian was dismantled and the C-14 took its place.

Still a 14-inch telescope, its Schmidt-Cassegrain optical configuration and short tube length, made it a perfect fit for the small dome. Now, more than two people in the dome was no longer overcrowded — and a good thing, too! With the Compustar system's ability to automatically aim the telescope at any target in the sky, the C-14 quickly became the favorite telescope of many Jubilee observers — both PAS members and guests.

Now, roughly a dozen years after the C-14, Sam has done it yet again!

In 'geek-speak', Dr. Decker has given us a 4-inch f/6 TMB apochromatic refractor on a Losmandy GM-8 mount with a Gemini controller— definitely a premium-grade, state-of-the-art system.

TMB 105 on a Losmandy Mount

The '4-inch f/6 TMB apochromatic refractor' part means crystal sharp star images over a wide field of view — both visually and photographically.

The Losmandy telescope mounts have a well-deserved reputation among amateur astronomers as one of the premium German equatorial setups. Motorized controls in both NS and EW directions allow high-speed slewing for aiming the telescope or fine, slow motion corrections when taking pictures.

However, the Gemini control system really brings the whole works to life. It not only will automatically aim at any of thousands of celestial objects stored in its database, but you can enter coordinates of your own favorite target. When taking photographs, the Gemini will automatically 'guide' the telescope during the exposure, thus assuring perfect tracking and pinpoint images.

One of the neatest things about the Gemini controller is hooking it up to a laptop computer running a planetarium program like *The Sky*. By simply clicking the mouse on some galaxy on the screen, the telescope will find it within seconds for your viewing pleasure.

We have a number of things to figure out and issues to resolve. For example: first we must learn how to work it; then start training keyholders; put in a permanent pier (to make polar alignment easy); and figure out a way to safely store it (it'll still be portable.)

Once again, Dr. Decker has changed the way the PAS sees the Cosmos. We haven't even figured exactly what the changes are that "Sam's Scope" will bring, but if previous experience is any indication, I'm betting they'll be substantial.

So far, this article has focused on Sam's kind gifts and what they mean to the Society. Here's a little about Sam...

Sam is a retired psychiatrist with wide interests not only in medicine, but also photography, science, art, sculpture and travel — a true Renaissance man. As Scott Hay, Tim McGrath and Tim Lester discovered, a visit to Sam's office is like a combination library and science and art museum. The music collection is amazing and the library alone overflows with tens of thousands of books on every subject imaginable and you wish you could spend a month just browsing.

Sam doesn't make it to all the Monthly Meetings and when he does, he usually slips in, listens in, and slips out afterwards. But try to catch him some time — look for a short, soft-spoken, bald man who looks 20-years younger than he really is — listen for his delightful sense of humor — and be sure to thank him for his generosity and, most important of all, his friendship to all of us in the Peoria Astronomical Society.

(Continued from page 3)

Jackson movies of CME

http://casswww.ucsd.edu/solar/smei/index.html

@ @ @

From: "Richard Tennis" <mtennis@m...>
Date: Mon Feb 3, 2003 7:16 am
Subject: Stardate feeder station in Peoria

Folks in Peoria that cannot get WGLT 89.1 to get Stardate have a second choice, 103.5, which is a feeder or satilite of WGLT. However, the power of the station is limited more than WGLT or WCBU 89.9. The signal is about a diameter that is five miles centered around Bradley University. So, the very fringes don't reach Brimfield, Dunlap, Metamora, Glasford, South Peking, or Tremont. The limit of their signal to be well received includes E. Peoria, Creve Coeur, Norwood. So, those that haven't heard Stardate and live in Peoria might just want to tune in at 6:58 AM & PM to get it.

@ @ @

From: <heyhay@b...>
Date: Fri Feb 7, 2003 11:00 am
Subject: Peoria Journal Star covers light pollution fight.

Excellent presentation on your light control program Rich Tennis! Here's the link below to an article covering your meeting on the front page of the local section of today's Peoria Journal Star. The Peoria Astronomical Society and the Peoria Academy of Science are proud of you and your light control committee members!

http://www.pjstar.com/news/topnews/g150633a.html

-Scott Hay

@ @ @

From: Timothy J Lester <katlester@j...>
Date: Sun Feb 9, 2003 4:46 pm
Subject: Twins?

NOT!

Anyway, now that I have your attention.

Kellie, Chase and I are proud to announce the birth of our 2nd child. Kassidy Jean was born 8:53am Sunday morning. She was 19.5" long and 7lbs 15.5oz.

@ @ @

From: "Dan & Barb" <sunshine92@i...>
Date: Mon Feb 10, 2003 12:14 am
Subject: Fw: Post your events on WMBD.com

Received this and thought this may be useful in the future for getting free publicity.

----- Original Message -----
From: "Steve Harris" <steveh@w...>
Subject: Post your events on WMBD.com
> We have added a community bulletin board on WMBD.com at:
> http://www.wmbd.com/calendar/default.asp
> We hope you make good use of it.
> Steve Harris
> Content Manager/
> Systems Coordinator
> WMBD/WYZZ Television

Farewell to Bill Kapitko

by Eric Clifton

At the end of December 2002, Tim Lester, Tim McGrath, my daughter Tammi, and I met with Bill Kapitko, at the park office of Jubilee College State Park.

Bill has been the Site Superintendent of the Park since 1980, and has been a valuable friend to both Jubilee Observatory and the Peoria Astronomical Society. He's leaving Jubilee to manage the Rice Lake site for the Department of Natural Resources.

We presented Bill with a framed photograph of Comet Hale-Bopp and a note of appreciation for his help and his friendship.

During the course of our conversation, Bill made a couple of comments that I thought reflected well on the Astronomical Society and on all of the Jubilee Keyholders we've had over the years.

Bill stated that in his new job he wouldn't have to deal with so many different 'kinds' of groups in the Park, citing " the equestrians, the campers, the mountain bikers, the snowmobilers…"

I asked him, "… And the astronomers, too?"

Bill replied, "No, you guys were the least of my worries."

Later in the conversation, Bill stated that some time ago he got a phone call from the Department of Natural Resources offices in Springfield. Apparently, they had received a request from 'an astronomy club' that wanted to have a star party lasting several nights at a state park down near Springfield. The DNR folks thought, "Hmm … astronomers … state parks" so they called to get Bill's opinion about whether or not it was good idea to approve the request.

Bill said to us that he told the Springfield officials, "No, you won't have any trouble with the astronomers at all … in fact, they'll probably leave the place better than they found it."

I think that Bill's comments speak very highly for the Jubilee Keyholders and for the Peoria Astronomical Society for the way we have managed Jubilee Observatory for more than two decades. Not only have we earned a good reputation with our hosts in the State Park system, but also our stewardship of Jubilee Observatory and the parklands that surround it has spilled over to benefit other astronomy clubs in Illinois. There is no doubt in my mind that had we not been good, public-spirited neighbors at Jubilee, the Sangamon Astronomical Society's request for a star party at the Jim Edgar State Park may very well have been rejected.

Congratulations to the Jubilee Keyholders and the Peoria Astronomical Society for a job well done. I am proud to be associated with such people.

Observing ....

(Continued from page 16)

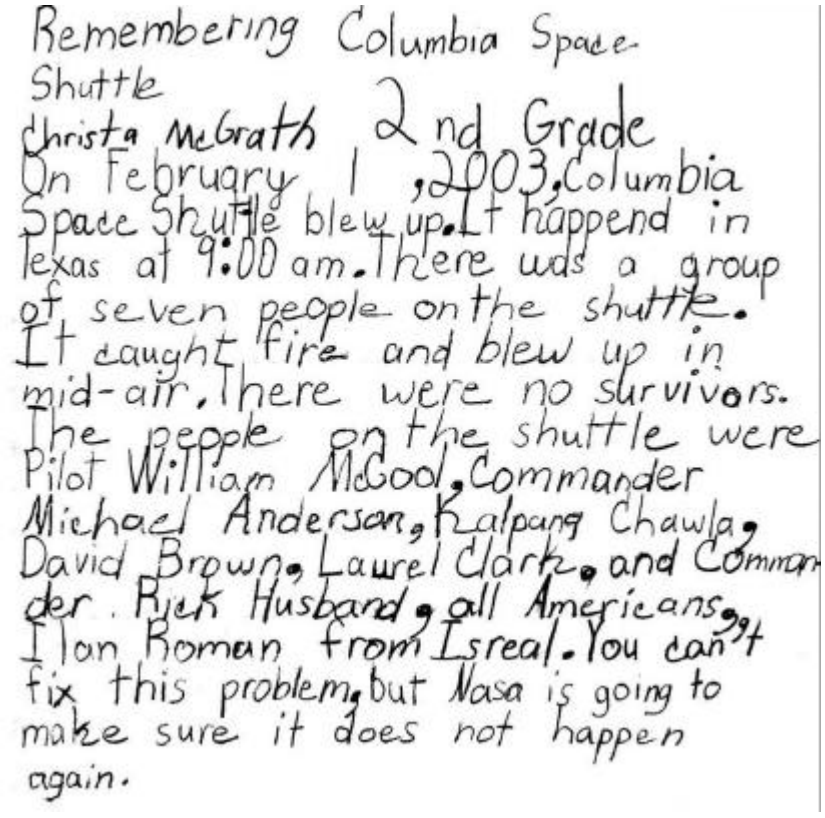
have your scores listed in the Summer Starlite.

Members participating should remember to dress according to the predicted temperatures. Being cold can ruin a marathon. Dress in layers and bring extras. It is easier to get cooler if one gets too warm. Bring plenty of water or other liquids for yourself to last the night. Everyone is encouraged to bring enough snacks to share.

Since it is not unusual for the clouds to interfere, check the weather forecasts in advance. If it looks like that Saturday will be cloudy, we will attempt to hold the Marathon the night before. Astronomy is probably the only activity where the rain date or "cloud date" might actually be the night before the scheduled event. If you belong to the PAS e-mail group, I will make announcements--including a "cloud out" announcement--by e-mail as the date draws near.

Remembering Columbia Space Shuttle

Christa McGrath



Remembering Columbia Space Shuttle
Christa McGrath 2nd Grade
On February 1, 2003, Columbia Space Shuttle blew up. It happend in Texas at 9:00 am. There was a group of seven people on the shuttle. It caught fire and blew up in mid-air. There were no survivors. The people on the shuttle were Pilot William McCool, Commander Michael Andersan, Kalpana Chawla, David Brown, Laurel Clark, and Commander Rick Husband, all Americans, Ilan Roman from Isreal. You can't fix this problem, but Nasa is going to make sure it does not happen again.

Astronomy Section Newsletter
Peoria Academy of Science
c/o Princen
677 E. High Point Terrace
Peoria, IL 61614

#153, March 2003

In This Issue... | Dr. Decker's Gifts, Columbia Tragedy, New Logo Contest, Can You Spot This?, and more....

Observing Club Notes

by John Barra

Messier Marathon Set for March 29

The annual PAS Messier Marathon is set for Saturday night, March 29th at the DGV Observatory at Jubilee. New moon is three days later on April 1st, so marathoners will only have to contend with a crescent moon near dawn the next morning.

...should have a much easier time finding objects ....

Optimum time for a marathon is the middle of March. However, that weekend this year would coincide with a nearly full moon. Marathons are always scheduled on the weekend closest to a new moon to minimize the effect of moonlight. They are always scheduled in March. That month provides the opportunity to see the most Messier objects in a single night since during March, the Sun is in the part of the sky that has a void of such objects.

At our latitude, in the years the Marathon can be held mid-month, 109 Messier objects potentially can be observed. M30 in Capricornus is too low in the sky on any Marathon morning to be seen here. It is likely that M74 and M77 will also be too low to be seen at twilight on March 29. Having the Marathon in late March results in the fact that the sky has moved approximately 15 degrees from where it was in mid-March, resulting in bad positioning of M74 and M77. However, this also means that those objects like M72 and M73, difficult to see near dawn in mid-March, will be 15 degrees higher at that time during this year's event.

Several of us members had considered trying to find a better place to hold the Marathon because of the trees to the south/southeast that interferes with the observing of rising Messier objects near dawn. However, we discovered that you can increase your viewing in this direction by 15 degrees by moving your telescope close to the 24-inch dome in the early morning hours. With the additional 15 degrees in that direction caused by the end-of-March Marathon, observers should have a much easier time in finding objects at the end of the night.

Observers should get to Jubilee around six o'clock the evening of the Marathon to have plenty of time to set up. Marathon check-off lists are available for your use in the warm-up building. Those members who might not be able to or want to make the entire night are welcome to attempt to complete a mini-marathon. Check-off lists for any of the four seasonal mini-marathons are also available in the same building. Return your check-off lists to me afterward so you can

(Continued on page 15)