



# STARLITE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
THE PEORIA ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY  
[www.astronomical.org](http://www.astronomical.org)

SUMMER, 2009

Hello from the new editor!! I am Linda Hay (yes, Mike's wife). Many of you know me and have known me for more years than I care to count. I retired from teaching after 34 years and find I have the time to become your editor. This is new to me. I have not decided on a format, so the Starlite may look differently from time to time, as I find what looks good and works well. Publications will remain quarterly. I have set up a separate email account for the Starlite for you to correspond with me, send articles, ideas, and complaints (hope there won't be many). The address is [starlite@astronomical.org](mailto:starlite@astronomical.org). I will be checking this site frequently. I am open to all ideas for changes, etc. For submissions, I request they be sent in the first week of the month before the publication is to come out such as: first week of August for Sept. publication. That gives me time to edit, organize and get it printed and mailed on time. I also request that articles be submitted in Microsoft Word for easier use. Hope this works for all of us. I look forward to doing this for the PAS.

***Welcome New Members:***

***Jerry Hosler***

***Paul Bedwell***

What's inside this issue---

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Positions Open:

The Peoria Astronomical Society Secretary has resigned because of other commitments. The Secretary's work consists of attending the monthly board meetings, taking notes and writing the minutes of that meeting.

Also, the election of officers will take place in September. The following offices need to be filled: President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary.

If you are interested in becoming secretary or holding any of the other offices, please contact Phil Burroughs. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Future Programs, 2009

**Summer Star Parties---**

June 27: At Northmoor Observatory (Public invited)

July 18: At DGV (Jubilee) Observatory (members and guests only)

August 22: At Jubilee State Park, Prairie Lane Shelter (Public invited)

September: Annual Meeting/Picnic: Sept. 26, 6PM - Potluck at Jubilee State Park, Quail Meadows Shelter

**Regular Meetings at the Planetarium---**

October 7: Great Debate IV: Big Bang, Intelligent Design or What?

November 4: Astrojeopardy

December 2: TBA

**MEMBERSHIP NOTE:**

Please notify Scott Swords if you will be getting a new mailing address and/or phone number. It is important that he has your personal information correct so you will continue to receive the Starlite and the Reflector. He would also like to receive any changes to your e-mail address as this is part of the membership database. If you would like to join the Peoria Astro email group or if you have changed your email address, please notify Mike Frasca with your email address. (Mike does not need your mailing address or phone number). If you are not a member of the e-group, you may want to consider joining. Most of the club activity information is sent via the e-group. And by the way, it is free to join!!

Both Mike and Scott may be reached through the contacts page on the PAS website at [www.astronomical.org](http://www.astronomical.org).

**NEBRASKA STAR PARTY**

July 19-24, 1009

In the past Starlite there was an article about the Nebraska Star Party. Rich Tennis is interested in going. Party information may be found at: [www.nebraskastarparty.org](http://www.nebraskastarparty.org).

The observing field is at the Snake Campground at Merritt Reservoir, which is south of Valentine about 20 miles. Another option to stay is at Sandhill double Ranch ([www.sandhilldoubleranch.com](http://www.sandhilldoubleranch.com)). The distance is less than distance to Valentine, and has air-conditioned cabins.

Please check with Rich if you are interested and about availability of space.

Of Starlites Past

By John Barra

50 YEARS AGO: Spring Newsletter 1959

*Editor's (John) note: Of Starlite Past is changing from 40 years ago to 50 years ago now that the age of our club has grown to include those extra years.*

“The plaque inscribed with the names of those donors who furnished the means for our observatory will be cast and ready to set in the wall this spring, when a ceremony will be held in honor of the occasion.”

*Details for the dedication ceremony for our new dome, 50 years later, will be announced shortly. Time to get that old plaque out of mothballs.*

There's work to be done and Al Sharov has issued a warning that he will be asking for help from members to clean up our observatory, paint the dome, etc. etc, ad infinitum, before the May opening.”

*Spring clean-up at Northmoor was simple this year with the new dome. But work to get the scopes going at Jubilee this summer will need some volunteer help. Be ready to help when the time comes.*

25 YEARS AGO: Summer Starlite 1984

“Over the past few months, we have been hammering over the issue of the ownership of the 9” telescope at Northmoor. This matter has finally been put to rest. The Peoria Academy of Science and our club are in agreement that the telescope is ours, and it has always been our property.”

*And it will remain so—as long as we use it for public viewing. With the new dome, we should be able to continue to have Saturday night public viewing for a long time into the future.*

“This is a story about four people: Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Somebody would do it. But Nobody asked Anybody. It ended up that the job wasn't done and Everybody blamed Somebody, when actually Nobody asked Anybody. (This little story says a thousand words!)—Scott Swords, President.

*Thank you Margo Tennis for finally being that Somebody to get our new dome project finally going!*

By Rich Tennis

### Meteorite Found Across the Road

I have a 3-pound meteorite handed to me by our neighbor as he talked with me and proceeded to pick it up from the field, last month, across the road from our home. I learned that it struck the field within the time that we lived in our home during the winter, about 30 years ago or so. Our neighbor explained that as he and his father were getting ready to do the spring planting, they found a crater in the field just 150 feet from our front door. The crater needed to be filled in, and the larger pieces (some as heavy as 25 pounds) of the meteorite needed to be removed so that they could do the spring plowing.

The spot that the meteor struck has been a continuing wet spot ever since it struck earth as it penetrated the aquifer that is about 20 feet below the clay and loam.

I examined the 3-pound meteorite and referred to my astronomy and astrophysics textbooks to determine if it was a rare kind...\$\$\$\$ per ounce...but concluded that it was not. It is a chondrite meteorite, which is named for the chondrules they contain. Chondrules are small silicate rock spheres a few millimeters in size. The origin of chondrules is still mysterious. They may have formed directly from the gas cloud that preceded the solar system. That would place the meteorite's age at about 4.5 billion years.

I don't recall hearing it fall, but it has made an impression on me and I didn't even hear it. I will bring it for further verification the next chance that I have, and will ask other PAS members for their opinion, as they examine it.