



Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association

July, 2016

Website: www.midhudsonastro.org

Yahoo Group: MHAstro

President : Willie Yee
Secretary: Jim Rockrohr
Newsletter Editor: Rick Versace
Publicity: Paul Chauvet
Parks Liaison: OPEN

Vice President: Candace Wall
Treasurer: OPEN (Ken Bailey until June)
Membership Coordinator: OPEN
Webmaster: Paul Chauvet
College Liaison: Dr. Amy Forestell

Directors: Karl Loatman, Joe McCagne, Steve Carey, Paul Granich

July meeting location change

The next meeting will be in Lecture Center Room 102

Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association, June 21, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Director Karl Loatman in the Auditorium of the Coykendall Science Center at SUNY, New Paltz, NY. (President Willie Yee and Vice President Candace Wall were both unable to attend.)

The previous meeting's minutes were approved as published in the most recent newsletter.

Officer's Reports:

Membership: Caryn Sobel was not present.

Treasurer: Ken Bailey was not present. See his latest report as published in the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report for the month of June, 2016

Date: 9 July, 2016

Bank Balance:	\$2757.18
Outstanding Checks:	\$ 384.49
Outstanding Deposits:	\$ 0
Ending Bank Balance:	\$2372.69
Checkbook Balance:	\$2372.69
Balance with Bank:	Yes

Ending balance total: \$2372.69

Notes: Outstanding checks are for last month's speaker's honorarium and reimbursement for solar glasses purchases. There are no outstanding deposits.

Respectfully submitted: Ken Bailey
Treasurer

Outreach: Candace Wall was not present but the following were discussed:

- **Smith Clove Park** in Monroe looking for program at end of May and September.
- **Boy Scouts at Thurman Camping Area:** 6/24 (6/25 rain date), Ken Bailey coordinating.
- **Olana:** September 3 (Labor Day weekend). Also looking for 'scopes on their Movie nights July 29 and August 26.
- **Montessori Schools** (New Paltz?): Looking for a regular (monthly?) presentation. Joe Macagne working on this.

Publicity: Paul Chauvet was not present. Send him info on public events.

Webmaster: Paul Chauvet was not present. No issues known.

Upcoming programs: Candace Wall was not present but the following information was shared:

- July – Dr. Daniel Wolf Savin: "A Brief History of Chemistry in the Cosmos"
- August – Linda Zimmerman: "Mysterious Stone Sites"
- September – Chris Kendall: (presentation TBD)

Old Business:

- **Club Telescopes:**
 - 13" Dobsonian (Jack Chastain). Mirror has been recoated and returned. Jack has reassembled the telescope and it got "first light" at the Girl Scout Camporee on June 11.
 - Criterion 8" SCT is available. Tabletop use (no tripod). See Willie.
 - Meade ETX 125 has a focuser issue. Willie has it.
 - 4" with Paul Chauvet.
 - 8" Newtonian on an equatorial mount was picked up by Ken Bailey from Karl Loatmann last week to be transferred Ken's son's new astronomy club in South Carolina. Karl mentioned that there may still be a donation of a drive motor for this mount.

New Business:

(none)

Observing Reports:

- **Girl Scout Camporee at Ulster County Fairgrounds:** June 11. Quarter moon and 3 planets. Great viewing even with all of the streetlights. Great turnout...100s of girls and adult leaders. We kept four 'scopes busy until after 11 PM.

Visitors/New Members:

There were about 15 people in attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at about 8:00 PM. The next meeting is on July 19th. The speaker had not arrived at the auditorium and Joe Macagne started to lead a discussion on UFOs. Subsequent phone calls to Willie and Candace revealed that the speaker was in Lecture Center Room 102 and began at 7:30. We all moved to the lecture center to catch the last half of his talk: Prof. Kevin H. Knuth: "UFOs: Governments, Pilots and the Military Speak". There were a total of about 30 people at that point.

Submitted by James Rockrohr, June 23, 2016.

MHAA at the RAC Summer Star Party

In March of this year The MHAA was offered free space that could be used to represent the Association at the RAC Summer Star Party. I made inquiries at the time for volunteers to represent us there; there were a few offers.

Feeling encouraged, I offered to take the lead in organizing the effort to represent us there. I asked questions of the person who made the offer initially and he was very responsive and pointed me to the person who was doing the organizing. I made several attempts of information gathering to find out what was available to us in the way of discounts, access to the campground and star party for members wishing to help out, etc. Nary a peep was heard so I gave up.

Yesterday I received the information below. I'll be there Friday and Saturday as a private citizen but if anyone would like to take the lead in representing the MHAA at the RAC Star party please contact Jose directly.

Rick Versace
Newsletter Editor

Hello Rick,

My name is José Alvira & I am the Director of the Summer Star Party.

First; I'd like to thank you for the interest in Rockland Astronomy's **Summer Star Party** & the longest (10 Day!) **Premier Star Party** on the East Coast.

I am extremely excited with MHAA joining us at SSP this summer and trying out a new style of "*Shared Star Party Camping*". This is definitely a new exploratory avenue for us & other clubs as we develop this community of organizations to use and share in our Summer Star Party. The idea of gathering many clubs under one Highly Organized & Successfully Proven Star Party (**SSP**); I believe is quintessential in promoting Astronomy & Space Science to the future explorers of tomorrow.

Now; I spoke to the owners of the SSP campground, & here is the way this "Shared Camping" works:

Campground & Campsite Requirements:

- People can come & go & different people can use the tent site, giving you that "Rotation" ability.
- However; **a campsite registration fee is only good for a max of 2 Adults & 2 Kids at one time** (sorry no substitutions of kids for adults).
- If **additional people** do come to stay with that "Allowed Core Group" of 2 adults & 2 Kids, **each additional Adult will have to pay \$10 PER DAY** to also stay (sleep) on that one campsite.
- If any **additional people come during the day or day / night observing** but do **NOT** sleep over (they must leave by 4 AM after observing); **they too must pay a \$10 per Adult person, each day/night.**
- Also; everybody that arrives & departs, **MUST** stop in the office & pay the fees & let them know you are arriving or leaving so they know who is here for insurance purposes.

The Club Star Party Fee:

This year we are requiring that *EACH* person pays the **FULL (Discounted Fee)** that we have offered all the sister clubs that are coming to SSP. After SSP is over; the RAC Executive Board of Directors will be looking at the possibility of a different fee structure. For this year however; since everyone else must pay the Full Discounted Fee we have offered for our visiting sisters clubs we are unable to enter a different fee structure for SSP 2016.

I hope this answers any questions you may have had, and if you have any other questions; please feel free to call me at my **home phone: (845) 446.4336**, or email me & I'll be very happy to answer.

As a note: I will be departing to go up to SSP for setup on Tuesday July 26. You may still contact me via my **cell phone: (845) 641.4006 (Does Not Work at my home)** or email. Email I might not be able to get to right away, due to the very busy setup schedule I have, so it's best to just call my cell phone after the 25th which I will have on me at all times.

I'm very excited to greet you all at SSP 2016!

Sincerely,

José

From the President:

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

July 2016

THE BIG 5-0

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Star Trek, and it is worth a moment to consider its impact on science and society.

We must start with the context in which Star Trek was born. The United States was in a Cold War, of which the space race was a vital part. The space program was a major part of the news, and it had a massive cultural influence. Recall, for example, that the Eisenhower dollar featured an eagle landing on the moon. Many societal issues were boiling such as the civil rights movement and opposition to the war in Viet Nam. Although there were other science fiction offerings at the time. Gene Roddenberry's willingness to address societal issues in the guise of science fiction gave it a depth lacking

elsewhere in television. This was a significant to a degree that all those involved, including Gene himself, did not recognize. When the series was over, the actors and producers assumed that was it, and everyone moved on. It was only in subsequent years of syndication that a following developed that turned Star Trek into a phenomenon that would last fifty years and more.\

In that time, any number of scientists and astronauts were inspired to pursue careers in the space program and related sciences. The fans' urging that the first space shuttle be named Enterprise fell on receptive ears.



And now, things have changed. The new Star Trek movies have split fandom, and some folks do not even know what “Beam Me Up, Scotty” means. But there is still an active fandom. Most of you know that I have been involved with what may be the ultimate fan expression, the making of new episodes of Star Trek—fan films. This 50th anniversary has seen a major change in that scene. Star Trek Phase II/New Voyages will no longer be making episodes. CBS/Paramount, because of a lawsuit involving a project that went way over the line as far as making money off of their intellectual property, came out with a set of guidelines (e.g., no more than 15 minutes long), that will change the nature of fan films.

Although Star Trek New Voyages will no longer exist, the sets will now be the center of Star Trek: The Original Series Set Tour. <http://www.startrek.com/article/the-original-series-set-tour-to-open> The public will now be able to come and see the sets, laid out as they were in the original Desilu studios 1966-1969. All the associated merchandising will be available, since this is an officially licensed project from CBS.

So my fifteen minutes of fame on screen has ended, but “The human adventure is just beginning.”



Visit spaceplace.nasa.gov to explore space and earth science!

Venus and Jupiter prepare for their close-up this August

By Ethan Siegel

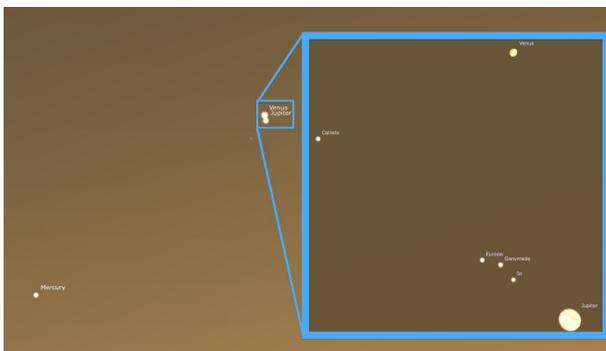
As Earth speeds along in its annual journey around the Sun, it consistently overtakes the slower-orbiting outer planets, while the inner worlds catch up to and pass Earth periodically. Sometime after an outer world—particularly a slow-moving gas giant—gets passed by Earth, it appears to migrate closer and closer to the Sun, eventually appearing to slip behind it from our perspective. If you've been watching Jupiter this year, it's been doing

exactly that, moving consistently from east to west and closer to the Sun ever since May 9th.

On the other hand, the inner worlds pass by Earth. They speed away from us, then slip behind the Sun from west to east, re-emerging in Earth's evening skies to the east of the Sun. Of all the planets visible from Earth, the two brightest are Venus and Jupiter, which experience a conjunction from our perspective only about once per year. Normally, Venus and Jupiter will appear separated by approximately 0.5° to 3° at closest approach. This is due to the fact that the Solar System's planets don't all orbit in the same perfect, two-dimensional plane.

But this summer, as Venus emerges from behind the Sun and begins catching up to Earth, Jupiter falls back toward the Sun, from Earth's perspective, at the same time. On August 27th, all three planets—Earth, Venus and Jupiter—will make nearly a perfectly straight line.

As a result, Venus and Jupiter, at 9:48 PM Universal time, will appear separated by only 4 arc-minutes, the closest conjunction of naked eye planets since the Venus/Saturn conjunction in 2006. Seen right next to one another, it's startling how much brighter Venus appears than Jupiter; at magnitude -3.80 , Venus appears some *eight times brighter than* Jupiter, which is at magnitude -1.53 .



Look to the western skies immediately after sunset on August 27th, and the two brightest planets of all—brighter than all the stars—will make a dazzling duo in the twilight sky. As soon as the sun is below the horizon, the pair will be about two fists (at arm's length) to the left of the sun's disappearance and about one fist above a flat horizon. You may need binoculars to find them initially and to separate them. Through a telescope, a large, gibbous Venus will appear no more distant from Jupiter than Callisto, its farthest Galilean satellite.

As a bonus, Mercury is nearby as well. At just 5° below and left of the Venus/Jupiter pair, Mercury achieved a distant conjunction with Venus less than 24 hours prior. In 2065, Venus will actually occult Jupiter, passing in front of the planet's disk. Until then, the only comparably close conjunctions between these two worlds occur in 2039 and 2056, meaning this one is worth some special effort—including traveling to get clear skies and a good horizon—to see!

“Treasures of the Night Skies”

Northern Lights and Astrophotos of Scott Nammacher will be on Exhibition at the Greenburgh Public Library August 2nd to September 9th, 2016



Deep Space and Northern Lights photographer Scott Nammacher, a Westchester based amateur astrophotographer, will be exhibiting his photos in The Howard and Ruth Jacobs Exhibition Hall at the Greenburgh Public Library. The exhibition opens August 2nd and extends to September 9th. It is called “Treasures of the Night Skies.”



The Artist Reception will happen August 6th between 2 and 4 pm, and is open to the public.

Mr. Nammacher’s photographs are taken from his up-state observatory (Starmere) and two remotely operated observatories (one in Australia and the other in New Mexico). He has been photographing nebulae, galaxies, along with cloud and gas regions, and more local solar system targets since the early 2000s. He became more seriously involved after he designed and built his own fully automated observatory near Catskill, NY in late 2008. He has shown earlier works at locations in the Hudson Valley area, including the Hudson Opera House in Hudson, NY, The Somers Library, and The Pound Ridge Library. He has also given talks and presentations around the region on astrophotography.



He recently photographed a spectacular show of the aurora borealis (northern lights) from Churchill, Manitoba, just south of the Arctic Circle. The best of these will be shown first, at this show.

His prints are created using a unique process that involves printing on a coated piece of thin aluminum, which enhances the color and vibrancy of the photos. His website is starmere.smugmug.com.



He will also give a talk on his photographs on August 20th, at 2 pm. Weather permitting, he will set up a solar telescope for attendees to get amazing views of the sun.

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Greenburgh Library information: 300 Tarrytown Road, Elmsford, NY 10523
 Phone: 914-721-8200
 Website: www.greenburghpubliclibrary.org

Artist Information: Website: Starmere.smugmug.com
 Email: snammacher@msn.com

2016 Star Party Schedule

Date	Time	Sunset	End Civil Twilight	Nearest New Moon
January 8th	7:30 PM	4:42 PM	5:13 PM	January 9th
February 5th	7:30 PM	5:16 PM	5:45 PM	February 8th
March 11th	7:30 PM	5:59 PM	6:26 PM	March 8th
April 8th	8:00 PM	7:30 PM	7:58 PM	April 7th
May 6th	8:30 PM	8:01 PM	8:32 PM	May 6th
June 10th	8:30 PM	8:31 PM	9:05 PM	June 4th
July 1st	8:30 PM	8:35 PM	9:09 PM	July 4th
July 29th	8:30 PM	8:17 PM	8:49 PM	August 2nd
September 2nd	8:00 PM	7:27 PM	7:56 PM	September 1st

September 30th	7:30 PM	6:38 PM	7:06 PM	September 30th
October 28th	7:30 PM	5:55 PM	6:23 PM	October 30th
November 25th	7:30 PM	4:28 PM	4:59 PM	November 29th
December 30th	7:30 PM	4:34 PM	5:06 PM	December 29th

Directions To The Star Party Site—

[Lake Taghkanic State Park](#) is in the town Ancram, NY. The park entrance is on the Taconic Parkway 10 minutes north of the exit used for Wilcox park.

Star Parties at Lake Taghkanic are held in the West Parking lot, next to the beach. The skies are darker than in Wilcox, with less stray light to deal with. The horizon is also much lower, especially to the south and east, making many more targets possible.

IMPORTANT: all events at Lake Taghkanic State Park require an **RSVP** which includes license plate number of the car you are bringing (please do so via [Meetup](#)). The park is patrolled by state police, and all non registered cars will be ticketed and risk our use of the park.

General Information:

- ♦ For the foreseeable future, all indoor meetings will be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in Coykendall Science Bldg., SUNY New Paltz (directions above) at 7:30 PM. All indoor events are FREE! All are welcome. The presentations are generally geared towards teenagers and up. For more information, call the Club Hotline.
- ♦ Dates listed for star parties are the primary dates. The rain date is the following night unless otherwise noted. Only one session is held for a given weekend, usually on the primary date, Friday, unless postponed (usually due to inclement weather) to the backup date, Saturday. Exceptions to this are noted in the “Scheduled Events” section above.
- ♦ All outdoor events are FREE! All are welcome. If you bring small children, it is **your** responsibility to keep a close eye on them. Please do not bring white-light flashlights. Instead, bring a red astronomer’s flashlight or an ordinary flashlight covered with several layers of red cellophane. If in doubt about the weather, check the status of the event at www.midhudsonastro.org.