

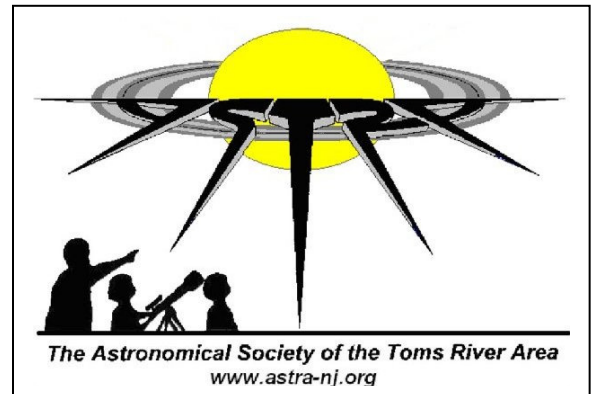
# ASTRAL PROJECTIONS

**December 2008**

[www.ASTRA-NJ.org](http://www.ASTRA-NJ.org)

\*\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE \*\*\*\*

Beginning in March 2008 and until further notice, the monthly ASTRA meetings will be held in the Solar Lounge beginning at 8:00 PM. The Solar Lounge is located in the Ocean County College Center building across from the Planetarium. The relocation of the meeting is due to the impending renovation of the planetarium building to begin in 2008.



With a paid-up family membership for 2008, when you attend a monthly meeting, each family may enter their name into a free random drawing for a door prize to be given away during the meeting.

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## 2008 Meeting Schedule

See [www.ASTRA-NJ.org/schedule.html](http://www.ASTRA-NJ.org/schedule.html) for latest update

**December 12<sup>th</sup> - So You Think You're An Astronomer:** Presentation by Rich Brady.  
**Election Results, and Awards;** Presented by Sarah Waters.  
**Vote on meeting time and dues for 2009;** Presented by Sarah Waters.  
**Start collecting dues for 2009;** Pay club treasurer.

## 2009 Meeting Schedule

**January 9<sup>th</sup> - Telescope Workshop-** Starts at 7:00PM. Open to anyone who has a telescope and needs help to put it together or how to use it. Bring the family, telescope and all the parts you want help with.

**February 13<sup>th</sup> – The Near Side Megabasin of the Moon;** Presentation by Charlie Byrne, a STAR member.

**March 13<sup>th</sup> – Our Changing Sun;** Presentation by Ken Legal, a STAR member.

**April 10<sup>th</sup> – Preparations and Ideas for Astronomy Day;**

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## Our Next Meeting – **Friday – 8 PM – Dec. 12, 2008**

**Election Results, and Awards;** Presented by Sarah Waters.  
**Vote on meeting time and dues for 2009;** Presented by Sarah Waters.  
**So You Think You're An Astronomer:** Presentation by Rich Brady.  
**Start collecting dues for 2009;** Pay club treasurer.

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# Highlights of the Last Meeting

Contributed by Allen Malsbury

## **Special Treat:**

Gloria opened the meeting with a special treat. The launch of the space shuttle Endeavor! I'm not sure how Gloria convinced NASA to launch a space shuttle especially for us. Gloria set up a computer and video projector linked via the internet to NASA's live feed of the launch. If you want to watch other live events visit NASA's website at [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov). Thanks Gloria.

After the launch, Sarah started the regular meeting.

## **New Visitors:**

We had three new prospective members at this meeting.

## **Kid's Zone:**

The Kid's Zone was in full swing tonight. Many new Holiday ornaments were made by the kids at the meeting. I counted 6 maybe 8 future Astronomers at the kid's table, heads down, hard at work on their ornaments. Erin shared her coloring supplies for the project. Later during the meeting Sarah's bother, Bill, laminated and trimmed their artwork. These will make nice looking ornaments for someone's Christmas tree this season. Thanks Bill, Erin and Sarah.

## **Dec. Vote:**

The club will vote on Club Officers, start time of meetings, and the amount of yearly dues at the December meeting.

## **Annual Orders:**

Randy Walton distributed Royal Astronomical Society Handbooks and Calendars to those who paid for them last month. He also showed two different handy LED flash lights on clearance at Radio Shack.

Phil Zollner collected for the group purchase of the Ottwell Astronomical Calendar. He will place the order for the calendars soon. Calendars won't arrive until early December.

## **Club Discounts:**

John Endreson provided information and discount codes to club members. These discounts are valued 3 to 15% at both Oceanside and Highpoint stores. So if you are going to buy new equipment you will want to get more information from John so you don't spend more than you should. Randy also reminded members they could get discounts on Meade or Celestron equipment from Lacey Outboard Repair, Bayville.

## **Free Items:**

Free items were provide by Rich Brady , left over from his "How to Buy a Telescope" Seminar. These included the latest Orion and Celestron catalogs available to those who wanted them.

## **Door Prize:**

A NASA jigsaw puzzle donated by Gloria was won by Mary Ann. Something good to do during these many rainy days and cloudy nights without any stars.

## **Star Parties:**

Last month Ro Spedaliere announced that ASTRA had won the Mars Globe and a DVD from the Night Sky Network. This month they were on display for all to see.

Also, Bob, announced that ASTRA's outreach program came in third on a national level and ahead of all other organization in New Jersey. Upcoming star parties include:

November 22th at Quail Hill

December 5th at the College

### **Project ASTRA NOVA:**

Project ASTRA NOVA is a program that creates a partnership between teachers and amateur astronomers.

- Are you an amateur astronomer?
- Do you love astronomy?
- Are you interested in sharing this?

Rich Gamba spoke on this project that tries to create a long-term partnership between an amateur astronomer and a teacher.

What is ~involved?

- Two days training
- Meet your teacher partner
- 4 Visits/year to the teacher's class

If you are interested, contact Theresa Moody at (908) 526-1200 x8942. The deadline for this year is soon. Training is February 6 and 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Speaker of the Month:**

#### ***Comets, Meteors and Asteroids***

Teresa provided an interesting, but most importantly, a fun presentation about comets, meteors and asteroids of our solar system. To everyone's surprise, she started with a written test. (Luckily, no essay questions.) Even our most knowledgeable members were struggling with some of the questions like:

- ✓ What is the solid center portion of the comet called?
- ✓ What is a meteor that strikes the earth called?
- ✓ What is the name of the largest Asteroid ever found called?
- ✓ What is the halo around a comet called?
- ✓ What shape is a comets orbit? Around what? What direction does the tail point?
- ✓ Which comet returns every 76 years?

The club member with the most correct answers got a scratch off lottery ticket prize. So did the next best, and the next and next. Teresa must grade on a bell curve or something. We all had fun.

Teresa provided information and showed how people looked at comets differently in the past. First documented by the Chinese, they were thought to be signs of good and bad events to come. Native Americans observed and saw comets as something special and included them in their explanation of the earth's beginnings and eventual demise. Comets orbit the Sun on a predictable elliptical pattern. Haley's comet returns every 76 years. The Dr. Cooper's mother saw Haley's comet twice, once at the age of 6 and later with her son, the Dr. Cooper, at the age of 82. Talk about amazing, did you know that Mark Twain was born and died on years Haley's comet came? This fun fact was provided by our Junior Astronomer Jordan. Teresa provided a list of some of the more famous comets and their period of orbit.

## **Star Party Plans**

For members who enjoy observing the skies, checkout the following list. ASTRA hosts several *public* and *private* star parties, coordinated by Ro Spedalieri. Many members also attend star parties put on by *other* groups held at other locations. **See the website Message Board for the latest updates, times, dates, directions, and who plans to go.**

**Coyle Field** (*private*)

**See the website Message Board.**

**December 5th**

Ocean County College

2008 Dec. Celestial Events: supplied by J. Randolph Walton (Randy)

Day	Date	Time (EDT)	Event
Mon	1	16:33	Moon near Venus and Jupiter
		19:35	Venus Sets, Jupiter Sets
Fri	5	12:06	Moon Rise
		16:26	<b>First Quarter Moon</b>
Sat	6	00:05	Saturn Rises
		07:08	Sunrise
		12:29	Moon Rise
		16:35	Sunset
		19:20	Jupiter Sets
		19:43	Venus Sets
Thu	11	03:00	Moon 0.7 Deg. N of Pleiades (M45)
Fri	12	11:37	<b>Full Moon</b>
		16:26	Moon Rise
Sat	13	16:35	Sunset
		17:07	Mercury Sets
		17:39	Moon Rise
		18:00	Geminid meteors peak (ZHR=120)
		19:00	Jupiter Sets
		19:57	Venus Sets
		23:35	Saturn Rises
Fri	19	05:29	<b>Last Quarter Moon</b>
		11:49	Moon Sets
Sat	20	07:05	Mars Rises
		07:18	Sunrise
		12:12	Moon Sets
		16:38	Sunset
		17:30	Mercury Sets
		18:40	Jupiter Sets
		20:12	Venus Sets
		23:10	Saturn Rises
Sun	21	07:04	Winter Solstice
Mon	22	03:00	Ursid meteors peak (ZHR=10)
Sat	27	07:00	Mars Rises
		07:21	Sunrise
		07:22	<b>New Moon</b>
		16:42	Sunset
		16:46	Moon Sets
		17:55	Mercury Sets
		18:23	Jupiter Sets
		20:25	Venus Sets
		22:45	Saturn Rises
Wed	31	18:11	Jupiter Sets, Mercury Sets
<b>Sat</b>	<b>Jan 3</b>	06:55	Mars Rises
		07:22	Sunrise
		08:00	Quadrantid meteors peak (ZHR=120)
		10:55	Moon Rise
		16:47	Sunset
		18:03	Jupiter Sets
		18:20	Mercury Sets
		20:37	Venus Sets
		22:20	Saturn Rises

# Astronomical League

[www.AstroLeague.org](http://www.AstroLeague.org)

As an ASTRA member you have a membership in the Astronomical League, which gets you the Reflector magazine, discounts on books, and Observing Awards. If you are not getting your Reflector magazine or want to apply for an Observing Award contact the club **ALCOR**: Ro Spedaliere.

## Items for Sale

### **ASTRA-WEAR: For Embroidered and/or Printed items with the ASTRA Logo**

You can see some samples at ASTRA meetings and ordering information for all items on our website, <http://www.astra-nj.org/ASTRA-WEAR.pdf>.

**Stellarvue 4" f/6.9 Achromatic Refractor Optical Tube Assembly**, Model # 102D. Focal length 704mm. The objective is partially attenuated, meaning visible color is very minimal. I've seen traces of color only on the Moon and brightest planets and stars. Contrast is unusually high. Includes a nesting dew cap and a fully rotating JMI Crayford 2" type tailpiece. Also with a 1¼" adaptor, Stellarvue tube rings, and a soft padded Stellarvue carry case. Combined original cost over \$1075. ~~Sell for \$850~~, Now reduced to \$550.

Contact: *Phil Zollner* at 732-905-0889 or [pazap@juno.com](mailto:pazap@juno.com)

**For Latest Items;** see the club website.

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***Astronomic Group Purchase, Items for Sale, or Help Wanted Advertisements:*** If you want to handle a Group Purchase, have Sale items, or need Help contact the President [President@astra-nj.org](mailto:President@astra-nj.org) to announce it at a meeting and send the advertisement to the newsletter (See *Newsletter* below).

***Education Article:*** If you have written a general interest astronomy article, please submit it to the newsletter (See *Newsletter* below). Try to keep it less than one page or it may need to be split over several months. It would be helpful if it were sent as an MS Word document attachment to an e-mail.

***Newsletter:*** E-mail material to [Newsletter@astra-nj.org](mailto:Newsletter@astra-nj.org) or mail to: Novins Planetarium, ASTRA Newsletter, Ocean County College, P.O. Box 2001, Toms River, NJ 08754-2001. If you do send something please call Randy Walton, phone 732-458-3465 as I may only check for e-mail at my local library weekly or the Planetarium only on the night of an ASTRA meeting. ***Deadline:*** Material for *ASTRAL PROJECTIONS* must be received 21 days before the next meeting.

***Astronomy Courses:*** Planetarium staff offers a number of mini-courses on astronomy. Call the OCC Department of Continuing and Professional Education, 732/255-0404, for information or to register.

***Planetarium office:*** 732/255-0343 weekdays 9 AM - 4 PM. ***Hot line:*** 732/255-0342. Select 6 for ASTRA. Visit the Planetarium web page at <http://ocean.edu/planet.htm> or visit our web page at <http://astra-nj.org>

***Executive Board:*** **President** - Sarah Waters, [President@astra-nj.org](mailto:President@astra-nj.org); **Vice President-Secretary** - Rich Gamba, [VP@astra-nj.org](mailto:VP@astra-nj.org); **Treasurer** - Ro Spedaliere, [Treasurer@astra-nj.org](mailto:Treasurer@astra-nj.org); **Newsletter Editor** - Randy Walton, phone 732-458-3465, [Newsletter@astra-nj.org](mailto:Newsletter@astra-nj.org), checked weekly; **Webmaster** - John Endreson, [Webmaster@astra-nj.org](mailto:Webmaster@astra-nj.org).

# ELECTIONS for 2009

Elections for ASTRA's Club Officers will take place at the December meeting. Please use the attached Election Ballot to cast your vote. You can fill out your ballot and mail it to: Robert J. Novins Planetarium, Attn: ASTRA, Ocean County College, Toms River NJ 08754-2001 or you can bring it with you to a meeting.

## Election Ballot

**The President** - The President shall be the primary point of contact for the organization, speak for the organization in all official matters, and preside over meetings.

Rich Brady \_\_\_\_\_ Mauro Bacolo \_\_\_\_\_ Or Self Nominate- Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

**The Vice President/Secretary** - Assume the responsibilities of the President in the President's absence. Make a record of any formal actions taken by the organization. Coordinate with the Newsletter Editor in mailing appropriate club business. Keep the official version of the Bylaws and Policy documents.

Ed Mullen \_\_\_\_\_ Or Self Nominate- Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

**The Treasurer** - The Treasurer shall be the club membership chairperson, shall maintain the club treasury, shall collect club dues, and shall expend funds as directed. Recurring expenditures normal to the operation of the organization are authorized. The Treasurer shall provide a written report of the year's expenditures, which shall be included in the Newsletter, published within the first calendar quarter. Separate accounting will be maintained for the Telescope Fund and it will not be used for general club operations without a vote at a regular meeting.

Ro Spedaliere \_\_\_\_\_ Or Self Nomination- Your Name \_\_\_\_\_