



ASTRAL PROJECTIONS

December 2010
Volume 21 Issue 12

Meeting Schedule

December 10th Meeting:

"ASTRA Election of club officers"

Awards, Star Party Roundup and Election of club officers.

Date: Friday, 12/10/2010

Time: 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Location: College Center
Solar Lounge on College Dr.,
Toms River, NJ 08754

January 14th 2011 Meeting:

"Telescope Workshop" +
Public Star Party.

Closed since the end of 2007,
the Novins Planetarium is
back!

Date: Friday, 1/14/2011

Time: 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Location: Robert J. Novins
Planetarium, College Drive,
Ocean County College, Toms
River, NJ 08754

Starting in January 2011 ASTRA will once again hold its meetings in the newly renovated Robert J. Novins Planetarium.



The new planetarium theater features the latest projection technology to bring you the universe in innovative and exciting new ways. The planetarium dome is a virtual 3-D video space, allowing us to take you on a journey from the smallest size scales to the edge of the universe, and a new fiber-optic star projector will provide a beautiful, crisp view of the night sky. Public shows began in October.

For Planetarium information:

Recorded information: 732.255.0342

Planetarium Office: 732.255.0343

Planetarium Director: 732.255.0400 ext 2111

Email: planetarium@ocean.edu

ASTRA Hotline

If you do not have online access to our website or message boards, you can call the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493 for the latest information on star parties and other observing plans. If you have a question about the club or astronomy in general, leave a message and we'll get back to you.

Whats up this month?

December 2010 Celestial Events

1st – 3rd Dawn: You can see the waning crescent Moon about 8 deg. lower right of Saturn on the 1st, 7 deg. right of Venus on the 2nd and below Venus on the 3rd.

5th New Moon (12:36pm EST).

6th Dusk: Mars is occulted by the thin crescent Moon very low in bright twilight.

13th First-Quarter Moon (8:59am EST). Also at dusk Mercury is just 1 deg. upper right of Mars very low in the southeast shortly after sunset.

13th-14th Night: The Geminid Meteor Shower peeks.

18th Evening: The Pleiades are 2 deg. upper left of the Moon.

20th-21st Late Night/Early Morning: A total eclipse of the Moon.

21st Full Moon: occurs at 3:13am EST, near the center of the lunar eclipse.

21st-22nd The Longest Night of the Year. Winter starts at the solstice, 6:38pm EST on the 21st.

27th Last-quarter Moon (11:18pm EST).

29th Dawn: Spica is just a few deg. above the Moon, with Saturn to their upper right.

30th Dawn: The waning crescent Moon is right of Venus.

ASTRA Public Outreach & Star Parties Schedule for December

Coyle Field Public Star Party

Beware! Although ASTRA members observe at Coyle Field It is not an official ASTRA observing location, therefore you should observe at your own risk.

Date: Saturday, 12/4/2010

Time: 7:00 PM - 2:00 AM

Location: Coyle Field, Coyle Field Rt. 72 Stevenson Road,
Burlington County, NJ 08019

Call the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493 or check the online message board on the date of the star party for up to date information on these events.

*Thanks to ASTRA members for
another great year of
Public Outreach
& Star Parties!*



**ASTRA Members observing at the Lighthouse
Star Party July 2, 2010**

ASTRA Library of Books & DVD's

The following books and DVD's are available to borrow for one month at a time. Request for these items must be made prior to our regular meeting and returned the following meeting. Please e-mail your request for these items to John Endreson webmaster@astra-nj.org or call the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493

BOOKS

1) **The National Air and Space Museum**

Second Edition by C.D.B. Bryan

2) **Milestones of Aviation** Smithsonian

Institution National Air and Space Museum

3) **New Atlas of the Moon** by Serge

Brunier (Author), Thierry Legault (Photographer).

4) **Encyclopedia of space** by National

Geographic

5) **The Real Mars** by Michael Hanion

DVD's

1) **Parts 1&2 Understanding the Universe What's New in Astronomy**

2003 Taught by: Professor Alex Filippenko. Each part has 8 lectures, 45 minutes per lecture.

2) **Parts 1 to 5 Understanding the Universe An Introduction to Astronomy**

Taught by: Professor Alex Filippenko each part has 8 lectures, 45 minutes per lecture.

3) **COSMOS**

In his "ship of the imagination," Carl Sagan guides us to the farthest reaches of space and takes us back into the history of scientific inquiry in the course of 13 fascinating hours.

For a complete list of books and DVD's, visit our website or Call the ASTRA Hotline at 609-971-8493.

Club Telescopes



A.S.T.R.A. owns four small telescopes

6-inch Dobsonian

8-inch Dobsonian

80mm Celestron Refractor

120mm EQ AstroView Refractor.

These telescopes are available for club members to borrow and use for a month or two at a time.

Wanted!

No longer used telescopes, Telescope parts, and accessories.

Call the ASTRA Hotline at 609-971-8493
We will come and pick-up your used equipment.

ASTRA-WEAR: For Embroidered and/or Printed items With the ASTRA Logo



You can see some samples at ASTRA meetings. To order by mail: Shelter Cove Embroidery Co. 1333 Bay Ave Toms River, NJ 08753 call 732-506-7700 or E-mail astra-wear@estitches.com

ASTRA

By KELLEY ANNE ESSINGER

It's pitch black at 9:00pm on a Friday night in July when I park my car and cut my headlights in the grassy field of The Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education located in Waretown, NJ. I can barely see a thing, and I'm feeling a bit disoriented as I have just driven down the narrow rocky, dirt road to the Center for the first time. As I hesitantly get out of my car with nothing but my cell phone for light, I'm greeted by my friend Jules who's studying turtles for the summer at the Center. But I'm not here to learn about turtles. In fact, I've been invited to look at the stars.

"I'm so glad you were able come to the star party!" squeals Jules, giving me a hug.

I snicker at the idea of a star party but have to admit that I'm excited for a little astronomy.

Following Jules through the dark field, I notice the sky is bright and clear; a perfect night for star gazing.

When my eyes finally adjust to the darkness of night, I notice a small crowd of people I cannot entirely see gathered around big, bulky telescopes, pointing at the sky and chattering about the view.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

President – Bob Salvatore,
President@astra-nj.org;

Vice President-Secretary – John Endreson, VP@astra-nj.org;

Treasurer - Ro Spedalieri,
Treasurer@astra-nj.org;

Newsletter Editor – John Endreson, Newsletter@astra-nj.org;

Webmaster - John Endreson,
Webmaster@astra-nj.org.

Check us out on Facebook, search groups for (ASTRA Astronomy) and look for our logo.



ASTRA is recognized as having one of the best public outreach programs in the country as recognized by Astronomy magazines "Out of this World" public outreach program. For more information go to <http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov> or contact Ro Spedalieri (Treasurer@astra-nj.org) or the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493



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The *REFLECTOR* is published in March, June, September and December. If you do not receive your copy of the REFLECTOR magazine, contact Astronomical League Coordinator (Alcor) Ro Spedalieri (Treasurer@astra-nj.org) or the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493 and leave a message.

ASTRA

From page #4

“Come over here and take a look at Saturn!” one of the men shouts at me from behind the biggest telescope of all.

Feeling a bit out of my element, I slowly walk over to the man, scrunch one eye shut and place the other over the eyepiece of the telescope. Peering in, I’m shocked to find a tiny but very bright and clear view of Saturn and its surrounding rings.

“Oh-my-gosh,” I say more than once.

The people around me giggle at my reaction, but I can’t help it. I can’t believe I’m really looking at Saturn and can actually see its rings. I’m so astounded I almost think it’s a trick — that this is some sort of practical joke and someone has slid a View-Master reel into the lens of the telescope. But nobody screams “Smile! You’re on Candid Camera!” so I guess this is for real.

After a moment, I’m hurried over to another telescope where I find a faint but almost glittery view of a Bok globule, a dark cloud of gas and dust in which star formation usually takes place.

This time I’m so astonished I begin clapping my hands and jumping in the air.

Thankfully, a woman to my right stops me from embarrassing myself any further and hands me a star chart used to explain the layout of the stars on this particular night. When she’s finished pointing out the arrangement of different constellations and how to find them in the sky, I ask her why these people are here.

“We’re ASTRA,” she says, handing me a pamphlet: “The Astronomical Society of the Toms River Area.”

ASTRA is as light-hearted as they come. Sometimes they’ll even spend whole meetings on discussions about the craters in the moon and the celebrities they’re named after. But the club isn’t all play and no work. Discussion topics can be as silly or as serious as the members like.



Changes to A.S.T.R.A. membership eligibility!

Because of A.S.T.R.A.’s involvement with the public and their families at our meetings, star parties and other such events, we have to make some changes to the A.S.T.R.A. Membership Application Form so we can better know whom we are allowing to become members, attend our meetings, and participate in A.S.T.R.A. events.

This will give the club officers the ability to make it safer for A.S.T.R.A. members and their families, and the public and their families to attend our events. All new and returning applicants must fill out this new Membership Application Form and return it with your dues payment.

Thank you for your continued support!



ASTRA Membership Application Form

Thank you for your interest in the Astronomical Society of the Toms River Area. Please read carefully and fill in the appropriate information below.

ASTRA reserve the right to deny admission or revoke the membership of individuals convicted of a sex offense.

Returning members Annual dues- \$ 25.00 from (January to December): (\$_____)

New membership- \$ 30.00 from (January to December):

New membership- \$ 20.00 from (July to December): (\$_____)

Telescope fund assessment of (\$ 5.00) a *one-time* assessment

“required of all new members” optional for returning members) (\$ 5.00)

TOTAL AMOUNT PAID (as determined by the above schedule): (\$_____)

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO ASTRA.

NAME _____ **PHONE ()** _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

Check here if you wish to receive a paper copy of our Newsletter.

Check here if you wish to receive an e-mail copy of our Newsletter.

E-MAIL ADDRESS (if applicable) _____

By filing this application with ASTRA, you are indicating that you have not been convicted, adjudicated delinquent or found not guilty by reason of insanity of a sex offense.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge all particulars supplied by me are correct and complete.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE _____

Send this application form with your dues payment to:

**Robert J. Novins Planetarium
ATTN: ASTRA
Ocean County College
Toms River NJ 08754-2001**