



ASTRAL PROJECTIONS

Volume 21 Issue 3

March 2010

**** PLEASE NOTE ****

Due to the renovation of the planetarium meetings are in the Solar Lounge beginning at 7:00 PM. The Solar Lounge is located in the Ocean County College Center building #15 across from the Planetarium.

Highlights from February 12th 2010 meeting.

Meeting Schedule

March 12th "Astronomy Day Preparations"

Members from Save the Universe will do a presentation on public outreach. After that, we will review the NSN Toolkits and will take volunteers to run the activities and setup a tentative schedule for Astronomy day.

April 9th Final preparations for Astronomy Day & Telescope Equipment/Books show and tell.

We will do final preparations on all the NSN Toolkits and getting them ready for Astronomy Day activities. We will take volunteers to run the activities and setup a final schedule for the day.

May 14th "Planetary Nebulas" - Richard Mackiewicz

A presentation and discussion on Planetary Nebulas given by Richard Mackiewicz.

With almost 5 feet of snow on the ground, the Guest speakers from the NASA Night Sky Network who had to travel from out of state were unable to come to our meeting. They have rescheduled their presentation for the next meeting on March 12th.

We used this extra time to get some preliminary Astronomy Day plans started. The date will be Saturday April 24th at 10:00 AM to 3 PM with exhibits, activities and demonstrations. Then Observing at 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Further planning will be done at our next meeting. In addition, we setup an advertizing committee with John Endreson, Sarah Waters, Bill Murphey, and Dr. Donald Cooper volunteering to get the word out through our local Schools, Newspapers, TV, and Radio stations. Join us at the next meeting as we make further plans for Astronomy Day.

There was a big presentation as ASTRA President Bob Salvatore was crowned "KING ASTRA" and was given a crown, a scepter, and a star colored cape. The "KING" then was gracious enough to give us one of his own presentations on Asterism Names.

You've all heard of "The Big Dipper" and "Whirlpool Galaxy (M-51)" and even the "Ring Nebula (M-57)" but have you heard of the "Dragonfly Cluster (NGC-457)" or the "Gator Cluster (NGC-7160)" or how about the "Whales Tail Galaxy (NGC-7177)"? Bob talked about how some of these names came about and how he came up with a few of them himself. Therefore, the next time you are out observing an object give it a name and who knows it just might catch on.

Thanks Bob, I mean "KING ASTRA" for another fun filled presentation, we may never live this one down.

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ASTRA Club Telescopes

A.S.T.R.A. owns two Dobsonian type telescopes of 6 inches and 8 inches in aperture and two refractors one 80mm Celestron w/Altaz mount and one 120mm Orion AstroView w/equatorial mount. After suitable training, club members may borrow these telescopes for a month at a time. Contact John Endreson at: Webmaster@astra-nj.org or call the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493 if you are interested in using one of our scopes.

Wanted!

No longer used telescopes, parts, and accessories.
Call the ASTRA Hotline at 609-971-8493
We will come and pick-up your used equipment.

Items for Sale

Meade Super-wide 13.8mm 1 1/4 in. eyepiece for sale.
This is an original Japanese made series 4000 eyepiece with a 70 degree field. Excellent condition. Originally \$125, sell for \$50.
Contact: Phil Zollner at 732-905-0889 or pazap@juno.com

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 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 Far Side of the Moon** by Charles J. Byrne.
- 2) **Night Watch** by Terence Dickinson
- 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
- 6) **Don't Know Much about the Universe** by Kenneth C. Davis's

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.

March 2010 Celestial Events

1st Evening: Saturn is 8 deg. left of the rising, just past full Moon.

3rd Dawn: Bright star Spica is just 4 deg. above the Moon.

7th Dawn: Bright star Antares is just 4 deg. to the right of the Moon.

Last Quarter Moon: (10:42 am EST)

14th Daylight Savings Time: Begins a 2:00am for most of the US and Canada.

15th New Moon: (5:01 pm EDT)

16th, 17th: A very thin crescent Moon should be visible a half hour after sunset 6 deg. lower right of Venus on the 16th, and 10 deg. above Venus on the 17th.

20th Spring Begins: At Equinox, 1:32 pm EDT

Evening: The waxing crescent Moon is very close to the Pleiades and will pass through the southernmost fringe of the cluster starting around 9:pm EDT

23rd First Quarter Moon (7:00 a.m. EDT)

25th Evening: The Moon passes beneath the arc formed by Mars, and stars Pullux, and Castor.

29th Full Moon (10:25pm EDT)

30th Dusk: Mercury is easy to see 30 minutes after sunset. Look low in the west, 4 deg. lower right of Venus.

Whats up this month?

ASTRA Public Outreach & Star Parties Schedule

Wild Birds Unlimited "Star Party"

The owners of Wild Birds Unlimited 941 Route 37 West Toms River, NJ 08755 has asked ASTRA to join them at their star party.

Date: Friday, 3/19/2010

Time: 7:30 PM - 10:00 PM

Location: Wild Birds Unlimited, 941 Route 37 West, Toms River, NJ 08755

OCC Spring Star Watch

Members of ASTRA will setup their telescopes on the campus of Ocean County College and share the wonderful views of the planets and stars with the public.

Date: Saturday, 3/20/2010

Time: 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

Location: College Center Solar Lounge "Ocean County College", Ocean County College, use parking lot # 2 on College Dr., Toms River, NJ 08754

Central Regional Middle School "Outreach Star Party"

Members of ASTRA will setup their telescopes on the campus of Central Regional Middle School and share the wonderful views of the planets and stars with the students. This is an "Outreach Star Party" so members who bring their telescopes must be willing to allow the students to observe (with your guidance) the night sky.

Date: Tuesday, 3/23/2010

Time: 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Location: Central Regional Middle School, Forest Hills Parkway, Bayville, NJ 08721

Call the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493 on the date of the star party for up to date information.



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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Astronomical Items for Sale, or Help Wanted Advertisements:

If you have an item to Sell, or need help with an astronomical problem (a question, or Telescope setup) contact the President President@astra-nj.org or the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493 to announce it at a meeting and send the advertisement to the newsletter (See Newsletter below).

Newsletter: E-mail material (Meeting reports, Observing reports) to Newsletter@astra-nj.org

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President – Bob Salvatore,
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Check us out on Facebook, search for (ASTRA New Jersey) and look for our logo.



After snacking on coffee, cake, and cookies provided by Geoff Redington & Sarah Watters, we watched a presentation of the movie “400 Years of the Telescope”. The movie examines how the telescope altered man's relationship with the universe, from Galileo through the Hubble Space Telescope and beyond.

Aided by the magnifying power of the telescope, Galileo discovered the four largest moons of Jupiter, the phases of Venus and the mountains of the moon. His observations also led him to support Nicolaus Copernicus' theory that the Earth revolved around the sun and not vice versa.

The documentary explores new theories, such as dark energy, a mysterious force that is accelerating the expansion of the universe, and provides a glimpse of a new generation of super-telescopes, which will have lenses the size of football fields. One is the European Extremely Large Telescope, or EELT. It will most likely be built on a mountaintop in Chile, where atmospheric turbulence is minimal.

After the meeting, some of us went down the road to Simkos Grill for a bite to eat, some drink and nice conversation.

Don't forget to pay your dues for this year 2010 and we thank you for your continued support.

Call the ASTRA Hotline 609-971-8493 for the latest information on all of ASTRA's activities or if you have a question about telescopes or astronomy in general, leave a message and we will get back to you.



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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 Spedaliere (Treasurer@astra-nj.org) or the ASTRA Hotline 609-971 8493 and leave a message.