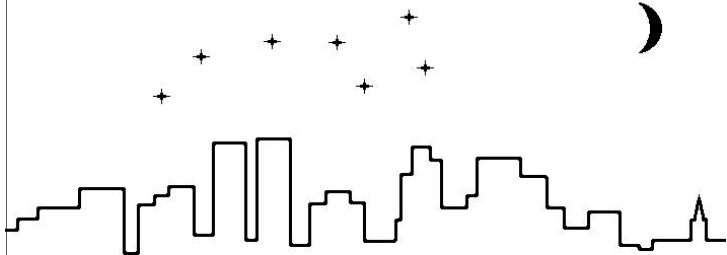


STARLITE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE PEORIA ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

www.astronomical.org



Peoria Astronomical Society

SPRING 2009

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Northmoor Gets a New Dome – Finally!

“We're on the way to a nicer home for our Northmoor telescope and the many star gazers we expect to see on Saturday nights this summer. “ — Terry Beachler

Thanks to the amazing efforts of PAS members, the Northmoor Observatory has a new dome. Our gratitude goes out to Rich and Margo Tennis for their fundraising efforts in making the dome a reality. A special thanks to Terry Beachler for all his help in getting the dome installed.

The old dome was finally removed on February 25th. The "Big Lift" was coordinated by Don Howerter of ENTEC. A 40 ton crane from N. E. Finch plucked the old dome off without a hitch. Apprentices from the local Steamfitters and Peoria Park District people were on hand to assist. Construction of the new dome was completed by apprentices from Ironworkers Local 112, Ash Dome personnel, and PAS volunteers. Upon completion of the dome, the telescope will be reassembled and minor building repairs will be completed.

We'll be back in business in late March, just in time for 100 Hours of Astronomy, April 2-5, and our summer season reopening on May 2. Many years of preparation resulted in a beautiful new dome.



By the time you read this, the new dome will be complete!



Help PAS Reach for the Stars!

By Rich Tennis

I know that many of you contributed to this happening. So, thank you for that effort...it made a difference. If you haven't yet sent in your dues for 2009, please do! And, if you are excited enough, I would ask sending an additional amount that will be applied to the Peoria Community Foundation \$10,000 match-grant - \$1 for every \$2 given. Plus, your contribution can be applied to possible employer matching money. We still need to get the full grant from the Peoria Community foundation.

Observatory Renovation Project

••• Preparing for the New Dome

Peoria Astronomical Society members Rich Tennis and Terry Beachler visited ASH Manufacturing Company in Plainfield, IL on Friday, January 23. The purpose of the visit was to inspect the rotating dome being built for the Northmoor Observatory Renovation Project and to make arrangements for delivery to the Observatory site on Donovan Golf Course. Delivery was planned for late February.



Terry Beachler, PAS Construction Coordinator for Northmoor
 Rich Tennis, PAS Chairman of fund-raising for the Project
 Bruce Marshall, ASH Dome field Supervisor.

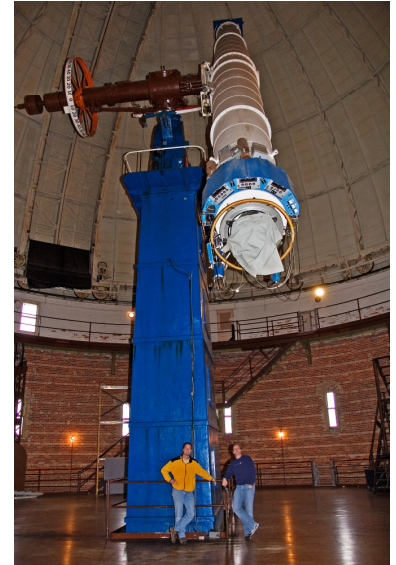


The dome is 20 feet, 6 inches in diameter and weighs 4400 pounds.

The completed and assembled Peoria Dome awaits delivery in the Ash Dome facility in Plainfield, Illinois

Yerkes Trip

Thank you to Rich Tennis for organizing the trip to Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay, WI. in Nov. 2008. All who went had a great time!



That's one big-honkin' telescope!



Yerkes Observatory, Williams Bay, WI

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 e-mail address, please notify Mike Frasca with your e-mail 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 Scott and Mike may be reached through the contacts page on the PAS website at www.astronomical.org.



Messier Marathon March 21st

By John Barra

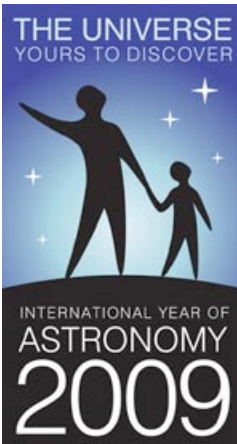
This year's version of the Messier Marathon is set for Saturday, March 21st at the Jubilee Observatory. The last few marathons have been at the Tennis StarHouse. The change back to Jubilee has been made in hopes of getting better attendance.

The first back up is the night before so pay close attention to weather reports and check your emails for updates if you are part of the PAS group list. Back up weekend is for Saturday, March 28 and the backup for that night is March 27.

Once again, dress appropriately and try to set up before dark. Check off lists will be in the warm-up room.



100 Hours of Astronomy April 2-5, 2009



Lakeview Museum celebrates the International Year of Astronomy in 2009 with a variety of activities. Want to build a telescope? Command a mission to the Moon? View the stars at Northmoor Observatory? Watch a full dome planetarium show? Lakeview is your place to celebrate the stars.

Telescope Doctor Jan. 31 and April 4 (1 day)
Need help operating or repairing your telescope? Bring it to the Telescope Doctors. 1 - 3 p.m. \$8 members/\$10 others

Telescope Amnesty

Don't use that old telescope anymore? Bring it in and we'll find a needy science student to give it to. Drop off at front desk anytime during museum hours. Contact Nick Rae or Cathy

Summer Star Parties

By John Barra

As was the case the last two years, we will not have any general meetings during the summer, but will replace them with star parties. The June star party will be at Northmoor with the new dome and will be open to the public. The July star party will be at the Jubilee Observatory and will be for members and guests. Finally, the August star party will be at Jubilee College State Park and also will be open to the public.

Check the summer Starlite and the PAS website for exact details as they become available.

Nebraska Star Party July 19-24, 2009

By Rich Tennis

How does the Nebraska Star Party fit into your "Bucket List" of places to see the dark...and I do mean dark...skies. I plan on going to this years NSP. Star Party information may be found at: www.nebraskastarparty.org

The observing field is at the Snake Campground at Merritt Reservoir, which is south of Valentine about 20 miles.

There is another option to where we stay at the Sandhill Double Ranch (www.sandhilldoublelerranch.com). The distance is less than distance to Valentine, and has air-conditioned cabins.

I will be sending in my reservation by the end of March, so I would like to drive my truck, seat up to six, but four comfortably, with possible trailer to haul the scopes and possible tents, if we choose to stay at a the campground the choice is primitive or electric sites.



Lakeview Planetarium 7:30pm	Monthly Meeting Programs
March 4th	Messier Marathon: Viewing the Messier Nebula by John Barra
April 1st	Keyholder Review: Rules of the Domes by Telescope Chairman
May 6th	Members Night: Learn Everyone's Interests
June 3rd	Northmoor Star Party: Open to Public
July 1st	Jubilee Observatory Star Party: Members and Guests
August 5th	Jubilee State Park Star Party: Open to Public
September 2nd	Annual meeting/picnic
October 7th	Great Debate IV by John Barra
November 4th	TBA
December 2nd	Astrojeopardy by Gene Hodel

Northmoor Observatory 2009 Hosting Schedule

May 2	Dave Grebner	Sheldon Schafer
May 9	Terry Beachler	Sheldon Schafer
May 16	Scott Hay	Phil Burroughs
May 23	Bill Cole	Gerald Horst
May 30	Dave Grebner	Nerio Calgaro
June 6	Tim Lester	Tim McGrath
June 13	Steve Wrigley	Jon Wrigley
June 20	Scott Hay	Sheldon Schafer
June 27	Rich Tennis	Nerio Calgaro
July 11	Brian Hakes	DeWayne Bartels
July 18	John Barra	Mike Hay
July 25	Scott Swords	Calene Fleming
Aug 1	Tim Lester	Tim McGrath
Aug 8	Dan Son	Phil Burroughs
Aug 15	John Barra	Mike Hay
Aug 22	Brian Hakes	Gerald Horst
Aug 29	Rich Tennis	Nerio Calgaro
Sept 5	Bill Cole	Brandt Bechtold
Sept 12	Steve Wrigley	Jon Wrigley
Sept 19	Phil Burroughs	DeWayne Bartels
Sept 26	Bill Cole	Brandt Bechtold
Oct 3	Scott Swords	Calene Fleming
Oct 10	Dan Son	Dave Grebner
Oct 17	John Barra	Mike Hay
Oct 24	Terry Beachler	Rich Tennis



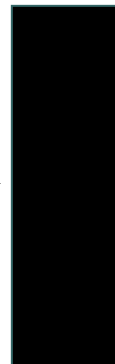
Northmoor Phone List

Barra, John
Bartels, D.
Beachler, Terry
Bechtold, Brandt
Burroughs, Phil
Calgaro, Nerio
Cole, Bill
Fleming, Calene
Grebner, Dave
Hakes, Brian
Hay, Mike



July 18 & Aug 15 & Oct 17
July 11 & Sept 19
May 9 & Oct 24
Sept 5 & Sept 26
May 16 & Aug 8 & Sept 19
May 30 & June 27 & Aug 29
May 23 & Sept 5 & Sept 26
July 25 & Oct 3
May 2 & May 30 & Oct 10
July 11 & Aug 22
July 18 & Aug 15 & Oct 17

• Hay, Scott
• Horst, Gerald
• Lester, Tim
• McGrath, Tim
• Schafer, Sheldon
• Son, Dan
• Swords, Scott
• Tennis, Rich
• Wrigley, Jon
• Wrigley, Steve



May 16 & June 20
May 23 & Aug 22
June 6 & Aug 1
June 6 & Aug 1
May 2 & May 9 & June 20
Aug 8 & Oct 10
July 25 & Oct 3
June 27 & Aug 29 & Oct 24
June 13 & Sept 12
June 13 & Sept 12

Jubilee Observatory 2009 Maintenance Schedule



April 4	Eric Clifton	Tim Lester	Steve Russell
April 11	John Barra	Brian Bill	Rich Tennis
April 18	B. Bechtold	Scott Hay	Tim McGrath
April 25	Cheryl Criss	Brian Hakes	Steve Thomas
May 2	C. Fleming	Gerald Horst	Scott Swords
May 9	Doug Kasel	Chuck Lamb	Greg Neaveill
May 16	G. Bussman	Mike Hay	Dan Son
May 23	D. Bartels	Cliff Jeske	Perry White
May 30	Brian Bill	Robert Pauer	Steve Thomas
June 6	Eric Clifton	Brian Hakes	Doug Kasel
June 13	Gerald Horst	Chuck Lamb	Tim Lester
June 20	Cheryl Criss	Scott Hay	Tim McGrath
June 27	Mike Frasca	David Grebner	Steve Russell
July 4	Cliff Jeske	Greg Mettlach	Dan Son
July 11	John Barra	Rich Tennis	Perry White
July 18	C. Fleming	Scott Swords	Steve Thomas
July 25	G. Bussman	Brian Hakes	Robert Pauer
Aug. 1	Brian Bill	Scott Hay	Doug Kasel
Aug. 8	D. Bartels	David Grebner	Gerald Horst
Aug. 15	Mike Frasca	Cliff Jeske	Mike Hay
Aug. 22	B. Bechtold	Cheryl Criss	Dan Son
Aug. 29	Eric Clifton	Greg Mettlach	Greg Neaveill
Sept. 5	John Barra	C. Fleming	Scott Swords
Sept. 12	Scott Hay	Tim Lester	Tim McGrath
Sept. 19	D. Grebner	Chuck Lamb	Robert Pauer
Sept. 26	B. Bechtold	Mike Hay	Perry White
Oct. 3	Brian Bill	Mike Frasca	Greg Neaveill
Oct. 10	D. Bartels	Gary Bussman	Greg Mettlach
Oct. 17	C. Fleming	Steve Russell	Scott Swords
Oct. 24	Doug Kasel	Dan Son	Rich Tennis

*** Note: If you can not make your scheduled day, it is YOUR responsibility to swap dates with another keyholder! ***

My Own Ostroski Design Dobsonian

By Greg Neaveill

On April 5, 2008, my wife and I returned to Sedona, AZ, where we were married 13 years before. On the Saturday of our arrival, I had the opportunity to view the wonderful, clear night skies of Arizona through a 28 inch homemade scope at the resort that we were staying at. On the following Tuesday, we attended a party where three astronomers took us on a tour of the skies. Again, all three of these scopes were homemade. Thanks to American Airline's unreliability, we stayed on through the following Saturday, giving me an opportunity to attend yet a third star party hosted by the Astronomers of Verde Valley in Cottonwood, AZ. One scope stood out and that was a 13" trussed Dobsonian custom made by Doug Ostroski. Like most trussed Dobs, it came apart quite easily; but UNLIKE most trussed Dobs, there were no stray pieces to contend with. The trusses were a unit; no tubes or loose nuts and bolts. The scope also deviated from the norm by having a six-sided primary mirror box instead of the standard or common four-sided. As a result, only six trusses were required instead of the usual eight. However, the trade off for the condensed design was an increase in complexity. This "Hex Box" design and single unit truss configuration was the invention of Doug Ostroski.



A light went off when I got home and before I knew it I was committed to the construction of my own Ostroski Design Dobsonian. There was a flurry of e-mails and phone conversations between IL and AZ. Eric Clifton weighed in with valuable suggestions on books and reference materials. A visit to the Rich Tennis estate and I came away with even more ideas. And then it all began – the construction of a 10" trussed Dobsonian . . . Baltic birch ply from the Woodworkers Shop, mirrors from Coulter out of Florida, aluminum tubing from Texas Tower, stain and paint from Born Paint, aluminum and stainless materials from 14th Street Hardware in Pekin. After numerous visits to Ace Hardware for nuts, bolts, and stainless steel screws, the serious work began. Trig. books were consulted and the calculator got a workout.

There were no plans for this scope, just photos from my trip, rough sketches in e-mails, and my own idea of what the scope would look like. Another unique feature of this scope would be the spider assembly that holds the secondary mirror. Most telescope makers buy the spider and simply glue in the secondary. Early on I was committed to building it all from scratch. I purchased the mirrors, the focuser and the eyepieces. Everything else would be fabricated, including the spider assembly. Over a four-month period, the scope took shape, first from simply a wooden hex box with pipes and aluminum to a fine boat finished hex box and secondary that moved smoothly with a nudge from your finger.

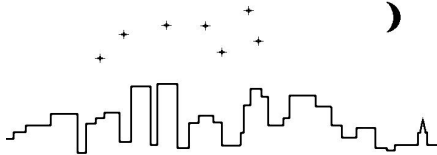


The icing on the cake for this scope was the 26 mm Nagler, purchased used on Cloudy Nights. I had my heart AND eyes set on the 26 mm and it had to be purchased early on since it weighs in at 26 ounces - it was critical in the determination of the center of gravity. Another innovation was the mounting of a green laser pointer/finder on the top of the scope. The laser is mounted in a custom made, unique holder that allows for the quick location of an object in the sky and then snaps out for storage in your pocket or for use in communicating an object's location.

All and all I couldn't be more pleased with my results. I consider it a functional tool for stargazing as well as a work of art. I look forward to sharing it with my fellow PAS members in the near future. To see more of my scope, go to www.Deverman.com/scope



STARLITE



Peoria Astronomical Society

PO Box 10111
Peoria, IL 61612-0111

From Starlites Past...

By John Barra

40 YEARS AGO

Winter Starlite 1968

“New Officers...were elected on September 12. Your new officers are as follows: George Triff Jr., president; Arthur Grebner, vice-president....”

Having read many of the old Starlites of the past to do this column every issue, I have seen their names mentioned many times. See the next message and 25 Years Ago below for further comments.

“George Triff and Arthur Grebner received awards from “National” for having found 110 Messier objects.”

As we all know, completing such a feat is a difficult task. Let their recognition inspire others to do the same.

25 YEARS AGO

Winter Starlite 1983

“The Editor is moved to add his tributes to the two former Presidents of our Society who departed our midst since the last issue of STARLITE. George Triff had a varied and colorful career, from war service in Asia to devoted searches for constellations and Messier objects....George’s close friend, Art Grebner was an engineer with a lifelong striving for perfection....”

His name, as part of the official name Decker-Grebner-Van Zant Observatory is a fitting memorial.” Nothing more needs to be said.

“Come springtime, we may have to face a rather large financial obligation. The roof at Northmoor

Observatory is in need of repairs.”

Twenty-five years later, another new roof and a new dome are close to reality.



Dome removal Feb 25, 2009