



August, 2000

At the August 4 meeting...

Tektites, a Cosmic Paradox ***Hal Povenmire***

**..author of a new book on the subject will
announce a significant discovery in the field of
Tektite research at our meeting.**

Houston Astronomical Society ***GuideStar***

Starline - 281-568-9340

Houston Astronomical Society presents *Starline* -- a recorded message of Society events and astronomical happenings. This service is updated regularly, so call often to keep up-to-date on Society functions, new comets and more.

HAS Web Page: <http://www.astronomyhouston.org>

Schedule Changes & Up-To-Date Information

See the GuideStar's Monthly Calendar of Events to confirm dates and times of all events for the month, and call Starline for any last minute changes.

Observatory Site Telephone: 979-732-8861 (New!)

★★★★★ *The Houston Astronomical Society* ★★★★★★

The Houston Astronomical Society is a non-profit corporation organized under section 501 (C) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code. The Society was formed for education and scientific purposes. All contributions and gifts are deductible for federal income tax purposes. General membership meetings are open to the public and attendance is encouraged.

★★★★★ Officers ★★★★★★

President: Don Pearce H: 713-432-0734	Secretary: Bill Leach H: 713-863-8459
Vice Pres: Barbara Wilson H: 281-933-1289	Treasurer: Gene Horr H: 713-468-2157

★★★★★ Additional Board Members ★★★★★★

Liaison responsibility

Bill Flanagan 713-699-8819	
Howard Leverenz 713-957-8667	
Jay Levy 281-992-2708	Field Trip and Observing, Program
Debbie Moran 713-666-9428	
Warren Wundt 713-697-2960	
Mike Dye 281-498-1703	Observatory Director

★★★★★ Committee Chairpersons ★★★★★★

Audit Gary Hlivko 713-864-2541	Program Margaret Nunez 713-529-2549
Education Richard Nugent 713-910-5945	Publicity Mark Egan 281-265-1497
Field Tr./Obsg. Kenneth Drake 281-367-1592	Telescope Darin Palmer 713-223-3123
Novice Kirk Kendrick 281-391-3834	Welcoming Bill Leach 713-863-8459
Observatory Michael Dye 281-498-1703	

★★★★★ Ad-Hoc Committee Chairpersons ★★★★★★

Historian Leland Dolan 713-529-0403	Publ. Star Party Marg Nunez 713-529-2549
Librarian Peggy Gilchrist 281-558-1190	Rice U. Coord. Matt Delevoryas 713-795-0808
Logo Mds Sales Judy Dye 281-498-1703	Schedule Obs'v'ty Steve Goldberg 713-721-5077
Long Range Plan Barbara Wilson 281-933-1289	Texas Star Pty Steve Goldberg 713-721-5077
Parliamentarian Kirk Kendrick 281-391-3834	

★★★★★ Special Interest Groups & Help Committees ★★★★★★

These are now listed on the inside of GuideStar (not every month). See the Table of Contents

★★★★★ Advisors ★★★★★★

Dr. Reginald DuFour, Rice Univ.	Dr. Lawrence Pinsky, U. of H.
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★★★★★ Dues and Membership Information ★★★★★★

Annual Dues: Regular \$33.00	Student \$5.00
Associate \$5.00	Honorary None
Sustaining . \$50.00	

All members have the right to participate in Society functions and to use the Observatory Site. Regular and Student Members receive a subscription to *The Reflector*. Regular, Student, and Honorary Members receive *The GuideStar*. Associate Members, immediate family members of a Regular Member, have all membership rights, but do not receive publications. Sustaining members have the same rights as regular members with the additional dues treated as a donation to the Society. *Sky & Telescope* mag \$29.95/year, *Astronomy* mag \$29/year -- see club treasurer.

Membership Application: Send funds to address shown on outside cover of *Guidestar*. Attention - Treasurer, along with the following information: Name, Address, Phone Number, Special Interests in Astronomy, Do you own a Telescope? (If so, what kind?), and where you first heard of H.A.S.

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Call the Starline, 281-568-9340 for updates and changes

Welcome to New Members!

The Houston Astronomical Society encourages you to join our group of active amateur astronomers and take advantage of the benefits of membership. As a member you'll have access to the club observing site near Columbus, Texas. (You're required to participate in a site orientation meeting before you get the gate lock combination.) The site has concrete pads for setting up your telescope, restroom and bunkhouse facilities, and areas set aside for camping. No new members this month. You'll get monthly issues of the *GuideStar* newsletter, you'll get to vote and to serve the organization as an officer, and you will be supporting the local amateur astronomy community.

Special Interest Group Listing

Any member who wants specific information on a SIG listed below may call the listed individual. Also, see the "Ad Hoc Committee Chairpersons" on the inside front cover and the "Special Help Volunteers" listing (not in every issue).

Advanced	Bill Flanagan	713-699-8819
Comets	Kenneth Drake	281-367-1592
Lunar & Planetary	John Blubaugh	713-921-4275
Occultations & Grazes ...	Wayne Hutchison	713-827-0828
Advanced	Bill Leach	713-863-8459

Observations... of the editor

by Bill Pellerin, GuideStar Editor

I observe this month that we members of the Houston Astronomical Society are very fortunate to have the dedicated group of officers, committee leaders, and helpers that make the Society grow and prosper. Mike Dye tells us about the work that's being done by himself and others to maintain and improve the observatory site. Mike has done such a fine job with the observatory that he deserves special recognition.

Bill Leach has been a frequent contributor to the *GuideStar*. This month he contributes a history of the society along with the minutes from the July meeting. He and Marg Nunez have done their part to make the meetings more enjoyable with the refreshments they bring to the meeting.

John Blubaugh continues to contribute the monthly calendar of events, an item that's well appreciated by those of us who need to be reminded what's going on during the month.

Astronomy Day -- October 7

There's an item in this month's *GuideStar* about Astronomy Day. Let's all get behind this effort and make sure that this year's event is the best ever. This is an opportunity for the Houston Astronomical Society to put its best foot forward and to make our society available to the general public.

There's a nice flyer put together for the event. And, I'm sure there will be copies at the meeting for you to take and post at your workplace, etc. I've copied the flyer on page 21 of this issue. (It's not an exact copy since the format of the *GuideStar* is different from a full-size sheet of paper, but it's similar.) Whatever you can do to get the word out on this and to help make it happen is going to be appreciated.

Yet another book...

If you're looking for something easy-to-read this summer, you could do worse than *Captured by Aliens* by Joel Achenbach. Achenbach is a reporter

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Houston Astronomical Society

***Meeting Notice
For Friday, August 4, 2000***

Tektites, a Cosmic Paradox

By Hal Povenmire, the author of a new book on Tektites. As part of this presentation our speaker will announce a major discovery to the Houston Astronomical Society.

Tektites are small glassy objects that are formed when rocks become molten due to the heat associated with the impact of a meteor or cometary material.

Schedule of meeting activities:

All meetings are at the University of Houston Science and Research building. See the inside back cover for a map to the location.

**Novice meeting: 7:00 p.m.
Across from Room 117**

Kirk Kendrick has planned an exciting year for the Novice Group. This month Kirk will talk about observing programs (what to observe) and observing software (as an aid to your observing program).

**Site orientation meeting: 7:00 p.m.
Classroom**

**General meeting: 8:00 p.m.
Room 117**

**See the inside back cover for a map
and more information.**

August/September Calendar:



Date Time Event

August

4		HAS Club Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H
	8:00 p.m.	General Membership Meeting U of H
6	8:02 p.m.	First Quarter Moon
11-12	Until sunrise	Perseid meteor shower peaks; best 3 hours before sunrise.
15	7:30 p.m.	Advanced SIG Mtg. Rice Univ., contact Bill Leach, 713-863-8459
	12:14 a.m.	Full Moon
19		Members Observatory Night-Columbus
22	1:51 p.m.	Last Quarter Moon
26		Prime Night-Columbus
29	5:20 a.m.	New Moon

September

5	11:27 a.m.	First Quarter Moon
8		HAS Club Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H
	8:00 p.m.	General Membership Meeting U of H
12	7:30 p.m.	Advanced SIG Mtg. Rice Univ., contact Bill Leach, 713-863-8459
13	2:38 p.m.	Full Moon
20	8:29 p.m.	Last Quarter Moon
22	12:27 p.m.	Autumnal equinox-Fall begins as sun enters southern celestial hemisphere
23		Members Observatory Night-Columbus
27	2:53 p.m.	New Moon
30		Prime Night-Columbus

*Send calendar events to JBlubaugh@aol.com
or call 713-921-4275.*

HAS Logo Sales

by *Judy Ann Dye*

If you are interested in any of the following items and would like to place an order, please contact me (Judy Dye) at 281-498-1703, or send a check for the items requested to 12352 Newbrook, Houston Texas, 77072-3910. Below is the current list of logo items for sale:

Grey Hooded Sweatshirt (M to XL)	\$25.00
22 Ounce Thermal Cup	\$5.00
Observe Messier	\$4.00
Observe Comets	\$7.00
2000 Observer's Handbooks	\$ 14.00

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for the *Washington Post* and the author of "Why Things Are" on National Public Radio.

His writing style is very easy-going, and often humorous, making this book a light, easy read for your summer vacation. The book is written in 36 'chapters', and each one of them is short enough to read in the few minutes of personal time that you might find at the end of a day. And, even though the entire book has a theme (stated on the front cover as, "The search for life and truth in a very large universe"), each essay (chapter) stands alone.

Another writer that I like is John Allen Paulos, who writes about mathematics and how most of the population doesn't understand how math works. I just found out that he writes a column on abcnews.com. Look for the "Who's Counting" column. You'll like it!!

Clear skies!!!

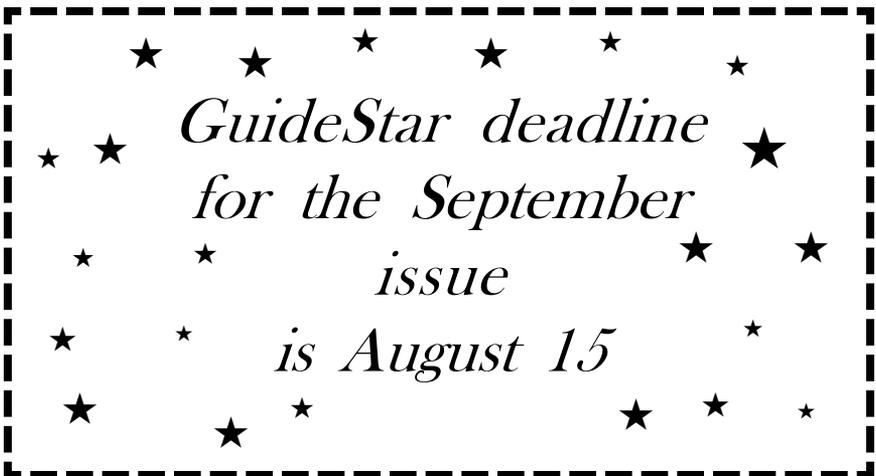
..Bill

Help Wanted: Star Parties for Kids

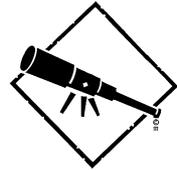
There will be a star party for underprivileged kids near lake Conroe on 7/22/00 These kids are very well behaved and excited about astronomy. Volunteers are needed to assist . Please contact Marg Nunez 713-529-2548 or Steve Sartor via the web (Steven O Sartor <ssartor@ix.netcom.com>).

Membership Renewals...

Please check the mailing label on your copy of the *GuideStar*. It'll tell you when your membership expires. If it expires soon, please send your renewal to the address on the outside cover of *GuideStar*. The dues information is on the inside front cover. **Thanks!**



Observatory Corner



By Michael B. Dye Observatory Chairman

Last month I mentioned that we (the Observatory Committee) are still looking for a Tractor (new or used) with a bush hog to mow the grass at the Observatory Site. Because of the height of the grass at the Observatory Site, we have moved this process from looking to actively organizing a fund raising drive to solve this problem. Kirk Kendrick and I spent an entire Saturday wandering all over the surrounding area looking at tractors, new and old. After some discussion with Kirk, I am considering getting a Kubota L2600 or L2700 series Diesel Tractor. These tractors are rated between 25 and 30 horsepower with a three speed hydrostatic transmission. The main considerations in selection of a tractor were (1) ease of use, (2) ease of maintenance and (3) maintaining some semblance of low cost. These two tractor series seem to fall in this category. The main difference between the two is that the L2600 series is a 3 cylinder while the L2700 series is a 4 cylinder. The big problem is about \$13,500.00. We will need to raise this amount in order to buy a new tractor and bush hog or about half that amount to buy a used tractor with attached bush hog. The problem with a used tractor is that we inherit any problems it may have had and without any warranty. With a new tractor we get a two to three year warranty in which to fix any problems that may arise during normal use.



Let me regress and recap the problem. Because of the continuing increase in the cost of someone else mowing the Observatory Site grass we have to find an alternative solution. The activity was starting to exceed \$200.00 a cut and we only have \$950.00 in the budget. It appears that the best and maybe the most cost-effective solution is to get our own tractor to use to cut the grass. This idea has been discussed within the Observatory Committee for the past several years. The Lawnmower we bought about four or five years ago was a stopgap action and is not up to the job of cutting the whole cleared area. We bought that lawnmower primarily to cut the grass around the observing pads and around the camping area. This job it does fairly well although we have to replace the blades every other run.

This means getting a 25 to 30 horsepower tractor with a bush hog attachment and storing the tractor at the Observatory Site. Unfortunately

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the word "storage" implies another building at the Observatory Site. This will take a serious storage building (estimated to be about 15' x 20' x 10'), tentatively scheduled to be placed about 20' east of the exit road in the northeast corner of the Observatory Site. This location has been calculated to not interfere with the light barrier we are trying to maintain around the cleared area of the Observatory Site and the rest of the world. The cost of said building will be a few thousand also.

The whole idea behind this article is four fold. One, introduce the idea of getting a new larger Lawn Mower for the Observatory Site. Two, explain the reasoning for the acquisition. Three, start the process of a major fund raising drive to fund the above ideas. And fourth, request a membership response to the whole concept of getting a larger lawn mower. Your response can be directed to my E-mail address as indicated below. Also we are looking for any companies that do donation matching and or large grants for non-profit organizations.

If you have a Randalls card, and have not done so, please have it coded for the Houston Astronomical Society. Our number is #6618. The Society gets 1 percent of the gross sales that members spend at Randalls. Randalls totals up the amount spent each quarter and will send us a check if the amount goes over \$2,500.00, otherwise the total roles over to the next quarter or zeros out at the end of the calendar year. So please link your Randalls card to the Houston Astronomical Society so that the society can benefit from this Randalls program. Our number is #6618. This is very easy to do, just go to the Courtesy Booth and tell the person there what you what to do. We are also in the process of getting a Kroger number that does the same thing for Kroger.

For the last few months, I have been inserting a paragraph requesting membership feed back concerning installing computers in the Observatory. I have actually got a response. This gives me hope that members are actuating reading my articles. This hope was shattered by a long time member who told me he never reads the *GuideStar*. If you have any ideas about the Observatory Site, including providing some sort of computers for controlling the Observatory Telescopes and maybe for CCD processing. Please contact me at mbdye@aol.com or 281-498-1703.

Please fill out the appropriate log form when you use the site. Remember we use these forms as attendance records and to report Observatory Site problems such as broken toilets.

History of the Houston Astronomical Society

by Bill Leach

The Houston Astronomical Society was formed on September 15, 1955 when 71 members elected Woody Meyers, the main organizer, as the first President. At the time it was known as the Houston Amateur Astronomy Club. (HAAC). The original club met at the Museum of Natural History in the zoo, at 8:00 PM on the first Friday of each month. This schedule for monthly meetings has been a thread of continuity through the years.

In 1957, meetings moved to the Garden Center in Herman Park to accommodate a larger membership. Then in 1958, through the efforts of Ken Thomson, a student in the University of Houston Physics Department, and Professor Leon F. Graves, meetings were moved to the University of Houston, Room 118, Science building. In 1969, the Science and Research building became the meeting site, where they are held to this day.

Certainly one of the things that helped generate interest in astronomy during these early days, was Woody Meyers' 20-inch mobile telescope. The instrument, a Cassegrain, was mounted on a truck bed and could be seen at shopping malls, county fairs, and even in downtown Houston. The telescope served a two-fold purpose. It augmented Mr. Meyers' income, and more importantly, it advertised the Club. Many early members joined as a direct result of their experience observing through this telescope. Mr. Meyers sold his telescope about 1963.

Another source of publicity for the early Club was a newspaper column by Bill Molinare, which appeared, first daily, then weekly in The Houston Post. His column covered many aspects of astronomy, and announced upcoming HAAC meetings.

In 1966, the Club adopted the name, Houston Astronomical Society (H.A.S.)*. Also in 1966, Woody Meyers, retired as President and was succeeded by Ken Thomson. During the following years, the society engaged in many scientific activities, contributing to groups such as the

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History of the H.A.S. ...from previous page

American Association of Variable Star Observers (AAVSO), the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers (ALPO), and the International Occultation Timing Association (IOTA). These contributions continue to this day, with members participating in organized grazing occultation trips, and other projects.

Through the benevolence of the Parker family and Field Enterprises, The Lamar High School Astronomy Club (LAC) received an observatory building northwest of Houston, near highway 6 and 529. For many years, H.A.S. sponsored monthly public observing sessions at the Lamar Observatory. Use of the observatory continued until June of 1974, when the city's growth and light pollution rendered the site unsuitable.

While the Lamar Astronomy Club was not officially affiliated with HAAC, many LAC members were also members of HAAC. Former members of LAC include Dennis Milon (now on the staff of Sky and Telescope magazine, and co-discoverer of comet Kobayashi-Berger-Milon, 1975h), Michael McCants and Bob Bailey (former secretaries of H.A.S.), and Allen Parker (former board members of H.A.S.).

In September of 1974, after the Lamar Observatory became unsuitable, the Society was allowed use of the W.W. Butler Ranch (located near Ulm, 80 miles west of Houston) for its field trips. Observing conditions at the ranch were excellent and use continued until mid-1980, when the Society's permanent facility became available.

A telescope making committee was formed in 1973 to build a high-quality, large-aperture telescope for the Society. More than 15 members, under the leadership of Fred Garcia, Society Vice President, and Art Ciampi, Telescope Committee chairman, produced a unique design for the instrument. Construction of the 12 ½ inch f/Newtonian reflector was completed in early 1979.

In 1976, with progress evident of the Society's telescope, the decision was made to take the next step, construction of an observatory at a suitable remote site. The preliminaries of this process involve reorganization of the Society's By-Laws, and incorporation as a non-profit, tax-exempt organization.

Continued...

History of the H.A.S. ...from previous page

After 12 years of dedicated service to the Society, Ken Thomson stepped down as President, turning the gavel over to Dennis Zwicky in 1978. It was during 1978 that incorporation as a private, non-profit corporation was actually achieved.

Tom Williams took over as President in 1979, and the Society's fledgling Board of Directors began to function. Professor Leon Graves of the University of Houston and Dr. Reginald DuFour of Rice University served as the first H.A.S. Advisory Directors. During 1979, the Society hosted a successful annual meeting of the Southwest Region of the Astronomical League.

As part of the 1979 activities, the Observatory Committee was formed, under the leadership of Allan Parker. Committee members Parker, John Hiat, Tom Williams and Larry Wadle were aided in early stages of design and site selection by John Arnold, Art Ciampi, Fred Garcia, Bill Murrell and others. Studies indicated that a site located west of Houston, and south of Columbus, Texas, would probably preserve dark-skies for at least 20 years. Armed with this knowledge, Parker was able to establish a relationship with Walter Fondren III, and he secured a deed for 18 acres of wooded land from the Fondren Foundation. The property, about 10 miles southwest of Columbus, was an ideal observatory site for this part of Texas. Clearing of the site and fund-raising began in earnest at this time.

Steve Goldberg took over as President in January, 1980. Under his leadership, the Society continued to expand its relationships with other organizations involved in astronomy. In May, 1980, H.A.S. hosted the National Spring Meeting of the American Association of Variable Star Observers. This meeting was attended by nearly 100 AAVSO members from all over the United States. Also during Goldberg's term, H.A.S. sponsored the first Annual Astronomy Day at Rice University. NASA, the Lunar and Planetary Institute, Houston Baptist University, JSC Astronomical Society, and the L-S Society helped host the event, held in May of 1981.

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History of the H.A.S. ...from previous page

Ground breaking ceremonies held at the H.A.S. Observatory site in June, 1980, spurred the donation of \$10,000 from the Fondren Foundation, as well as contributions by Society members totaling over \$15,500. Key dates in the progress of the project include the pouring of 22 observing pads in July of 1980, and extension of electric power to the pads that September. June, 1981, saw the pouring of the slab for the Observatory building, with the brick walls completed that November.

When Art Ciampi assumed the Presidency in January, 1982, the Society roster had grown to 211 members. Special Interest Groups were formed by members sharing common interests in certain facets of astronomy, such as Lunar and Planetary, Occultations and Grazes, Variables and Solar, and Astrophotography.

During Ciampi's term the Observatory building was completed, and more than 100 people attended the dedication of the building on October 15, 1983. Dr. Harlan Smith of the University of Texas' McDonald Observatory was guest speaker. The first Observatory Open House was hosted on March 10, 1984. A 14-inch Celestron, a 12 ½ inch Astrola (on permanent loan from the University of Houston), and the Society-built 12 ½ inch f/5 Newtonian became available to H.A.S. members.

Due to the sophisticated nature of the Observatory and the equipment, it became necessary to train members in the proper use of the facilities. The first training class was held in May, 1984. In June of 1984, The Fondren Foundation donated an additional \$7000 toward the construction of roads, a water well and restroom facilities. A grant from Exxon obtained through Peter Nolan provided two additional telescopes for our loaner program, two 8-inch Meade reflectors, also during Ciampi's tenure.

January, 1985, saw Peter Nolan become President. On September 6, 1985, at the 30th anniversary meeting, a time capsule was filled, and on October 19, 1985, the capsule was buried at the Observatory site during the annual picnic. The capsule will be opened on the Society's 50th anniversary, September 2005.

For amateur astronomers, 1986 was the year of Halley. Houston Astro-

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History of the H.A.S. ...from previous page

nomical Society, along with other local societies and the Museum of Natural Science, began a series of programs to better inform the public about the famous comet. These included mall displays, lectures and public star parties at Brazos Bend State Park.

Largely due to the public awareness about Halley's comet, the Society grew to over 400 members during Nolan's term. Looking toward the future of the Society, Nolan initiated the Long Range Planning Committee, appointing Vice President Lee Cain as chairman. The permanent ad hoc committee, to be chaired by the Society Vice President, will survey members annually to anticipate future needs of the Society.

To bring together the representatives of all area astronomical organizations into a cohesive group, the Metro Council was initiated during Nolan's tenure. And in January, 1986, a grant of \$5000 to complete larger, more modern restroom facilities at the Observatory site, was made to the Society by the Faith Foundation.

Lee Cain became President of our Society in 1987. Member Larry Wadle, who had spent three years in Guildford, England in 1986 had suggested a twinning of H.A.S. with the Guildford Astronomical Society. Since both societies were founded in 1955, and share common profiles and interests, the twinning was approved. The Guildford Society drew up the twinning charter and it was brought to Houston by Brian States. Lee Cain and Brian States signed the charter at our general membership on June 5, 1987. The charter now hangs in the H.A.S. Observatory building. The 6-hour (90 degree longitude difference between our cities means that joint cooperative observing projects will offer opportunities not usually available to either society.

At the general membership meeting on July 10, 1987, more than \$1,075 was collected from members towards additional observing pads at the site. The 16 new pads were poured during a week of work at the site in October, 1987. Four large picnic tables were constructed, along with the completion of the septic system for the new restrooms. The warm-up room was begun, remodeling a small building donated by Allan Parker.

Continued...

History of the H.A.S. ...from previous page

Also during Cain's tenure, several new Special Interest Groups were formed. To fulfill the needs of a large membership, groups dedicated to Advanced subjects, Astrophotography and Computers were formed. Some of the earlier Special Interest Groups still met irregularly, but the Society set up a formalized SIG structure along with financial assistance for the future. Additional groups dedicated to Radio Telescopes, Amateur Telescope Making, Advanced Astroimaging and Visual Astronomy formed later with projects and speakers to involve all interested members.

The future is bright for the Houston Astronomical Society. The formation of the Metro Council has renewed and encouraged cooperative work among local groups and institutions interested in astronomy. A newly-created Endowment Fund will maintain and operate the Observatory, and our members continue to fulfill the aims of the founders in educating the public about the science of astronomy.

*An earlier organization which flourished from the 1945 to 1952 was also known as the Houston Astronomical Society. This earlier society held meetings on the last Friday of the month at 7:30 PM in the old museum at Herman Park Zoo. Nathan Miron served as President, as well as W.D. Martin and Mrs. Jay Murray. The Society was dissolved in the spring of 1952.

HAS Web Page

The Houston Astronomical Society Web page has information on the society, its resources, and meeting information.

The address is: <http://www.astronomyhouston.org>

Want your astronomy work and name on the Internet for the whole world to see? Have some neat equipment? Pictures in film, CCD, hand drawings or video format are all welcome on the page. Do you have an idea to improve the page? I'm listening. Send me Email at goldberg@sccsi.com. (You can click on my name on the HAS home page). Or, you can call Steve Goldberg (WebMaster), at 713-721-5077.

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting of the Houston Astronomical Society July 7, 2000

Secretary's Draft

1. The meeting was called to order by President Don Pearce at 8:15 PM. He welcomed everyone and the following general announcements were made:
 - a. The general meetings of the membership are in this room, room 117, at 8:00 PM on the 1st Friday of the month, except for May and September when the meeting will be on the 2nd Friday of the month.
 - b. The novice meeting is across the hall in room 116 at 7:00 PM preceding the general meeting.
 - c. The site orientation meeting is in room 121. All members must attend this meeting in order to obtain access to the 18-acre observing site in Columbus, Texas. You may visit the site as a guest of a qualified Society member prior to your certification.
2. There were 83 members and 5 guests present.
3. President Don Pearce talked about recent light violations at the Columbus site. He reminded members that the best way to solve the problem is to remove appropriate fuses before entering the light-restricted area.
4. The following new members were introduced:
Stephen G. Brown, William R. Needels, Alan Rossiter, John Schubert, Mary Alice Schubert, Shane Schubert, Alex Villasana, William H. Wallendorf
5. Four guests were recognized.
6. Bob Bailey and his wife were introduced by Leland Dolan. Bob was a past secretary of H.A.S. in 1970.
7. The President reviewed the types of telescopes available to the membership at the Society's 18-acre observing site: C-14, 12.5 in. f/5, 12.5 in. f/7, and two 12.5 in. Dobsonians. Don announced that

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there was a problem with one of the 12 ½ inch Dobsonians. These telescopes are housed in a separate building right next to the observatory.

8. Darin Palmer, chairperson of the Telescope Loaner Program, was introduced and he explained the program. Darin asked the membership to donate any spare filters to the program.
9. The President announced the following membership benefits/concerns:
 - a. The Guidestar newsletter editor, Bill Pellerin, was recognized.
 - b. The Starline (281-568-9340), a service offering various recorded astronomy messages, was also announced and Matt Delevoryas was recognized for keeping the messages updated.
 - c. Mike Dye was recognized for the work that he does in keeping a well-maintained observing site.
 - d. Judy Dye was recognized for the work she does in the logo sales program.
 - e. The HAS website is also available and Webmaster Steve Goldberg was introduced and thanked. The H.A.S. new domain name is www.astronomyhouston.org.
 - f. Discount prices for society members on Sky & Telescope (\$29.95) and Astronomy (\$29.00) magazines were announced.
 - g. Marg Nunez and Bill Leach of the welcoming committee were introduced. It was announced that donations are welcome to support the activities of the Welcoming committee. Marg was also recognized for being able to answer an E-mail the day before it is sent.
 - h. The program with Randall's grocery stores was announced and members were asked to register for nonprofit organization number 6618. One percent of everything you buy at Randall's will come to H.A.S.
10. Don Pearce and John Blubaugh measured the magnitude of comet Linear 1999 S4 as an adjusted 8.3. The coma had a width of 2 minutes, the tail had a length of 10 minutes and the central condensation was measured at 5 minutes of arc.
11. Mike Dye, Observatory Director was recognized and announced:
 - a. The site needs a tractor to assist with grass cutting
 - b. Site orientation is in room 121 at 7:00 PM before the general

Continued...

Minutes... from previous page

- meeting
 - c. The phone ringer at the site was disconnected and will be repaired
 - d. Persons not able to fulfill their site supervisory duties need to contact Mike Dye
12. Amelia Goldberg announced that a new E-group has been established to exchange ideas about managing an astronomy group. Members can access it through the H.A.S. website.
 13. Steve Goldberg announced the acquisition of a new \$400 wireless microphone system.
 14. Matt Delevoryas announced that the advanced SIG group will meet on their normal day, Tuesday, 11 days after the general meeting, in Geology 106 at 7:30 PM at Rice University.
 15. Kirk Kendrick announced that the August novice meeting will be on polar alignment. He also announced that the September novice meeting will be on observing programs and the use of computers.
 16. Don Pearce introduced the speaker, Bill Ruddersdorf, who spoke on "Astronomy on the Rocks or Darkness at Brunch". The presentation centered around the El Moro National Monument in western New Mexico which is known for its inscriptions. El Moro has places designed to observe the midsummer and midwinter solstice and has an inscription that records an almost total solar eclipse. The presentation lasted for 40 minutes and was followed by 15 minutes of questions and answers. The speaker was presented with a framed certificate.
 17. Matt Delevoryas gave a short presentation on "How Big is Polaris?" which involved a discussion on Cepheid variables.
 18. Marg Nunez and Bill Leach handed out door prizes.
 19. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

***HAS Secretary: William W. Leach
July 7, 2000***

Astronomy Day 2000!

This annual H.A.S. sponsored event is scheduled for Saturday, **October 7, 2000** from 3:00 – 10:00 PM at the George Observatory at Brazos Bend State Park. Organizational efforts have been engaged to publicize the event and to offer a quality program. Other sponsors include the Houston Museum of Natural Science, the Astronomical Society of Southeast Texas, the Fort Bend Astronomy Club, the Johnson Space Center Astronomical Society and the North Houston Astronomy Club.

This “family” oriented event will feature space shuttle simulations, solar observations, views with the George’s 36-inch telescope, numerous types of telescopes on the deck, information booths of local astronomy groups, astronomy specialty displays, younger astronomer’s activities, solar system display, door prizes and seven interactive presentations by speakers scheduled on the hour.

The event requires the efforts of many volunteers and H.A.S. usually provides most of these. If you usually help with this event or if you would like to help then please contact Bill Leach at 281-312-1650 or astrobil@flash.net. Even if you can’t bring a telescope your efforts are needed in promoting the Society and in coordination.

See the event flyer on page 21



Astronomy Day 2000!

**Saturday,
October 7, 2000**

3:00 – 10:00 PM

**George Observatory
Brazos Bend
State Park**

Southwest of Houston

Activities:

**Space Shuttle Simulations
Daytime Solar Observations
36-inch Telescope Views
Deck Telescope Observing
Houston Astronomy Organizations
Astronomy Specialty Displays
Interactive Presentations
Younger Astronomer's Activities
Solar System Display
Door Prizes**

Objects to Observe:

First Quarter Moon

Mercury

Venus

Jupiter

Saturn

Neptune

Uranus

Ring Nebula in Lyra

Globular Cluster in Hercules

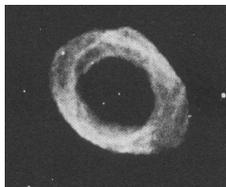
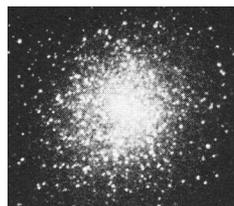
Andromeda Galaxy

Northern Cross Double Star

Milky Way Galactic Center

Satellites and Meteors

Open Clusters in Sagittarius



Sponsored By:

**Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS)
Astronomical Society of Southeast Texas (ASSET)
Fort Bend Astronomy Club (FBAC)
Johnson Space Center Astronomical Society (JSCAS)
Houston Astronomical Society (HAS)
North Houston Astronomy Club (NHAC)**

Observatory Duty Roster

by Michael B. Dye, *Observatory Chairman*

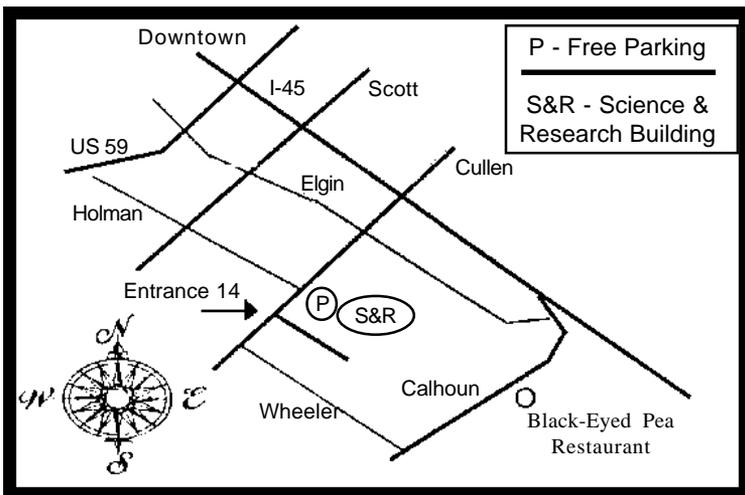
This is the duty list for August, September and October. Some names were moved from one month to another to accommodate some conflicts. If you are listed in this roster, please be sure to contact your supervisor for any information that you may need and the date and time to be at the site. You may change from site duty to open house or from open house to site duty by pre-arrangement with the Site Supervisor for that month. Changes between months require Observatory Chairman coordination.

August Supervisor Allen Gilchrist 281-558-1190
Larry Wadle Site
Mark Watson Members Observatory Night 08-19-00
Tom Williams Site
Barbara Wilson Members Observatory Night 08-19-00
Buster Wilson Members Observatory Night 08-19-00
Warren Wundt Site
Richard Nugent Site
Don Bates Site

September Supervisor Matt Delevoryas 713-795-0808
John Blubaugh Site
Ken Carey Members Observatory Night 09-23-00
John Chauvin Site
Art Ciampi Members Observatory Night 09-23-00
Brian Cudnik Members Observatory Night 09-23-00
George M. Dolson Site
Kenneth Drake Site
Mark Egan Site

October Supervisor Dana Lambert 281-933-4627
Jean-Marc Follini Site
Fred Garcia Members Observatory Night 10-21-00
John Garza III Site
Clifton Goldman Members Observatory Night 10-21-00
David Granadino Members Observatory Night 10-21-00
Chai S. Heng Site
Terry J. Hiserodt Site
Gary Hlivko Site

Please remember that Site work can be done anytime and does not have to be done just before Members Observatory Night. Contact your Site Supervisor for details. Names are selected for Site Duty using the current Alphabetical listing for Observatory Key Holders. If any member knows of a conflict please call me before your name is listed.



General Membership Meeting

The Houston Astronomical Society holds its regular monthly General Membership Meeting on the first Friday of each month, unless rescheduled due to a holiday. Meetings are in Room 117 of the Science and Research Building at the University of Houston. A Novice Presentation begins at 7:00 p.m.. The short business meeting and featured speaker are scheduled at 8:00 p.m. Also typically included are Committee Reports, Special Interest Group Reports, current activity announcements, hardware reviews, an astrophotography slide show by members and other items of interest.

Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors Meeting is held on dates scheduled by the board at 7:00 p.m. in Room 106 of the Space Science Building at Rice University. Call StarLine for Board Meeting information. Information provided to GuideStar will be published. The meetings are open to all members of the Society in good standing. Attendance is encouraged.

GuideStar Information

The H.A.S. *GuideStar* is published monthly by the Houston Astronomical Society. All opinions expressed herein are those of the contributor and not necessarily of Houston Astronomical Society. The monthly Meeting Notice is included herein. *GuideStar* is sent via bulk rate mail to Regular, Student, and Honorary Members of H.A.S., selected individuals and recent visitors to the General Membership Meeting. Contributions to *GuideStar* by members are encouraged. Electronic submission is helpful. Submit the article in ASCII text, MS-Word (preferred), or WordPerfect format on an IBM format floppy or via AOL (BILLP10566). Mail copy to the address shown on the outside cover or to the editor at 256 East 5th Street, Houston, TX 77007. Copy must be received by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the issue to be mailed near the end of the same month. Or, bring copy to the General Membership Meeting and give it to the Editor, or phone to make special arrangements.

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AOL: BILLP10566; Internet: BILLP10566@AOL.COM

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Houston Astronomical Society

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