



**August, 2001**

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*At the August 3 meeting...*

**Bill Dillon**

*from the Ft Bend Astronomy Club*

**Amateur Contributions  
to Astronomy**

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*Houston Astronomical Society*

**GuideStar**

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**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**

## ★★★★★ *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 & Past President ★★★★★

President: Kirk Kendrick ..... H: 281-391-3834	Treasurer: Debbie Moran ..... H: 713-666-9428
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Field Tr./Obsg. .... Steve Grubbs ..... 713-455-5701	Telescope ..... Darin Palmer ..... 713-223-3123
Novice ..... Warren Wundt ..... 713-697-2960	Welcoming ..... Marg Nunez ..... 713-529-2549
Observatory ..... Michael Dye ..... 281-498-1703	

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Librarian ..... Peggy Gilchrist ..... 281-443-8773	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 ..... Bill Leach ..... 281-863-8459	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.

## Table of Contents

4	President's Corner	10	Observing Mars
5	Meeting notice	15	HAS Web Page
6	Other meetings	16	Observatory Duty Roster
7	August/September Calendar	18	Logo Sales
8	Observations of the Editor		
9	Observatory Corner		

***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 .....	Don Pearce .....	713-432-0734
Lunar & Planetary .....	John Blubaugh .....	713-921-4275
Occultations & Grazes ...	Wayne Hutchison .....	713-827-0828
Advanced .....	Bill Leach .....	713-863-8459

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# *President's Corner*

*August 2001*

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by **Kirk Kendrick**

Well, I have missed a month (or two) writing a *President's Corner*. I had one prepared last month but missed the mailing.



I want to commend Bill Pellerin for the outstanding job he does working around the misgivings of those of us that send in articles (or don't...). When one of us misses a month, Bill steps up and "fills" the slot. And, Steve Goldberg seems to always find time to update the club web site and keep the news flowing.

It's been a hectic late-spring, early-summer for me. I haven't seen a good view of Mars yet – between travel and bad seeing...it's not my year.

As to TSP, my son (Jerod) and I observed the binocular challenge objects. My method was to observe with the binoculars, a 3" refractor, and take a "snapshot" of the object with my CCD camera. That was a terrific challenge considering the amount of rain we had at TSP. We had about 2 ½ nights observing...some found a few more hours when you could "see the sky". I spent the first night playing with my equipment and just "gee-whizzing" through the exquisite sky. But, I made it through about 35 objects...and completed the binocular challenge! Jerod, of course, beat me by a full night using his ETX to find the objects and binoculars once he knew what to look at. Not exactly cheating ... but my mount had me contorting trying to find the field in the finder about 12" off the ground. So...I have about 25 Messiers down towards my re-observing the list for the award. Less than I'd hoped, but "on the way".

*Continued on page 6...*

# ***Houston Astronomical Society***

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***Meeting Notice  
For Friday, August 3, 2001***

## ***Bill Dillon Amateur Contributions to Astronomy***

***Amateurs are making more contributions than ever to the science of Astronomy. New tools and techniques available to amateurs have made this possible. From variable stars, nova searches, double star measurements the opportunities for contributions are greater than they've ever been. Bill Dillon works with a team from the Fort Bend Astronomy Club to collect data on asteroids and gamma ray bursts. Come hear about the extraordinary work they're doing and learn about how you can make your own contribution. Check their web page at:***

***<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/7477/index.html>***

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### **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

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.**

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## ***President's Message... from page 4***

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I am working on getting a web site created to be able to share my “snapshots”. I took 30 second, slightly off-center shots of the objects. I was using two tube assemblies without an easy way to get them aligned. Rather than play a second night with the setup, I left it off by about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the CCD field. I'm after verification for my log...not pretty pictures at this point.

With Mars fading, Uranus and Neptune reach prime observing for this season. Not as “spectacular” but definitely worth trying.

Clear skies!

*...Kirk*

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## ***Other Meetings...***

**Brazosport Astronomy Society** meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month in the Planetarium of the fine Arts Center at Brazosport College. Call Steve Lamb for program details (409) 297-3984

**Fort Bend Astronomy Club** meets the third Friday of the month at 8:00 p.m. at the First Colony conference Center. Novice meeting begins at 7:00, regular meeting begins at 8:00. Web site: <http://rampages.onramp.net/~binder/>

**Johnson Space Center Astronomical Society** meets in the the Lunar and Planetary Institute on the 2nd Friday of each month. Web site: <http://www.ghgcorp.com/cbr/jscas.html>

**North Houston Astronomy Club** meets at 7:30 p.m. on the 4th Friday of each month in the Teaching Theatre of the Student Center at Kingwood College. Call 281-312-1650 or E-mail [bill.leach@nhmccd.edu](mailto:bill.leach@nhmccd.edu). Web site: [www.astronomyclub.org](http://www.astronomyclub.org)

# August / September Calendar:



Photo by Scott Mitchell

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>
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## August 2001

3		HAS Club Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H
	8:00 p.m.	General Membership Meeting U of H
4	12:55 a.m.	Full Moon
11		Members Observatory Night-Columbus
12	2:53 a.m.	Last Quarter Moon
		Perseid meteor shower
14	a.m.	Moon and Saturn close
	7:30 p.m.	Advanced SIG Mtg. Rice Univ., contact Matt Delevoryas, 713-795-0808
15		Uranus at opposition
18	9:53 a.m.	New Moon
		Prime Night-Columbus
25	2:55 p.m.	First Quarter Moon

## September 2001

2	4:43 p.m.	Full Moon
7		HAS Club Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H
	8:00 p.m.	General Membership Meeting U of H
8		Members Observatory Night-Columbus
10	2:00 p.m.	Last Quarter Moon
15		Prime Night-Columbus
17	5:27 a.m.	New Moon
18	7:30 p.m.	Advanced SIG Mtg. Rice Univ., contact Matt Delevoryas, 713-795-0808
22	6:05 p.m.	Autumnal Equinox-Fall begins
24	4:31 a.m.	First Quarter Moon
27	7:30 p.m.	HAS Board meeting, Rice Univ.

**Send calendar events to [JBlubaugh@aol.com](mailto:JBlubaugh@aol.com)  
or call 713-921-4275.**

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## *Observations... of the editor*

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**by Bill Pellerin, GuideStar Editor**

Last night, Saturday, July 21, was one of the best observing nights I've had in a long time. The sliver of a moon was just visible after the sun set in the west, so it wasn't an issue for the observing session. Some high, thin clouds threatened to damage the experience, but these dissipated as the cooler night air took over.

I observed some variables from the AAVSO list. As we learned a couple of months ago, preparation is the key to a good observing session. I spent some time during the day reviewing AAVSO documents to be sure that the stars I wanted to observe were expected to be bright enough to see. (AAVSO Bulletin 64 provides this information for 2001. Check [www.aavso.org](http://www.aavso.org).) With my observing list in hand I was ready, and the stars didn't disappoint me. Many of the ones on my list were at or near maximum, and the only challenge was finding comparison stars of similar brightness. Some variables have a wide range of brightness, and at their dimmest are beyond the range of my instrument and site.

I also worked my way through the August, 2001 *Sky and Telescope* "Overlooked Neighbors" list by Sue French. The list is mostly globulars, many of which were quite nice and well resolved in my 8" telescope. There's one double star in the list, 36 Ophiuchi. It's a beauty! Two orange-red stars of equal brightness separated by an easy-to-resolve 5". Check this one out! I had to sneak a peak at Epsilon Lyr, the double-double. This is a wide double star with each 'star' of the double being another double.

I missed the occultation of Venus by the moon on Tuesday, the 17th. I was in a business meeting I couldn't get out of, so the occultation had to happen without me. If you saw it, send me your impressions and we'll put them in the next *GuideStar*.

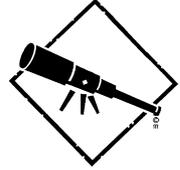
We have another chance... On August 15 the moon will occult Jupiter (see August *Sky and Telescope* for details). This will be another daytime event, so it'll require some preparation to view this one.

*Continued on page 15...*

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# *Observatory Corner*

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*By Michael B. Dye Observatory Chairman*



As some of you may know, the Observatory Roof hasn't worked very well for the last two years. The motor controlled Variac that controls the roll off roof movement speed failed about two years ago. The Observatory Committee has had a problem getting enough people out to the Observatory Site at the right time with the correct tools and parts to correct the failure. At various times over the past two years, I have had members come out to the Observatory Site to help me with the different phases of the repair and by the first of the year we had the problem down to two tasks. 1) Mount the new motorized Variac to the wall above the control cabinet (the new Motorized Variac was larger than the old one and wouldn't fit in the control box) and 2) wire the new Variac to the control panel. I would like to publicly thank all the members who helped me mount the box above the old control box, but I am sorry to admit, but I have forgotten the name(s) of the member(s) who helped me. I seem to be having a few senior moments about these things.

Anyway to continue the story, I made arrangements with Matt Delevoryas to help me do the final wiring to the control panel on June 9<sup>th</sup> this year. We did this at the January Annual Observatory Committee meeting. It seems that June 9<sup>th</sup> was the only date that we were both available. As some of you may remember, it rained a bit that week and the repair action was canceled. All was not lost; after some telephone calls, we were able to make it out to the Observatory Site on June the 16<sup>th</sup>. Kirk Kendrick, his son Jarad and I went out early (about 10:30 AM). While Kirk and Jarad cut branches out of the roads, I worked in the Observatory getting all the wiring ready for the final connection process. Matt showed up about 2:30 PM and we started making the final connections. Matt figured out where we had to change the control wiring and we made the connections. The wiring required some modification because while the original motorized Variac control system

*Continued on page 17....*

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# ***Observing and Sketching Mars and Martian Meteorology***

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***By Barbara Wilson***

Of all the worlds in the solar system Mars is the most Earth-like, it has changing weather, its polar caps thaw and shrink during Martian summer, clouds, dust storms, and four seasons. Mars is the only planet with a surface that can be seen and charted from Earth. It is fun and exciting to observe the meteorological changes on Mars, but in order to do so; you have to learn the dark markings and features that remain the same or change slowly for comparison.

Editor's note: Mars is past opposition, but still observable. Mars is well placed in the early evening sky. Give it a look.

Use maps of Mars to familiarize yourself as Mars approaches Earth during 2001. There are many different maps available on the Internet and in both *Sky and Telescope* and *Astronomy* magazine.

There is software available at *Sky and Telescope's* web site that will draw the features on a globe based on the time and date that you input. By using these maps you will gain the skills to notice changes in markings with a skilled, trained, and patient eye when Mars reaches opposition. Then by 2003's great opposition you will be able to readily see clouds, bluish limb hazes, bright surface ice fogs and frosts, as well as dust storms and the receding polar cap with more ease.

The worst dust storms usually happen after Martian perihelion. Dust storms vary from perihelion to perihelion. In 1971 the planet was totally blanketed with dust; 1956 it was partly obscured; 1958 local small dust squalls only. In 1988 only small localized dust squalls were seen. Global dust storms are apparently fairly rare. The polar caps are the planets most brilliant features. The white southern polar cap shrinks very noticeably during Martian summer.

Even at its best, Mars is challenging to observe. The disk is tiny and its markings are blurred by the Earth's atmosphere. My first view of Mars was totally disappointing. I had my first look at the desert area north of Mare Sirenum and I could see nothing except the Mare itself! But I drew it anyway. By two years later in 1988, I was skilled enough to see the Mountains of Mitchel peek through the

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## ***Observing Mars... from previous page***

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south polar cap as the cap melted away underneath them in one memorable August night! By drawing what you do see teaches you to observe; it trains you to carefully record what your telescope shows you. You don't have to be an artist to make useful drawings. If you begin observing when the planet's disk is small (around 12" arc seconds in size) you may not see any surface detail. However, persevere, as Mars comes closer to Earth the disk will almost double in size in 2001 and more than double in 2003, which will be the greatest opposition in recorded history, when perihelion and opposition occur within 2 days of each other. Mars will be so brilliant in 2003 that only the Moon and Venus will outshine it.

Features will then be easier to discern, especially if you have trained your eye to see these delicate features and contrasts while the disk was still small. As you become more familiar with the planet, your observing skills will increase. You will have learned to recognize the standard markings on Mars and use these as a reference in order to be able to recognize subtle changes.

It helps to make a sketch of whatever you see on Mars. You create a permanent record, and train your eye in detecting elusive detail. Start by drawing a circle 1-3/4 inches (42 mm) in diameter. The reason for a 42mm circle is that Mars is 4200 miles in diameter, so the image scale is a convenient 100 miles per millimeter. This is the standard used by the American Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers.

1. Draw in the phase (the line where daylight ends and night begins) of the planet, if any. The sunset terminator is visible on the east side, or evening limb, before opposition. After opposition, the terminator becomes the sunrise line on the morning limb on the west side of Mars. At opposition, there is no perceptible phase, because the planet is fully illuminated.
2. Add the bright polar caps or cloud hoods.
3. Shade in the largest dark markings, being careful to place them in exactly the right locations on the disk. At this stage, record the time to the nearest minute.
4. Now add the details, and cloud features viewing through various color filters, starting at the planet's sunset limb.
5. Finally, note the date, observer's name, the instrument(s) used, and any other relevant information, comments about the sky conditions, temperature, humidity, seeing conditions, was the atmosphere steady, or tremulous as you did your observation.

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## ***Observing Mars... from previous page***

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Mars is a wonderful planet to observe and even if you don't have time to sketch and observe it every clear night when it is close to earth, I hope you will observe it whenever possible just for the experience. Your next great views won't come until the year 2018!

### ***Telescopes for Observing Mars***

A telescope used for planetary observing should provide sharp images with the highest possible contrast. A long-focus refractor is generally considered the best but good refractors are expensive. The cost is higher per inch of aperture than reflectors or Cassegrains. Next is a long-focus Newtonian (a focal ratio of  $f/6$ ,  $f/8$ , or longer) or Cassegrain reflector. Telescopes with large central obstructions such as Schmidt Cassegrains do not perform quite as well on planets.

It is important that your optics are well aligned (collimated). The optics should be clean and free of dust so they give the best contrast. Observe away from concrete or asphalt surfaces, which give off heat at night, which cause turbulence in the telescope. The telescope needs to equalize with the nighttime outdoor temperature. Let it sit outside for an hour before you start any critical observing.

It is important that the base or mount the telescope is placed upon is stable. An undersized mount will cause the image to shake; you will continually lose the planet in the eyepiece and become frustrated. This is imperative. High power observing of planets requires a strong and sturdy mounting for your telescope. In addition, a motor driven mount for your telescope will track the planet while you observe. The mount will need to be aligned with the north celestial pole near the North Star. This is easily learned, and most good telescopes come with a manual that can teach you to polar align. A motor driven mount allows you to spend your energy observing not constantly moving the telescope to track the planet across the sky.

Under excellent seeing conditions, a 4-inch telescope should give sharp images at 200 power. An 8 inch telescope may be able to handle magnifications as high as 400. In general, you should use between 30 to 40 power per inch of aperture. This is 240 - 300 magnification for an 8-inch. On still and calm nights, you may be able to use up to 50 power per inch of aperture, if your telescope has good optics.

A good quality telescope over 70mm in aperture should reveal surface features on the planet near opposition.

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## ***Observing Mars... from previous page***

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In a four inch you will be able to see large surface features, bright clouds, large dust storms, the expansion or shrinking of the polar caps, and limb brightening which occur when there is a lot of haze in Mar's atmosphere. With a 4 inch though you will be limited to viewing these features only about 10 weeks on either side of opposition, when Mars is close to Earth and its disk is largest.

With a 6 to 10 inch telescope you will be able to expand your viewing period to 12-14 weeks on either side of opposition. Smaller clouds and markings will be visible than with a 4-inch telescope. The advance or retreat of the polar caps will be visible in detail and you may see irregularities in the cap's boundary.

Telescopes that are 11 inches or larger will make all the above features much easier to see and increase the quality of your observations. You may see color changes in surface features and clouds. Finer detail is more readily visible than with a smaller telescope, but only if you have trained your eye in advance of the observing season.

A caveat, I have seen observers with 4 to 6 inch telescopes, detail finer features, and observe more markings, dust storms, clouds, etc than observers with larger telescopes that have not taken the time and patience needed to observe Mars. It is more in the eye, than the telescope size, unless the telescope has very poor optics.

You will need good quality eyepieces. Wide angle eyepieces are not necessary as Mars is small. Orthoscopic and Plossl type eyepieces are fine for planets. Choose three eyepieces, one for low power about 4-6 power per inch of aperture, medium power about 13 power per inch of aperture, and one for high power, about 30-50 power per inch of aperture. High power eyepieces have tiny lenses and usually poor eye relief. You have to get really close to the eyepiece to see through it. A good quality barlow lens will increase the versatility of your eyepieces. A barlow lens placed in front of the eyepiece in the focuser will increase the power of each eyepiece placed into it. Barlow lenses are available in 1.8x magnification, 2, 2.5 and 3 as well as the newer Powermates. They also give the added benefit of allowing you to transform a low power eyepiece with correspondingly better eye relief into a high power eyepiece.

Color filters are important to detect the changes on Mars. All observers, visual as well as photographers and CCD camera users, use at least a basic set of filters according to the following guide: Red or Orange (W-25 or W-23A) for surface plains and maria and reducing the glare to enhance detail and mottling; Green (W58) for ice frosts, low clouds, and to examine the melt lines around the polar caps; Blue-

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## ***Observing Mars... from previous page***

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Green (W-64); Blue (W-38A or W-80A) for polar caps cloud detection, dust storms; and Violet (W-47) for the faint clouds during “violet clearing”. Observers with smaller telescopes, such as 3 to 6-inch apertures may find a Yellow (W-15) useful and may provide better performance than the deep red filter. With larger instruments, such as 8 to 24-inch apertures, deep Red and Blue filters most useful for fine surface details or atmospheric cloud detection. [Capen, et al, 1984].

## ***Contributing your Observations and Resources on the Internet***

MarsNet is the WWW arm of the International Mars Watch, a group founded by professional astronomers interested in Mars to facilitate better communication between the amateur and professional Mars observing communities. At these Internet sites, you will find images of Mars contributed by amateurs and professional, tools to aid you in planning your own Mars observations, current and past issues of the International Mars Watch Electronic Newsletter, and links to other Mars-relevant sites on the Internet. The primary purpose of this project is frequent CCD imaging of Mars using B,V,R or other standard filters and visual drawings and photos in order to monitor the planet’s atmospheric dust and cloud activity.

The current home for MarsNet is: <http://astrosun.tn.cornell.edu/marsnet/mnhome.html>

A great educational resource for information with links to other sites on Mars is at: <http://marswatch.tn.cornell.edu/marsidea/>

Planet Mars, Mars Exploration and Mars Missions at: <http://www.seds.org/~spider/mars/mars.html>

Percival Lowell’s Original “Mars” book from 1895 is at: <http://www.bibliomania.com/NonFiction/Lowell/Mars/>

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## 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](mailto: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.

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### *Observations... from page 8*

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This month's presentation is of particular interest to me. I like to observe variable stars and report my results to the AAVSO (American Association of Variable Star Observers). My other obligations keep me from being a major contributor, but if I can contribute in any way to the science of astronomy, that makes me feel good.

Bill Dillon will be telling us about the contributions his team has made and about what you can do to contribute to astronomical science. You don't need sophisticated equipment, just a willingness to learn some observing and reporting techniques.

I hope you get out under the sky this month!

*..Bill*

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*GuideStar deadline  
for the September issue is August 15*

*GuideStar, Page 15*

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# ***Observatory Duty Roster***

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*by Michael B. Dye, Observatory Chairman*

This is the duty list for August, September and October. Some names may have been 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 ..... Dana Lambert ..... 281-933-4627**  
Tom Williams ..... Site  
Barbara Wilson ..... Members Observatory Night 08-11-01  
Buster Wilson ..... Members Observatory Night 08-11-01  
Warren Wundt ..... Site  
John Blubaugh ..... Site  
John Chauvin ..... Site  
Art Ciampi ..... Site  
Brian Cudnik ..... Members Observatory Night 08-11-01

**September Supervisor ..... Allen Gilchrist ..... 281-443-8773**  
George M. Dolson ..... Members Observatory Night 09-08-01  
Kenneth Drake ..... Site  
Mark Egan ..... Members Observatory Night 09-08-01  
John Fennel ..... Site  
Rusty Fletcher ..... Members Observatory Night 09-08-01  
Jean-Marc Follini ..... Site  
Fred Garcia ..... Site  
John Garza III ..... Site

**October Supervisor ..... Matt Delevoryas ..... 713-662-2939**  
Clifton Goldman ..... Members Observatory Night 10-20-01  
David Granadino ..... Site  
Chai S. Heng ..... Members Observatory Night 10-20-01  
Gary Hlivko ..... Site  
Wayne Hutchinson ..... Members Observatory Night 10-20-01  
Clayton Jeter ..... Site  
Stanley G. Jones ..... Site  
Keith A. Jurgens ..... 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.

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## ***Observatory Corner... from page 9***

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called for an AC motor as the Variac motor, the members who constructed the original controls used a DC motor which necessitated modifying the control circuits when the system was installed. Matt and I had to back out the changes that were installed back when the controls were originally installed (circa 1985) and installed the new Variac as was originally intended. About 4:30 or 5:00 we were finished and we tested the roof. Believe it or not, after two years of us messing around with the system, the motor still worked as it did when the system was installed back in 1985 (?). Kirk, Jerod and I left right after the test and we left Matt to clean up and do some Observing. As it turned out later, it seems that the skies were still crummy and Matt didn't get to do any observing. So ends the tale of the repair of the Observatory Roof.

Next on our list of fun things is the Randalls report. For the Second Quarter of this year, April through June, we spent a total of \$9,517.00 at various Randall's stores. This spending spree resulted in a check (not yet received) of \$95.17, which will be split 50/50 between the Observatory Fund and the club General Treasury. Our account will zero out and started over again on July 1<sup>st</sup>. 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. In fact Bill Leach is actively working on this and should have some (hopefully) good news to report soon.

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 actually 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.

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# Logo Sales

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Please note the prices for the books listed below. They are all new and will go fast on a first come, first served basis.

**Observe the Herschel II Guide \$17.00**  
**Observe and Understand the Sun \$14.00**  
**Astronomy, The Teachers Handbook \$12.00**  
**ALPO's Mars Observer's Handbook \$12.00**  
**Observe Variable Stars \$17.00**  
**Observe Eclipses \$17.00**

Orders will be taken for the 16 inch Levy Planisphere. It will sell for \$24.00 prepaid.

The prices all include taxes. **All checks should be made out to HAS** for the correct amount, and mailed to Judy Dye, 12352 Newbrook, Houston TX 77072-3910. If there are any questions, please call. Our phone number is 281-498-1703.

*Judy Ann Dye*

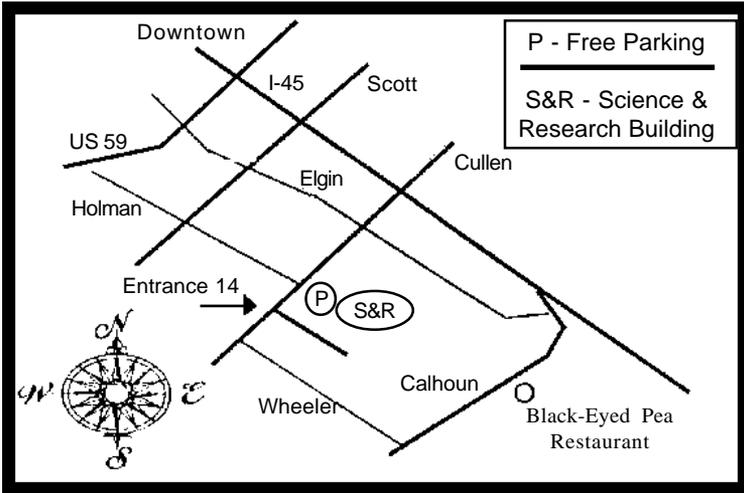
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## *Mars*

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I would like to make a new T-shirt for Astronomy Day. I need a black and white picture of Mars and a color picture of the same view. You will get them back after the silk-screen is done. Just make sure that your name and address is on the pictures with a separate sheet of paper. Thank you.

*Judy Ann Dye*



### 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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