

Houston Astronomical Society

# GuideStar



.....  
**September, 2004**

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*At the September 10 meeting...*

*Note: Second Friday due to  
Labor Day Holiday*

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## **Chasing the Leonid Meteor Storms**

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**Peter Gural**

Discussion of the ground-based and airborne missions to study the Leonid meteor storms where Peter contributed as an amateur meteor enthusiast. The ground based missions to Mongolia (1998), La Palma (1999), KSFC (2000), and Alaska (2003) as well as the Leonid MAC air based campaigns of 2001 and 2002 will be discussed.

Peter Gural received an MS degree in Astronomy from graduate work at the University of Arizona studying mass loss in red giant stars. Moved into the scientific programming and simulation arena working on satellite onboard orbit determination, ocean wave spectral modeling, adaptive processing, and non-acoustic ASW. Joined Science Applications International Corp in 1985 working on underwater acoustics, hull modeling, and modal analysis. In recent years in support of a SETA contract with DARPA's Sensor Technology Office has been involved in pulse-doppler radar performance analysis, clutter modeling, and the development of the Dual-Polarization Adaptive Seeker Model used by various government contractors and agencies.

### **Highlights:**

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**HAS Web Page:**

<http://www.AstronomyHouston.org>

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

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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.  
Astronomical software

Site orientation meeting: ..... 7:00 p.m.  
Classroom 121

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

See last page for a map  
and more information.

## 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: Steve Sartor .....	H:281-370-3544
Vice Pres: Bill Leach .....	H: 281-893-4057
Secretary: Brian Cudnik .....	H: 832- 912-1244
Treasurer: Bill Flanagan .....	H:713-699-8819
Past President: Kirk Kendrick .....	H: 281-633-8819

### Additional Board Members

Steve Goldberg .....	713-721-5077	Liaison responsibility
Don Pearce .....	713-432-0734	
Jay Levy .....	281-557-4920	Field Trip and Observing, Program
Tessie Nolan .....	936-321-5422	

### Committee Chairpersons

Audit .....	Don Selle .....	281-391-5470
Education .....	Richard Nugent .....	713-524-1993
Field Tr./Obsg. ....	Kenneth Miller .....	936-931-2724
Novice .....	George Stradley .....	281-376-5787
Observatory .....	Michael Dye .....	281-498-1703
Program .....	John Blubaugh .....	713-921-4275
Publicity .....	Joe Khalaf .....	713- 660-8219
Telescope .....	Clayton Jeter .....	281-573-1337
Welcoming .....	Susan Kennedy .....	281-376-3262
	Hannah Lange .....	832-715-7833

### Ad-Hoc Committee Chairpersons

Historian .....	Leland Dolan .....	713-688-0981
Librarian .....	Peggy Gilchrist .....	281-443-8773
Logo Mds Sales .....	Judy Dye .....	281-498-1703
Long Range Plan .....	Bill Leach .....	281-893-4057
Parliamentarian .....	Kirk Kendrick .....	281-633-8819
Publ. Star Party .....	Richard Nugent .....	713-524-1993
Rice U. Coord. ....	Matt Delevoryas .....	713-666-9428
Schedule Obs'v't'y .....	Steve Goldberg .....	713-721-5077
Texas Star Pty .....	Steve Goldberg .....	713-721-5077

### 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.  
 Dr. Lawrence Armendarez, U. of St. Thomas

### Dues and Membership Information

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

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 \$32.95/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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## 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. 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 Leach .....	281-893-4057
Comets .....	Don Pearce .....	713-432-0734
Lunar & Planetary .....	John Blubaugh .....	713-921-4275
Occultations & Grazes .....	Wayne Hutchison .....	713-827-0828
Advanced .....	Bill Leach .....	281-893-4057

## Other Meetings...

**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://www.fbac.org>

**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)

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# President's Corner

September 2004

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by Steve Sartor

This month we're going to try something a little different at the general membership meeting. A raffle. George Stradley has generously donated a nearly new Lumicon 80mm Super Finder, an Amici diagonal, and a 25mm Kellner cross hair eyepiece, all mounted on a Lumicon Dovetail bracket for a 14" telescope. This assembly has a retail value of \$354.00 and I've been told they are getting very hard to find. Raffle tickets will sell for \$5.00 each, and you can buy as many tickets as you please. If this works well, we may be looking for other items to raffle in the future. Wish us well.

We have still been unable to find a replacement for Anne Hallman. Anne has been the backbone for the printing and mailing of the *GuideStar*. If you have been looking for a way to contribute to the HAS, this may be it. Please contact Anne, me, or any of the members of the board of directors if you are interested. Anne says that this position takes just a few hours of work each month and she'll be more than happy to teach you what needs to be done.

Our nominating committee chairman this year is Jay Levy. Jay has put together a nominating committee to look for candidates for our upcoming elections. Again, if you are looking for a way to contribute to the HAS please let Jay know that you are interested.

This month marks the 49<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the HAS. Please come to the meeting and join us for a piece of birthday cake. Happy birthday, Houston Astronomical Society. And in the same tone, as a reminder, we have a time capsule buried at the Columbus site that will be exhumed about this time next year.

*Steve Sartor*

"Birthdays are nature's way of telling us to eat more cake"

Unknown

## Membership Renewals...

**Please check the mailing label on your copy of the *GuideStar*, or check your email if you get an electronic 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 page 2.

Membership in the Houston Astronomical Society is one of the great bargains in Astronomy. For a regular membership of \$33 you get the opportunity to support an active and growing organization, you get the monthly *GuideStar* newsletter, and you get access to the outstanding H.A.S. observing site near Columbus, Texas. (You must attend an orientation, given monthly, to use the site.) And, after two months of membership you can borrow, at no charge, one of the Society's loaner telescopes. It's the best deal in town, we think. Please renew your membership when it expires.

**Thanks!**

# Houston Astronomical Society

## General Membership Meeting

Friday, August 6, 2004

University of Houston

### *Minutes*

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The Meeting was called to order at 8:12pm.

The President gave the welcome and announced that the September meeting will be September 10, due to the Labor Day holiday.

There were 0 new members and about 4 visitors present.

The announcements were as follows:

- A call for volunteers to assemble the printed *GuideStar* has been put out to the membership (no printed *GuideStar* was delivered this month). Ann Hallman is unable to serve in the capacity of *GuideStar* assembler any longer.
- George Stradley donated some Lumicon equipment, including a 12x80 finderscope, which will be raffled off during the September meeting for \$5 per raffle ticket.
- Jay Levy, Chairman of the nominating committee, called for people interested in an office; they may contact Jay Levy or Don Pearce.
- Don Selle summarized his audit: The H.A.S. treasurer, the Observatory Committee, and Logo Sales were each audited. All is well as balance checks and controls are in place. One recommendation included improvement of frequency of giving the Board finance reports.
- Amelia Goldberg awarded Clayton Jeter the Observing Award for the Herschel 400. Certificate #301, along with a pin, were awarded to Clayton.
- Steve Sartor suggested eliminating the "Scope of the Month" feature of the General Meeting and having this be a feature of the Novice Meeting instead.
- Susan Kennedy announced that George Observatory will be open all night for the Perseid meteor shower Wednesday night. The cost is \$5 per car.
- Bill Leach has purged the nametags of those belonging to inactive or former members; if an active member is missing his or her nametag, please see Bill to get it replaced.
- Bill Leach also announced the upcoming Astronomy Day activities:
  - Friday, October 22 at St. Thomas University, the regional meeting will take place with Jay McNeil being the featured speaker (the H.A.S. meeting is only two weeks later)
  - Saturday, October 23, Astronomy Day at the George Observatory. George Stradley needs members to help at the H.A.S. meeting table. Bill Leach is in charge of recruiting scopes and outdoor speakers.
  - Indoor speakers are needed for Astronomy Day as well.
- Michael Dye announced that the fundraising for the new lawn mower has reached \$5,825.
- Don Pearce gave the Comet Report:
  - Anomaly: C/2003 K4 (LINEAR) is at mag. 7½ as reported by the last observation. Last month, the comet was at 6½ and seems to have faded. The object is moving from southwest Bootes into Corona Borealis and into Virgo. It is expected to brighten as it approaches perihelion passage on October 12. It is receding from the Earth but will again approach by October 1, when it should reach a maximum magnitude of about 5. However, this comet will be better placed for Houston in the summer.
  - Comet C/2001 Q4 (NEAT) is fading slowly as it recedes from both Earth and Sun and is now about magnitude 8. It is moving northeast through the Bowl of the Big Dipper toward Draco, and is expected to remain a telescopic object through 2004.
  - C/2004 H6 SWAN is at magnitude 10.5 and is moving from Aquarius to Aquila—it has dimmed dramatically. It now rises around sunset and is up all night. The comet passed perihelion on May 12 and perigee on July 25
  - 29P S-W 1 is normally at magnitude 15 or 16, but had been in outburst since mid-July. Most recent magnitude estimates have it at 12.2 and it could be brightening again.
- Don Pearce also announced that Dr. Pinsky has been confirmed to speak at the November 5<sup>th</sup> H.A.S.

*Continued on page 8...*

# September/October Calendar:



Photo by Scott Mitchell

**Date Time Event**

## September 2004

4		Members Observatory Night - Columbus
6	10:11 a.m.	Last Quarter Moon
10	NOTE:	Meeting is on <i>second</i> Friday
	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H.
	8:00 p.m.	General membership meeting U of H. Peter Gural, "Chasing the Leonid Meteor Storms"
11		Prime Night-Columbus
14	9:29 p.m.	New Moon
21	10:54 a.m.	First Quarter Moon
22	11:30 a.m.	Autumnal Equinox-Fall starts in N. Hemisphere
28	8:09 a.m.	Full Moon

## October 2004

1	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H.
	8:00 p.m.	General membership meeting U of H. Richard Nugent presents: "New Developments in the Field of Asteroid Occultations"
6	5:12 a.m.	Last Quarter Moon
9		Members Observatory Night - Columbus
13	9:48 p.m.	New Moon
16		Prime Night-Columbus
20	4:59 p.m.	First Quarter Moon
22	7:30 p.m.	All Clubs Astronomy Meeting at location to be announced.
23	3:00 p.m.	Astronomy Day—George Observatory
28	8:14 p.m.	Lunar eclipse partial phase begins
	9:23 p.m.	Totality begins
	10:04 p.m.	Full Moon, greatest point of eclipse
	10:45 p.m.	Totality ends
	11:54 p.m.	lunar eclipse partial phase ends
30	3:00 a.m.	Daylight Saving Time ends and Standard Time begins. ★ Set clocks back 1 hour.

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

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**GuideStar deadline  
for the October  
issue  
is September 15**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Check the web site:  
[www.astronomyhouston.org](http://www.astronomyhouston.org)  
Webmaster: Bob Rogers  
[siteworker@juno.com](mailto:siteworker@juno.com)**

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

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 [siteworker@juno.com](mailto:siteworker@juno.com).

## New HAS Shirt

We have a new shirt for Logo Sales. It is a short sleeve with a collar, and comes in several different colors. It comes in men's sizes and ladie's sizes. The logo was digitized and will be embroidered on each one, not silk-screened. You will be seeing them (I hope) by the next meeting.

For those of you who want to order a shirt, or for those of you who want to order another one, they have to be prepaid. The price of the shirt will be \$24.00. If you want to order, please call me at 281-498-1703, or you can e-mail me at [judyadye@aol.com](mailto:judyadye@aol.com). All checks are to be made out to HAS and mailed or given to me.

Thank you to the ones who have already ordered a shirt.

*Judy Ann Dye*

**At the HAS meeting, please remember to park across from Entrance 14 because of the construction in the parking lot of the Science and Research bldg.**

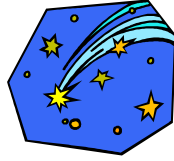


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## Observations... of the editor

by Bill Pellerin, GuideStar Editor

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Prior to last weekend, it had been quite some time since our last clear observing opportunity. But, on the 12th of August a cool front blew through and the air cleared out and the temperatures got (somewhat) cooler.

I took a couple of extra days off work, and was able to do some observing on Friday night (August 13th), Saturday night, and Sunday night. A recent *Sky & Telescope* magazine has a nice list of double stars to look at, and I spent some time with those. I also spent some time with one of Sue French's lists from the same magazine.

From there, it was on to some variable star observations for the AAVSO. I got several of those done. I've already submitted the observations to the AAVSO (American Association of Variable Star Observers). There's nothing to it, really. First, you get the star charts from the AAVSO at their web site, [aavso.org](http://aavso.org). These charts will tell you how to find the star and provide you with reference stars for comparison. You have to use their reference stars. Once you've compared the star-of-interest to the reference stars, and estimated its magnitude, you simply tell the AAVSO the date and time of the observation, your estimate for the magnitude, the magnitudes of the reference stars you used for comparison, and the AAVSO chart you used. My observation of V Boo - 8/15/04, 22:00 CDT, estimated 9.7 magnitude with reference stars of 9.2 and 9.9, all from the chart Sb1986. You'll need to join the AAVSO and get an observer ID, but this is pretty simple stuff. You can easily find out how your observations compare with others by searching for the available observations on your star.

Then, just for fun, I let my telescope's computer recommend and find bright open clusters for me. I don't use this feature of the telescope often, but I had a good time with it - buzzing around among the open clusters that were visible. One of them was the open cluster associated with the Lagoon nebula. They're all good, though.

It's amazing how much functionality is built into today's equipment. It seems like a great bargain to me.

Hey - the Houston Astronomical Society is still looking for someone to take over the mailing duties for the *GuideStar*. Someone may have stepped up to the job by the time you read this. I hope so. If nobody has volunteered, why don't you? It's not a big job. I'll send you a PDF; you have it reproduced at a print shop; and you mail the copies. Easy.

Don't forget about Astronomy Day, coming soon. Bill Leach is coordinating volunteers. I'll be there with a telescope. I did this last

year and had a great time showing the attendees various bright objects in the sky.

I ordered one of the new HAS 'golf' shirts from Judy Dye at the meeting. Judy had hers on, and it looks great. See Judy at the meeting to order one for yourself.

*Until next time...  
clear skies and new moons!*

*..Bill*

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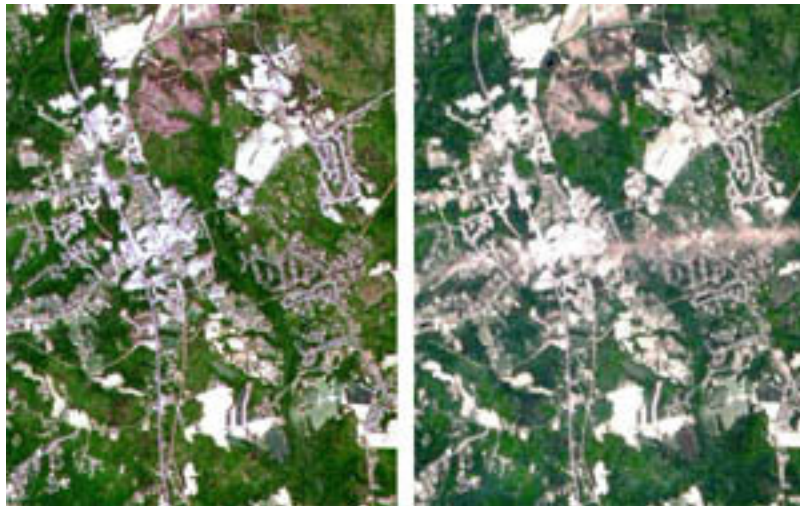
# *Resisting Retirement: Earth Observing 1*

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by Patrick L. Barry

The Hubble Space Telescope isn't the only satellite that scientists have fought to keep alive beyond its scheduled retirement. Scientists also went to bat for a satellite called EO-1, short for Earth Observing 1, back in 2001 when the end of its one-year mission was looming.

The motivation in both cases was similar: like Hubble, EO-1 represents a "quantum leap" over its predecessors. Losing EO-1 would have been a great loss for the scientific community. EO-1, which gazes back at Earth's surface instead of out at the stars, provides about 20 times more detail about the spectrum of light reflecting from the landscape below than other Earth-watching satellites, such as Landsat 7.



*These images, made from EO-1 data, are of La Plata, Maryland, before and after a tornado swept through May 1, 2002.*

That spectral information is important, because as sunlight reflects off forests and crops and waterways, the caldron of chemicals within these objects leave their "fingerprints" in the light's spectrum of colors. Analyzing that spectrum is a powerful way for scientists to study the environment and assess its health, whether it's measuring nitrate fertilizers polluting a lake or a calcium deficiency stressing acres of wheat fields.

Landsat 7 measures only 8 points along the spectrum; in contrast, EO-1 measures 220 points (with wavelengths between 0.4 to 2.5  $\mu\text{m}$ ) thanks to the prototype Hyperion "hyperspectral" sensor onboard. That means that EO-1 can detect much more subtle fingerprints than Landsat and reveal a more complete picture of the chemicals that comprise the environment.

As a NASA New Millennium Program mission, the original



purpose for EO-1 was just to "test drive" this next-generation Hyperion sensor and other cutting-edge satellite technologies, so that future satellites could use the technologies without the risk of flying them for the first time. It was never meant to be a science data-gathering mission.

But it has become one. "We were the only hyperspectral sensor flying in space, so it was advantageous to keep us up there," says Dr. Thomas Brakke, EO-1 Mission Deputy Scientist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

Now, almost three years after it was scheduled to be de-orbited, EO-1 is still collecting valuable data about our planet's natural ecosystems. Scientists have begun more than a dozen environmental studies to take advantage of EO-1's extended mission. Topics range from mapping harmful invasive plant species to documenting the impacts of cattle grazing in Argentina to monitoring bush fires in Australia.

Not bad for a satellite in retirement.

Read about EO1 at [eo1.gsfc.nasa.gov](http://eo1.gsfc.nasa.gov). See sample EO-1 images at <http://eo1.usgs.gov/samples.php>. Budding young astronomers can learn more at [spaceplace.nasa.gov/eo1\\_1.htm](http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/eo1_1.htm).

*This article was provided by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.*

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# Observatory Duty Roster

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by Michael B. Dye, Observatory Chairman

This is the duty list for September, October and November. 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.

**September Supervisor .....Allen Gilchrist ..... 281-443-8773**  
Robert Menius ..... Site  
Larry Mitchell ..... Members Observatory Night 09-04-04  
Debbie Moran ..... Site  
Mark Mulrooney ..... Site  
Johnny Norris ..... Members Observatory Night 09-04-04  
Richard Nugent ..... Members Observatory Night 09-04-04  
Ralph Overturf ..... Site  
Don C. Pearce ..... Site  
Sim Picheloup ..... Site

**October Supervisor .....Logan Rimes ..... 713-681-5397**  
Scott Poteet ..... Members Observatory Night 10-16-04  
Leonard Raif ..... Site  
Henry Schneider ..... Site  
Linda Sternbach ..... Members Observatory Night 10-16-04  
Larry Wadle ..... Site  
Mark Watson ..... Members Observatory Night 10-16-04

**November Supervisor .....Logan Rimes ..... 713-681-5397**  
Tom Williams ..... Site  
Barbara Wilson ..... Members Observatory Night 11-06-04  
Buster Wilson ..... Members Observatory Night 11-06-04  
Warren Wundt ..... Site  
John Blubaugh ..... Site  
Ken Carey ..... Members Observatory Night 11-06-04

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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## Minutes... from page 4

meeting, about the accelerating universe.

- Judy Dye announced that new shirts have been ordered by members. Also, orders for new shirts and hats are being accepted, with a minimum order (by the membership) of 12 items. The shirts, at \$24 each, come in many different colors.
- Judy Dye also announced that the H.A.S. banquet preparations are underway and a speaker has been contacted—Dr. Pat Reiff of Rice University. Two dates in February are possibilities for the banquet.

Brian Cudnik introduced the evening's speaker, Richard Schmude, who gave a talk entitled "The 2003 Mars Apparition (the South Polar Cap).

Door prizes were awarded.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00pm.

Donations to the Observatory Committee are still being taken. Send your contribution to the club address or contact Michael Dye for more information.



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# *An Interesting Observation at the Texas Star Party 2004*

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by Bill Pellerin, GuideStar editor

The April *Sky & Telescope* magazine had an item in it about a star that was discovered to have many characteristics that are similar to our sun. The difference is that this star is 46 light years away, while the sun is only 8 light minutes away. The color, mass, size, and luminosity of this star are remarkably close to those values for our sun. While I was at the Texas Star Party in May, I made it a point to look for this star.

The star name is 18 Scorpii (18 Sco, for short), and it'll still be visible in mid September. It's going to be just over 23 degrees above the horizon on the 18th of September, mid month, at 9:30 p.m. and with a moon that's only a few days old. The star magnitude is about 5.5, so it's bright enough to see from the city, if you can get a reasonably good southern horizon. Note that the star is just on the border between Sco and Oph, but its officially in Scorpius.

I looked at this star at the Texas Star Party and it was one of my most enjoyable observations, I must say. Here is a bright object, that's no challenge to see, but that has the property that it is virtually identical to our sun. So, it was like being 46 light years from our sun, and looking back at it. Wow, this is what our sun would look like at that distance. I looked at it for quite some time and thought about the number of stars that must be comparable to our sun, the only star that's known to have a planet with intelligent life.

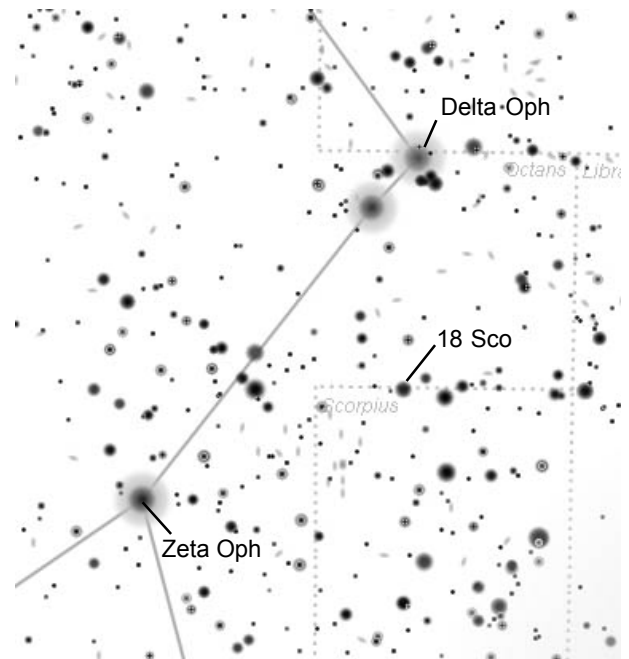
I encourage you to make this observation for yourself. If you still have the April *Sky and Telescope* magazine, dig it out and check out the article, which includes a finder chart. If you don't have the magazine, here's my own attempt at a finder chart (with the help of The\_Sky software).

If you need coordinates, here they are:

Coordinates:      RA: 16h, 15m, 37.3s (2000 coordinates)  
                      Dec: -8 degrees, 22 minutes, 12 seconds

We amateur astronomers are often called "stargazers", but how often do we actually look at stars? We may look at collections of stars in open and globular clusters, and in distant galaxies, but this is one star that's worth looking at, on its own.

Enjoy.



Finder Chart for 18 Sco  
(from The\_Sky)

# Upcoming HAS Meetings

## General Meetings

**October 1**—Richard Nugent “New Developments in the field of Asteroid Occultation’s”

**November 5**—Dr. Larry Pinsky “The Accelerating Universe” (originally scheduled for April, but postponed until November)

**December 3**—Kelly Taylor. "Industrial Light Pollution" Kelly Taylor, working for the power generating plant at Premcor Refinery in Port Arthur, noticed the wasted light that his refinery was putting into the sky. And this wasted light cost money to produced and harmed the environment in several different ways. Kelly set about adjusting the position of some lights, replacing many with lower wattage bulbs, and turning other off. These changes reduced glare, made the working environment more friendly, and helped comply with OSHA standards.

## Novice Presentations

**August 1:** An Overview of Computer Programs for the Amateur Astronomer: Bill Flanagan, Bill Pellerin, Steve Sartor and Don Selle. The program will describe what each of AstroPlanner, MegaStar, Sky Tools, Starry Night Pro, and TheSky can and can't do. Each participant will use his laptop for a “live” demonstration.

**September 10:** Coordinate Systems: Ed Preston. Don't miss this one if you are a beginner — it's your key to finding things in the sky.

# Special "Help" Volunteers

Any member who wants specific information on a subject listed below may call the individual listed. If you have a moderate knowledge of a special subject and would be happy to have others ask you about that subject, let the editor know and your subject, name and phone will be listed in *GuideStar* in the future. Note that we have listed a few possible areas where you might volunteer, but, of course, you are not limited to these. You can also have a specialty which is a sub-group of another. Note that the number of names for any subject is not limited to only one person. Also see the "Ad Hoc Committee Chairpersons" on the inside front cover and the "Special Interest Groups Listing article.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Asteroids .....	Barbara Wilson .....	281-933-1289
Astrometry .....	Richard Nugent .....	713-910-5945
Astrophotography .....	Steve Goldberg .....	713-721-5077
Beginning in Astronomy .....	Peggy Gilchrist .....	281-443-8773
.....	Amelia Goldberg .....	713-721-5077
CCDs & Astrophotography .....	Randy Brewer .....	
Comets .....	Kenneth Drake .....	936-890-3735
.....	Don Pearce .....	713-432-0734
Computers .....	Matt Delevoryas .....	713-795-0808
.....	Leland Dolan .....	713-688-0981
.....	Ricardo Palmeira .....	713-669-1409
Cosmology .....	Ricardo Palmeira .....	713-669-1409
Deep Sky .....	Larry Mitchell .....	281-448-8700
.....	Barbara Wilson .....	281-933-1289
Double Stars .....	John Blubaugh .....	713-921-4275
Drawing (Sketching) .....	Scott Mitchell .....	713-461-3020
Herschel Objects .....	Larry Mitchell .....	281-448-8700
History, Astro'y - General ...	Leland Dolan .....	713-688-0981
.....	Ricardo Palmeira .....	713-669-1409
History, Astro'y - Amateurs	Tom Williams .....	713-526-2868
Mathematics, Astronomical ..	Richard Nugent .....	713-910-5945
Messier Objects .....	Novice Committee (see	
Photometry .....	Open	
Radio Telescopes .....	John Hiatt .....	713-464-4010
Satellites, Artificial .....	Open	
Solar Observing .....	Larry Mitchell .....	281-448-8700
Spectroscopy .....	Open	
Thin Crescent Moons .....	Don Pearce .....	713-432-0734
Telescopes .....	Clayton Jeter .....	281-573-1337
Variable Stars .....	Barbara Wilson .....	281-933-1289
.....	Tom Williams .....	713-526-2868
Video .....	Larry Mitchell .....	281-448-8700

# Observatory Corner



By Michael B. Dye Observatory Chairman



OK people, this is the month for the Annual Picnic at the Observatory Site. I have been pushing this activity all year. The Picnic is scheduled for September 18<sup>th</sup>. We will use the modified format of the format that I started using in 2002. The modification comes as a result of the July Board of Director's meeting in 2003 at which it was suggested that instead of requesting all members bring something extra to eat, I will get selected volunteers to bring

specific items for the picnic. This means unless you have talked to me and volunteered to bring specific items to the picnic, you just need to show up. As I write this article, no one has volunteered to be the cook. The Observatory Committee will be funding the meat (hamburgers and franks) and buns so we will not be collecting any money for food either. I am still looking for some more volunteers to bring chips and dip, condiments (tomatoes, onions and such) and beans (no picnic is complete without beans). Members who would like to volunteer to help or who would like to come to the picnic can E-mail me at [mbdye@rice.edu](mailto:mbdye@rice.edu) or [mbdye@aol.com](mailto:mbdye@aol.com). The Picnic will start about 4 PM. Any earlier and it is too hot.

Again I would like to thank Ed Szczepanski for Power washing and painting the Observatory Building brickwork. Ed did this work over the July 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> weekend. Initial reports by Bob Rogers had Ed cleaning the building and then painting the building a very nice "Bright Day-Glo Orange with a florescence additive. What a nice Orange glow at night across the field." I think this was sent out to see if any one was reading Bob's E-mails. Bob amended his E-mail to indicate that Ed had painted the building with WHITE paint. Bob reports that the Observatory building looks great. I can now report that the Observatory Painting project is complete.

The next thing I want to cover is something I am not proud of. My own stupidity. At the last meeting I insulted Bill Flanagan during my announcement by indicating that he was lax in checking the HAS mail box. I had forgotten that the Houston Astronomical Society is made up of volunteers and we should not be criticized if we don't have time to accomplish some of the things that other members think we should be doing. So I am taking this time to say:

Bill, I am sorry that I insulted you at the last meeting. I hope that you will forgive me and not hold my big mouth against me.

The last item I need to report is the totals for the 2004 Fund Raising campaign. Last month I announced that we had donations totaling \$5,250.00 and now I am happy to announce that our totals for this month are at \$5,794.06. I have no idea where the six cents came from or why. I am planning to set up an on site weather station at the Observatory Site that can be accessed from the HAS web site. The logistics of this entire activity are still being worked out at this time. In the mean time I want to thank all those who donated to this years Fund Raising campaign.

The Society continues to benefit from members who shop at Randalls and now Kroger's. For this we (the Society) thanks you. Please link your Randalls card to the Houston Astronomical Society so that the society can benefit from the 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. If you shop at Kroger, we now have a card available (at the General Meeting) that you present at the cash register when you check out. We can thank Joe Khalaf for his efforts in getting the cards.

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.

### 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. Parking is NOW across from Entrance 14, by the stadium.

### Board of Directors Meeting

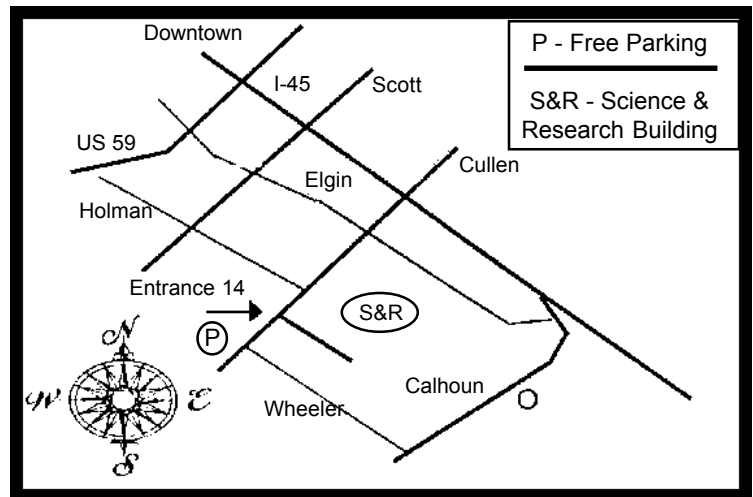
The Board of Directors Meeting is held on dates scheduled by the board at 7:00 p.m. at the University of St. Thomas. Information provided to GuideStar will be published. The meetings are open to all members of the Society in good standing. Attendance is encouraged.

### 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 text, MS-Word format via email BillP10566@aol.com. 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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## **Houston Astronomical Society**

### **Meeting**

**September 10, 2004**

**7:00 Novice & Site Orientation**

**8:00 General Meeting**

**University of Houston**



## **Houston Astronomical Society**

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