

# HAS GuideStar

*Learning about the universe through programs that foster awareness of the art and science of astronomy*

## President's letter

by Rene Gedaly

### Hoping this finds you well and on the mend from Harvey

Where were you for the Great American Eclipse of August 21, 2017? I was in Casper, WY for my first total solar eclipse and my first Astronomical League Convention. Neither will be my last.

**HAS was out in force for the partial** Michael Rapp was busy with students at the University of Houston, and Allen Wilkerson, Sherry Irby, and Stephen Jones were at the Mendenhall Community Center. They planned for 150 attendees and got 300+. Get ready now for April 8, 2024: The Great Texas Eclipse.

**Changes to Bylaws** In 2013 and 2014 we changed our bylaws to bring them better in line with the way we operate. This year we'd like you to consider three more changes: (1) online meetings of the board of directors, (2) online voting by the membership, and (3) changes to the dues process. Notification of the proposed changes will go out by October 1, 2017.

**Elections** VP Don Selle and his nominating committee are working hard to select a leadership slate for 2018. Interested in running? Contact Don now or throw your hat in the ring from the floor at the Annual Meeting in November. The slate will be posted on the website and emailed to [HAS@astrolist.org](mailto:HAS@astrolist.org) by October 1.



Allen Wilkerson  
Mendenhall Center

**We must rebuild our infrastructure** Chatting with others at AstroCon 2017 in Casper, I learned what an extraordinary observatory and dark site we have. Sure, I bragged on us a bit—but did not exaggerate—and was met with astonishment that HAS can support all we do on \$36/year per member. How do we do it? We have a generous membership who donate to specific funds, like the Observatory.

We also save because of sweat equity. The dark site is maintained by the observatory committee and includes DIY repairs and maintenance of the entire site. (You thought it was only mowing?) However, some of our infrastructure is decades old and in need of professional repair or replacement. We also need new facilities to accommodate increased use and growth.

**We need money** How do we raise the funds we need? Especially when many of us are picking up the pieces from Harvey? Often, I'm asked by new members and their guests how much it costs to rent an RV spot, a pad, or stay overnight in a bunkhouse. We're an inclusive club and want these facilities open to all, so we charge nothing. To continue, however, we must raise funds. *Mike Edstrom*, Observatory Chairperson, will be running the fundraising campaign. Please contact Mike when you're able to help.

Inside this issue:	
Asterisms	2
A note about this issue	3

**Asterisms: ET, NGC 457, Owl Cluster, Caldwell 13, Kachina Doll Cluster**

By Steve Goldberg

**Constellation:** Cassiopeia  
**Right Ascension:** 01 h, 19 m 35s  
**Declination:** 58° 17' 12"  
**Magnitude:** 5.1  
**Size:** 15' (minutes)

This cluster, NGC457, was discovered by William Herschel in 1787, and lies over 7,900 light years away from the Sun. The asterism is also commonly known as the Owl Cluster. After the movie "ET-The Extraterrestrial" was released the name "ET" was also given to this asterism



**Asterism:** a grouping of stars that form a recognizable pattern

Looking at this image you can see 2 bright stars, which are the eyes of ET. A horizontal line of stars under the "eyes" are the outstretched arms, with another line of stars going downward for the legs

At public outreach events where children are present, this object is a big hit



### **A note about this issue**

Hurricane Harvey slammed into the Texas Gulf Coast Aug 25, 2017. Over the next four days Houston suffered unprecedented flooding. Recovery will continue for months to come

Many HAS members have been affected including the GuideStar production team

These Harvey Editions are placeholders for when the real GuideStar returns

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