



May 2017

Editor -Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 280 adult members are dedicated to promoting and sharing the wonders and science of astronomy. We host dark-sky and local star parties, telescope-making workshops, science lectures, astronomy lectures, educational outreach sessions and much more.

### Vice President's Message

JACK FRITZ

★ It's summer again here in Florida so the days are long and the nights are short and mostly cloudy. That makes it a poor time for night sky observing but good for vacation and travel.



Our outreach season is mostly over. I would like to thank Jim Hunter, our Outreach Chair, and all our members who participate. We seek to help create new interests in Astronomy and science in general across the Tampa Bay area. Who knows, we may just inspire the next great astrophysicist.

I would also like to thank our Mirror Lab Team for their contribution to our club. Paul McNabb, Mirror Lab Chair, and his team; Allen Maroney, Mike Davis, and Ralph Craig spend their Saturday afternoons every week teaching the art, and science, of mirror making.

I would also like to thank the Examiner staff for their help in creating our newsletter each month. Steve Robins, gives us the upcoming astronomical events and NASA news. Kelly Anderson reports on the Withlacoochee River Park events, and Nancy Huff skillfully proofreads each edition. Ralph Craig reports on the developments at the mirror lab.

Lastly, thanks to our members who make it all worthwhile.

### New Members

We would like to welcome Stephanie Larson, Walter Brinkman, Scott & Christa Huntley, Kristen Shepherd & Todd Berman, and Jarrett Trezzo & Megan Robinson to our family of members.

### General Meeting

This month's general meeting will take place on Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 PM, at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N, St. Petersburg.

Main Program - Asteroids - Greg Shanos

### Club Meeting Hurricane Policy

Hurricane season is upon us. We may cancel the meeting if a hurricane is threatening Pinellas County. If that happens, we will send a cancellation notification via email. Alternatively, you may call Allen Maroney at 727 867-4781 or Jack Fritz at 813 508-5680 to check on the status of the meeting.

### Hillsborough Outreach

JIM HUNTER

★ Jack, Kelly, Steve and Wally made the trip with me to Gibbs High School in south St. Petersburg.

There were about 60 students with varying degrees of interest. I was to do the solar system program inside, while Jack set up the Glackin solar scope. As Jack got set up, the clouds came in, so those plans needed work. A few students did get a look at the sun through the clouds.

After dark, we set up in a mostly lighted parking lot and had intermittent but good views of the Moon, Jupiter, plus a few stars. My guess was that none had ever looked through a scope.



Students get their first look at the Sun compliments of our Glackin Solar Telescope.

Wally & Ramona Vazquez, Steve Gaber, and Karen Sell attended a Greek Cypriot Picnic at Fred Howard Park. Wally set up our Glackin Solar Telescope, and Steve set up his refractor with a solar filter.



Wally shows off our home star through our Glackin Solar Telescope.

With the late sunset, school vacation and lousy weather, outreach is essentially done until the Fall.

I will do a solar system presentation at Brooker Creek while Jack sets up the solar scope on June 3. On June 21<sup>st</sup>, I will do a presentation for the Science Center's, summer kids program. Thaaats, all folks.



Wally and Gibbs Students

I want to thank the several members who have made the outreach program possible: Jack Fritz, Kelly Anderson, Steve Gabor and Wally Vasquez. Without their signing and showing up, I could not have done it.

We may not get many new members, but we expose astronomy to a wide cross-section of the Bay Area public. Personally, I also have fun and meet new folks.

We will visit the Grandkids in June and visit friends in Missouri for the eclipse.

Happy summer to all and to all a good night(s).

**National Weather Service**

SHIRLEY VUILLE



★ The Atlantic hurricane season lasts from June to November and peaks between August and October. Everyone should make plans how to deal with these severe storms now, before the season begins.

Click this link to view and print their booklet, [How to Prepare for a Hurricane](#).

**June Astronomical Events**

STEVE ROBBINS

★ Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Venus is at greatest western elongation, 45.9° west of the Sun.

Between Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> and Friday the 9<sup>th</sup>, the Moon misses Jupiter, the Pleiades, and Saturn by more than 2.5°.

Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup> Saturn is at opposition.

Finally, after a series of wide conjunctions, on Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> the Moon passes half a degree south of Aldebaran.

Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> find the Moon .1° North of Regulus.

June's full Moon is the Full Strawberry Moon. Strawberry harvest season was short and happened in June.

**June's Moon Phases:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Moon at First Quarter
- 9<sup>th</sup> - Full Moon
- 17<sup>th</sup> - Moon at Third Quarter
- 23<sup>rd</sup> - New Moon

**April Dark of the Moon**

KELLY ANDERSON

★ The Dark of the Moon weekend for April 21<sup>st</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> was another mixed event, half-and-half for astronomy, but all good for an astronomy club. Enjoying the clear and fairly dark skies on Friday night were Jack

Fritz, Richard & Mary Garner, Bob Stelmock, Franklin Matos, Beverly, Dean & Alex Lounkis, Colin Davis, Joe Canzoneri, Ron & Dee Wayman, Heather Thompson, and Stan Sanford. That's a pretty good show for a DOTM weekend, wouldn't you say? Ron was the most popular guy that night since he was the only one with an eyepiece in his scope. Everyone else was taking images!

Bob brought his brand-new Newtonian astrophotograph and mounted it on his brand-new equatorial mount (appropriately nicknamed "Goliath") hefty enough to sport a 110-pound payload! Next time he should bring a portable hydraulic crane to lift everything on top of it.

The Lyrid meteor shower was punier than average this year. Our stalwart group of astronomers at Withlacoochee didn't see much in the way of meteors. This particular shower peaks closer to dawn, a challenge that most of us tend to forego, so nothing spectacular this time around.

Saturday night clouded over, so for astronomy we batted .500, but those who were camping stayed for the fellowship. What a great place to stare at the bottoms of clouds and talk about whatever. All-in-all, another great weekend!

Mark your calendars for the next DOTM, scheduled to appear May 26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>.

**NASA News**

STEVE ROBINS

★ May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Cassini began its second dive between the rings and Saturn. Prepared to hold its round antenna in front of it as a shield, scientists found that wasn't necessary, as the space between the innermost ring and Saturn [is astonishingly empty](#). Scientists switched impact detection to audio format, expecting to hear and measure the frequency of micrometeorite impacts. Instead, they heard the radio squeals of electronics cutting through intense magnetic field lines.

New Horizons is now more than halfway from Pluto to its next target, 2014 MU69, set to become the farthest world ever visited by any Earth spacecraft.

In orbit around the giant asteroid/minor planet Ceres, Dawn has lost the use of one of its reaction wheels, reducing its designed four reaction wheels to one. As programmed, Dawn put itself into safe mode and switched to hydrazine thrusters for attitude control. Because hydrazine is a strictly limited resource on Dawn, this necessarily puts strict limits on the time Dawn can continue to function.

### Astrophotography

Here are a few nice images from our members.



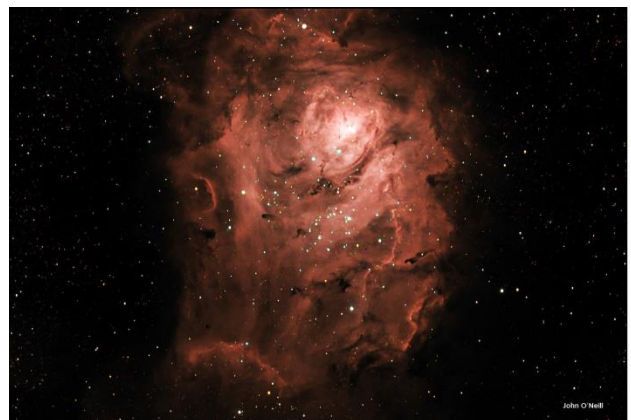
NGC 6465, The Needle Galaxy by Joe Canzoneri



NGC 896 Taken in Chiefland by John O'Neill



M-101 by Joe Canzoneri



M-8 the Lagoon Nebula by John O'Neill

Great shooting guys. Keep it up. If you have photographs you would like to share with our members; please send them to [space-examiner@gmail.com](mailto:space-examiner@gmail.com).

### For Sale

Orion SkyQuest xx16g - Bought 2 years ago. See Orion catalog for a complete description. Used 5 times. In New condition. I added the wheel barrel kit and shroud and 3 12 volt fans. I have more than \$4000.00 in it. Selling it for \$3000.00 firm. The reason for selling is that I have COPD. It is just too heavy for me to roll around to my back yard. If interested call Tom at (727) 845-7776 in New Port Richey.

**SPAC Business Meeting** 

Our next meeting is Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 PM at the Science Center. All interested members are invited to attend. All club business decisions are made at the business meeting so as not to encumber the general meeting.

**Officers & Directors**

President:	<a href="#">Kyle Brinkman</a>	727 455-6931
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Club Webmaster:	<a href="#">Chris Curran</a>	813 653-2604

Click on the name to send email

**Recognition of Patrons & Benefactors:**

Clifford B. Benham	Benefactor
Jack & Roni Fritz	Benefactor
Alexie & Yanira Velez	Patron
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Anthony Staiano	Patron
Brad Perryman	Patron
Gustav J. Waffan	Patron
Joe Ortiz-Bradley	Patron
Kyle Brinkman	Patron
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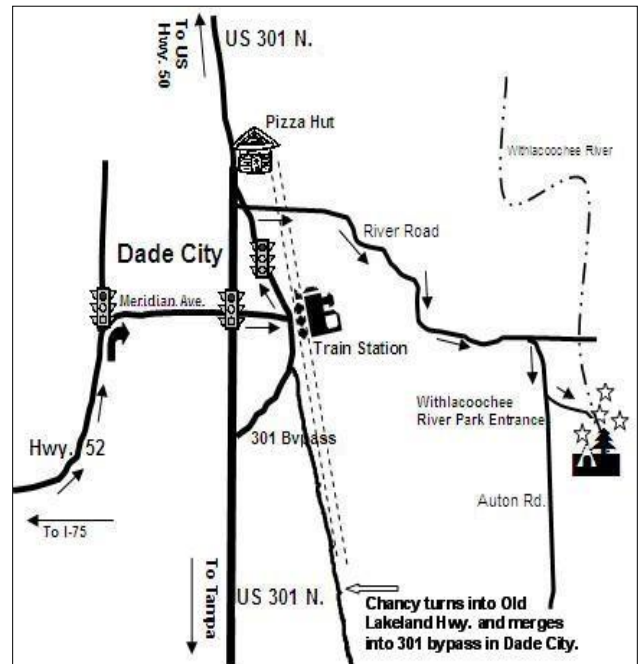
**Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend**

Our next New Moon Weekend falls on May 26<sup>th</sup> through the 27<sup>th</sup>.

The park gate is locked at Sundown, so you will need to arrive before then. The year-round camping fee with electrical use is

\$10/night for club members and \$20 for non-members. Tent camping without electric is \$5/night.

Be reminded that if you are not camping, you must pay the \$2/vehicle fee. Vehicles displaying the handicap parking tag are exempt. For further information, contact Bill or Nancy Huff. [starhopr3@msn.com](mailto:starhopr3@msn.com) or 813 621-3606.



**Withlacoochee River Park - Dade City, FL**  
 Detailed directions can be found at:  
[www.StPeteAstronomyClub.org](http://www.StPeteAstronomyClub.org)



15406 Stonecreek Lane  
Tampa, FL 33613

**SPAC, INC. MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

Membership in St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc. is open to anyone, regardless of age, who is interested in astronomy. Dues are considered donations and are non-refundable. Membership options are available as listed below:

**To join or renew your membership:**

Complete the following form and return it with your payment to: Jim Hunter - Treasurer, 17316 Oak Ledge Dr., Lutz, FL 33549-7626 - Telephone number (813) 909-7013 (checks should be made payable to SPAC, Inc.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ Children (*Under 18*): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ St. \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter Preference: Email [  ] US Mail [  ] \$25

Single: [  ] \$ 30.00/YR. Includes one adult, minor children, the "SPACE" newsletter, and all the rights and privileges of membership.

Family: [  ] \$ 35.00/YR. Includes two adults, minor children and the above rights and privileges.

Patron: [  ] \$ 50.00/YR. A Patron member is entitled to the above rights and privileges.

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US Mail: [  ] \$ 25.00/YR. Please include \$25 if you choose to have the newsletter via US Mail.