



July 2017

Editor -Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 259 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.

President's Message

KYLE BRINKMAN

★ That time is almost upon us. The great North American Eclipse is about to start. On August 21st, the eclipse will start in Oregon and across the USA to South Carolina. The viewing will be high in the sky for most of the states. Even St Petersburg Florida will have about 85% totality. That is something you will certainly notice even during our cloudy summer weather.



If you haven't made your travel plans, it may well be too late. There are 12 million people living near the centerline, and another 25 million within a short drive. Hotels have been booked well in advance. I understand many of the public parks are concerned because there are inadequate facilities to handle the large crowds expected to gather for the eclipse. So be sure to bring your own lunch and plenty of water.

There is a lot of advice on how to watch an eclipse. Be sure to have your safety glasses for solar viewing. Don't ever stare at the Sun directly. Chap Percival, who spoke at our club, said the thing to do is to enjoy the moment. There will be plenty of video on the internet as soon as it is over. You don't have to take

your own. This event hasn't happened in the USA for nearly 100 years. It won't happen again until 2024. Don't waste the moment worrying about the cameras.

A Buddhist mantra I read recently comes to mind. "I am alive in this moment. What a beautiful moment."

New Members

We would like to welcome Carl & Ruth Brown, and Ren & Ansel Monllor to our family of members.

General Meeting

This month's general meeting will take place on Friday, July 28th, at 8:00 PM, at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22nd Ave. N, St. Petersburg.

Main Program - Greg Shanos will give us tips for observing a solar eclipse.

Upcoming Programs

- August: No General Meeting - The entire BODs will be off somewhere observing the solar eclipse.
- September: Member Eclipse Experiences
- October: Annual Meeting, Elections, and Picnic.
- November: Auction.
- December: Christmas Party.

Cosmic Odyssey: Dark Energy, Dark Matter, Distant Worlds, and Time.

If you missed last month's meeting, you missed a great presentation by Chris Vuille. He did a great job of making some very complex astrophysics understandable.

The good news is that Greg Shanos videoed the presentation and you can still see it on YouTube.

- Part 1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ll-2fGXl5_E
- Part2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFY1Q-nj4JY>

Orange Blossom Special

Our annual star party will be February 7th - 11th, 2018. As of now, we do not have a food vendor this year. We are working to find someone, but you need to be prepared to provide all your own food. We will have coffee, hot cider, and cocoa available in the hospitality tents all day and night. Go to www.OrangeBlossomSpecial.org/ for more information.

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 notice 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.

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](#).

Editor's Notes

JACK FRITZ

★ It's time to start thinking about our annual elections. We need you to get involved with the leadership of our club. Each year we elect or reelect the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and one of the three directors-at-large. Please consider running for one of these important positions in our club.

Allen has served as Director-at-Large for about 15 years and is stepping down this year. We desperately need someone to step up and assume this vital role.

The New Moon Weekend events for July and August have been cancelled due to hot, stormy weather and travel.

August Astronomical Events

- August 11,12 - Perseids Meteor Shower. The Perseids is one of the best meteor showers to observe, producing up to 60 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by comet Swift-Tuttle, which was discovered in 1862. The Perseids are famous for producing a large number of bright meteors. The shower runs annually from July 17 to August 24. It peaks this year on the night of August 11 and the morning of August 12. The waning gibbous moon will block out many of the fainter meteors this year, but the Perseids are so bright and numerous that it should still be a good show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Perseus, but can appear anywhere in the sky.
- August 21 - Total Solar Eclipse This is a rare, once-in-a-lifetime event for viewers in the United States. The last total solar

eclipse visible in the continental United States occurred in 1979 and the next one will not take place until 2024. The path of totality will begin in the Pacific Ocean and travel through the center of the United States. The total eclipse will be visible in parts of Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, Nebraska, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina before ending in the Atlantic Ocean. A partial eclipse will be visible in most of North America and parts of northern South America.

August Moon Phases:

- 7th - Full Moon
- 14th - Moon at Third Quarter
- 21st - New Moon
- 29th - Moon at First Quarter

Space Exploration News

STEVE ROBBINS

★ The Day the Internet Stood Still:

July 4, 1997. Once upon a time, NASA was used to mailing out mission notices and updates. But, a fundamental change had taken place with the brand new Internet. Suddenly, on July 4, the day of the Pathfinder landing, NASA took 30 million Internet hits on landing day from eager citizens. But the real story was that NASA was ready. Yes, it took an hour to download a panorama, but I remember being delighted in being able to do that at all. Corporate networks choked. E-mail and telephone service slowed down. But NASA met the demand.

Sometimes you learn surprising things from a casual mention during a more important announcement. Plunging in a series of orbits between the planet Saturn and the inner ring plane, Cassini has taken [a detailed photo of the Encke Gap](#), along with a thin, kinked ring

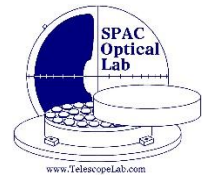
in the blackness of the gap. And casually mentioned, "The view captures the outer edge of the 200-mile-wide Encke Gap" Only twice the distance from Orlando to Jacksonville, and we see it clearly in our telescopes!

During today's (July 10) Jupiter close fly-by, Juno will be taking photos of Jupiter's giant Red Spot at only [5,600 miles over the swirling cloud tops](#) of our solar system's largest storm system! All Juno instruments will be recording, and the JunoCam images will be better than words can say!

Mirror Lab

RALPH CRAIG

★ Our new grinder, Collin has been rough grinding his 8-inch f/5 mirror every chance he gets to stop by for an hour or two.



Paul has been fine grinding his 14-inch mirror and should be ready to move into the air-conditioned polishing room soon.



Paul grinding the 14-inch.

Dimitri is about ready to start polishing the 12-inch he has been working. Jean-Paul is also coming over from Orlando to work on his 10-inch mirror every chance he can get.

Allen, Mike, and Brad are figuring their mirrors now. It will be interesting to see who finishes their mirror first. Once we get a few

of these mirrors done, we should be ready for a run to Spectrum coatings in Deltona.



Mike figuring the 14-inch.

More pictures are on the mirror lab web page www.telescopelab.com and Mike Davis's web page at www.mdpub.com and also on Allen Maroney's web page www.knology.net/amaroney/.

For Sale

Rich Freed, a long time SPAC member, is downsizing and would like to sell his 10-inch, f/5, hand-made Dob. You can contact him at (352) 259-2905 or rcf42bbf@comcast.net.



In addition to the telescope itself, he has a Sky Commander, Hotech SCA Laser Collimator, some very nice eyepieces, and lots of books. There is too much to list it all here,

so you will need to contact him. He would like to sell all as a single package

SPAC Business Meeting 

Our next meeting is Wednesday, August 9th, 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:	Kyle Brinkman	727 455-6931
Vice Pres.:	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
Secretary:	Shirley Vuille	727 864-2624
Treasurer:	Jim Hunter	813 909-7013
Dir.-at-Large:	John O'Neill	727 637-5945
Dir.-at-Large:	David Pearson	727-215-1526
Dir.-at-Large:	Allen Maroney	727 867-4781
SPACE Editor	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
Public Relations	John O'Neill	727 637-5945
Membership Chair	Shirley Vuille	727 864-2624
Outreach Chair:	Jim Hunter	813 909-7013
Librarian:	Ralph Craig	727 384-2086
Club Webmaster:	Chris Curran	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
Andy Demartini	Patron
Anthony Staiano	Patron
Brad Perryman	Patron
Gustav J. Waffan	Patron
Joe Ortiz-Bradley	Patron
Kyle Brinkman	Patron
Matt Labadie	Patron
Robert Myers	Patron

Examiner Staff

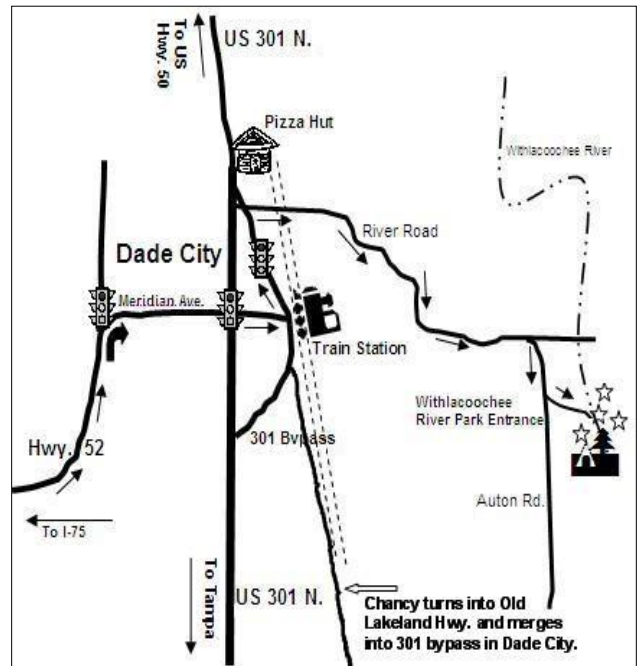
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Assistant Editor	Nancy Huff	813 621-3606
Reporter	Kelly Anderson	813 672-2751
In the News	Steve Robbins	386 736-9123
Mirror Lab	Ralph Craig	727 384-2086

Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend

The monthly events for July and August have been cancelled due to hot, stormy weather and travel. Our next New Moon Weekend falls on September 15th - 17th.

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 or 813 621-3606.



Withlacoochee River Park - Dade City, FL
 Detailed directions can be found at:
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.

Benefactor: [] \$100.00/YR. A Benefactor member is entitled to the above rights and privileges.

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