



SPACE

St. Petersburg Astronomy Club Examiner

November 2021

Editor – Guy Earle

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area since 1927. Our 337 adult members are dedicated to promoting and sharing the wonders and science of astronomy. We host a dark-sky star party each New Moon at Withlacoochee River Park, along with local star parties, telescope-making workshops, science lectures, astronomy lectures, educational outreach sessions and much more.

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Astronomy Image of the Month

The Sculptor Galaxy, taken with 6" RC w/ZWO183MC Pro by Joe Canzoneri



Line 'em up!

As we move into Fall we should be getting some more pleasant evenings for observing—should, mind you. The summer saw whole weeks of no telescope use, but sometimes it's nice to sit back and enjoy the wide view. Such was the other night when Jupiter (far left), Saturn, a Crescent Moon, and Venus were all in alignment. Photo taken by the editor with his Samsung Galaxy S9+, and using a 20mm Nagler Type II to block the streetlight.

November General Meeting

This month's general meeting will take place on Friday, November 19th at **8:00 PM**. The meeting will be both *in person* at St. Petersburg College, Gibbs Campus, 6405 5th Avenue North, Natural Science Building, Classroom 232, 2nd floor and also virtual. The main program will be presented by Muhammad Omer Farooq, Ph.D., Associate Professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University on **Cosmology, Accelerating Universe, Dark Energy, and Observational Constraints**



To attend virtually with **Zoom**, join from your computer, tablet or smartphone by clicking [here](#).

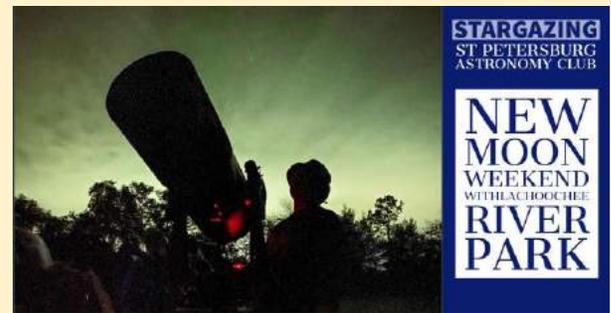
You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: +1 (301) 715-8592

Meeting ID: 993-399-331

Passcode: 999123

The club's **New Moon observing weekend** will be held December 3rd-5th at [Withlacoochee River Park](#) east of Dade City.

New SPAC Members

We would like to welcome Lisa Pineda & Veronika Keblinskas, Gabe & Elaine Faraone, Teresa & Marvin Sapp, and Matthew Miller to our family of members.

President's Message

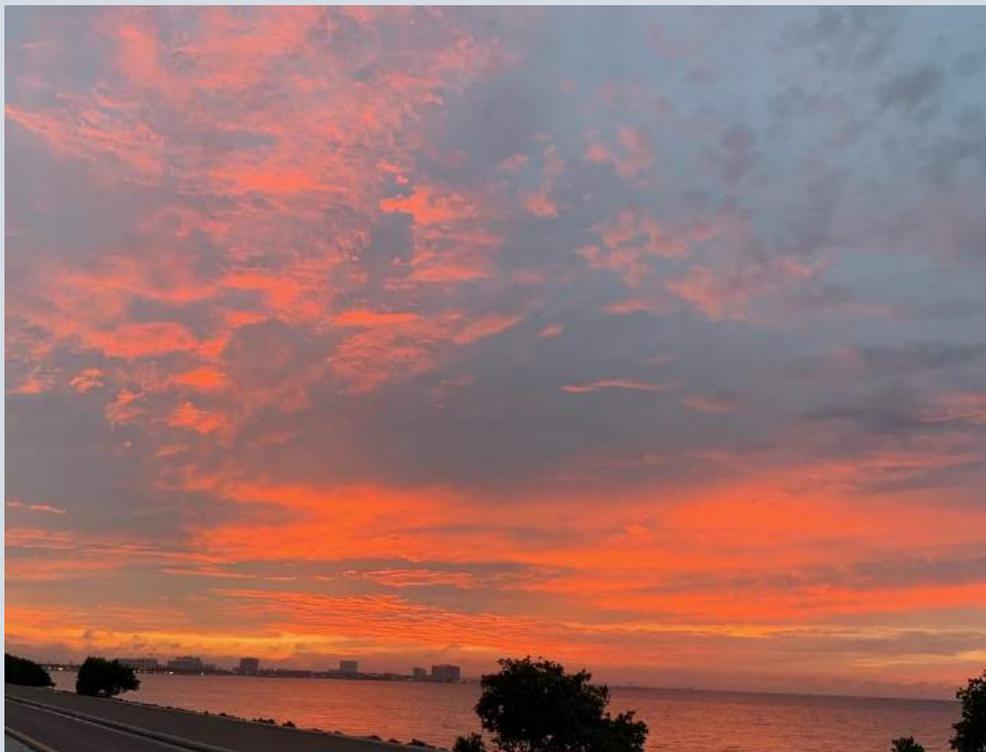
BRAD PERRYMAN



Commuting to work over the last year and a half has been delightful. But now, with rush hour traffic back to pre-pandemic levels, that pleasure has past. Fortunately, I have been able to maintain my zen by enjoying the spectacular beauty that is the Belt of Venus, rising above the horizon towards the east during civil dawn. The Causeway bridge provides a great, unobstructed view of it every morning. It's the pinkish red seen as the earth's shadow gives way to the encroaching sunlight, then expanding to reveal most of the colors in the rainbow, starting with dark blue followed by a tinge of green into a thick yellow band, below that a hint of orange before the last band of red just above the horizon. The phenomenon is described by Rayleigh scattering of light. I was a bit disappointed the first time clouds were mentioned in the forecast, believing they would obstruct the view, but to my surprise it actually added to the beauty of the skyline with shadows and colors wisping out to create a larger pallet, adding depth to an otherwise flat sky. I've enjoyed it so much that I am no longer looking forward to my favorite time of year, the end of daylight saving time. After the time change, it will be another month before the Belt of Venus brightens my morning commute again.

Clear skies,

Brad Perryman



Registration for 2022 OBS is now open!



Greetings all,

I am happy to announce that registration for our annual **Orange Blossom Special** opened on October 9th. Advanced registration continues till January 2nd, 2022. Late registration will run from January 3rd till February 19th with a \$25 late fee. Our 2022 OBS will return to our normal operations complete with a site cooked and catered B-BQ Dinner Saturday night from D&D BBQ and Catering. We will have chicken and pork for the meats. The meals must be pre purchased with registration to be able to participate.

Please keep in mind that RV spots on the observing field are limited and on a first come first site basis. We do reserve the entire park for our event and there are plenty of camping sites in the regular campground located just behind our observing field. Please let me know if you should desire to be in the campground vs the observing field. Lastly, we are always on the look-out for donations for our giveaways and door prizes. If you happened to have that new eyepiece, old charts, binoculars etc. which aren't getting used, please feel free to donate!

Mike Partain
Star Party Chair

New Moon Weekend, November 2021

KELLY ANDERSON

After an extended absence for a variety of reasons, mostly clouds, your Intrepid Field Reporter returned (nothing like a Prodigal Son returning because of the lack of prodigality whilst I was gone). The November New Moon Weekend presented a variety of opportunities and challenges along with good fellowship, not to mention getting out of town for a few days.

Fred & Diane Friedman and the Kelly McGrew jumped the gun a little, arriving on Wednesday. They reported viewing conditions were “Okay” for that evening. Those of us who arrived on Thursday, Joe Canzoneri, Jack Broadhurst, and your IFR, were met with totally overcast skies. Our optimism led us to believe that there might be breaks in the overcast that night (there weren’t), but after the frontal passage on Friday there would be clear skies immediately behind it (wrong again). But lacking that, Saturday evening was sure to be clear all night (didn’t happen).

As the front arrived during the wee hours Friday morning it brought with it some pretty strong gusts. Sadly, Jack suffered damage to his sunshade and his tent couldn’t fend off the onslaught of rain, making his night soggy and chilly. The rest of the day was, literally, a washout. It rained without let up, mostly light but occasional moderate showers accompanied with gusty breezes.

Saturday arrived with lower temperatures (mid-50s) and cloudy, but no rain, and our fabulous observing field had drained very well. By mid-afternoon our star city had grown to include Roy & Laura Lanier + their loveable chiweenie, David Knowlton, Mike & Carli Partaine, Bob Stelmock, Tim Harris and Jim Hunter. Also joining us were Shane Eigel, Doug Sliman, Jamie Kenas, Leeann Muszynski, and Tom Boyko.

And … the skies were completely clear all night, although our enthusiasm was dampened somewhat by the heaviest dew and fog that we’ve experienced in a very long time. It challenged our dew zappers for sure.

Joe, Bob, Tim and I stayed over Sunday and Monday nights to take advantage of the clear weather. I’m sure you’ll be seeing some of our results posted on Facebook in the near future, and I’m just as sure that we’ll have clear skies for the next New Moon Weekend, scheduled for December 3 – 5. And here’s an idea: the NMW following will be December 31 – Jan 2 … how about having a safe and sane (but not too sane) New Year celebration at our favorite Star City? Just a thought.

We did have a minor incident on Saturday from which we can all learn a lesson or two. One of our members backed his travel trailer too fast and too far and ended up smashing into a utility post, breaking the water line and electrical hookup. We have a wonderful dark site and enjoy a great relationship with the Park Management, but incidents like this are avoidable. Operating large Class A/B/C motor homes and travel trailers can be challenging and creates some unique hazards. We

are a great group of people who enjoy each other’s company and we gather to share our passion for staring upwards at the wonders of the Universe. We also have a pretty good time telling jokes and swapping lies. But I think we might have become a little lackadaisical in looking out for each other. I’m suggesting we might pay a little more attention to helping our fellow astronomers in operating their conveyances around our observing area. I was disappointed to learn that no one offered to be safety observer for our member, nor did he request help from anyone. Even if a member is moving forwards into a site, it is far too easy to fail to see something that would not react well to collision, and we should never back an RV without a safety observer to keep us from running into something. Let’s be quick to offer our help, and let’s also not be shy in asking for help when we need it.



“Through our eyes, the universe is perceiving itself. Through our ears, the universe is listening to its harmonies. We are the witnesses through which the universe becomes conscious of its glory, of its magnificence.”

— Alan Wilson Watts



SPAC Image Gallery

★ Here are some excellent astrophotography highlights from our fellow SPAC members. Anyone who would like to share his or her work, I encourage you to [email the editor](#) to submit for future newsletters or share them on our [SPAC Facebook page](#).



Above: Ground fog in the morning light, last New Moon Weekend by **editor**



Above: The pack man nebula at our last new moon weekend 6inch rc scope zwo 183pro camera 60 sec x 40 live stacking with sharpcap by **Joe Canzoneri**



Left: The **cocoon nebula** live stacking with sharpcap. zwo 183mc pro camera by **Joe Canzoneri**



Above: Venus, seconds away from saying goodnight by **Bill Lomaka**



Above: Target: **IC 443 The Jellyfish**, Date: 2021-10-09, Location: My house, St Pete Exposures: 300s x63, OTA: Rasa 11, Camera: ZWO ASI2600MM, Mount: CEM70 Filter: Baader ultra highspeed HA by **Jamie Kenas**

+++++

Target: **IC 410 The Tadpoles**, Date: 2021-10-07, Location: Withlacoochee River Park, Exposures: 300s x58, OTA: Rasa 11, Camera: ZWO ASI2600MM, Mount: CEM70, Filter: Baader ultra highspeed HA by **Jamie Kenas**

SPAC Outreach

JIM HUNTER



On 11/9, Jack, Wally and I went to Curtis Elementary. We had a great turnout but the clouds had other plans. We would get a couple minutes of viewing every 10 or 15 minutes. Seldom got good views, plus Jack's scope had a problem and my finder did as well.

On 11/11, at Eisenhower Elementary we had a great evening. Brad, Wally and I showed Venus, Saturn, Jupiter and the Moon to a large crowd. The School has had "An Evening Under the Stars" which was for both reading and astronomy for at least the six years SPAC has participated.

It was good to have a "normal" outreach event.

SPAC Mirror Lab: *Astronomical Shortages*

ALLEN MARONEY



Most amateur astronomers buy astronomy stuff. Lots of stuff.

Eyepieces, red lights, CCD cameras and the occasional offering to the god of clear skies are all within reason for any given month. Amateur telescope makers also buy pieces of telescopes such as focusers and mirror cells. Over the last two years we have become accustomed to a few shortages. Until now the shortages have been luxury items that you can live without, such as toilet paper. This week things became real. During some rework on my 12.5" Dob I wanted to install a new Moonlite focuser. I was unable to locate a manual 2" focuser on the Moonlite web site and came across this message:

MoonLite is not able to make and ship Manual versions of our focusers due to severe supply chain issues.

Only motorized versions are available to ship at this time.

We are forced to phase out all manual versions and are removing them from our web page as the last of each model are sold.

The severe semiconductor and electronic component shortages may also start affecting our automated / motorized models as well by the end of the year. We are seeing delays up to 50 weeks for some components. These issues can't last forever, and I hope 2022 will be better. Let's all hang in there and see if the supply chain issues get resolved soon.

Ron Newman

Moonlight is a first rate company with well-made products and excellent service. The Mirror Lab

instructors have recommended them to scope builders for years. I appreciate their candor on the web site. And yes, 'I'll be back'.

Next I surfed over to the Highpoint Scientific site to order an eyepiece. This is part of an email from Highpoint Scientific after I placed the order (the actual item was removed):

Due to high demand the following item(s) are currently on back order and we are waiting for the manufacturer to provide an estimated in stock date:

Whatever it was that you ordered

***No Lead Time Available.**

I expect to eventually get a 'next in line' number that looks like the AU distance to Alpha Centauri (about 276173.78 AU). Again, Highpoint Scientific is a great company to do business with. I called a few other companies and they were all out so I'll guess that the missing raw materials are affecting Televue's production also. To be fair the item that I was buying didn't say In Stock, but it didn't say out of stock either.

The moral of this story is if you plan on ordering astronomy equipment for your next star party you may consider not waiting too long to place the order and get on the waiting list. Here's to clear skies and new toys!

SPAC Business Meeting

Our next business meeting is **Wed., December 1st, at 8:00 PM** via conference call; details upon request.

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	Brad Perryman	727 420-1957	Public Relations	John O'Neill	727 637-5945
Vice Pres.	Paul Krahmer	727 535-5827	Membership Chair	Shirley Vuille	727 864-2624
Secretary	Shirley Vuille	727 864-2624	Mirror Lab Chair	Paul McNabb	727-345-5713
Treasurer	Jim Hunter	813 507-8415	Outreach Chair	Jim Hunter	813 507-8415
Dir.-at-Large	Kyle Brinkman	727 455-6931	Star Party Chair	Mike Partain	850 339-0828
Dir.-at-Large	Steven Gaber	727 215-0464	Librarian	Ralph Craig	727 384-2086
Dir.-at-Large	Jack Fritz	727 692-9831	Club Webmaster	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
SPACE Editor	Guy Earle	813 785-1972	Dark Sky Chair	Leeann Muszynski	813-601-0986

Click on the name to send email

Recognition of Patrons & Benefactors:

Steven Balke	Benefactor	Steve & Cindy Fredlund	Patron
Clifford B. Benham	Benefactor	David Furmanski	Patron
Lakeisha & Stephen Black	Benefactor	Steve Gaber & Karen Sell	Patron
David Brewer & Joan Baldwin	Benefactor	Richard & Mary Garner	Patron
Walter Brinkman	Benefactor	Les & Janet Gatechair	Patron
Dave & Deborah Catalano	Benefactor	Timothy & Mary Ann Harris	Patron
Michael Coate	Benefactor	Charlie & Linda Hoffman	Patron
Jack & Roni Fritz	Benefactor	Sharon Herman & Melissa Hughes	Patron
Jamie Kenas	Benefactor	Lee Jarvis	Patron
David Knowlton	Benefactor	Matt Hughes & Manuel Ordonez	Patron
Laura & Roy Lanier	Benefactor	Matt Labadie & Jennifer Willman	Patron
Jim MacDougald	Benefactor	Greg Legas	Patron
Tod Markin	Benefactor	Mark & Cheryl MacNeill	Patron
Kelly McGrew	Benefactor	Allen Maroney & Tracee Elliott	Patron
Kevin & Karen Mulford	Benefactor	Leeann Muszynski	Patron
Will & Jenni Nelson	Benefactor	Robert Myers	Patron
David & Tara Pearson	Benefactor	Stephen Oros	Patron
Rath, Damon & Jean Futch	Benefactor	Antonio Paris	Patron
Doug & Teri Sliman	Benefactor	Brad & Lisa Perryman	Patron
Todd Vogt & Brittany MacDonald	Benefactor	Alan Polansky	Patron
Bruce Berger	Patron	John & Abbie Redmond	Patron
Kyle Brinkman	Patron	David & Rusty Richmond	Patron
Ralph & Christine Craig	Patron	John Ross	Patron
Peter & Jaclynn Dimmit	Patron	Robert Rutledge	Patron
Guy & Kelly Earle	Patron	Anthony Staiano	Patron
Gabe & Elaine Faraone	Patron	Willis Sutherland	Patron
Joseph & Pamela Faubion	Patron	Wally & Ramona Vazquez	Patron
Darla & Peter Flynn	Patron	Charlie White	Patron

Examiner Staff

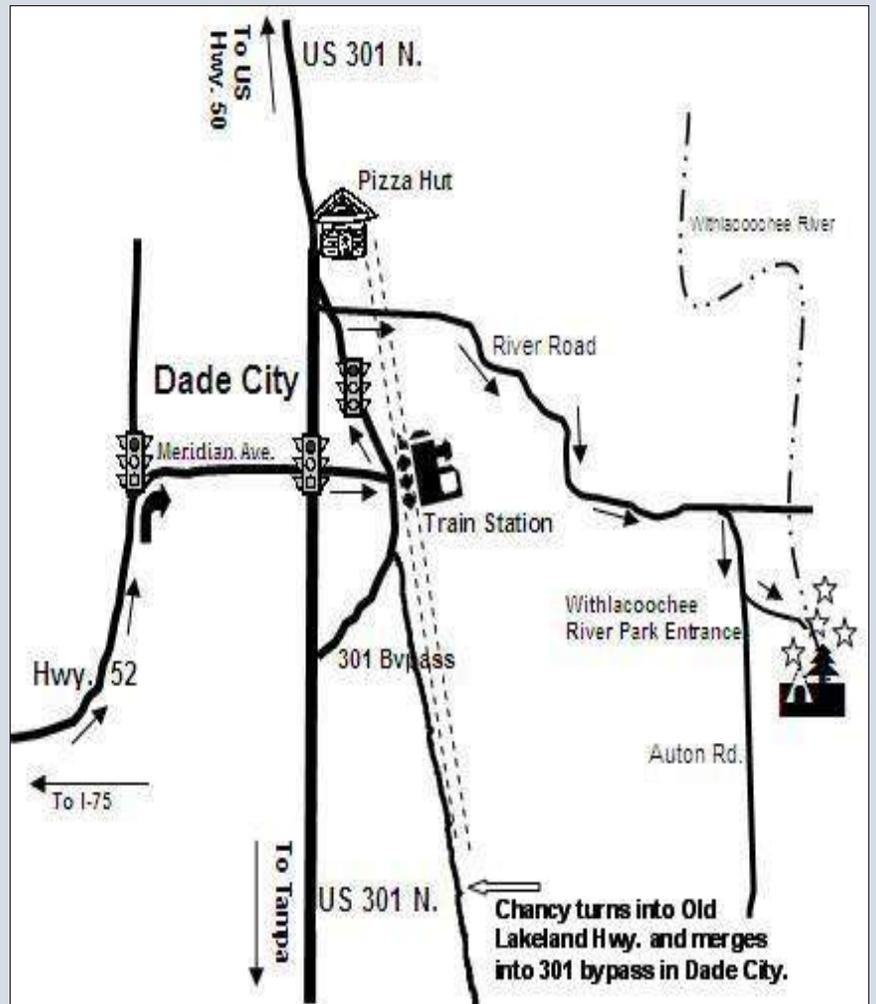
Editor	Guy Earle	813 785-1972
Reporter	Kelly Anderson	813 672-2751
In the News	Steve Robbins	386 736-9123
Mirror Lab	Ralph Craig	727 384-2086

Withlacoochee New Moon Weekends

There's no need for reservations. However, the park closes at sundown, so you will need to arrive before then. The park rangers will give you the gate-code once you're inside the park. Please do not call for the gate code as they are not allowed to give it out over the phone.

Reservations are not necessary. Please print and display our [Friends-Of-The-Park Pass](#) on your dashboard.

Please join us! All astronomy enthusiasts are welcome. You do not need to be a club member to attend. Please refer to our [Club Calendar](#) for details and scheduled dates.



Withlacoochee River Park - Dade City, FL

Detailed directions can be found at:

www.StPeteAstronomyClub.org



St. Petersburg Astronomy Club Membership Form

Membership in St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc. (SPAC) is open to anyone, regardless of age, who is interested in astronomy. Benefits of membership include a monthly subscription to the SPAC Examiner newsletter, reduced camping rates and use of the club's bunkhouse at our dark sky site at Withlacoochee River Park, the ability to serve on the SPAC board and voting privileges. Dues are considered donations and are non-refundable. Membership options are available as listed below.

You are now able to choose how you wish to join or renew your membership:

- **Preferred On-line Website Option: New instructions as our website has been updated.**

Go to https://www.stpeteastronomyclub.org/Sign_In.php on the SPAC website where you can join, view and update your membership profile, provide payment, and **print your membership card.**

- **US Mail Option: Takes more time to process manually because we are all volunteers.**

Complete the attached membership form and send it along with your payment to:

Jim Hunter
17316 Oak Ledge Drive
Lutz, FL 33549.
(Checks should be made payable to SPAC, Inc.)

Adult 1: _____ Adult 2: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Number of Children under 18: _____

Memberships:

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.

Student: FREE. SPAC offers free membership to full time high school and college students.

Expected date of graduation: _____

Total Submitted: \$ _____

Your SPAC Membership Card is required for reduced fees at the campground.