



January, 2001

At the January 5 meeting...

Star Parties, Expeditions, and Events for 2001

***Panel Discussion --
Planning for the new year***

Houston Astronomical Society GuideStar

Starline - 281-568-9340

Houston Astronomical Society presents *Starline* -- a recorded message of Society events and astronomical happenings. This service is updated regularly, so call often to keep up-to-date on Society functions, new comets and more.

HAS Web Page: <http://www.astronomyhouston.org>

Schedule Changes & Up-To-Date Information

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

Observatory Site Telephone: 979-732-8861

★★★★★ *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 ★★★★★★★★★★

President: Kirk Kendrick H: 281-391-3834	Secretary: Art Ciampi H: 713-665-5008
Vice Pres: Bill Leach H: 713-863-8459	Treasurer: Debbie Moran H: 713-666-9428

★★★★★★★★★ Additional Board Members ★★★★★★★★★★

Liaison responsibility

George Dolson 713-721-1560	
Bill Flanagan 713-699-8819	
Howard Leverenz 713-957-8667	
Jay Levy 281-557-4920	Field Trip and Observing, Program
Larry Wadle 281-395-6290	

★★★★★★★★★ Committee Chairpersons ★★★★★★★★★★

Audit Gary Hlivko 713-864-2541	Program Scott Mitchell 713-461-3020
Education Richard Nugent 713-910-5945	Publicity Brian Cudnik 713-460-1093
Field Tr./Obsg. Steve Grubbs 713-455-5701	Telescope Darin Palmer 713-223-3123
Novice Warren Wundt 713-697-2960	Welcoming Marg Nunez 713-529-2549
Observatory Michael Dye 281-498-1703	

★★★★★★★★★ Ad-Hoc Committee Chairpersons ★★★★★★★★★★

Historian Leland Dolan 713-529-0403	Publ. Star Party Marg Nunez 713-529-2549
Librarian Peggy Gilchrist 281-558-1190	Rice U. Coord. Matt Delevoryas 713-795-0808
Logo Mds Sales Judy Dye 281-498-1703	Schedule Obs'v'ty Steve Goldberg 713-721-5077
Long Range Plan Barbara Wilson 281-933-1289	Texas Star Pty Steve Goldberg 713-721-5077
Parliamentarian Kirk Kendrick 281-391-3834	

★★★★★★ 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.
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★★★★★★★★★ Dues and Membership Information ★★★★★★★★★★

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

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 \$29.95/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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Call the Starline, 281-568-9340 for updates and changes

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. No new members this month. 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 Flanagan	713-699-8819
Comets	Kenneth Drake	936-890-3735
Lunar & Planetary	John Blubaugh	713-921-4275
Occultations & Grazes ...	Wayne Hutchison	713-827-0828
Advanced	Bill Leach	713-863-8459

President's Message

January 2001



by **Kirk Kendrick**

24 years after I first joined the HAS back in 1976, I now sit at the computer writing my first "President's Letter". This is a very humbling experience! To prepare, I went back through my old *GuideStars* (I couldn't find any before Sept 84 unfortunately). I read about 17 ½" binoculars (by Lee Cain), grazing occultations, eclipses, astro-photography, photometry, CCDs, the Observatory through the years, and all the great contributions by all our various club members.



After looking at the past and thinking about where we are today, I realized that we are at a juncture as a club. Our observing site in Columbus was dedicated back in 1982 with the completion of the Observatory Building ... with a predicted "dark sky" lifetime of 20 years. Today, we see flashing lights and an increasing sky glow that is encroaching on our dark haven. How much longer before our skies brighten and we'll need to find a darker home? 5 years?

Another juncture is that (up to now), we have relied heavily on paper and telephones to disseminate information. Steve Goldberg's great work has brought us an Houston Astronomical Society Home Page (<http://www.astronomyhouston.org>). But, for the internet to become the hub of our communications, we will have to find more volunteers and a commitment to focusing on future trends to make our club and site more accessible to all. Automation can allow us to use the site from our homes, and to generate *Starline* and web content remotely for all to access. Today, these are managed by only a few...but could become a cornerstone of astronomical information in the Houston area and beyond.

And, I noticed that "in the beginning", the Astronomical League logo was prominently displayed on the President's page. At the November board meeting, the importance of AL to the HAS was discussed for about 30 minutes. One of the highlights was the realization that many members enjoy the AL Reflector, the observing programs (and awards like the Honorary Messier Certificate), and the connections to other clubs the AL

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Houston Astronomical Society

***Meeting Notice
For Friday, January 5, 2001***

Star Parties, Expeditions, and Events in 2001

***It's not too early to plan your
astronomy vacations for 2001. Hear
about some of the upcoming activities.***

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.
Across from Room 117

Novice Committee -- Looking for observing buddies that can help you get started in astronomy? Join the Novice "Committee" at 7pm on the night of each regular HAS membership meeting. Each month we focus on a "topic of interest" requested by the group, and spend some time just talking about astronomy - from observing Messier objects to aligning your telescope to what's in Houston skies.

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

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

**See the inside back cover for a map
and more information.**

January/February Calendar:



Photo by Scott Mitchell

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>
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January 2001

2	4:32 p.m.	First Quarter Moon
4	3:00 a.m.	Quadrantid meteor shower, max ZHR=130
5		HAS Club Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H
	8:00 p.m.	General Membership Meeting U of H
9	2:24 p.m.	Full Moon
13		Members Observatory Night-Columbus
16	6:35 a.m.	Last Quarter Moon
	7:30 p.m.	Advanced SIG Mtg. Rice Univ., contact Matt Delevoryas, 713-795-0808
20		Prime Night-Columbus
24	7:07 a.m.	New Moon

February 2001

1	8:02 a.m.	First Quarter Moon
2		Groundhog Day
		HAS Club Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H
	8:00 p.m.	General Membership Meeting U of H
8	1:12 a.m.	Full Moon
13	7:30 p.m.	Advanced SIG Mtg. Rice Univ., contact Matt Delevoryas, 713-795-0808
14	9:24 p.m.	Last Quarter Moon
17		Members Observatory Night-Columbus
23	2:21 a.m.	New Moon
24		Prime Night-Columbus

**Send calendar events to JBlubaugh@aol.com
or call 713-921-4275.**

HAS Logo Sales

by Judy Ann Dye

If you are interested in any of the following items and would like to place an order, please contact me (Judy Dye) at 281-498-1703, or send a check for the items requested to 12352 Newbrook, Houston Texas, 77072-3910. Below is the current list of logo items for sale:

Grey Hooded Sweatshirt (M to XL)	\$25.00
22 Ounce Thermal Cup	\$5.00
Observe Messier	\$4.00
Observe Comets	\$7.00
2001 Observer's Handbooks	\$ 15.00

President's Message... from page 4

brings. After a lot of discussion, the board unanimously agreed that staying in the AL is the right thing to do. For those of you that are not familiar with the Astronomical League, you should visit their website at <http://www.astroleague.org>.

What do I commit to in the next year? To take us from the 1980's tools we rely on now and fully into 2001. And, to focus on the primary purposes of the society as stated in our By-Laws...

- (1) Developing and implementing programs designed to foster awareness in individuals and in the community with regard to astronomical developments and achievements as well as promoting the science of astronomy.
- (2) Making available to individuals and the community educational resources concerning astronomy.

I look forward to seeing you all at our January Meeting, on January 5th! I wish you a great Holidays, a Happy New Year, and clear skies!

...Kirk

Observations... from page 21

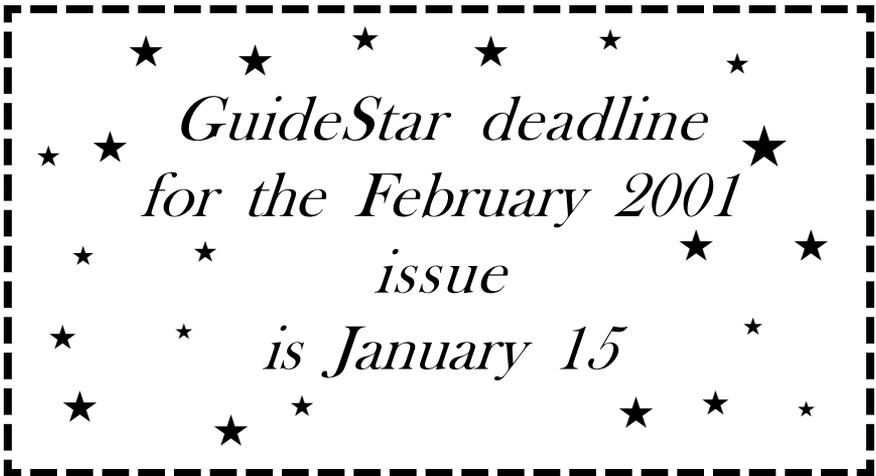
The H.A.S. has plenty of volunteer opportunities still left. Check with Kirk or any of the other officers or committee leaders at the next meeting and volunteer your time and talents.

Finally, as the new officers and committee leaders take on their responsibilities, we should all make a point of saying 'thanks' to those of us who served in positions last year. It's a big effort to make an organization of this size function, and I know that these folks would appreciate your telling them that you are grateful for their service to the organization.

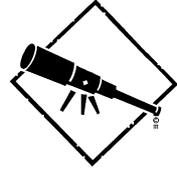
Pay attention to Steve Goldberg's item about the Texas Star Party. It's an outstanding event, and if you can make it to West Texas for the event, you'll have a great time!

Finally... I hope you all have a happy holiday season and an outstanding new year. I look forward to seeing you at the meetings and on the observing field.

..Bill



Observatory Corner



By Michael B. Dye Observatory Chairman

This year's Observatory Committee Volunteers are as follows. I would like to thank every member for volunteering to serve again. The main changes this year are that Kirk Kendrick was removed as Site Supervisor (because he is now President of the HAS), Edward Preston come back on board as Financial Records after a three year break because of work commitments and Cooper Walls moves from Financial Records to Site Supervisor. I have supplied my E-mail address in case members want to get in contact with me. I cannot promise a prompt reply, but I usually get around to answering most E-mail eventually. My time allocated to HAS activities has become severely limited because of other commitments. As of the time I write this article I have still not set a date for the Annual Observatory Committee meeting. When I set one, I will try and get it on Star Line and the Web site for those who interested in attending.



Michael B. Dye Chairman MBDye@aol.com
Kirk Kendrick Vice Chairman
John Hiatt Advisor
Matt Delevoryas Site Supervisor
Allen Gilchrist Site Supervisor
Dana Lambert Site Supervisor
Logan Rimes Site Supervisor
Robert Rogers Site Supervisor
B. Cooper Walls Site Supervisor
Edward Preston Financial Records
Steve Goldberg Scope Assignment

Last month I published the proposed schedule for Prime Night and Members Observatory Night dates. No one contacted me indicating that they had spotted any major (or minor) faux-pas', so I guess it stands as published

Continued...

Program Committee

This is to invite any interested HAS member to join the program committee. If you would like to participate in picking topics, obtaining speakers, or arranging for publicity for programs, e-mail Scott Mitchell at STARSCM@aol.com. We usually have fun putting together the programs for the general meeting, and often enjoy pre-meeting dinners with the speakers. You don't have to have any special speaker contacts to help.

Observatory Corner... from previous page

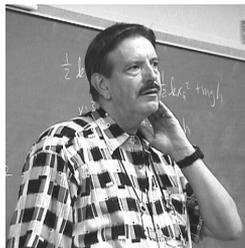
For the last few months, I have been inserting a paragraph requesting membership feed back concerning installing computers in the Observatory. I have actually got a response. This gives me hope that members are actually reading my articles. This hope was shattered by a long time member who told me he never reads the GuideStar. If you have any ideas about the Observatory Site, including providing some sort of computers for controlling the Observatory Telescopes and maybe for CCD processing. Please contact me at mbdye@aol.com or 281-498-1703.

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.

Ex-President's Message

By Don Pearce

As your president the last three years, I want to take this time to express my view of where we have come from and to where we might go. As I mentioned at the last meeting, there were four major areas I wanted to address.



- 1. To increase the membership.** We have been very successful in increasing the membership. Primarily, I believe it has been through people accessing our web site that has produced this growth. We should thank Steve Goldberg, our webmaster, for the development and continued improvement of the web site. During this time we have also acquired our own domain name: www.astronomyhouston.org.
- 2. To have the meetings become a fun and entertaining experience,** to make new members feel welcome, and with recognition given to the members who make the HAS work. I have always believed appropriate credit should be given to volunteers who give extensive time to our efforts. Sometimes, in this endeavor, omissions are made. One, I can think of right now is that we have not given enough credit or attention to the local star parties that Marg Nunez and others have put so much work and effort into. We obviously should emphasize these at every general membership meeting.
- 3. The light pollution problem.** Despite our best efforts, we seem to be losing the battle to control the increasing levels of light pollution at our Columbus site. Various remedies recommended over the last few years has not yielded the desired results, and we may come to the realization that nothing we are able to accomplish will impact the problem, that is, it is beyond our control. Two solutions become apparent, one, long range the other in the near future. Immediately, we can begin the process of procuring a "remote, primitive site" that is within a feasible distance (not more that 3 hours) that members would be willing to drive, and would serve as a darker site when the need demands one. In the long

Continued...

Ex-President's Message... from previous page

run, as, incidentally, the original planners had projected, we need to be thinking of another permanent home.

4. Acquisition of a large visual scope for all the members to use.

Because of problem #3, it probably doesn't make sense to complete a large visual instrument project with a permanent building, until we have decided upon a future, permanent home. Having said that, there has been virtually no effort except a general positive working relationship with the Observatory Committee. In conclusion I want to thank all of you who have helped make HAS work the past three years, and here is wishing Kirk and the incoming officers the best.

Clear skies and thin crescent moons and may all of you have a very happy holiday season.

Don Pearce

Marg's Star Parties

by Marg Nunez

Ok star party volunteers, we've been enjoying a little break from bringing astronomy to the world. But no more. Here is a schedule of upcoming star parties in your neighborhood. Please be generous with your time. It won't be a star party without you!! Please contact Marg. at 713-529-2549 or Marg10@flash.net to help.

Parent Science Night, J. R.Harris Elementary (KeyMap: 535B)

801 Broadway. Houston, TX 77012,

Jan 10th. 6 to 8 o'clock.

Grady Middle School (KeyMap: 491Q)

(San Felipe at Sage near the Galleria)

Jan 19th at 7:00pm

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B&Ps from the IAUCs

By Matt Delevoryas

A short while back IAU Circular 7478 had an interesting editorial announcement. Breaking with long policy, the IAU General Assembly this year decided it would be appropriate to cease announcing the discoveries of many comets in the IAU Circulars, instead mentioning them on the Minor Planet Electronic Circulars, with a summary in the IAUCs later. In fact, they decided this about the most productive discoverer of comets ever, with well over 100 discoveries — the satellite SOHO! (Almost all discoveries, many retrospective, have been sun-grazing comets visible only by using SOHO.) The second most productive discoverer, LINEAR, has fewer than half as many discoveries. But, eventually LINEAR will overtake SOHO (with its limited lifetime).



Just as we are discussing a satellite which has been so productive finding comets that its discoveries will not be heralded as before, those of us down on earth are also having our astronomical worth vindicated. While we think of planetary satellite discoveries these days as something done by space probes, IAUC 7512 and 7513 announce the apparent discovery of four new satellites of Saturn, all discoveries made from the ground. While it cannot yet be ruled out that some of these four are actually asteroids with centaur orbits, the working assumption is that they are indeed satellites. These discoveries are from a team of at least eight astronomers, led by B. Gladman of the Observatoire de la Cote d'Azur, searching for satellites. The discovery observations were made by CCD at ESO (2.2m and NTT), the CFH, LPL's Catalina Station, and the Michigan- Dartmouth-MIT telescope at the McGraw-Hill — not a single space probe in the list. Don't go run out to observe the satellites quite yet — they range in R magnitude from 20 to 22.

Houston Astronomical Society

Board of Directors Meeting – November 30, 2000

Minutes – Secretary’s Draft

Attendees:

President – Don Pearce

Secretary – Bill Leach

Director – Warren Wundt

Director – Bill Flanagan

Director – Debbie Moran

Director – Jay Levy

Observatory Director – Michael Dye

Seven society members were also present as guests.

Absent:

Vice President – Barbara Wilson

Treasurer – Gene Horr

Director – Howard Leverenz

1. The meeting was called to order by president Don Pearce at 7:38 PM.
2. The secretary announced that a **quorum** of board members **existed**.
3. After two additions to the agenda under new business, Michael Dye made a **motion** to accept the agenda. After a second, it was unanimously accepted.
4. Michael Dye made a **motion** to accept the minutes from the September 2000 board meeting. After a second, they were unanimously accepted.

Reports:

5. Treasurer’s report: The acting treasurer, Bill Flanagan, placed into the record the November 30, 2000 financial status reports.

Total Assets: \$20,662.78

Total Liabilities and Equity: \$20,663.78

Income:

Astronomy Magazines \$4117.09

Continued...

Board Minutes... from previous page

Donations	\$1093.79
Banquet	\$1180.50
Interest	\$528.08
Logo Sales	\$1263.50
Dues	\$8772.15

Total Income \$16,955.11

Expenses:

Astronomical League	\$943.00
Administrative	\$77.90
Awards	\$56.56
Program Committee	\$315.43
Astronomy Day	\$100.00
Banquet	\$1461.05
Guidestar	\$1977.63
Logo Sales	\$1267.57
Observatory	\$5000.00
Astronomy Magazines	\$4013.09
Starline	\$254.58

Total Expenses \$15,466.81

Net Income \$1488.30

6. Novice Committee: Kirk Kendrick, Larry Wadle and Warren Wundt Volunteered to cover the novice sessions for January, February and March 2000 after which the new novice chairman will come online.
7. Bill Leach announced that, in spite of a constant drizzle, Astronomy Day saw 500 visitors who received the 'royal treatment' from an enthusiastic group of volunteers.
8. Michael Dye announced that the annual picnic met a similar fate, as it started out wet and then got wetter.
9. The president announced that the December 21, 2000 board meeting will concentrate exclusively on the 2001 budget.

Continued...

Board Minutes... from previous page

Old Business:

10. Bill Leach reported that he is still working on signing the Society up with the “club program” at Kroger grocery stores. It was suggested that Albertson’s might have a similar program. Monies brought in by these programs are split between the general fund and the observatory committee. So far this year this program has brought in \$447.
11. The 2001 Banquet Committee is functional and is in search of a speaker and a restaurant for the event.

New Business:

12. The participation of the Society in the Astronomical League was discussed. An extensive letter from a concerned member of the Society was read. It was determined that the Society received a \$500 rebate from the Texas Star Party off-setting the dues paid to the Astronomical League by the Society. Michael Dye proposed the following **resolution**, which received a second from Jay Levy, and was unanimously accepted by the board.

“ The Board of Directors of the Houston Astronomical Society recommends continued participation in the Astronomical League and its programs.”

13. Logo sales and procurement was discussed. Michael Dye made a **motion** that a temporary committee of Michael Dye, Debbie Moran and Bill Leach come up with a proposal to correct inefficiencies in the present system. The motion received a second and was unanimously accepted.
14. Michael Dye made a **motion** that the meeting be adjourned. After a second, president Don Pearce adjourned the meeting at 8:51 PM.

November 30, 2000
William W. Leach
H.A.S. Secretary

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting of the Houston Astronomical Society December 1, 2000

Secretary's Draft

1. The meeting was called to order by President Don Pearce at 8:14 PM. He welcomed everyone and the following general announcements were made:
 - a. The general meetings of the membership are in this room, room 117, at 8:00 PM on the 1st Friday of the month, except for May and September when the meeting will be on the 2nd Friday of the month.
 - b. The novice meeting is across the hall in room 116 at 7:00 PM preceding the general meeting.
 - c. The site orientation meeting is in room 121. All members must attend this meeting in order to obtain access to the 18-acre observing site in Columbus, Texas. You may visit the site as a guest of a qualified Society member prior to your certification.
2. There were 80 members and 1 guest present. A quorum was determined to be present.
3. Three new members were introduced.
4. The President reviewed the types of telescopes available to the membership at the Society's 18-acre observing site: C-14, 12.5 in. f/5, 12.5 in. f/7, and two 12.5 in. Dobsonians. These telescopes are housed in a separate building right next to the observatory.
5. Darin Palmer, chairperson of the Telescope Loaner Program, was not present and all members that brought telescopes to the meeting to be returned were asked to hold onto them.
6. The President announced the following membership benefits/concerns:
 - a. The *GuideStar* newsletter editor, Bill Pellerin, was recognized.
 - b. The Starline (281-568-9340), a service offering various recorded astronomy messages, was also announced and Matt Delevoryas was recognized for keeping the messages updated.
 - c. The HAS website is also available and Webmaster Steve Goldberg

Continued...

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was introduced and thanked. The H.A.S. new domain name is **www.astronomyhouston.org**.

- d. Judy Dye, in charge of logo sales, was not present but other arrangements for the evening were announced.
- e. Discount prices for society members on Sky & Telescope (\$29.95) and Astronomy (\$29.00) magazines were announced.
- f. Marg Nunez and Bill Leach of the welcoming committee were introduced.
- g. The program with Randall's grocery stores was announced and members were asked to register for nonprofit organization number 6618. One percent of everything you buy at Randall's will come to H.A.S.

Announcements/Business:

7. Jay Levy made a motion that the proposed change in the bylaws be accepted, and after a second, the change was accepted by the Society, with one dissenting vote.

Article 4, Section 6

Old: "Twenty (20) voting members or twenty percent of the voting membership...."

New: "Twenty (20) voting members or fifteen percent of the voting membership...."

8. Chris Mendell thanked the Society's outgoing president, Don Pearce, for three excellent years of leadership and guidance.
9. Scott Mitchell, the newly elected chairman of the program committee, solicited from the membership, ideas for future programs. Any ideas relative to this need to be passed on to him at STARSCM@aol.com.
10. Larry Mitchel also thanked Don Pearce for his excellent tenure as Society president. Larry also praised Steve and Amelia Goldberg for their excellent work with the Texas Star Party and announced that a new asteroid had been named after them, asteroid, 1990 VZ 6.

Continued....

Minutes... from previous page

11. A *GuideStar* error was corrected by an announcement that The Observer's Handbook 2001 was \$15.

Program: The evening's presentation was given by Bill Leach, professor of physics at Kingwood College. The title was **Radio Astronomy: The New Green Bank Telescope and the Expanded Very Large Array**. This audio/visual presentation included sound files of pulsar radio signals.

12. Marg Nunez and Bill Leach handed out door prizes.

13. The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 PM.

HAS Secretary: William W. Leach
December 1, 2000

Marg's Star Parties... from page 12

Johnson Middle School (KeyMap: 531T)
10410 Manhattan 77096
Jan 26th 7pm

Feb 27th Horn Academy (KeyMap: 531M)
Bellaire, Texas on Pine st.
Feb 27 7:30pm

Observatory Duty Roster

by Michael B. Dye, Observatory Chairman

This is the duty list for January, February and March. Some names may have been moved from one month to another to accommodate some conflicts. 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.

January Supervisor Robert Rogers 281-997-9682

Richard Nugent Site
Ralph Overturf Jr. Site
Don C. Pearce Members Observatory Night 01-13-01
Sim Picheloup Members Observatory Night 01-13-01
Leonard W. Raif Site
Glenn L. Ray Members Observatory Night 01-13-01
Henry Schneider Site
Steve Simpson Site

February Supervisor Robert Rogers 281-997-9682

Larry C. Wadle Site
Mark R. Watson Members Observatory Night 02-17-01
Tom Williams Site
Barbara Wilson Members Observatory Night 02-17-01
Buster Wilson Members Observatory Night 02-17-01
Warren Wundt Site
John Blubaugh Site
Ken Carey Site

March Supervisor Allen Gilchrisrt 281-558-1190

John Chauvin Site
Brian Cudnik Site
George M. Dolson Members Observatory Night 03-17-01
Kenneth Drake Site
John D. Fennell Site
Jean-Marc Follini Members Observatory Night 03-17-01
Fred Garcia Members Observatory Night 03-17-01
John Garza III Site

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.

Observations... of the editor

by Bill Pellerin, GuideStar Editor

I'm going to let you in on a 'secret' observing site this month. It's called Canyon of the Eagles, and it's about 70 miles northwest of Austin on Lake Buchanan. I was there last weekend (3rd quarter moon), and the site is outstanding. At the observing field there are permanently placed chart tables with red-light illumination. Before nightfall, you drive your car (with your telescope gear in it) to the observing area to unload and set up your equipment. (There's an area dedicated to the Austin Astronomical Society at the field.) Then (advance booking is always recommended) check into your room at the lodge, not more than a mile away. Plan for an early dinner at the lodge restaurant and head back out to the observing field for a night under the stars. When you're ready to quit for the night, you can drive back to the lodge and get a good night's sleep.

During the day, there are boat trips, hiking trails, birding opportunities and other relaxing activities available.

For the future, more construction is planned for the observing area, including an amphitheater, a lecture hall and warming house (with bathrooms!), and a planetarium. Public observing events will be held at the site as well.

My experience was excellent. The lodge room was very clean and neat, the food at the restaurant was very good (dinner and breakfast), and the observing was just fine, thanks. The temperature dipped to about 27 degrees and the moon was at third quarter, so I didn't stay out too late, but the skies were clear and dark with the Milky Way arching overhead as Cygnus set in the west.

If you have a few days available this is an excellent opportunity. Canyon of the Eagles is about 230 miles from Houston. Check it out at...
<http://www.canyonoftheeagles.com> or call (800) 977-0081.

I am pleased to welcome the new officers and committee heads to their posts and I look forward to their continuing contributions to the H.A.S. Kirk Kendrick starts the year off with his first 'message'.

Continued on page 8....

Texas Star Party 2001

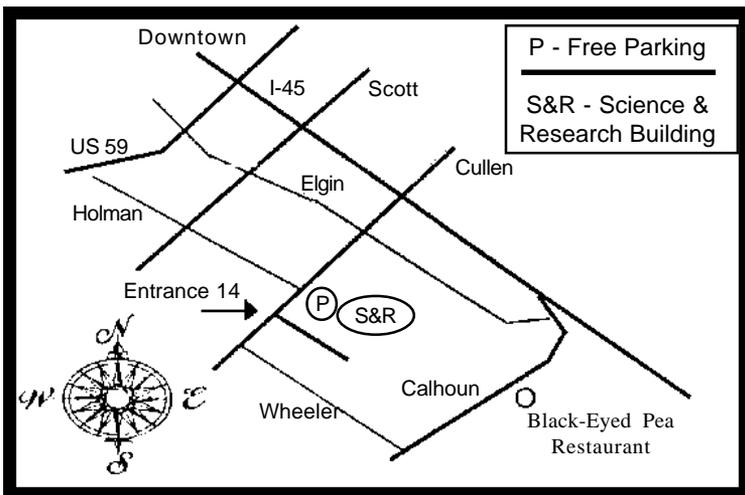
by Steve Goldberg, TSP Co-Chair

Have you ever been to the Texas Star Party? Want to go this year? The veterans will tell you that it is a lot of fun. You meet plenty of people and learn a lot about astronomy from the lectures and other attendees. And don't forget about the Great Texas Giveaway on Friday and Saturday nights. The dates for this year are May 13th to 20th. The location, as usual, is the Prude Ranch near Ft. Davis, TX., 12 miles from McDonald Observatory. The skies are some of the darkest in N. America.

If you are planning on attending and need housing arrangements at the Prude Ranch, the Ranch has motel-type rooms, small family cabins, bunkhouses, full hookup RV spaces, and tent camping. Because of the limited space, there is a drawing for the available space. To enter the drawing, which will take place at the end of January, you need to submit a form with your request for housing. Preference in the drawing is given to those requesting at least 5 days. You can get the form from the TSP web site, or watch for a flyer in the mail in early January. The deadline for the entry is January 26. After the initial drawing, a posting on the web site of the remaining space will be available.

If you have any questions, please email the TSP Housing Committee at tsprooms@sccsi.com. Or call the TSP Hotline at 713-721-9775, nights before 10PM and weekends after 9AM. The TSP web page is <http://www.metronet.com/~tsp>.

Continued...



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.

Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors Meeting is held on dates scheduled by the board at 7:00 p.m. in Room 106 of the Space Science Building at Rice University. Call StarLine for Board Meeting information. 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 ASCII text, MS-Word (preferred), or WordPerfect format on an IBM format floppy or via AOL (BILLP10566). Mail copy to the address shown on the outside cover or to the editor at 256 East 5th Street, Houston, TX 77007. 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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