



December, 2001

At the December 7 meeting...

Swap Meet!!!!
Buy!! Sell!! Swap!!

It's time for out with the old and in with the new (used). Bring your astronomy stuff that you're ready to part with, and your checkbook for acquiring new-to-you astronomy stuff.

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 & Past President** ★★★★★★★★★★

President: Kirk Kendrick H: 281-391-3834	Treasurer: Debbie Moran H: 713-666-9428
Vice Pres: Bill Leach H: 281-893-4057	Past President: Don Pearce H: 713-432-0734
Secretary: Art Ciampi H: 713-665-5008	

★★★★★★★★★ **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 281-443-8773	Rice U. Coord. Matt Delevoryas 713-795-0808
Logo Mds Sales Judy Dye 281-498-1703	Schedule Obs'v't'y Steve Goldberg 713-721-5077
Long Range Plan Bill Leach 281-893-4057	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. 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	Don Pearce	713-432-0734
Lunar & Planetary	John Blubaugh	713-921-4275
Occultations & Grazes ...	Wayne Hutchison	713-827-0828
Advanced	Bill Leach	713-863-8459

President's Corner

December 2001



by Kirk Kendrick

Well, it's been a year since I started as President. I want to thank all the committee chairmen, Board Members, and officers for a great year! We are entering 2002 with an enthusiastic group that should make next year as great as my first. I want to extend a special thanks to Don Pearce for being a great advisor and "past President" to me in my first year as President.

I am a few objects short of completing my observing targets... And STILL don't have a web site created. I guess it would help to install my copy of FrontPage. A lot of personal commitments that weren't quite met...but I had a great time!

Sorry I missed you all at the Astronomy Day activities. I had a prior commitment that was made to a close friend from work...that I couldn't break. I took 30 boys to do astronomy at the site...I'll leave the long version of the story to Mike Dye to tell, but I'll summarize by saying that I wish all groups were that well organized and behaved!

Now that winter approaches, I hope all of you take the time to look at the major planets. Jupiter and Saturn are prominent in the midnight sky. And Uranus is relatively easy from a dark site. My goal for the last 3 years has been to take a high-resolution color CCD image of Jupiter and Saturn. I'm 0 for 2 now...but with my mount tracking better I plan to go for it (again) this winter. I also WILL succeed in finishing 1/2 of my Messier "snapshot" images by the end of the year if the weather holds out...and the business trips stay scarce.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the meetings!

Clear skies!

...*Kirk*

Houston Astronomical Society

***Meeting Notice
For Friday, December 7, 2001***

~ Swap Meet ~

The first-ever H.A.S. Swap Meet will take place at the December meeting. Here's your opportunity to pass on some of your astronomical goodies to others and to acquire some new goodies for yourself!

How about that equipment that has been unused for the last year? Is it time for it to go? Let someone else try it out! What about the books that you read last year and don't intend to re-read? Clean off those bookshelves, bring the books to the meeting and walk out with new stuff or with cold cash.

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**

**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.**

November/December Calendar:



Photo by Scott Mitchell

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

7	1:52 p.m.	Last Quarter Moon
		HAS Club Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H
	8:00 p.m.	General membership meeting U of H.
8		Members Observatory Night-Columbus
14	12:01 a.m.	Geminid meteor shower maximum; often bright, plentiful, and slow.
		Some think that the shower is derived from asteroidal or semi-asteroidal, as opposed to cometary, fragments.
	2:47 p.m.	New Moon
	4:08 p.m.	Partial solar eclipse's maximum extent as seen from Houston.
		About 27% of sun's disk obscured by moon; about 14° altitude.
		First contact is at 2:56 p.m.
15		Prime Night-Columbus
18	7:30 p.m.	Advanced SIG Mtg. Rice Univ., contact Matt Delevoryas, 713-795-0808
21	1:22 p.m.	Winter Solstice. Sun reaches furthest southern limit.
22	2:57 p.m.	First Quarter Moon
30	4:41 a.m.	Full Moon

January 2002

4	7:00 p.m.	Novice Presentation - U of H
	8:00 p.m.	General membership meeting U of H.
5	9:55 p.m.	Last Quarter Moon
12		Prime Night-Columbus
13	7:29 a.m.	New Moon
15	7:30 p.m.	Advanced SIG Mtg. Rice Univ., contact Matt Delevoryas, 713-795-0808
21	11:47 a.m.	First Quarter Moon
28	4:51 p.m.	Full Moon

Send calendar events to JBlubaugh@aol.com

or call 713-921-4275.

The Seven Judges of Hell

By John Lane

Tighten your seat belt because I'm going to take your imagination on a ride to a place it has never been!!!

Imagine that you are living in ancient Arabia; in the land of the Akkad, with King Sargon as your emperor. This frame of thought should take you back in time to around the year 2,300 BC. As you do your daily chores that are required for your survival, you suddenly feel the ground shake hard enough for you to lose your balance. After a few moments of bewilderment, you notice the blue sky above being rolled up like a scroll by an immense ball of smoke and fire growing in the distance. Ok! Back to reality. Did you think it was a nuclear attack? Well, it's not. But, it is the legend of the Seven Judges of Hell.

The Seven Judges of Hell is an ancient Arabic legend that gives an account of what was a Middle Eastern disaster of apocalyptic proportion. The legend has it that the Seven Judges of Hell pored out their wrath upon the earth. They "raising their torches, setting the land ablaze with flames."* In their rage they "smashed the land like a cup... turning day into night,"* flooding the land with a great wave, reclaiming the high places to the depths of eternity.

Recent evidence suggest that this legend was caused by a meteor impact, 4,300 years ago, in the Al'Amarah region of modern day Iraq. In his article Meteor clue to end of Middle East Civilization, Robert Matthews implies that the legend of the Seven Judges and Gilgamesh was a way that people, of that time, could begin to describe and relate to what happen. It also appears that the two-mile-wide crater (which was a small lake up into the mid-1980s) was drained by a recent canal-building project.

Could there have been more than one impact? I think that the Seven Judges legend could have alluded to seven different strikes, some of which could have landed in the Persian Gulf or the Arabian Sea. This could have sent a wall of water rushing inland as far as the Caucasus Mountains; where you will coincidentally find the resting place of Noah's Ark. Matthews concluded his article by stating, "craters recently found in Argentina date from around the same period - suggesting that the Earth may have been hit by a shower of large meteors at about the same time."*

* Robert Matthews. Space.com. Online. April 4, 2001.

Early Amateur Astronomers in Houston

by Thomas R. Williams

(Part 2 of 3)

Last month we discussed Warren Fay Carothers of Houston, who owned a six-inch Clark refractor reputed to be the largest telescope on the Gulf Coast in about 1910. Not much is known of amateur astronomy in Houston between Carothers' time and about 1935 when James H. Logan began contributing monthly articles to the *Texas Observers Bulletin (TOB)*. Logan lived at 1419 West Bell in Houston at the time but he later moved to Dallas where he remained an active contributor to the *TOB*.

In 1938, Oscar E. Monnig, editor of the *TOB*, conducted a survey of amateur astronomy in Texas. From that survey we learn that there were more amateurs and telescopes in the Dallas-Fort Worth area than in Houston. However, one of the Houston's amateur telescopes, quite large for that time, was a 12-inch refractor owned by John A. Haschal. Faced with need to move to Shreveport, Louisiana, Haschal offered to donate the telescope to the City of Houston. Unfortunately, the fate of the Haschal instrument is unknown.

Through the pages of *TOB* we do learn something about a few Houston amateurs and their activities. W. S. Athey, who lived near the intersection of Gray and Fannin streets, was very active and well known as an amateur astronomer from about 1938 to the late 1940s. Because he was well known as an astronomer, Athey was called upon to investigate and explain strange night-lights that were observed from Houston and from ships at sea during the late 1930s. His investigation showed that the lights were a reflection of extensive natural gas flaring in connection with East Texas oil production. Concerns about these strange sightings continued well into the late 1940s in spite of Athey's authoritative explanation of the phenomena.

Athey was interested in navigation as well as astronomy. He authored an article in the *TOB* on "The Navigation Stars." As a result of Athey's well-known involvement with astronomy, he was invited the dedication of the McDonald Observatory in 1939, as were Logan, Monnig and several other amateurs from the Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth areas.

Observations... of the editor

by **Bill Pellerin**, *GuideStar Editor*

The sky on the evening of 11/17/01 wasn't good. While a few stars were visible, the cloud cover only got worse as time went on, and by late evening, no more stars appeared through the overcast. We saw one (uncertain) meteor during this time, low to the east.

At 4:00 a.m. on 11/18/01, things were different. The skies were clear, but the transparency wasn't very good. Looking at the sky was like looking through a dirty window. That said, we saw 234 meteors from 04:00 until 05:15. Of those, all but a few were clearly Leonids. The few sporatics came from directions other than the radiant.

At 04:00, Leo was well above the horizon and the radiant was well placed in the eastern sky. Some of the later meteors were seen below the radiant and near the horizon. The meteor flashes were typically about 10 degrees long and quite bright, easily as bright as any star in the sky. A few were very bright and a few were quite a bit shorter. The shorter meteor flashes were likely due to the angle of the meteor path relative to our viewing position.

This was an excellent shower, and I was surprised to see it at all given the weather conditions on Saturday night, and the forecast for Sunday. It was not, however, a meteor storm, as some had predicted.

This month's *GuideStar*

John Lane is a new contributor with his item called "The Seven Judges of Hell", a very interesting story of a (possible) long ago meteor strike.

Tom Williams, a serious student of astronomical history, gives us some additional information on early amateur astronomy in Houston. The first part of this article appeared in the November, 2001 *GuideStar*, and the last part of the article will appear in the January, 2002 issue.

This will be the last month that Mike and Judy Dye see to it that a printed copy of the *GuideStar* reaches your hand. After having taken on the

Continued....

Observations... from page 4

responsibility for printing, assembling, and mailing the *GuideStar* for several years, they're passing that responsibility on. Many thanks to Judy and Mike for their outstanding effort in behalf of the Houston Astronomical Society.

Last month's meeting

Last month we had a presentation by Dr. Mark Matney of NASA on meteors in general and the (then) upcoming Leonid meteor shower. Armed with charts, graphs, and slides, Dr. Matney had us all set for the meteor shower by the end of the evening. As usual, our program committee recruited a fine speaker for the program.



Dr. Mark
Matney



Darin Palmer

Darin Palmer, our loaner telescope chair reviewed the function of his committee and the inventory of telescopes available to members who have been paid-up for at least two months.

Marg Nunez provided refreshments and door prizes for the members and guests attending the meeting. Good stuff, as usual.

Thanks to all the contributors and to everyone who does his or her part to make the organization a success.

With the new society year starting, you have an opportunity to contribute to the membership. Ask what you can do!

Membership Renewals...

Please check the mailing label on your copy of the *GuideStar*.

It'll tell you when your membership expires. If it expires soon, please send your renewal to the address on the outside cover of *GuideStar*. The dues information is on the inside front cover.

Membership in the Houston Astronomical Society is one of the great bargains in Astronomy. For a regular membership of \$33 you get the opportunity to support an active and growing organization, you get the monthly *GuideStar* newsletter, and you get access to the outstanding H.A.S. observing site near Columbus, Texas. (You must attend an orientation, given monthly, to use the site.) And, after two months of membership you can borrow, at no charge, one of the Society's loaner telescopes. It's the best deal in town, we think. Please renew your membership when it expires.

Thanks!

Other Meetings...

Fort Bend Astronomy Club meets the third Friday of the month at 8:00 p.m. at the First Colony conference Center. Novice meeting begins at 7:00, regular meeting begins at 8:00. Web site: <http://rampages.onramp.net/~binder/>

Johnson Space Center Astronomical Society meets in the the Lunar and Planetary Institute on the 2nd Friday of each month. Web site: <http://www.ghgcorp.com/cbr/jscas.html>

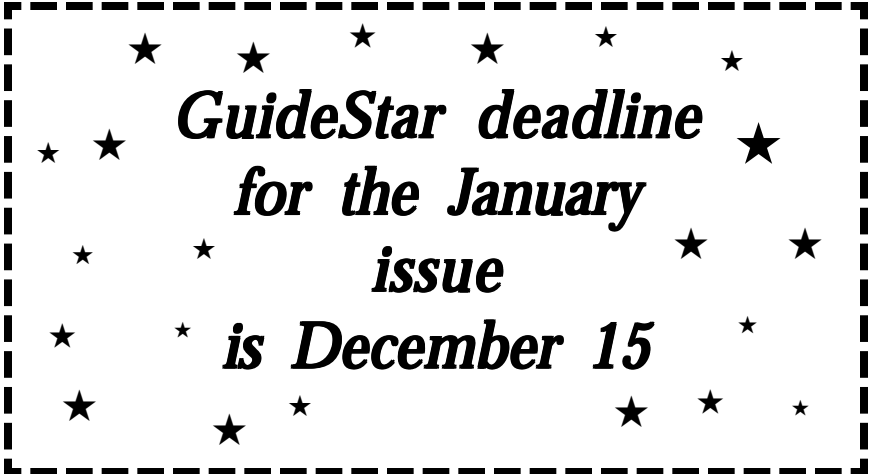
North Houston Astronomy Club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the 4th Friday of each month in the Teaching Theatre of the Student Center at Kingwood College. Call 281-312-1650 or E-mail bill.leach@nhmccd.edu. Web site: www.astronomyclub.org

HAS Web Page

The Houston Astronomical Society Web page has information on the society, its resources, and meeting information.

The address is: <http://www.astronomyhouston.org>

Want your astronomy work and name on the Internet for the whole world to see? Have some neat equipment? Pictures in film, CCD, hand drawings or video format are all welcome on the page. Do you have an idea to improve the page? I'm listening. Send me Email at goldberg@sccsi.com. (You can click on my name on the HAS home page). Or, you can call Steve Goldberg (WebMaster), at 713-721-5077.



***GuideStar deadline
for the January
issue
is December 15***

Observatory Duty Roster

by Michael B. Dye, Observatory Chairman

This is the duty list for December, January (02) and February (02). 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.

December Supervisor Logan Rimes 713-681-5397

Christopher Mendell	Site		
Larry Mitchell	Members	Observatory Night	12-08-01
Jeff Moore	Site		
Debbie Moran	Site		
Mark K. Mulrooney	Site		
Ben Negy, Jr.	Members	Observatory Night	12-08-01
Johnny Norris	Members	Observatory Night	12-08-01
Richard Nugent	Site		

January Supervisor Robert Rogers 281-997-9682

Margaret Nunez	Members	Observatory Night	01-xx-02
Ralph Overturf	Site		
Don Pearce	Members	Observatory Night	01-xx-02
Sim Picheloup	Site		
Glenn Ray	Members	Observatory Night	01-xx-02
Mike Reynolds	Site		
Henry Schneider	Site		
Steve Simpson	Site		

February Supervisor Cooper Walls 713-461-9590

Larry Waddle	Site		
Mark Watson	Site		
Tom Williams	Members	Observatory Night	02-xx-02
Barbara Wilson	Members	Observatory Night	02-xx-02
Buster Wilson	Members	Observatory Night	02-xx-02
Warren Wundt	Site		
John Blubaugh	Site		
John Chauvin	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.

Logo Sales

For H.A.S. Logo merchandise, call:
Judy Ann Dye - 281-498-1703

Hooded Sweatshirts

M	\$31.00
L	\$31.00
XL	\$31.00
XXL	\$33.00

These are the prices for our new hooded sweatshirts. These are made from heavy sweatshirt material and were very popular at the previous meetings. If you want one, come to the December meeting -- cash and checks accepted.



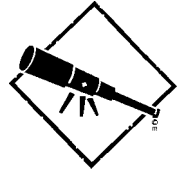
Judy shows the logo on the back of the new hooded sweatshirts.

∞ Want Ads ∞

For Sale: Nexstar 8, like brand new- w\ accessories, asking \$1175 & 5.5" Celestron Schmidt Camera w\ 2 filter & 2 regular fim holder, asking \$1400! Thanks & God Bless. Phone # is 281-444-7101 or cell #- 281-468-1434 Bennie "BOBO" Negy Jr.

Wanted: A copy of Tom Lorenzin's "The Astronomer's Field Guide To Deep Sky Observing- 1000+" Contact: Clayton L. Jeter hm: 281-383-1337 pg. 713-687-8844 Email: stonebloke@aol.com

Observatory Corner



By Michael B. Dye Observatory Chairman



For those of you who noticed that our club president was not at Astronomy Day last month, he had a good reason. He was sponsoring a troop of Boy Scouts out at the Observatory Site. His rendition of what happened is as follows. Scout Troop 211 with about 30 boys and 8 adults arrived at the site on 25 Oct around 9:00 p.m. and left around 9:00 a.m. on 27th. Jerod Kendrick met them at the roadside park and brought them in Friday night. The Scouts camped in Logan's Glen and did a great job! Friday night, several viewed with Ed Szczepanski, Jerod Kendrick and Bob Rogers. Saturday morning, the scouts formed a pair of work groups, the first large one to clear the brush out of the north fence line along the road, and a smaller one led by Jerod to walk the fence and try to figure out how the cows are getting in. Besides repairing a couple of small loose wires, it isn't evident how the cows are getting in. Saturday night, Bob Rogers, Kirk Kendrick, and Clayton Jeter worked the observatory and showed the scouts a few sites. Clayton and his friend John Missavage were there to use the F/7 to view the planets (Uranus, Saturn, and Jupiter primarily).

Two of the adult leaders in Troop 211 (Ed Boulware and Mike Andries) work with Kirk and have been planning a celestial visit for a few months. The event was great! Many, many thanks to Bob and Clayton for their immense help.

Another good time was had by a scout troop at the Observatory Site. If any member has a troop of either Boy or Girl Scout that they want to sponsor out at the Observatory Site, please contact me.

Next on our list of fun things is the Randalls report. For the Third Quarter of this year, July through September, we spent a total of \$9,832.17 at various Randall's stores. This spending spree resulted in a check (not yet received) of \$98.32, which will be split 50/50 between the Observatory Fund and the club General Treasury. Our account will zero out and

Continued...

Observatory Corner... from previous page

started over again on October 1st. So please link your Randalls card to the Houston Astronomical Society so that the society can benefit from this Randalls program. Our number is #6618. This is very easy to do, just go to the Courtesy Booth and tell the person there what you what to do. We are also in the process of getting a Kroger number that does the same thing for Kroger. In fact Bill Leach is actively working on this very activity and should have some (hopefully) good news to report soon.

The next item I was going to talk about was the RV results so far. Unfortunately I left all the files at the Office (Rice University) and sense I am up against a deadline; I will do that report next time. This does not mean all the votes are in, in fact only about 8 or 10 people have sent me anything. And I know there are more people in the club with an opinion. I would like to here from more members. Don't be shy, the only way we can do this and come up with an answer that the majority agree with is for members to inform me which option they dislike the least. Currently we have room for about seven (7) RV's to be in use at the Observatory Site at any one time. We (the Observatory Committee and the Board of Directors) have not yet worked out a comprehensive policy about use of RV's at the Observatory Site. To help move our decision along, I am asking for feed back from members. Our Policy options work out to roughly the following:

- 1.) RV's may be used at the Observatory Site but not stored for any length of time. (like more than 2 weeks)
- 2.) RV's may not be used at the Observatory Site.
- 3.) RV's may be used and a limited number may be stored at the Observatory Site.

Your opinion counts. Please E-mail your response to one the three options above or even an option I didn't consider to 'mbdye@rice.edu' or 'mbdye@aol.com'. If you don't have E-mail or feel you want to talk about your answer (opinion), feel free to call me in the evenings from 7 PM to 10 PM almost any weekday evening.

As most members know, the Society had the election of Officers and Chairman again at this past November General Meeting. It will come as

Continued...

Observatory Corner... from previous page

no surprise to almost no one that I was re-elected as Observatory Chairman. I am announcing the members of the 2002 Observatory Committee. We have only one new member this year. The new member is observer, comet discoverer, and astrophotographer, Ed Szczepanski. The Committee Members are as follows:

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
Ed Szczepanski Grounds Keeper

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. Also I have not yet worked up a schedule for Prime Night and Members Observatory Night dates. When I get this done I will publish it for all to see.

Please fill out the appropriate log form when you use the site.

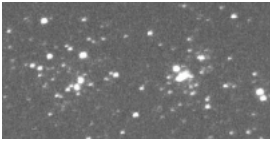
Remember we use these forms as attendance records and to report Observatory Site problems such as broken toilets.

Astrophotos from Kent Francis

Kent Francis sent some electronic versions of images made during his first attempt at deep sky objects with a camera piggybacked to his LX200.

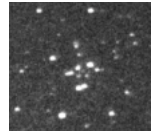
By Kent Francis

All images were shot in my driveway here in The Woodlands on Nov 5th using my OM-1 with Fuji 1600 film and 210 mm lens with 2X doubler f/2.8. The exposure for each was for 10 minutes and I guided them manually with my 8 inch LX 200. I scanned the prints and just trimmed in Adobe Photo Deluxe and put on the text names.



This is a picture of the famous double cluster in Perseus. This pair of open clusters will fit within a wide-angle eyepiece view of most telescopes, and is a wonderful sight. It's unusual in that open clusters don't normally appear close together in the sky. This set of relatively young stars also looks good in binoculars, and it's bright enough to see from the city.

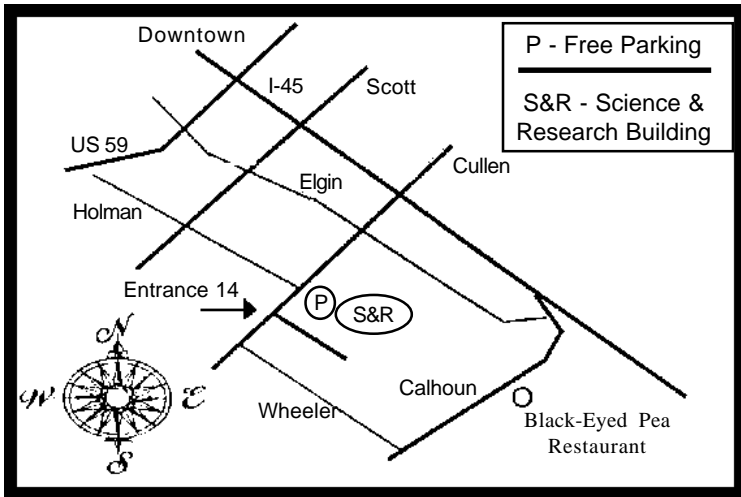
Kent's second image is of M34 (NGC 1039), another open cluster in Perseus. The cluster is composed of about 80 stars, and there are several double stars in the cluster to examine with your telescope.



While you're in the neighborhood, keep an eye on Algol, "the demon star". It's a short-period variable with a 2.9 day cycle. Check *Sky & Telescope* for minima of Algol. The magnitude change is from 2.2 to 3.5 over that period of time. There are nearby reference stars that you can use for comparison. Check your sky atlas. Everything you need to know about Algol is in the handy book *Stars and Planets* (a Peterson Field Guide) by Jay M. Pasachoff.

Then, there's the ET Cluster, NGC 457, featuring two bright 'eyes' and the outstretched 'arms' of ET himself. Check it out.

..Bill Pellerin, GuideStar Editor



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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