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Located 300 million light-years away in the constellation Coma Berenices, the colliding galaxies have been nicknamed "The Mice" because of the long tails of stars and gas emanating from each galaxy. Otherwise known as NGC 4676, the pair will eventually merge into a single giant galaxy.

Credit: [NASA](#), Holland Ford (JHU), the ACS Science Team and [ESA](#)

GUIDESTAR

June 2020

Membership and the Community



President's Letter

Joe Khalaf

As we approach the halfway point in what's been a year unlike any I've experienced in my lifetime, I'm reminded that, despite all of the changes around us, we're still doing the best we can with the hands we're all dealt. We keep hearing things like "this is the new normal" or "things won't be back to the way they were for a long time," which is all true. But human beings are nothing if not resilient, and we tend to take comfort in our routines to compensate for all of the changes we've faced for months now.

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Don Selle

Guidestar Editor

As I write this, the state of Texas is in the process of “reopening” from the Corona Virus lock down. What is clear is that while we are far from being out of the woods yet, the situation in Texas was less severe than in other parts of the country and it is

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We are also fortunate that astronomy is an outdoor activity, and that with some restrictions (see the observatory notice in this issue), the HAS Columbus dark site is open for use by our members. The size and arrangement of the observing field ensure that we can maintain our space without too much difficulty. Now if only the weather would cooperate!

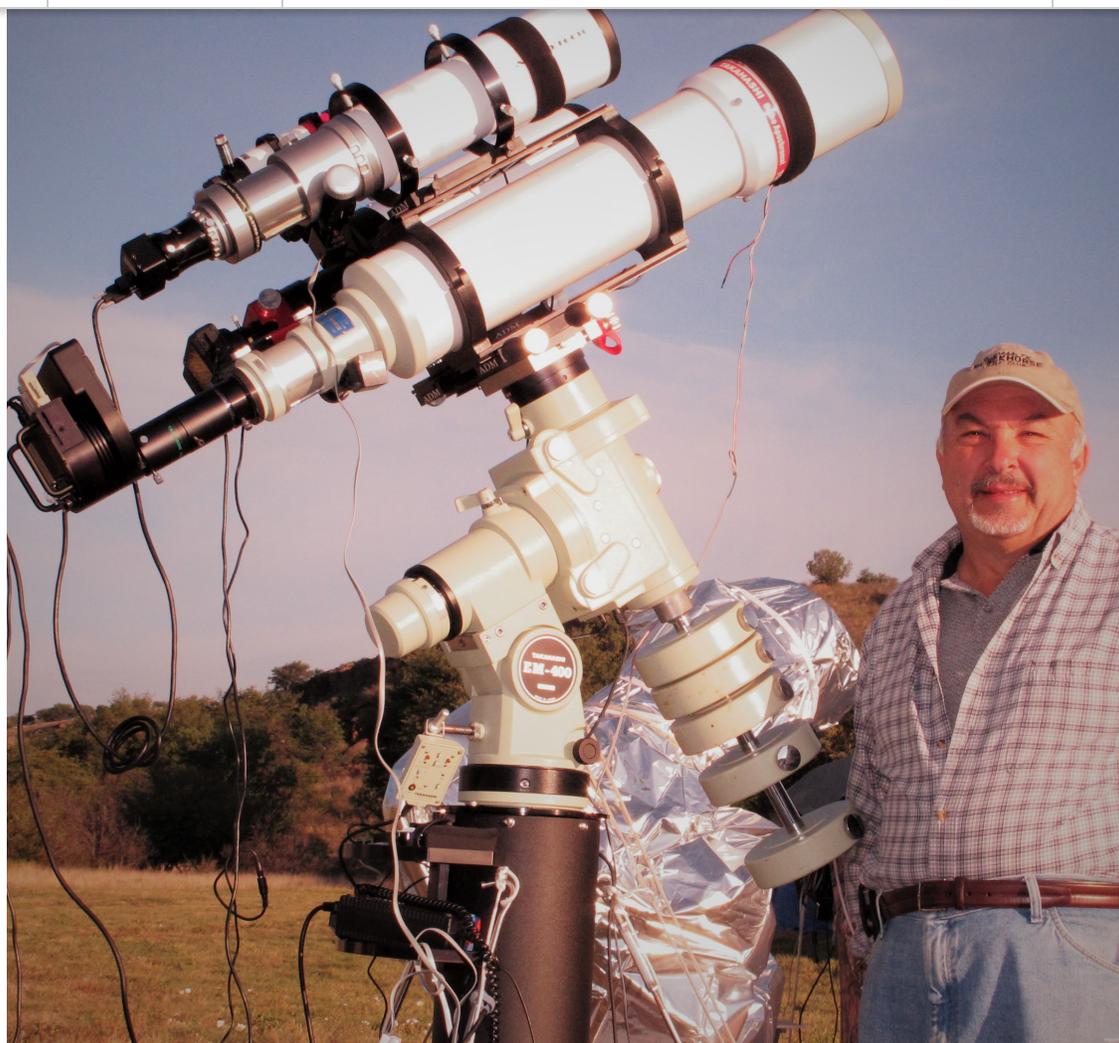
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HAS June Meeting
Main Presentation - Via Zoom
June 05, 2020, 7:00PM:

**“Development of the Astronomical Observatory at Prairie
View A&M”**

Speaker: Brian Cudnik

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**HAS June Meeting
Novice Presentation - Via Zoom
June 04, 2020, 7:00PM:
“I Have This Scope and Want to do Astrophotography”
Speaker: Don Selle**

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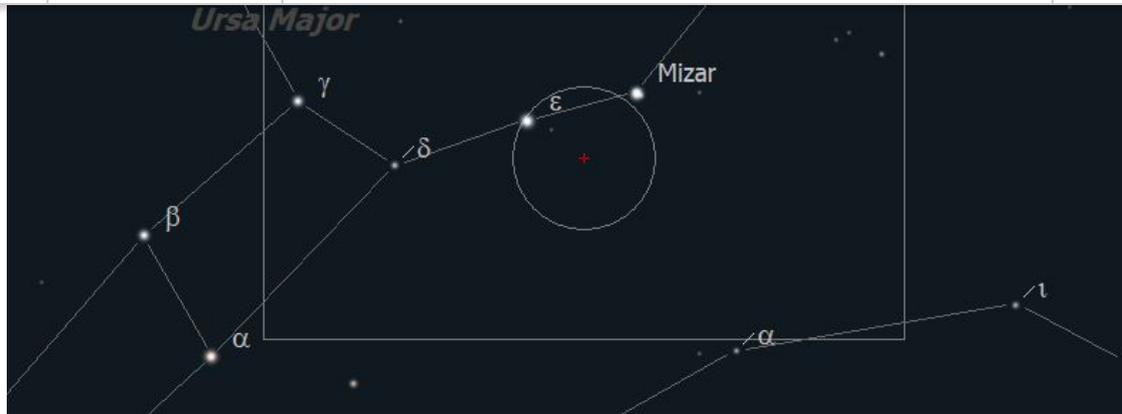
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Getting Kids Into Astronomy

By: Amelia Goldberg

I recently began a new project designed to get children actively involved in astronomy by observing with their own telescope. My idea is to find old telescopes that might need a little TLC, like a new coat of paint, add on a Telrad or something of that nature. My goal is to find some 6" – 10" telescopes with descent optics at a low cost. Rather than putting money into purchasing scopes, I wanted to spend the money making the telescope a personalized scope for a specific child. The child would choose the color, choose how to decorate it and choose a name for it. I feel this will really make it their own and instill a "pride of ownership" in the child. I also hope that if the children have their own telescopes, they would be more likely to want to get out with them to observe. In other words, I hope to light that spark of interest. The plan is to have the children actually do a lot of the work themselves. I also plan to work with the children, helping them learn how to be an observer.

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Eiffel Tower - Asterism of the Month - June 2020

Steve Goldberg

Asterism: a grouping of stars that form a recognizable pattern.

This month we have a two for one special! There are two Eiffel Tower assterims, one in the constellation Ursa Major and the other in the constellation Gemini

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HAS Observatory use during COVID-19

Although the observatory roof has been fixed, only those already trained on observatory use can reserve time on the observatory telescopes. In addition, only two telescope operators—one on each telescope—is permitted to enter and use the

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Observatory / Dark Site Rules

- The observatory is open only to previously trained operators as described above. Bring your own eyepieces – the observatory eyepiece case is not available.
- The observatory building is not open for in-person training
- Dark Site observing pads, RVs, private observatories, and restrooms are *open*
- The bunkhouses are *closed*
- Tent camping in the designated camping area is permitted
- All other rules covered in online site training apply

To reserve time on an observatory telescope, email hasbooking@astronomyhouston.org. For questions about the observatory and use of the dark site facilities, email observatory@astronomyhouston.org. To take online site training, log into the website and click button Start Your Training near the bottom of this page <https://astronomyhouston.org/about/has-observatory>.

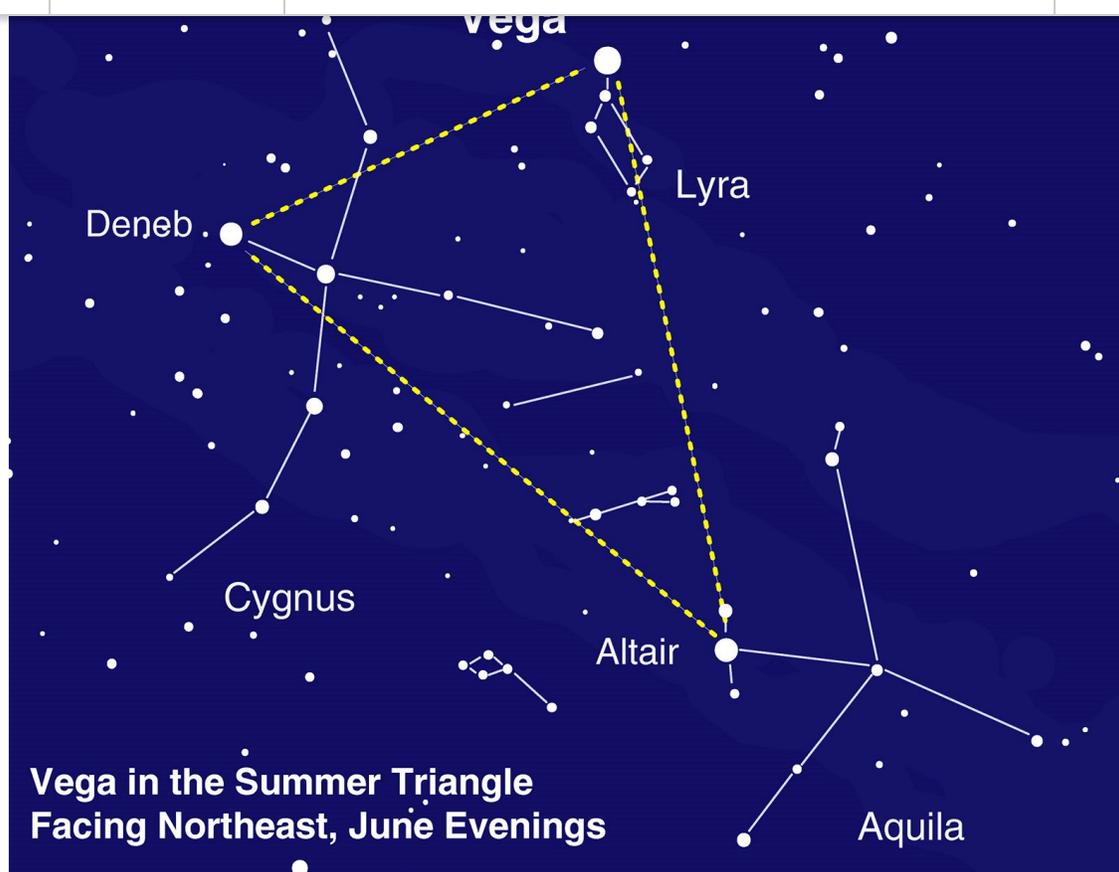


Messier of the Month - June 2020

Jim King

This is the fourth installment of a series of columns primarily revolving around observing the Messier Catalogue. The intent is to provide the reader a small sampling of the Messier objects each month that are most visible in the time frame the column is published. Hence, these deep sky objects should be easily identifiable in and around the month of June. Late spring is galaxy time and June is no exception. Some months, like June, will have a special treat in addition to the Messier Objects. Check the trailer.

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Summer Triangle Corner: Vega

David Prosper and Vivian White

If you live in the Northern Hemisphere and look up during June evenings, you'll see the brilliant star **Vega** shining overhead. Did you know that Vega is one of the most studied stars in our skies? As one of the brightest summer stars, Vega has fascinated astronomers for thousands of years.

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June 2020 Visual Challenge Object

Ed Fraini

The purpose of the visual challenge object is to encourage visual observation and to help each other improve our observational skills. This month's target is a small dim globular cluster in Ophiuchus that will take good observational skills. It will help us reach this goal by comparing our observations. The HAS VSIG would love to hear about your visual observations. Send them to Ed Fraini at edf@astronomyhouston.org and he will get them posted to the VSIG list server, or just share them to the VSIG list server directly (contact Ed to subscribe to that list also).

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