

SPACE

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club Examiner

January 2017

Editor - Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 276 adult members are dedicated to promoting and sharing the wonders and science of astronomy. We host dark-sky and local star parties, telescope-making workshops, science lectures, astronomy lectures, educational outreach sessions and much more.

President's Message

KYLE BRINKMAN



This is important.

There will be no monthly meeting at the Science Center this month only. The Orange Blossom Star Party is that week. Many of us will be out there having a great time. The monthly meetings at the Science Center will resume in February.

We had some good times in 2016. The OBS was blessed with good skies every night. Our outreach reached many people every month. The monthly meetings were well attended, and we had some great topics. We are going to build on these things and make 2017 a year to remember.

This coming year should be great for astronomy. We are anticipating the great 2017 solar eclipse. This will be the first one in nearly a century that crosses the continental US from sea to sea. This event will receive a lot of media attention. Most of the US lives within a day's drive of the eclipse's path. Public interest in astronomy should increase as we approach August 21st.

Our club's own Antonio Paris (also of St Petersburg College and MOSI) is going to be testing his research on the Wow Signal this



month. He spoke to our club about his publication last year. The Wow Signal was an observation by radio astronomy in 1977 that bore the expected hallmarks of an extraterrestrial signal. Good luck Tony!

I hope you all have a wonderful new year. Keep looking up

New Members

We would like to welcome Yadira Sierra, Jose & Aania Ramirez, Jennifer Brackney, Tom & Germaine Knapp, Brad & Lisa Perryman, Darrel Lashley, Kevin Kelly, Ryan Robertson, Kyle & Casey Mallard, and Garry Potts to our family of members.

General Meeting

There will not be a General Meeting in January due to the conflict with the Orange Blossom Star Party.

Mirror Lab

The mirror lab will not be open on Saturday, January 28th.

Upcoming Programs

March 25th - Spring Picnic at Withlacoochee. Please refer to the SPAC calendar on the website.

2017 Orange Blossom Star Party

Registration for this year's annual Star Party is now closed. We have more than 110 adults and ten children registered. Next month's Examiner will have all the scoop on this year's event.

New Moon at Withlacoochee

KELLY ANDERSON

★ The final Dark of the Moon weekend for 2016 was a mixed bag, cloudy as well as clear nights, but enjoyable throughout.

Falling as it did over the New Year's weekend, a few of us started early on Thursday. Joe Canzoneri, Ron & Dee Wayland, and I showed up that afternoon and set up our scopes. Tom Boyko arrived later for just the evening. Unfortunately, we only observed the bottoms of overcast clouds that night. Sigh. It seems like this has been the "Year of the Overcast," and we were worried our nearly unbroken string would continue.

Allen and Betsy Force brought in the "Leviathan" for landing on Friday, and we were also joined by Elizabeth and Roy Ward, who set up their tent under their favorite tree. Dusk greeted us with a colorful sunset, but alas, also with more overcast. The skies did clear about 2 am, but it was too late for us to do anything about it. At least it was for me because by then I had grown very fond of my nice, warm bed.

Saturday afternoon we welcomed Shane Eigell, late of the Tucson Astronomy Club and newly arrived in Florida. We were finally rewarded Saturday evening with mostly clear

skies with only a very high, very thin cirrus layer. Seeing was generally good, and Joe and I got some good images. Joe and I decided to stay one more day (everyone else went away on Sunday morning), and the skies cooperated, being even clearer than the previous night. Joe stayed up past midnight, a highly unusual event!

The next Dark of the Moon is, of course, the Orange Blossom Special! We start on Wednesday, the 25th of January, and continue through Sunday, with a host of events and guaranteed clear skies. Well, hopefully, clear skies, anyway, but no matter, I'm sure everyone's looking forward to our Winter Star Gangle on the banks of the beautiful Withlacoochee River.

February Astronomical Events

JACK FRITZ

★ February's full Moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Snow Moon because the heaviest snows usually fell during this time of the year. Since hunting is difficult, this moon has also been known by some tribes as the Full Hunger Moon, since the harsh weather made hunting difficult.

February:

- 3rd - Moon at First Quarter
- 11th - Full Moon
- 17th - Jupiter at aphelion and Venus at its greatest brightness.
- 18th - Moon at Third Quarter
- Feb 22nd - Conjunction of the Moon and Pluto
- 25th - Conjunction of Moon and Mercury.
- 26th - New Moon
- 28th - Conjunction of the Moon and Venus

SPAC Business Meeting 

Our next meeting is Wednesday, February 8th, at 8:00 PM at the Science Center. All interested members are invited to attend. All club business decisions are made at the business meeting so as not to encumber the general meeting.

Officers & Directors

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Vice Pres.:	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
Secretary:	Shirley Vuille	727 864-2624
Treasurer:	Jim Hunter	813 909-7013
Dir.-at-Large:	John O'Neill	727 637-5945
Dir.-at-Large:	David Pearson	727-215-1526
Dir.-at-Large:	Allen Maroney	727 867-4781
SPACE Editor	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
Public Relations	John O'Neill	727 637-5945
Membership Chair	Shirley Vuille	727 864-2624
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Click on the name to send email

Recognition of Patrons & Benefactors:

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Editor	Jack Fritz	813 508-5680
Assistant Editor	Nancy Huff	813 621-3606
Reporter	Kelly Anderson	813 672-2751
In the News	Steve Robbins	386 736-9123
Mirror Lab	Ralph Craig	727 384-2086

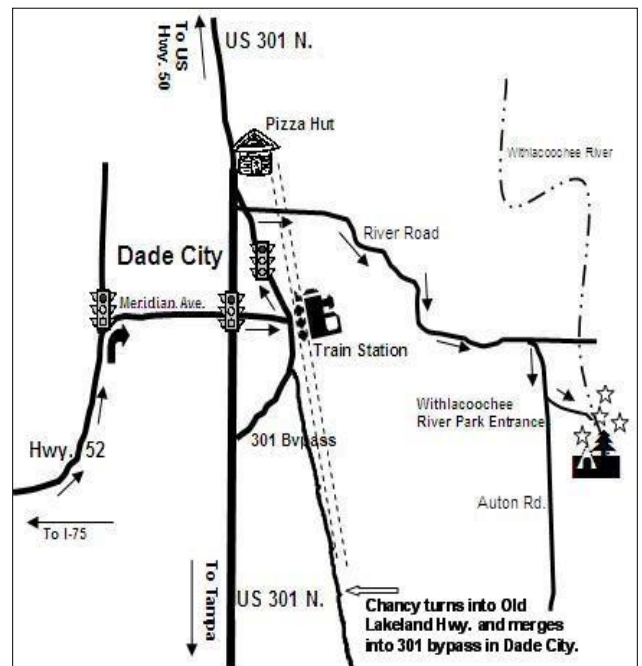
Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend

Our next New Moon Weekend falls on February 24th and 25th.

The park gate is locked at Sundown, so you will need to arrive before then. The year-round camping fee with electrical use is \$10/night for club members and \$20 for non-

members. Tent camping without electric is \$5/night.

Be reminded that if you are not camping, you must pay the \$2/vehicle fee. Vehicles displaying the handicap parking tag are exempt. For further information, contact Bill or Nancy Huff. starhopr3@msn.com or 813 621-3606.



Withlacoochee River Park - Dade City, FL

Detailed directions can be found at:

www.StPeteAstronomyClub.org



15406 Stonecreek Lane
Tampa, FL 33613

SPAC, INC. MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, Inc. is open to anyone, regardless of age, who is interested in astronomy. Dues are considered donations and are non-refundable. Membership options are available as listed below:

To join or renew your membership:

Complete the following form and return it with your payment to: Jim Hunter - Treasurer, 17316 Oak Ledge Dr., Lutz, FL 33549-7626 - Telephone number (813) 909-7013 (checks should be made payable to SPAC, Inc.)

Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Spouse: _____ Children (*Under 18*): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ St. ____ Zip: _____

E-Mail address: _____ Newsletter Preference: Email [] US Mail [] \$25

Single: [] \$ 30.00/YR. Includes one adult, minor children, the "SPACE" newsletter, and all the rights and privileges of membership.

Family: [] \$ 35.00/YR. Includes two adults, minor children and the above rights and privileges.

Patron: [] \$ 50.00/YR. A Patron member is entitled to the above rights and privileges.

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

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