



THE DARK SKY OBSERVER

The Dark Sky Observer is a publication of the North Jersey Astronomical Group (NJAG), whose purpose is to promote the study and knowledge of the science of astronomy.

The Dark Sky Observer needs your input! Letters, comments, suggestions, book and product reviews, and articles are welcomed and encouraged. Contact the editor at 973-340-5963, kdconod@earthlink.net, or at this address:

Dark Sky Observer

North Jersey Astronomical Group
P.O. Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472
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VISIT OUR WEB PAGE AT

<http://community.nj.com/cc/njag>.

Mary Lou West also maintains a web page at:
<http://www.csam.montclair.edu/~west/njag.html>

MEMBERSHIP

Dues are only \$15.00 per year (\$20.00 for family and \$10.00 for student memberships). Benefits of membership include: \$10 discount on subscriptions to "Sky & Telescope" or "Astronomy" magazines ("Sky & Telescope" subscribers also get a 10% discount on all books, maps, and products at Sky Publishing); a subscription to this newsletter; an e-mail list for the latest club and astronomy news; use of our dark sky sites; field trips to local planetariums, science centers, and star parties; a lending library of astronomical books; a Telescope Loan Program; and star parties for special celestial events.

Make checks out to the NJAG and mail to: North Jersey Astronomical Group, P.O. Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472. If you have any questions regarding membership, contact our Acting Membership Committee Chair, Kevin Conod at: kdconod@earthlink.net or 973-340-5963.

UACNJ

The NJAG is a member of the United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey (UACNJ), a consortium of more than a dozen astronomy clubs, united to better help support, coordinate, and communicate ideas between stargazers in and around the state. The UACNJ operates an observatory at Jenny Jump State Forest near Hope, NJ which serves as the NJAG's dark sky site.

STARGAZERS SAFE

In the wake of the World Trade Center collapse, it seems that most of the amateur astronomy community in New Jersey came through the ordeal safely. The closest call we heard came from one of our members from Staten Island. Anthony Barra was on the 97th floor of tower 2. He got banged around a bit but made it out with a few minutes to spare. Walt Windish notes his company's offices were on the 102nd and 103rd floors of tower 1. Fortunately the company moved to Jersey City in 1990.

What do you say in a situation like this? After the Voyager 1 spacecraft took a picture of Earth from deep space in 1990, the late Carl Sagan wrote:

"Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity - in all this vastness -- there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves. It is up to us...It's been said that astronomy is a humbling, and I might add, a character-building experience. To my mind, there is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly and compassionately with one another and to preserve and cherish that pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known."

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the NJAG will be Wednesday, October 10. Meetings begin promptly at 8:00 p.m. in Richardson Hall, room 226, on the campus of Montclair State University. Call 973-680-8420 or see our web page for directions.

NOVEMBER MEETING

At the November meeting Dr. Ted Williams of Rutgers University will give a presentation on SALT, the new South African Large Telescope.

FALL STARGAZING

Thursday Nights are Telescope Nights
September 6 to December 13

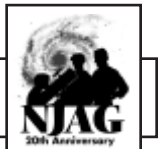
**Thursday Nights
are
Telescope Nights
Sept. 6 to Dec. 13**

Montclair State University and the North Jersey Astronomical Group will team up for a free "Telescope Night" every Thursday night (weather permitting) through December 13. From 8:00 to 9:00 p.m., several large telescopes will be set up on the south side of Richardson Hall (the math & science building). Bring your friends and kids to explore the wonders of the night sky! (Note there will be no Telescope Night on November 22 due to the Thanksgiving holiday.)

The Moon will be featured on October 4 and 25, and November 1 and 29. Mars will be visible in September and October and then Saturn in November and December. Call 973-680-8420 or see our web page for directions.

STARLINE

For a weekly update on the night sky, call the StarLine at 973-680-8420.



NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following to the ranks of the NJAG. Look for the following new faces at upcoming meetings and events!

Timothy Campana Nutley, NJ
Mike Taliento & family Secaucus, NJ
William Dillon New Providence, NJ
William Donnally Boonton Twp, NJ
Mark Eifenbein Upper Montclair, NJ
Mary Fletcher & family Bloomfield, NJ
Richard Potter Hasbrouk Heights, NJ
Jewel Seehaus-Fisher Highland Park, NJ
Barbara Calluori & family Nutley, NJ
Clare Jordon Nutley, NJ

P.O. BOX REMINDER

We've been asked several times recently where to send membership and magazine renewals. Remember that the NJAG has a Post Office Box in Clifton. All correspondence, membership renewals, etc., no matter what the topic, can be sent to the P.O. Box (hey we're paying for it, you might as well use it!). We'll make sure it gets to the correct party.

North Jersey Astronomical Group, P.O.
Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472

NEW NJAG MAILING LIST

The NJAG's very successful e-mail list has operated via Listbot.com since September 2000. Listbot recently announced that it is closing down its free mailing list service. As a result we have opened a new list through Yahoogroups. If you'd like to keep in touch with other members and be informed of NJAG activities, star parties, and special events, you can register at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/njag>.

METEOR WATCH

November 17

9:00 p.m. - 12:00 Midnight

Weather Permitting at Riker Hill Art Park, Beaufort Ave., Livingston

Catch a shooting star! The Newark Museum, the County of Essex Department of Parks, and NJAG will sponsor a free Meteor Watch on Saturday, November 17. From 9:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight, join us for the annual Leonid meteor shower. Our telescopes will also focus on other wonders of the night sky.

Our telescopes can't see through clouds! If this event needs to be canceled due to the weather, a message will be left after 6:00 p.m. at: (973) 680-8420.

Directions to Riker Hill Art Park:

Riker Hill Art Park is located off Beaufort Ave. in Livingston.

*Take the NJ Turnpike to Exit 15W or Garden State Parkway to Exit 145

*Take Route 280 West to Exit 4A

*Take Eisenhower Parkway south. Go straight at the first light.

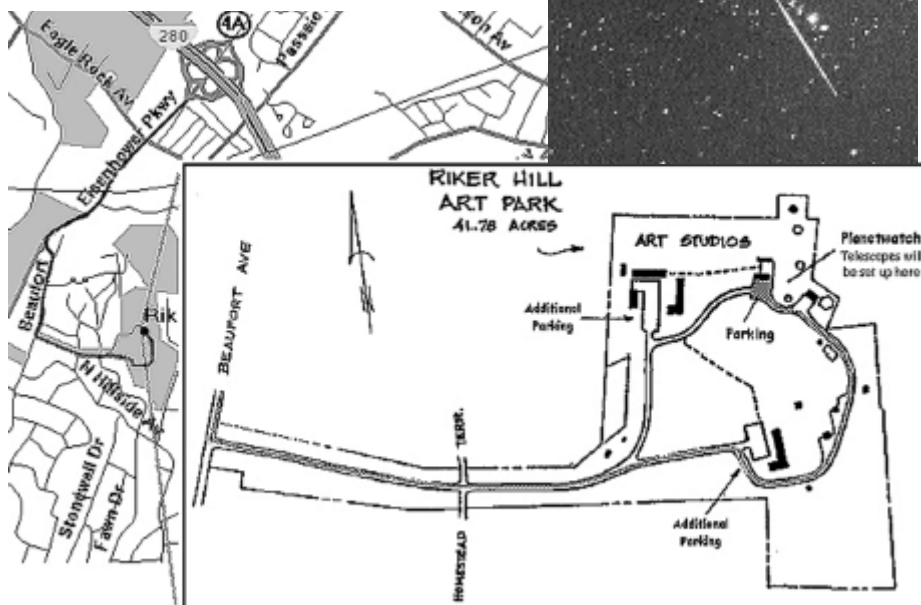
*Cross the railroad tracks and go up the hill.

*Make a left onto Beaufort Ave.

*Make a right turn to continue on Beaufort. A few blocks down make a left at the sign for Riker Hill Art Park.

*Go straight at the stop sign. Keep to the right at the fork in the road.

*Telescopes will be set up in the field on your right at the very top of the hill.



STUMP THE ASTRONOMERS

Have a question about astronomy?

Send it in to Kevin Conod at the address on page 1

or to kdconod@earthlink.net

and we'll try to have an answer in the next newsletter.

RENEWING MAGAZINES

As you may know, NJAG members get a discount on Astronomy and Sky & Telescope magazines. If you get a renewal notice remember that you make the check out to the magazine and send it the NJAG's Post Office Box. Checks for \$29.95 for Sky & Telescope should be made out to Sky Publishing. Checks for \$29.00 for Astronomy should be made out to Kalmbach Publishing. Send to: North Jersey Astronomical Group, P.O. Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472. We verify your membership and then send it on to the magazine. If you send your renewal directly to the magazine, it eventually gets sent back to the NJAG for verification and that may interrupt your subscription.

NJAG WEB PAGE UPDATED

The NJAG web page has been updated with new club info and new images in the Photo Gallery. Check it out at: <http://community.nj.com/cc/njag>.

GET YOUR COPY OF THE ASTRONOMER'S JOURNAL!

The NJAG is making copies of "The Astronomer's Journal" available to its members at cost. The journal is a great 100 page notebook for writing down info and sketching objects while stargazing. Price is only \$7.00 (Please include \$4.00 for postage and handling if you want it mailed to you).

The Astronomer's Journal is a daily log designed to be used at the eyepiece by amateur astronomers of all skill levels. Each page has 16 fields of entry, two sketching circles, and ample room for detailed notes. In addition, The Journal has a blank table of contents that the user fills in with a brief description of each entry; it acts as a valuable reference for information contained in the book. Spiral bound and three-hole punched for observing convenience.

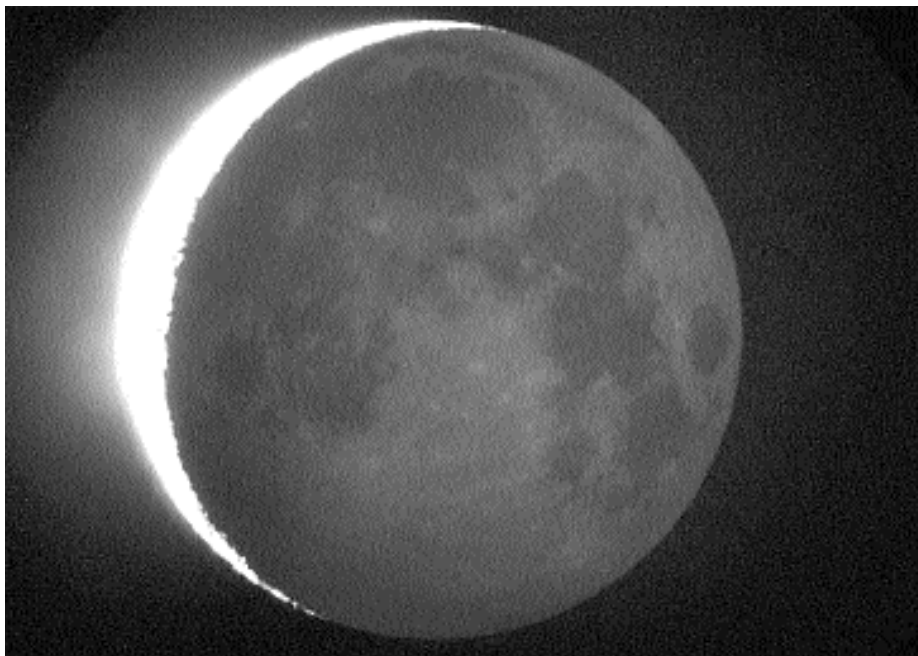
Make checks or money orders out to the North Jersey Astronomical Group and send to:

Astronomer's Journal, NJAG, P.O. Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472.

“Life is ours to be spent,
not to be saved.”

D.H. Lawrence

Waning Crescent Moon with Earthshine by John Cudworth
Saturday morning, Sept. 15, 2001



SOUTH JERSEY STAR PARTY

*October 12-14
Belleplaine State Forest*

It's time to start making plans for the Fifth Annual SOUTH JERSEY STAR PARTY, which this year takes place October 12-14, 2001 at Belleplaine State Forest in Cape May County, NJ. The event offers one of the best dark sky areas in the state, along with great company and events. Mark your calendar now, and sign up for the South Jersey Star Party! Registration is \$10 before October 5. Camping on observing field is \$15 per person. Registration will also be available upon arrival, but camping on the observing field may be unavailable at that time. Space is limited.

Contact:
SJAC c/o Nelson J. Biggs, Sr.
3780 Cedarville Road
Cedarville, NJ 08311
biggsnj@cs.com

For more information and directions see the SJAC web site:
<http://hometown.aol.com/sjastroc/index.html>

JERSEY ASTRO CONFERENCE

*Saturday, November 3, 2001
9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.*

Amateur Astronomers, Inc., and Union County College will sponsor the Jersey Astro Conference on the Cranford Campus of Union County College.

Speakers:

Dr. Esther Zirbel, Dr. David Merritt, Dr. David Dunham, Dr. Margaret Geller, Dr. Gillian Knapp. VENDORS: Pocono Mountain Optics, Sivo Scientific, T&T Binocular Mounts, Universal Astronomics, Laser Collimators, Fuji Color Photo, TPO Magazine, and many more...

Exhibitors:

Newark Museum, UACNJ Clubs, Project Astro Nova, and other astronomy organizations... RAFFLE: First Prize: Starfinder 8" Dobsonian Telescope. Admission is \$12.00 at the door.

For more information contact: Amateur Astronomers Inc., JACS Registration, P.O. Box 111, Garwood, NJ 07027- 0111, jacs@asterism.org, <http://www.asterism.org>.



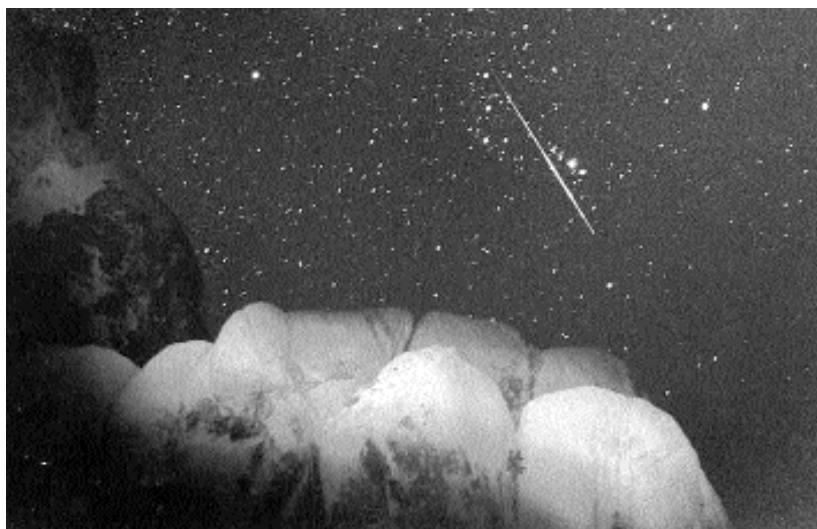
FAVORITE COSMIC LINKS

Don't forget to check out some of our favorite astronomy sites on the Internet. Visit <http://community.nj.com/cc/njag> and click on "Links" on the left hand side.

SKY CALENDAR

October

2	Full Moon (Harvest Moon)
7 & 8	Moon near Saturn
9 & 10	Moon near Jupiter
12	Mars at perihelion
16	New Moon
23	Moon near Mars
29	Venus & Mercury in conjunction



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