



October 2016

Editor -Jack Fritz

The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club, has been the center of family astronomy in the Tampa Bay Area for decades. Its 289 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

★ Our club is getting stronger. We have just received a large donation for the purchase of two solar telescopes. These will support our daytime outreach programs to schools in Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties.



The telescopes are a special donation in memorial to a member from a long time ago. Next month's newsletter will have a full write-up. You will know when you read it that our club makes a tangible difference in people's lives and contributes to the endeavor of science in an amazing way.

Our relationship with the Science Center has just been guaranteed for another two years. We will have our 30 year anniversary with the center and hopefully a lot longer than that. Career Source Pinellas bought the center about two years ago and has been sinking a large investment into the facility. They are continuing the daytime science programs for youth and just refurbished the planetarium. Our new deal is going to let us restore the Carol Samuels Observatory. The 16" Meade telescope is the largest in the Southeast that

is available for amateur use outside of a university or privately owned telescope. Our public outreach events will be greatly enhanced once this telescope is restored.

Good News! Registration is open for the Orange Blossom Star Party, our big annual event. People come from all over the US and Canada to join in. Be sure to reserve your spot. The details can be found in the newsletter and online.

The season for observation is upon us. The skies are clearing, and the weather is cooling. Be sure to get out there and enjoy the upcoming meteor showers. Keep looking up

### New Members

We would like to welcome Hank Staub, William Weiss, Richard Burner and Jasmin Bogliovic to our family of members.

### Annual Meeting

This month's meeting will take place on Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM, at the Science Center of Pinellas County, 7701 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N, St. Petersburg, FL.

Main Program - Annual Meeting, Election of Officers, Fall Picnic, and Sidewalk Astronomy. Please remember that our Annual Meeting begins at 7:00 PM, one hour earlier than normal.

**Upcoming Programs**

Please remember our General Meetings are the third Fridays in November and December.

**November 18th** - Dave Valletta (NASA& FIT), Magnetic Reconnection as interplanetary propulsion.

**December 16th** - Christmas Party

**From the Editor**

JACK FRITZ

★ We have just signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Science Center that provides us a home for our meetings and mirror lab for the next two years and formally defines our mutual interest. We owe big thanks to John O'Neill, our past president, and Ed Peachy, CEO of Career Force Pinellas, for making this happen. Thank you, John and Ed.

Our current club officers have all agreed to continue to serve in their current positions and are running unopposed this year. Their names and contact information are listed on page 5. I would like to thank the other officers for agreeing to serve another year.

**2017 Orange Blossom Star Party**



Registration for our annual star party is now open. You will want to register early to get a good spot. Please check the website for more information.

**Club Meeting Hurricane Policy**

Hurricane season is upon us. We may cancel the meeting if a hurricane is threatening Pinellas County. If that happens, we will send

a cancellation notification via email. Alternatively, you may call Allen Maroney at 727 867-4781 or Jack Fritz at 813 508-5680 to check on the status of the meeting.

**Member Appreciation**

KYLE BRINKMAN

★ This month I'd like to show our appreciation for an enthusiastic member of our club, Jaya Prakash. Jaya is a contributor to our club in a number of ways. She is a promoter of our group for public outreach events and a participant in those events.

She is a regular friendly face at our meetings. Among the most important ways she participates is by bringing her friends. Visitors and new members are the sustaining force behind any organization. By bringing them in she is living out our mission to promote the enjoyment of the science of astronomy.

Thank you Jaya for all that you do.

**Examiner Subscriptions**

JACK FRITZ

★ Please remember that beginning in January, membership renewals will include a \$25 subscription fee for those members electing to receive the newsletter via US Mail.

**November Astronomical Events**

STEVE ROBBINS

★ The morning of Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup> is the Southern Taurid Meteor Shower, with ZHR of about 10. This will be followed by the Northern Taurid Meteor Shower, ZHR about 15 on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup>. The Taurid meteor stream is very wide, and both showers are part of the same stream of particles from the comet Enke. The distinguishing feature of these showers is that their particles aren't dust grains, they are pebbles. Fireballs can be expected, and what the shower lacks in quantity, it will make up in quality.

Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, Aldebaran will be .4° south of the Moon.

The morning of Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> is the Leonid Meteor Shower. However, this year's event is only four days after a full moon. It's safe to say that this year the Tau-rids are a better bet.

November's full Moon is the Full Beaver Moon. Beavers made their dams strong for the winter, and it was time to set those traps.

**The Moon**

- First Quarter - November 7, 14:51
- Full Moon - November 14, 08:52
- Third Quarter - November 21, 03:33
- New Moon - November 29, 07:18

**Mirror Lab**

★ Our college student, Devin, finished his 10" f/6 which tested as good a 1/11th wave. He is starting to build his telescope and is also a budding artist, so we are looking forward to seeing the design he comes up.

RALPH CRAIG



Devin's Finished Mirror

Allen started work on a thin 16-inch mirror, and there are rumors that Dave Pearson has been stopping by to finish one of his mirrors. We also sold our Draper mirror grinding machine this month as we are trying to make some room in the lab. Pictures are on the mirror lab web page at [www.telescopelab.com](http://www.telescopelab.com) and on Mike Davis's web page at [www.mdpub.com](http://www.mdpub.com) and also on Allen Maroney's web page [www.knology.net/amaroney/](http://www.knology.net/amaroney/).

The award-winning Mirror Lab welcomes interested visitors to their facility at the Science Center's rear annex. The lab is open on Saturdays between noon and 4:00 pm. Several experienced and skilled tutors are there to give you support, help & instruction. For more information, call Ralph Craig 727 384-2086; Paul McNabb 727 345-5713; or Allen Maroney 727 867-4781

If you have any surplus telescope parts, the mirror lab could use them for various projects.

**Outreach**

JIM HUNTER

★ International Observe the Moon: Many of our members set up at the Science Center for a public viewing in observance of IOM night. However, it was mostly members that attended due to limited publicity. I set up on Dale Mabry in front of a pizzeria about 7 PM and stayed until 9:15. Venus was already under a parking lot light. Saturn was great, and Mars was small. When I left, Saturn had been eclipsed by the light. The moon was great. I had 45-50 viewers of all ages. Many were rookies. The level of interest varied from "Wow - thanks!" to talking for 10 minutes.

Please check our calendar at [www.stpe-teastronomyclub.org/calendar.php](http://www.stpe-teastronomyclub.org/calendar.php) for upcoming outreach events.

**New Moon at Withlacoochee**

KELLY ANDERSON

★ Stars were few and clouds were many this New Moon Weekend at Withlacoochee River Park. Joe Canzoneri, Ron & Dee Wayland, Elizabeth & Roy Ward and yours truly with spouse Natalie arrived at the park Friday afternoon, in collectively optimistic frames of minds. Friday evening was a tease, with a few clear spots showing up from time to time. What we saw was awesome, but too little to bring out the big guns. Joe and I got up in the wee hours Saturday morning and were greeted with very clear skies. You'll be happy to know that our old winter friends like Sirius and the Orion Constellation, The Pleiades, and all the rest are back, if only you get up very, very early. Joe and I decided to wait for a few more months when they'll be back at a more reasonable hour. We both went back to bed after a few minutes of appreciation of what the skies were presenting

Late Saturday afternoon Wayne Beck joined us and set up his huge light-bucket Dob, but we were destined for disappointment once again. The clouds moved in early and stayed all night. At 2:00AM Sunday morning, I arose to observe a few fuzzy bright lights, but the overcast was pretty solid. So I guess my guarantee of clear skies was worth what you paid for it.

But even so, we all had a great time visiting and sharing stories well into the night. I have it on good authority that most of the stories were true, mostly. It was also pretty great getting out of the city and enjoying the beautiful park we have to play in.

October-November-December weather is historically much better for astronomical pursuits, so check your calendars. We'll next congregate for the Dark of the Moon ceremonies October 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, followed on November 25<sup>th</sup>

-27<sup>th</sup> (Thanksgiving weekend!), then December 30<sup>th</sup> —January 1<sup>st</sup> (Happy New Year!).

**NASA News**

STEVE ROBBINS

Rosetta was the first spacecraft to orbit and deploy a lander to a comet. A veteran of three Earth flybys, one Mars flyby, and two asteroid encounters, Rosetta came out of a record 31-month hibernation to encounter not a dirty snowball, but a cosmic rubber ducky beyond anyone's imagination. After two years of studying the enigmatic comet Churyumov-Gerasimenko, [Rosetta](#) was entering a part of the Solar System too dim to support continued existence on its solar panels. Rosetta set down on the surface of the comet it had studied for so long and ended its historic mission on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) has discovered that [micrometeorite bombardment](#) of the lunar surface is several times more intense than previously thought. Taking photos [repeatedly of the same area](#), LRO has found over 200 impacts creating craters of at least 5 meters. New theories of bombardment rates mean that the astronauts' footprints will be gone in a couple hundred thousand years rather than millions of years. It also means that lunar bases will have to be built stronger to withstand statistically certain hits by high-velocity particles.

On its way to the distant asteroid Bennu, OSIRIS-Rex reported, that it was 2 million miles from Earth on September 15<sup>th</sup>, moving at 12,300 miles per hour and all systems are operating nominally. As of October 7<sup>th</sup>, OSIRIS-Rex was 9 million miles from home.

**SPAC Business Meeting** 

Our next meeting is Wednesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 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**

President:	<a href="#">Kyle Brinkman</a>	727 455-6931
Vice Pres.:	<a href="#">Jack Fritz</a>	813 508-5680
Secretary:	<a href="#">Paul McNabb</a>	727 345-5713
Treasurer:	<a href="#">Jim Hunter</a>	813 909-7013
Dir.-at-Large:	<a href="#">Mike Davis</a>	727 474-6785
Dir.-at-Large:	<a href="#">David Pearson</a>	727-215-1526
Dir.-at-Large:	<a href="#">Allen Maroney</a>	727 867-4781
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Membership Chair	<a href="#">Shirley Vuille</a>	727 864-2624
Outreach Chair:	<a href="#">Jim Hunter</a>	813 909-7013
Librarian:	<a href="#">Ralph Craig</a>	727 384-2086
Club Webmaster:	<a href="#">Chris Curran</a>	813 653-2604

Click on the name to send email

**Recognition of Patrons & Benefactors:**

Clifford B. Benham	Benefactor
David & Mina Swan	Benefactor
Jack & Roni Fritz	Benefactor
Antonio & Cherish Paris	Benefactor
Tommy & Amy Ming	Benefactor
Alexie & Yanira Velez	Patron
Anthony Staiano	Patron
Gustav J. Waffan	Patron
Joe Ortiz-Bradley	Patron
Kyle Brinkman	Patron
Lindsey & Alyssa McKeown	Patron
Matt Labadie	Patron
Robert Myers	Patron
Robert & Debora Csere	Patron
Ruggero & Carla Santilli	Patron
Thomas Tobin	Patron

**Examiner Staff**

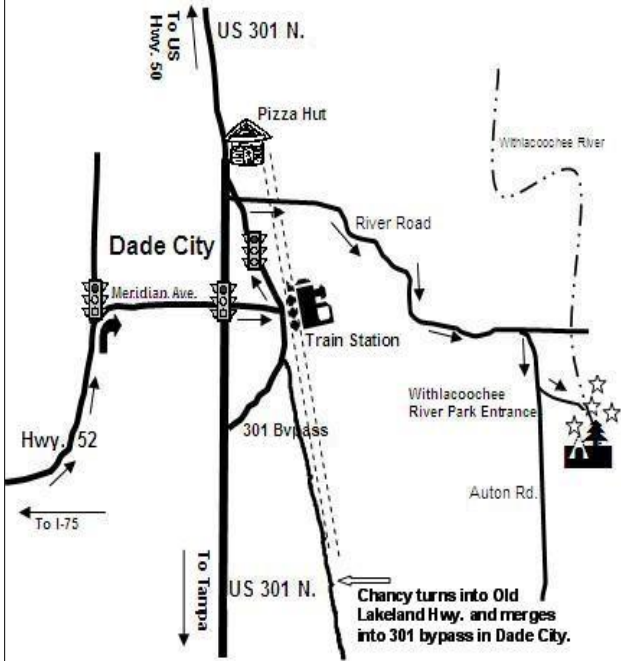
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In the News	<a href="#">Steve Robbins</a>	386 736-9123
Mirror Lab	<a href="#">Ralph Craig</a>	727 384-2086

**Withlacoochee New Moon Weekend**

Our next New Moon Weekend falls on October 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>.

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](mailto:starhopr3@msn.com) or 813 621-3606.



**Withlacoochee River Park - Dade City, FL**  
 Detailed directions can be found at:  
[www.StPeteAstronomyClub.org](http://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 [  ]

Single: [  ] \$ 20.00/YR. Includes one adult, minor children, the "SPACE" newsletter, and all the rights and privileges of membership.

Family: [  ] \$ 25.00/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.