



# Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association

## July, 2020

Website: [www.midhudsonastro.org](http://www.midhudsonastro.org)

**President :** Jack Chastain

**Secretary:** Jim Rockrohr

**Newsletter Editor:** Rick Versace

**Publicity:** Tim Denman

**Speakers:** Alexandra Passas

**Directors:** Joe Macagne, Steve Carey, Willie Yee, Karl Loatman

groups.io Group: [mhaa.groups.io](https://groups.io/g/mhaa)

**Vice President:** Tim Denman

**Treasurer:** Eric Myers

**Membership Coordinator:** Open

**Webmaster:** Steve Dittmar

**Outreach:** Joe Macagne

**College Liaison:** Dr. Amy Forestell

**General Meeting, July 21 to once again be held via Zoom. Please use the following link to access the Zoom meeting beginning at 7:30 pm Tuesday, July 21 that will be sent from Meetup**

# Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association, June 16, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 PM by President Jack Chastain on the online application Zoom.

The minutes of the May meeting were approved unanimously as published in the newsletter.

## **Officer's Reports:**

**President:** The meeting is being recorded on Zoom. We will be continuing on Zoom for the foreseeable future.

**Vice President:** Tim Denman was present. MeetUp seems to be working OK regarding distributing links to online meetings.

**Secretary:** Jim Rockrohr was present. No news to report.

**Treasurer:** Eric Myers was present.

- See the newsletter for the latest information.
- We have about \$2800 in the bank and no debts.
- MemberPlanet owes us about \$100.00. Eric will pursue.
- T-shirts (\$15), sweatshirts (\$25) and pins (\$4) are available.
- Membership dues of \$25 per year can be paid by cash or check to Eric. Eric has PayPal set up which will cost \$1 more. You can also pay through MemberPlanet for a \$2 charge.

**Publicity:** Tim Denman was present. Middletown Record is publishing our meeting notices. Tim has gotten calls from NYC, Westchester and Rockland counties looking for more info.

**Newsletter:** Rick Versace was present. He has added the Zoom link to the newsletter. (He needs to update Amy's name in the header since she recently married.)

**Webmaster:** Paul Chauvet was not present. No issues known. Steve Ditmar is helping with web maintenance.

- Eric mentioned that we now have our own MeetUp account (rather than Paul's account).
- Our site will move soon and we will have 3 sites: MHAA, Star Trek (Willie), and the "Southern Group" under Ken Bailey.

**Outreach:** Joe Macagne was not present.

**Upcoming programs:** Alexandra Passas was present.

- We have programs booked through September and working on future speakers.
- See MeetUp page for the latest information.

**Membership:** (need leader; Eric is handling it for now)

- How to become a member? Read about it under "MORE" on MeetUp.

**Solar System Ambassador:** Willie Yee was present.

- SSA Virtual Exchange: ability to share speakers. Willie will pass info to Alexandra.
- 7/20 – Launch window opens for Mars 2020 launches.

## **Old Business:**

- Zoom meetings have been successful, although some people had audio issues. Jack will follow up with them.

## **New Business:**

- Star parties will remain virtual, for now. Jack will check with Taghkanic State Park on rules during Phase 4. We may be able to start live meetings with restrictions in July.
- SUNY New Paltz will not open until Phase 4 and will have restrictions.
- Next Star party will be virtual. Greg Salyer is not available but Steve Ditmar will be.
- Club scopes and cameras available to paid members,

### Upcoming Events

- **Next Club Star Party:** June 19; see above.
- **Venus and Mercury conjunction.**
- **Neowise Comet** visible in northern hemisphere in July.
- **Saugerties Science Fair** sometime after Halloween.

### Observing Reports:

- (none reported)

### Visitors/New Members:

There were about 39 people in attendance on Zoom at the end of the business meeting.

The business meeting was adjourned at about 8:03 PM. **The next meeting is July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, on Zoom. Check Meetup for details and link. Link will be sent to all those that RSVP.**

The presentation that followed was by Dr. Michael Banks: “Harmony and Symmetry in the Solar System – Astronomy, Music, Math”.

Submitted by James Rockrohr, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020.



### **MHAA Treasurer’s Report for June 2020**

As of 19 July 2020 we have \$2,980.33 in our bank account, and \$149.70 in our PayPal account, with \$24.99 expected from Member Planet by next month. The payment from Member Planet of \$99.80 I mentioned in last month’s report finally showed up in our bank account. We gained one new member and had one existing member renew, resulting in about \$50 of income. We again paid \$14.99 for another month of Zoom service.

Our Meetup site has been transferred from Paul Chauvet’s personal Meetup account to our own club Meetup account (and along with it a local Star Trek club that Willie is involved with, and they have paid us in the past to defray our costs). Paul was charged one last time for Meetup, but he was able to use a coupon, so we owe him only \$53.43, and I’m working with him to get that to him. The payment method for Meetup has been switched to my personal credit card, so the next charge (in 6 months) will be paid that way and I will then reimburse myself. There are no other outstanding debts.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Eric Myers  
Treasurer





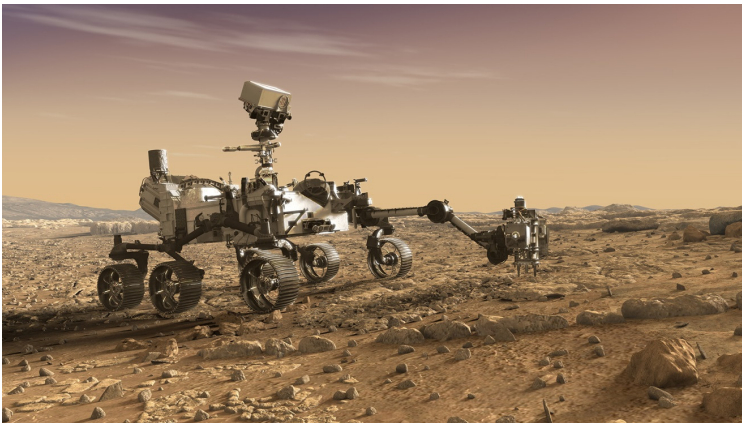
This article is distributed by NASA Night Sky Network

## Mars's Latest Visitor: NASA's Perseverance Rover

David Prosper

NASA's latest Mars rover, Perseverance, is launching later this month! This amazing robot explorer will scout the surface of Mars for possible signs of ancient life and collect soil samples for return to Earth by future missions. It will even carry the first off-planet helicopter: Ingenuity. Not coincidentally, Perseverance will be on its way to the red planet just as Mars dramatically increases in brightness and visibility to eager stargazers as our planets race towards their closest approach in October of this year.

Perseverance's engineers built upon the success of its engineering cousin, Curiosity, and its design features many unique



*Perseverance inspects a cluster of interesting Martian rocks with its instruments in this artist rendering by NASA JPL/Caltech*

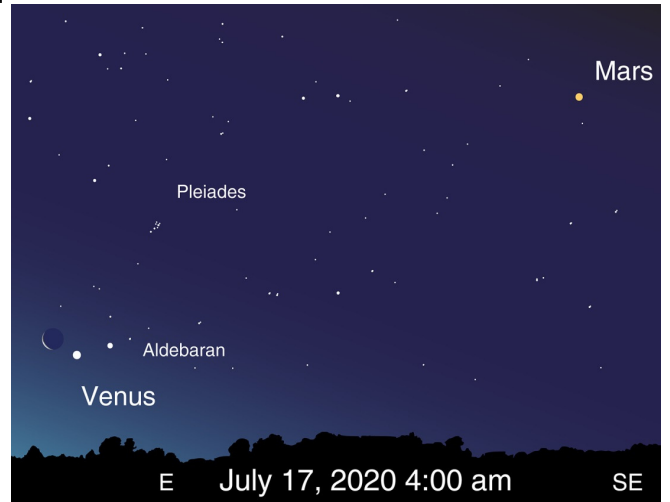
upgrades for a new science mission! In February of 2021, Perseverance will land at the site of an ancient river delta inside of Jezero Crater and ready its suite of seven primary scientific instruments. The rover will search for traces of past life, including possible Martian fossils, with WATSON and SHERLOC, two advanced cameras capable of seeing tiny details. The rover also carries an amazing instrument, SuperCam, to blast rocks and soil outside of the rover's reach with lasers to determine their chemical makeup with its onboard suite of cameras and

spectrometers. Perseverance will also take core samples of some of the most promising rocks and soil, storing them for later study with its unique caching system. Future missions will retrieve these samples from the rover and return them for detailed study by scientists on Earth. Perseverance also carries two microphones so we can hear the sounds of Mars and the noises of its instruments at work. It will even launch a small helicopter - Ingenuity - into the Martian atmosphere as a trial for future aerial exploration!

Would you like to contribute to Mars mission science? You can help NASA's rover drivers safely navigate the Martian surface by contributing to the AI4Mars project! Use this tool to label terrain features on photos taken of the Martian surface by NASA missions to help train an artificial intelligence algorithm to better read their surrounding landscape: [\\_](https://bit.ly/AI4Mars)

[bit.ly/AI4Mars](https://bit.ly/AI4Mars)

The launch of Mars Perseverance is, as of this writing, scheduled for July 20, 2020 at 9:15am EDT. More details, updates, and livestreams of the event are available on NASA's official launch page: [bit.ly/Mars2020Launch](https://bit.ly/Mars2020Launch) . Dig deep into the science of the Mars 2020 mission and the Perseverance rover at: [mars.nasa.gov/mars2020/](https://mars.nasa.gov/mars2020/) . Find out even more about past, present, and future Mars missions at [nasa.gov](https://nasa.gov).



~~~~~

*Observe Mars yourself over the next few months! Mars can be found in early morning skies throughout July, and by the end of the month will rise before midnight. Mars gradually brightens every night until the close approach of Mars in October. The pre-dawn skies of July 17 present an especially nice view, as the waning crescent Moon will appear near Venus and Aldebaran.*

## Member Submissions

Scott Ewart

Comet Neowise



*Here's my effort from Sunday morning around 4AM. It's a stack of 15 images. I wish I could have found a better foreground.*

## 2020 Star Party Schedule

|              |         |
|--------------|---------|
| January 24   | 5:00 PM |
| February 21  | 5:30 PM |
| March 27     | 7:00 PM |
| April 24     | 7:30 PM |
| May 22       | 8:00 PM |
| June 19      | 8:30 PM |
| July 17      | 8:30 PM |
| August 21    | 7:30 PM |
| September 18 | 7:00 PM |
| October 16   | 6:00 PM |
| November 13  | 4:30 PM |
| December 11  | 4:30 PM |
| <b>2021</b>  |         |
| January 15   | 4:30 PM |

### Directions To The Star Party Site

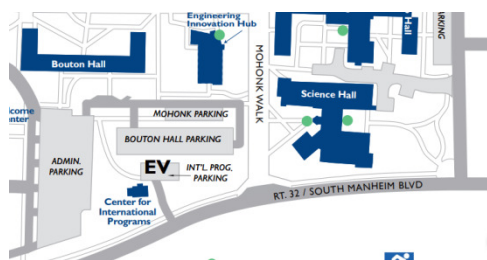
[Lake Taghkanic State Park](#) is in the town Ancram, NY. The park entrance is on the Taconic Parkway 10 minutes north of the exit used for Wilcox park.

Star Parties at Lake Taghkanic are held in the West Parking lot, next to the beach. The skies are darker than in Wilcox, with less stray light to deal with. The horizon is also much lower, especially to the south and east, making many more targets possible.

**IMPORTANT:** all events at Lake Taghkanic State Park require an **RSVP** which includes license plate number of the car you are bringing (please do so via [Meetup](#)). The park is patrolled by state police, and all non registered cars will be ticketed and risk our use of the park.

### General Information:

- ♦ For the foreseeable future, all indoor meetings will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month in the Science Hall Bldg., SUNY New Paltz (directions below) at 7:30 PM. All indoor events are FREE! All are welcome. The presentations are generally geared towards teenagers and up.
- ♦ Dates listed for star parties are the primary dates. The rain date is the following night unless otherwise noted. Only one session is held for a given weekend, usually on the primary date, Friday, unless postponed (usually due to inclement weather) to the backup date, Saturday. Exceptions to this are noted in the “Scheduled Events” section above.
- ♦ All outdoor events are FREE! All are welcome. If you bring small children, it is **your** responsibility to keep a close eye on them. Please do not bring white-light flashlights. Instead, bring a red astronomer’s flashlight or an ordinary flashlight covered with several layers of red cellophane. If in doubt about the weather, check the status of the event at [www.midhudsonastro.org](http://www.midhudsonastro.org).



The Meeting will be in the Science Hall, SH181 (The square at the South entrance area in the image). The building is at the corner of Rt 32 and Plattekill Ave. Parking is available on the road or possibly in the large Admin parking lot. The Bouton Hall and Mohonk parking are not necessarily recommended, particularly when college is in session. Parking is available on the street as well, and there are a couple spaces on the North West parking on the road - MAKE SURE they are unmarked places though!