



Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association

May, 2021

Website: www.midhudsonastro.org

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

President : Jack Chastain

Secretary: Jim Rockrohr

Newsletter Editor: Rick Versace

Publicity: Tim Denman

Speakers: Alexandra Passas

Vice President: Tim Denman

Treasurer: Eric Myers

Membership Coordinator: Rick Versace

Webmaster: Steve Dittmar

Outreach: Joe Macagne

College Liaison: Dr. Amy Bartholomew

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

The next meeting is May 18th, 2021, on Zoom. Check MeetUp for details and link. Link will be sent to all those that RSVP

Speaker for May

MHAA virtual star parties

Mid Hudson Astronomical Association members Eric Myers, Jack Chastain, and Tim Denman will discuss their ideas and progress on doing remote star parties. The presentation and subsequent discussion will occur at 8 PM via Zoom after the regular 7:30 meeting.



Lectures Opportunity

submitted by Alex Passas

I recently discovered an online source of astronomy lectures. The AmateurAstronomers Association offers online lectures at 7 PM on the second Tuesday of each month. Their website is aaa.org. If you open that up you go to events then calendar and click on the word lecture on the second Tuesday. Scroll down to register. Have fun!

Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association, April 20, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Jack Chastain on the online application Zoom.

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

Officer's Reports:

President: Jack Chastain was present.

- Discussed progress on online star parties. Need some helpers to manage Zoom windows, etc. See Jack or Eric Myers.

Vice President: Tim Denman was present.

- Discussed publicity, see below.

Secretary: Jim Rockrohr was present.

- Nothing new to report.

Treasurer: Eric Myers was present.

- See the newsletter for the latest information.
- Eric discovered we had a Square account (for accepting credit cards)
 - o He may cancel it as we don't use it.
- We are almost completely off of MemberPlanet
 - o Waiting for some money they owe us.
- Eric furnished some checks for the Dutchess County Science Fair awards
 - o Still to be cashed.

Publicity: (Need a volunteer. Tim Denman is covering.)

- No press on live star parties until Covid restrictions lifted.

Membership: Rick Versace was not present.

- Eric reported that he received 3 new memberships.

Newsletter: Rick Versace was not present.

Solar System Ambassador: Willie Yee was not present.

Webmaster: Steve Ditmar was present.

- Busy working on the new web design.

Outreach: Joe McCagne was not present.

Upcoming Programs: Alexandra Passas was present.

- May and June meetings are covered. Working on future speakers.

Old Business:

- The last club star party was moved to Saturday.
 - o Unfortunately it was not clear.
 - o We had our first radio receiver tracking HAM satellites.
 - o Eric worked with the "star cam" IR camera. It can see brighter stars. Eric will continue working with it to put it online.
- Jack reviewed the list of club scopes and other equipment available to paid members.

New Business:

- Question about when we might return to SUNY for live meetings. “Stay Tuned” although Eric was not hopeful it will be anytime soon.
- COVID guidelines will now let us have up to 200 people at our star parties.

Upcoming Events

- **Next Club Star Party:** May 14 at Lake Taghkanic State park. See MeetUp and YOU MUST RSVP with car make, model and license plate number to attend.
- **Lyrid Meteor Shower** peaks tonight (4/20).
- **Crew launch to ISS** on April 22 at 6 AM.
- **Annular Solar Eclipse:** June 10. Only partial annulus (scimitar) here. We may do a walkway event as viewing will be good from the bridge.
 - A motion was made and seconded to order solar glasses at \$150.00 for 200 glasses.
 - Passed unanimously.
 - Eric and Steve will coordinate.

Observing Reports:

- There is apparently a new NOVA visible with telescopes. No reported sightings by our club members, yet, due to weather.

Visitors/New Members:

There were about 35 Zoom windows in attendance at the end of the business meeting.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM. **The next meeting is May 18th, 2021, on Zoom. Check MeetUp for details and link. Link will be sent to all those that RSVP.**

The presentation that followed was by Chris Mlodnicki: “Asteroids, Meteoroids, Meteors, Meteorites”.

Submitted by James Rockrohr, May 14th, 2021.



MHAA Treasurer’s Report for May 2021

As of 16 May 2021 we have \$3194.60 in our bank account and \$231.86 in our PayPal account, with the Treasurer holding \$55 in petty cash. Our monthly payment of \$14.99 for Zoom was just paid out of our PayPal account. We have \$75 in outstanding checks for two prizes given to participants in the Dutchess County Regional Science Fair.

I was able to reverify our bank account with Member Planet and have received payment from them for our last two memberships that went through their site. The group name has been changed to “DO NOT USE!!” and only Jack and I are members, so we hope that we are now completely untangled from Member Planet.

At our last meeting I was authorized to spend up to \$150 on eclipse glasses, and so I ordered 100 from RainbowSymphony.com and 100 from LuntSolarSystems.com with the idea that if either could not fulfill the order quickly at least we might get half of them. However, both shipments arrived promptly on the same day. I did not anticipate that shipping would be extra, so the total expense was \$183.03, with one order paid directly out of the club’s PayPal account and the other put on my personal credit card. I have not yet reimbursed myself because that would put us over the \$150 limit, so at the next meeting I will ask the membership to approve that payment.

At the next meeting we should also discuss the distribution of the eclipse glasses to members and to non-members. Note that the total cost per unit was \$0.92, while individually they sell for \$1.95.

This month I discovered that the club had an account with Square, an electronic payment service, and this account was tied to Paul Chauvet’s personal bank account. Paul was the previous Webmaster, and he tells me he was experimenting

with using Square to accept payments for member dues, donations to the club, and other things (like t-shirts). The Square account is no longer tied to his bank account, and I will at some point delete it.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Treasurer



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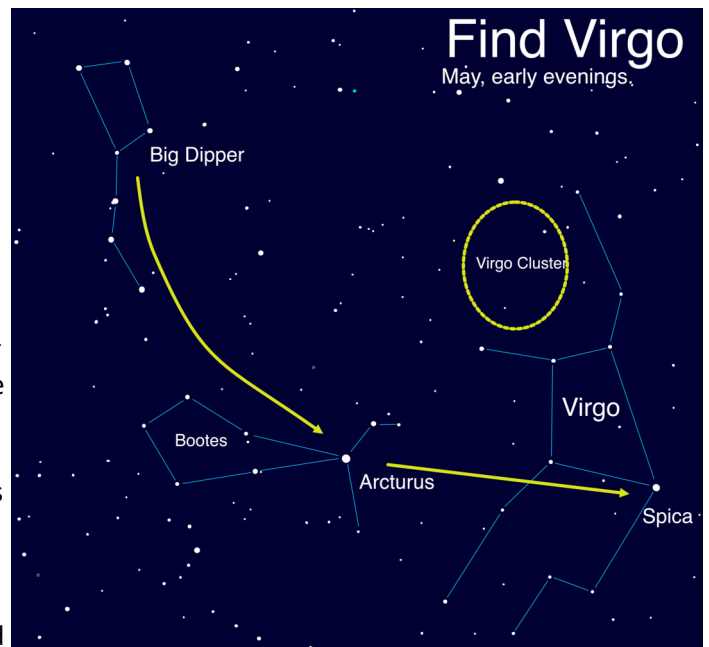
Virgo's Galactic Harvest

David Prosper

May is a good month for fans of galaxies, since the constellation Virgo is up after sunset and for most of the night, following Leo across the night sky. Featured in some ancient societies as a goddess of agriculture and fertility, Virgo offers a bounty of galaxies as its celestial harvest for curious stargazers and professional astronomers alike.

Virgo is the second-largest constellation and largest in the Zodiac, and easily spotted once you know how to spot Spica, its brightest star. How can you find it? Look to the North and start with the Big Dipper! Follow the general curve of the Dipper's handle away from its "ladle" and towards the bright orange-red star Arcturus, in Boötes – and from there continue straight until you meet the next bright star, Spica! This particular star-hopping trick is summed up by the famous phrase, "arc to Arcturus, and spike to Spica."

This large constellation is home to the Virgo Cluster, a massive group of galaxies. While the individual stars in Virgo are a part of our own galaxy, known as the Milky Way, the Virgo Cluster's members exist far beyond our own galaxy's borders. Teeming with around 2,000 known members, this massive group of galaxies are all gravitationally bound to each other, and are themselves members of the even larger Virgo Supercluster of galaxies, a sort of "super-group" made up of groups of galaxies. Our own Milky Way is a member of the "Local Group" of galaxies, which in turn is *also* a member of the Virgo Supercluster! In a sense, when we gaze upon the galaxies of the Virgo Cluster, we are looking at some of our most distant cosmic neighbors. At an average distance of over 65 million light years away, the light from these galaxies first started towards our planet when the dinosaurs were enjoying their last moments as Earth's dominant land animals! Dark clear skies and a telescope with a mirror of six inches or more will reveal many of the cluster's brightest and largest members, and it lends itself well to stunning astrophotos.



Virgo is naturally host to numerous studies of galaxies and cosmological research, which have revealed much about the structure of our universe and the evolution of stars and galaxies. The "Universe of Galaxies" activity can help you visualize the scale of the universe, starting with our home in the Milky Way Galaxy before heading out to the Local Group, Virgo Cluster and well beyond! You can find it at bit.ly/universeofgalaxies. You can further explore the science of galaxies across the Universe, along with the latest discoveries and mission news, at nasa.gov.

The first image of a black hole's event horizon was taken in the center of one of the most prominent galaxies in Virgo, M87! This follow up image, created by further study of the EHT data, reveals polarization in the radiation around the black hole. Mapping the polarization unveils new insights into how matter flows around and into the black hole - and even hints at how some matter escapes! More details: apod.nasa.gov/apod/ap210331.html



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## 2021 Star Party Schedule

|              |         |
|--------------|---------|
| January 15   | 4:30 PM |
| February 12  | 5:30 PM |
| March 12     | 6:00 PM |
| April 9      | 7:30 PM |
| May 14       | 8:00 PM |
| June 11      | 8:30 PM |
| July 9       | 8:30 PM |
| August 6     | 8:00 PM |
| September 10 | 7:00 PM |
| October 8    | 6:30 PM |
| November 5   | 5:30 PM |
| December 3   | 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:

- ♦ 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).