



Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association November, 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: Eric Myers
Webmaster: Steve Dittmar
Outreach: Joe Macagne
College Liaison: Dr. Amy Bartholomew

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



The next meeting is November 16th, 2021, on Zoom and at SUNY. Proof of vaccination and masks will be required at the SUNY location. Check MeetUp for details and link. Link will be sent to all those that RSVP.

MHAA members and other groups.io contacts may attend the meeting in person at the former meeting site in the auditorium of the Coykendale Science building a cross from the planetarium. Proof of vaccination and masks are required. The speaker's presentation will be virtual but the meeting is in-person. This will be an experimental approach which may be implemented for future meetings

Speaker for November

Amateur Texas Astronomer to present Mayan Astronomy Talk

Fort Worth astronomer Chris Mlodnickis talk will include Information about Mayan cosmology, their astronomical observatories, and the spread of their ideas and culture though trade.



Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association, October 19, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Jack Chastain on the online application Zoom AND to a live group at the Coykendall Auditorium on the SUNY New Paltz campus.

The minutes of the September meeting as published in the newsletter were unanimously approved with a correction that we are looking for a vice president candidate, not a publicity person.

Officer's Reports:

President: Jack Chastain was present.

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

Vice President: Tim Denman was present.

- Nothing to report

Secretary: Jim Rockrohr was present.

- Nothing to report.

Treasurer: Eric Myers was present.

- See the newsletter for the latest information.

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

- Sent out publicity for this meeting.

Newsletter: Rick Versace was not present.

- No report.

Webmaster: Steve Dittmar was present.

- Steve reports that he's still testing the new web site.

Membership: Rick Versace was not present. Eric reported:

- It was suggested we publish a list of paid members and their renewal date so people can see if they are behind on dues.

Outreach: Joe McCagne was not present.

- We need someone to assist Joe.

Upcoming Programs: Alexandra Passas was present.

- Alex now has speakers from the Natural History Museum for the next couple of months although the November speaker had to cancel.

Solar System Ambassador: Willie Yee was not present.

Old Business:

- The last club star party was cancelled due to cloud cover.
- Beekman library event was well attended.
- Desmond Fish library event had 6 'scopes and lots of people and kids.
- Need imagers to put views on Zoom for the virtual star parties. See Jack or Eric.

New Business:

- Nominations for officers are due at the next monthly meeting.
 - o Called for volunteers for a nominating committee. Seeing none Jack said he would appoint someone.
- Do we want to do an annual dinner this year?
 - o Where? The Lakeside restaurant was suggested.

- When?
- Let Jack know.
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- Lots of requests for events:
 - Walkway Over the Hudson, Friday, 10/29, 6-7:30.
 - Saugerties High School, Friday, 11/12.
 - Fishkill Plains School, date TBD
 - Opus 40, paid event, Wednesday, 12/15
 - Mohonk Mountain House:
 - 3 weekends; Friday and Saturday evenings.
 - 10/29-30
 - 11/5-6
 - 11/19-20
 - A “large company” rents Mohonk for its employees.
 - \$150/night to the club
 - They are expecting naked eye show-and-tell, but we plan to bring ‘scopes.
- The 2022 club star party dates need to be published.
 - It was suggested we have a rolling calendar on Meetup so people can plan head.
 - “How do we handle holidays?” The moon rules. We stick with the Friday/Saturday closest to the new moon.

Upcoming Events

- **Next Club Star Party:** November 5th at Lake Taghkanic State park. See MeetUp and YOU MUST RSVP with car make, model and license plate number to attend.
- **Mohonk Mountain House:** Looking for speakers on “Astronomy Weekends”; October 29/30, November 5/6, and November 19/20. Contact Jack if you want to help.
- **Saugerties High School:** Looking for an event on 11/12.

Observing Reports:

- None

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM. There were 26 Zoom windows open at the end of the business meeting and about a dozen people in the auditorium in New Paltz. **The next meeting is November 16th, 2021, on Zoom and at SUNY. Proof of vaccination and masks will be required at the SUNY location. Check MeetUp for details and link. Link will be sent to all those that RSVP.**

The presentation that followed was by Sam Grunblatt: “Planetary Archeology: Exploring the Final Stages of Planet Life Cycles”.

Submitted by James Rockrohr, November 13th, 2021.



MHAA Treasurer’s Report for November 2021

As of 14 November 2021 we have \$3,410.43 in our bank account and \$392.65 in our PayPal account, with the Treasurer holding \$65 in petty cash. I expect our monthly bill for Zoom for \$14.99 will be paid out of our PayPal account on Nov 15th. We have had a number of membership renewals in the past month, totaling \$273.84. See the Membership Report for details. I’m expecting a donation from the Mohonk Mountain House for \$900 sometime after next weekend. Many thanks to those who have been going there these past weekends to help with their extended special event.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Treasurer

MHAA Membership Report for November 2021

As of 14 November 2021 MHAA has 44 members in good standing, and 32 lapsed memberships, of which 9 expired over a year ago. We have 2 student members, and 12 Lifetime memberships (though recent email to two of those bounced). We've had 9 membership renewals and gained 2 new members in the past month.

I have been working on some software, using Google Apps Script, to send reminders to those who's memberships are expiring soon, and also to send a status message to those who's membership has expired. Unfortunately a bug caused membership reminders to go out this week to some members who are paid up, and some of those folks then paid to renew their membership even though they didn't need to. I offered them the choice of a refund or to extend their membership another year, with everybody choosing the extension.

The software also lets me get a more accurate count of members. Once I have the kinks worked out, this system will be automated to send reminders, probably once a month, but only to those who actually need reminding.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Treasurer



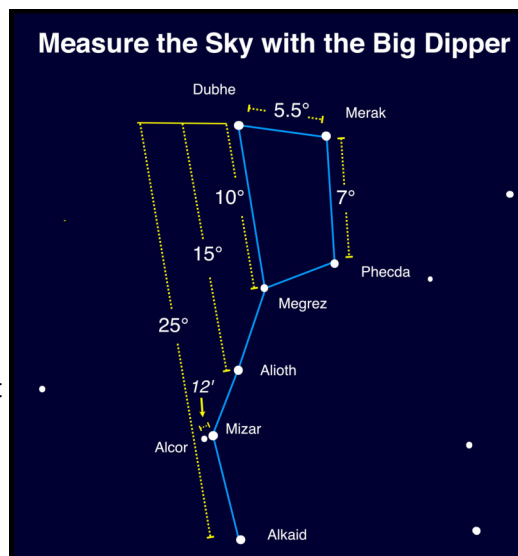
This article is distributed by NASA Night Sky Network

Measure the Night Sky

David Prosper

Fall and winter months bring longer nights, and with these earlier evenings, even the youngest astronomers can get stargazing. One of the handiest things you can teach a new astronomer is how to measure the sky – and if you haven't yet learned yourself, it's easier than you think!

Astronomers measure the sky using units. These may sound more like a good catch! – but today we are distance. Degrees are largest, and are each minute is made up of 60 imagine yourself in the center of a center, extending out to the stars: the celestial sphere. A circle contains view of the horizon all around you, once to see what 360 degrees looks circle from inside out, with yourself at into quarters, starting from due degrees, equal to the distance measures 90 degrees between due degrees along the horizon between switch from a horizontal circle to a below your head. Look straight above your head: this point is called the zenith, the highest point in the sky. Now look down toward the horizon; it measures 90 degrees from the zenith to the horizon. You now have some basic measurements for your sky.



degrees, minutes, and seconds as terms for measuring time - and that's focused on measuring angular each made up of 60 minutes, and seconds. To start, go outside and massive sphere, with yourself at the appropriately enough, this is called 360 degrees, so if you have a good you can slowly spin around exactly like, since you are in effect drawing a the center! Now break up that circle North; each quarter measures 90 between each cardinal direction! It North and due East, and a full 180 due North and due South. Now, vertical one, extending above and

Use a combination of your fingers held at arm's length, along with notable objects in the night sky, to make smaller measurements. A full Moon measures about half a degree in width - or 1/2 of your pinky finger, since each pinky measures 1 degree. The three stars of Orion's Belt create a line about 3 degrees long. The famed "Big Dipper" asterism is a great reference for Northern Hemisphere observers, since it's circumpolar and visible all night for many. The Dipper's "Pointer Stars," Dubhe and Merak, have 5.5 degrees between them - roughly three middle fingers wide. The entire asterism stretches 25 degrees from Dubhe to Alkaid - roughly the space between your outstretched thumb and pinky. On the other end of the scale, can you split Mizar and Alcor? They are separated by 12 arc minutes - about 1/5 the width of your pinky.

Keep practicing to build advanced star-hopping skills. How far away is Polaris from the pointer stars of the Big Dipper? Between Spica and Arcturus? Missions like Gaia and Hipparcos measure tiny differences in the angular distance between stars, at an extremely fine level. Precise measurement of the heavens is known as astrometry. Discover more about how we measure the universe, and the missions that do so, at [nasa.gov](https://www.nasa.gov).

Handy Sky Measurements

Hold your hand out in front of your face as far as you comfortably can, and measure:



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.