



Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association

September, 2022

Website: www.midhudsonastro.org

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

President : Jack Chastain

Vice President: Dave Sherman

Secretary: Jim Rockrohr

Treasurer: Eric Myers

Newsletter Editor: Rick Versace

Membership Coordinator: Eric Myers

Publicity: Tim Denman

Webmaster: Steve Dittmar

Speakers: Alexandra Passas

Outreach: Joe Macagne

College Liaison: Dr. Amy Bartholomew

Directors: Alex Passas, Karl Loatman, Steve Carey, and Willie Yee



The next meeting is September 20th, 2022, on Zoom and in person. Check MeetUp for details and link. Link will be sent to all those that RSVP.



September Speaker

Space, The Next Frontier for Innovation!

Naeem Altaf, IBM Distinguished Engineer, CTO IBM Space

Space has become an integral part in enabling today’s daily infrastructure, Protecting our planet and our environment, Improving our day-to-day lives, and Enhancing safety on Earth. At IBM Space, we believe in innovation that matters, building groundbreaking technology that not only drives mission success on the final frontier - but also improves life for the rest of us on earth.



New online link to the MHAA monthly Business Meeting Agenda:

<http://mhaa.midhudsonastro.org/agenda>



Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association, August 16, 2022

The meeting began at 7:30.

The minutes of the July meeting were distributed and also sent via email and were approved. They will also appear in the September newsletter.

PRESIDENT REPORT

Jack Chastain is covering this under old and new business.

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

Dave Sherman was contacted by school in Dover about doing a star party in November.

SECRETARY REPORT

Jim Rockrohr was absent. Tim Denman was requested to take minutes.

NEWSLETTER CHAIR REPORT

No report.

PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

Tim Denman reported that Alex Passas contacted him about "Chronogram" calendar and advertising. Tim will try again for the calendar listing and advertising will be discussed under new business.

TREASURER REPORT

Eric Myers reported that a change in our constitution needs to be made in order for the IRS to recognize us as a non-profit organization. Eric will research the process. This will also qualify us for a free Google account. More details are in the webmaster report.

MHAA Treasurer's Report for September 2022

As of 19 September 2022 we have \$4198.52 in our bank account and \$1212.72 in our PayPal account, with the Treasurer holding \$40 in petty cash. Our monthly Zoom subscription of \$14.99 was paid automatically via PayPal on the 15th, as always.

Since last month's report we have received \$75.44 for one new membership and two renewals. With PayPal's revised service fee we receive an extra 22 cents when someone pays \$26 for membership via PayPal, compared to losing 24 cents as we did before.

As reported a few months ago I repaired the internal power supply for the club's ETX-125 so that it could run off of batteries. (It was working fine via an external 12V connection.) It takes 8 AA batteries and I noticed that they did not last very long, so I purchased a set of rechargeable batteries and a charger that will now go with that scope, for a cost of \$28.80, which I reimbursed to myself via PayPal.

We are now receiving monthly invoices from Google for the storage we use for the club "Datastore," though the charge has been zero. They will start charging us soon, but the fee should be minimal, and we now have some guarantee that our data will be preserved. Meanwhile, I regret that with the start of the school year I have not been able to do further research on securing a non-profit letter of determination from the IRS. I hope to get back to that soon.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Treasurer

MHAA Membership Report for September 2022

As of 19 September 2022 the club has 69 members in good standing and 5 lapsed memberships, of which 3 expired over a year ago. We still have 12 Lifetime members and 2 student members. This month we welcomed 1 new member and had 2 renewals of existing memberships.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Acting Membership Coordinator

SPEAKER CHAIRPERSON

Alex reported that she has speakers for the next two months.

WEBMASTER REPORT

Steve Dittmar's report:

Website changes

www.midhudsonastro.org and midhudsonastro.org used to take you to our Meetup group page

mhaa.midhudsonastro.org used to take you to our homepage

Now that our website is launched, I've configured for all three of those to take visitors to our homepage. This is more in line with standard website URLs and easier for people to remember.

The mhaa subdomain URL (mhaa.midhudsonastro.org) will forward to midhudsonastro.org for the time being, but should be considered deprecated and not used from now on as it may be disabled at any time.

You may still use <http://meetup.midhudsonastro.org> as an easy URL to give guests for finding our Meetup page.

MHAA Membership Account management status

The members in elected roles completed the beta test run of setting up new accounts on the website that will manage their membership and grant access to members-only content/features. The test resulted in some minor tweaks to the instructions based on their experience, but by and large it was a success. I plan to send out codes to the regular members, so they can do the same, in early October.

Google Workspace Account

Google requires us to convert from our free workspace account to a paid business account. This introduces a monthly bill in the ballpark of \$20.

We hope to convert to a non-profit account within a few months, which will make it free again, but I confirmed with the IRS that we are not officially registered as a 501(c)(3) org even though some members thought we were. We'd been operating under the belief that we were when it came to our by-laws and filing the tax postcards, etc, so we should only need tiny tweaks, if any, to our existing procedures to qualify. Eric is working on sorting out any changes and filing the paperwork.

As a bonus, once we have the Determination Letter from the IRS confirming our status, we can enroll in Bing Rewards

and Amazon Smile as eligible recipients of user micro-donations (through their searches and purchases etc) as I'd brought up a few months ago."

SOLAR SYSTEM AMBASSADOR

Willi Yee reported that he has NASA card sets, stickers, and other materials for distribution.

OLD BUSINESS

The 2nd July star party was a huge success despite an interruption by about of kids with cars. Jack called the Park ranger and the park police officer cleared the intruders. The walkway event was held with 3-5 MHAA members contributing. The wedding event was fun despite cloudy skies until 11:30. Burger Hill and Opus 40 events were clouded out and the Armenia event was canceled.

We still have not heard back from Sam's Point.

NEW BUSINESS

Jack welcomed the several new participants to our meeting and subsequent solar system experience. He also reported that we have money for equipment and repairs and suggested an online discussion to address this.

Upcoming events:

- Aug. 26. star party and Walkway
- Aug. 29. Artemis launch
- Sept. 22. Vineyard Commons
- Sept. 23. star party and Walkway
- Sept. 24. Town of Kent

There was a Facebook request for a star party. No details yet.

Willie Yee reported on his attendance at the Adirondack Star Party with David Levy.

Alex Passas announced that we can get a six month ad in the Chronogram . The cost is \$329.

The meeting g was adjourned at 8:01. Eric Myers delivered his outdoor solar system experience program to a very interested and appreciative audience of 15-25 people.

Submitted by Tim Denman.

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## **Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association, July 19, 2022**

The meeting began after 7:30 due to technical difficulties with the virtual setup in Science Hall. The minutes from June were accepted without changes.

### **PRESIDENT REPORT**

Jack Chastain brought up topics later under old and new business to save time.

### **VICE PRESIDENT REPORT**

### **SECRETARY REPORT**

Jim Rockrohr was on vacation. Tim Denman filled in.

## **NEWSLETTER CHAIR REPORT**

No Report.

## **TREASURER REPORT**

- Monthly report is in the newsletter.
- PayPal dues transactions to be smaller.
- Members attending the picnic will be assessed \$10 to keep in compliance with our non profit tax status. Non member fee is \$15.

## **OUTREACH CHAIR REPORT**

- Currently we need a chairperson.
- Rick, Tim, Tanya, and Dave have been helping Jack fill in.
- See new business.

## **SPEAKER CHAIR REPORT**

- Eric Myers will be presenting in August. The topic is The Live Solar System Experience.

## **MEMBERSHIP CHAIR REPORT**

- Eric Myers filled in. Info is in the newsletter.

## **SOLAR SYSTEM ABASSADOR REPORT**

- Willie Yee was not present.
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## **WEBMASTER**

- Steve Dittmar reported on progress for the new website.
- Members need to sign up.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- First July Star party went well.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Scott reported on the picnic. It starts at 6 and tables are requested.
- Money for repairs was discussed.

## **Upcoming Events:**

- July 25 – Amenia
- July 29 - Opus 40
- Star Party at Lake Taghkanic
- August 12 - Walkway
- August 13 - Cocksackie Wedding
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The meeting ended as shortly after 8 as possible.

The speaker was Andrew Metz. He presented practical strategies for acquiring and processing photos. The presentation topics included On-Camera Settings, Session Planning, Image Calibration, Narrow-Band Imaging and Advanced Techniques such as HDR, Dithering and Drizzle.

Submitted by Tim Denman late Tuesday, August 16.

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MHAA Treasurer's Report for July 2022

As of 17 July 2022 we have \$4,354.20 in our bank account and \$1343.31 in our PayPal account, with the Treasurer holding \$40 in petty cash. Our monthly Zoom subscription of \$14.99 was paid via PayPal on the 15th of the month, as it always is. Around that same time our 6 month bill for Meetup.com was charged to my credit card for \$106.86, and I have reimbursed myself via PayPal.

Since last month's report we have received \$99.52 for two new memberships and two renewals. We received a donation of \$100 from Vineyard Commons in Highland, where we had a delightful event on June 3rd. I am afraid I forgot to mention in last month's report that when long time member and club founder David Lindemann renewed his membership he included an additional donation to the club of \$25. Thank you David, both for the contribution now, and for your contributions back when we were getting started.

I have received notice from PayPal that they are changing their terms of service (as they sometimes do) and that includes their fee structure. They have been taking out a fixed fee for every transaction, plus a percentage of the amount of the transaction. For someone who pays dues of \$26.00 via PayPal, they take \$1.24 and we get slightly less than \$25. Their new system will do away with the fixed fee and just charge 2.99% of the transaction amount. That should lower our fee so that we will get slightly more than \$25 instead, so this is in our favor.

They are also changing their terms so that a U.S. Business (that's how they view us) cannot receive money from "friends" without the transaction fee. In the past it was possible for someone to pay dues via PayPal of only \$25 but check a box that said something like "sending to a friend," and we would get the whole \$25. I have not publicized this, because it might be confusing to people, and as we now see, it is going away. I don't think they are removing the path which lets us send money without a fee to a personal account. That is how I pay back myself and others for expenses we've paid for initially out of our own pockets. I'll keep an eye on this — it will be important after the picnic.

This coming weekend we will have our first (annual, we hope) club picnic, at the Field of Dreams Park outside of New Paltz (near the Fairgrounds). At a previous meeting we voted to pay for some of the expenses, but we later realized that we should also ask people to help with the expenses, to avoid any possible question of our status as a 501(c)(3) organization for federal tax purposes. The club has already paid \$100 to the Town of New Paltz to rent the shelter. The organizers will pay for food and drink and collect money from those in attendance, and we'll sort it out afterwards and I'll pay back the organizers after the event.

I'm afraid I have not made any significant progress since the last report on filing IRS Form 1023-EZ to secure a definite determination of our tax exempt status. According to our Webmaster we have a few months until Google starts charging us, and they will not delete our files, so we are not in danger of great damage. I also don't think the IRS will give us a letter of determination right away. Still, it's best to get it into their hands soon, so I hope to make progress on it in the next month.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Treasurer

MHAA Membership Report for June 2022

As of 17 July 2022 the club has 65 members in good standing and 4 lapsed memberships, of which 2 expired over a year ago. We still have 12 Lifetime members and 2 student members. This month we welcomed 2 new members, and had 2 renewals of existing memberships. This past month I also went through our Slack membership list and disabled all of the accounts with memberships that have long been expired.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Acting Membership Coordinator

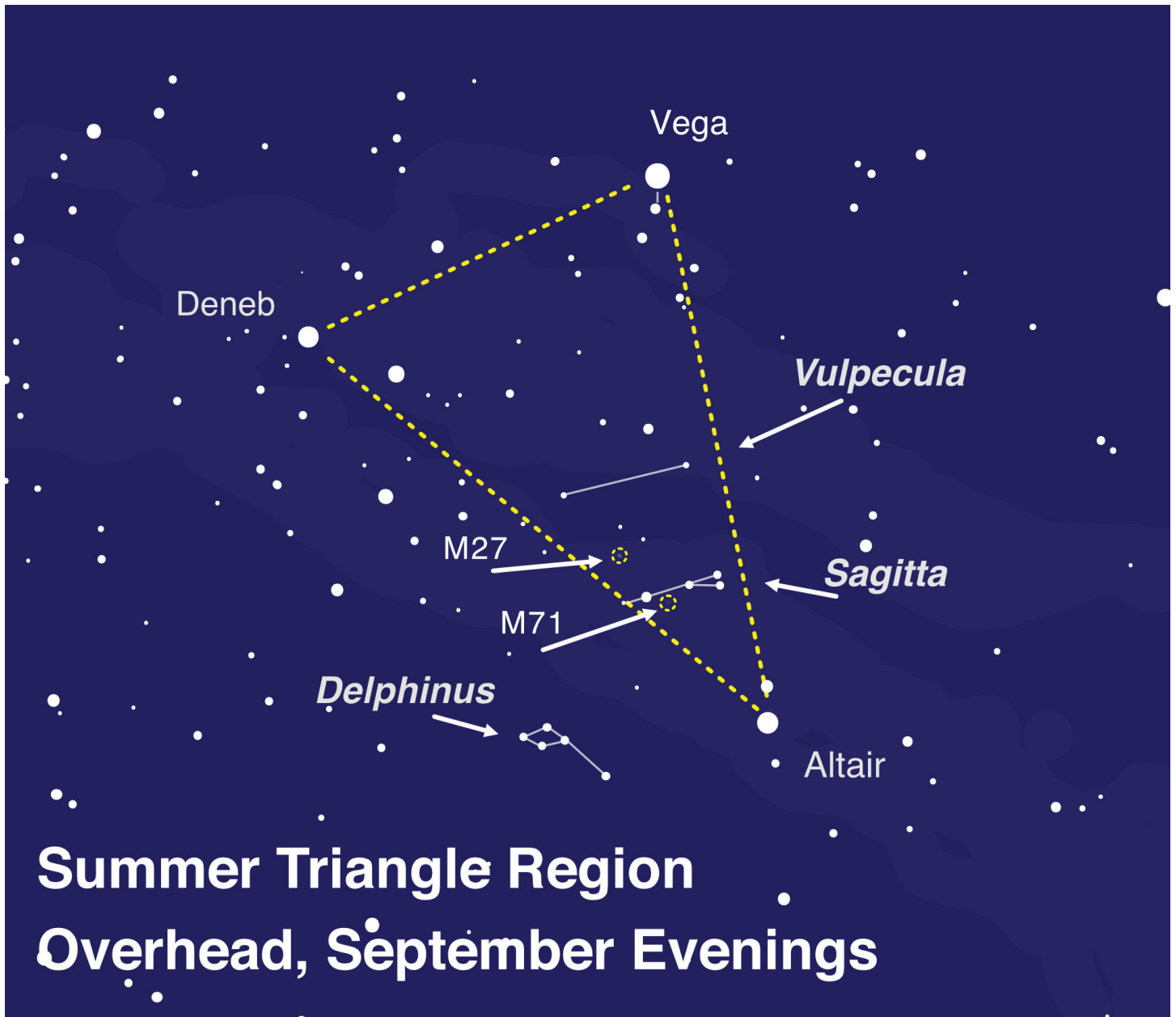
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**This article is distributed by NASA Night Sky Network**  
The Night Sky Network program supports astronomy clubs across the USA dedicated to astronomy outreach. Visit [nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov](https://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov) to find local clubs, events, and more!

## The Summer Triangle's Hidden Treasures

by David Prosper



September skies bring the lovely **Summer Triangle** asterism into prime position after nightfall for observers in the Northern Hemisphere. Its position high in the sky may make it difficult for some to observe its member stars comfortably, since looking straight up while standing can be hard on one's neck! While that isn't much of a problem for

those that just want to quickly spot its brightest stars and member constellations, this difficulty can prevent folks from seeing some of the lesser known and dimmer star patterns scattered around its informal borders. The solution? Lie down on the ground with a comfortable blanket or mat, or grab a lawn or gravity chair and sit luxuriously while facing up. You'll quickly spot the major constellations about the Summer Triangle's three corner stars: Lyra with bright star Vega, Cygnus with brilliant star Deneb, and Aquila with its blazing star, Altair. As you get comfortable and your eyes adjust, you'll soon find yourself able to spot a few constellations hidden in plain sight in the region around the Summer Triangle: **Vulpecula the Fox**, **Sagitta the Arrow**, and **Delphinus the Dolphin**! You could call these the Summer Triangle's "hidden treasures" – and they are hidden in plain sight for those that know where to look!

**Vulpecula the Fox** is located near the middle of the Summer Triangle, and is relatively small, like its namesake. Despite its size, it features the largest planetary nebula in our skies: M27, aka the Dumbbell Nebula! It's visible in binoculars as a fuzzy "star" and when seen through telescopes, its distinctive shape can be observed more readily - especially with larger telescopes. Planetary nebulae, named such because their round fuzzy appearances were initially thought to resemble the disc of a planet by early telescopic observers, form when stars similar to our Sun begin to die. The star will expand into a massive red giant, and its gasses drift off into space, forming a nebula. Eventually the star collapses into a white dwarf – as seen with M27 - and eventually the colorful shell of gasses will dissipate throughout the galaxy, leaving behind a solitary, tiny, dense, white dwarf star. You are getting a peek into our Sun's far-distant future when you observe this object!

**Sagitta the Arrow** is even smaller than Vulpecula – it's the third smallest constellation in the sky! Located between the stars of Vulpecula and Aquila the Eagle, Sagitta's stars resemble its namesake arrow. It too contains an interesting deep-sky object: M71, an unusually small and young globular cluster whose lack of a strong central core has long confused and intrigued astronomers. It's visible in binoculars, and a larger telescope will enable you to separate its stars a bit more easily than most globulars; you'll certainly see why it was thought to be an open cluster!

Delicate **Delphinus the Dolphin** appears to dive in and out of the Milky Way near Aquila and Sagitta! Many stargazers identify Delphinus as a herald of the fainter water constellations, rising in the east after sunset as fall approaches. The starry dolphin appears to leap out of the great celestial ocean, announcing the arrival of more wonderful sights later in the evening.

Want to hunt for more treasures? You'll need a treasure map, and the Night Sky Network's "Trip Around the Triangle" handout is the perfect guide for your quest! Download one before your observing session at [bit.ly/TriangleTrip](http://bit.ly/TriangleTrip). And of course, while you wait for the Sun to set - or skies to clear - you can always find out more about the objects and science hidden inside these treasures by checking out NASA's latest at [nasa.gov](http://nasa.gov).



## 2022 Star Party Schedule

|              |         |
|--------------|---------|
| February 4   | 5:00 PM |
| March 4      | 5:30 PM |
| April 1      | 7:00 PM |
| April 29     | 8:00 PM |
| May 27       | 8:30 PM |
| July 1       | 8:30 PM |
| July 29      | 8:00 PM |
| August 26    | 7:30 PM |
| September 23 | 6:30 PM |
| October 28   | 6:00 PM |
| November 26  | 4:30 PM |
| December 23  | 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).