



December, 2022

Website: www.midhudsonastro.org

President : Jack Chastain
Secretary: Jim Rockrohr
Newsletter Editor: Rick Versace
Publicity: Tim Denman
Speakers: Alexandra Passas

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

groups.io Group: mhaa.groups.io

Vice President: Dave Sherman
Treasurer: Eric Myers
Membership Coordinator: Eric Myers
Webmaster: Steve Dittmar
Outreach: Joe Macagne
College Liaison: Dr. Amy Bartholomew

~~~~~

**The next meeting is December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022, on Zoom and in person. Check MeetUp for details and link. Zoom link will be sent to all those that RSVP.**

**Room change for the December Meeting**  
Lecture Center Room 104

~~~~~

December Speaker

Member Presentations and Snacks

At the December meeting, we don't have a usual speaker but open the floor to members who would like to present a short item, images, whatever. If you would like to talk for between 5 and 15 minutes, please let me know!

We also tend to bring cookies and such for a little seasonal shared snacking once we have completed everything for the year.

Hope to see lots of you in the Coykendall Auditorium for the last gathering of 2022!

~~~~~

## **Election of Officers for 2023**

It's that time of year again - please consider standing for any of the listed positions and support MHAA. All current holders are willing to continue in their positions, but PLEASE consider stepping up and helping out!

President: Jack Chastain

Vice President: David Sherman

Treasurer: Eric Myers

Recording Secretary: James RockRohr

Publicity: Tim Denman

Newsletter: Rick Versace

Directors:

Alex Passas

Karl Loatman

Willie Yee

[Open - was Steve Carey, moved out of state]

Voting methods to be provided later for those not attending the meeting in person.

~~~~~

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, November 15, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Jack Chastain on the online application Zoom. There was no in-person meeting at SUNY New Paltz due to a snow storm.

The minutes of the October meeting as published in the newsletter were unanimously approved with no corrections.

### **Officer's Reports:**

**President:** Jack Chastain was present.

- Since there was no nominating committee, Jack canvassed the existing officers that were present and all will continue in their current positions.
- Voting on officers for 2023 will be at the next meeting in December.

**Vice President:** Dave Sherman was present

- No report.

**Secretary:** Jim Rockrohr was present.

- Nothing new to report.

**Outreach:** Joe MacCagne was not present

- Willie Yee commented that there was nothing new.

**Publicity:** Tim Denman was present.

- No report.

**Newsletter:** Rick Versace was not present.

- No report.

**Treasurer:** Eric Myers was **not** present.

- See the newsletter for the latest information.

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

- December will be member presentations – See Alex to volunteer.
- January and February are covered.

**Membership:** Rick Versace was not present.

- No report.

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

- Artemis launching tonight (11/15)! NASA TV is covering live.

**Webmaster:** Steve Dittmar was present.

- The new website is live!
- All of the sign in codes for members have been created. Emails will start going out shortly.

#### **Old Business:**

- The last club star party was moved to Saturday but had a good turnout; about 40.
  - Lots of new people.
  - Good participation.
- Saugerties High School star party.
  - Good turnout; about 50.
  - Clouds in and out but got some good viewing in.
- Land Rover event
  - Cancelled ‘scopes due to weather.
- Money is available for repairs/upgrades to club telescopes. Need a committee. Jack still needs to set up a Tech meeting.
  - The club’s 8” Dob, 13” Dob and 8” Meade telescopes are available to members. There is also a large collection of CDs and several imagers that can be loaned. Contact Jack.

#### **New Business:**

- Elections next month. Be sure to attend either live or on Zoom.
- Jack wants to add a new non-officer position: Event Coordinator.
- Tim Denman contacted by an Audubon club about an event in the spring in the Shawangunk Grassland Preserve near Wallkill.
- Winter Dinner discussed.
  - Jack will contact the Lakeside Restaurant in Orange County about dates, etc.
- Holiday party
  - Who can coordinate (not Alex)?

**Upcoming events:**

- **Artemis launch** – 1 AM, 11/16 (tonight!)
- **Girl Scouts** – 11/18 in Kingston. See Rick.
- **Next club star party** – November 25, Lake Taghkanic state park.
- **Wappinger Elementary School** – 12/2, rain date 12/9. See Jack
- **Opus 40** – 12/14. See Rick.
- **Wildflower Farms, Gardiner** – 12/5 through 12/23 (every night!).
  - o Resort area, good visibility.
  - o 2 telescopes maximum for 1-2 hours
  - o We'll get \$150/night we participate.
  - o See Jack
- **Sam's Point** – latest info is that there is no room in this year's remaining schedule. Maybe in the Spring.
- **Wedding** – April. Details TBD.
- **Need Presenters!** – Jack needs help with all of the requested events. Please consider volunteering to organize/present events. See Jack.

**Observing Reports:**

- (none reported)

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM. There were 22 Zoom windows open at the end of the business meeting. (No in-person meeting due to weather.) **The next meeting is December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022, on Zoom and in person. Check MeetUp for details and link. Zoom link will be sent to all those that RSVP.**

The presentation that followed was by Jim Hall, SSA: "Various NASA Projects" overview.

Submitted by James Rockrohr, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

~~~~~

MHAA Treasurer's Report for December 2022

As of 19 December 2022 we have \$4575.60 in our bank account and \$1547.31 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. This month I paid New York State Parks \$25 for our permit for next year to use Lake Taghkanic State Park for stargazing. Since last month's report we have received \$277.54 for eleven membership renewals.

This month's bill from Google for their gSuite service was \$19.46, which is significantly larger than the \$0.63 from last month. As best I can tell, the first bill was for only the last day of the previous month, and the second bill was for an entire month.

This month we also received \$200 in donations for two events where we participated (less a \$2.99 fee for one of the payments because it was via PayPal).

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Treasurer

MHAA Membership Report for December 2022

As of 19 December 2022 the club has 67 paid members in good standing and 10 lapsed memberships, of which 2 expired over a year ago. This month we had 11 membership renewals.

We lost one student member, who had graduated in the spring, but he's come back as a full member, and we've gained another student member from SUNY New Paltz, for a total of 2. We have 12 Lifetime members.

Our Slack workspace has 87 “members” (which does not include 26 deactivated accounts), but that number includes 30 invitations sent out but not used, so there are actually just 57 members using Slack.

As of a few years ago memberships run for 1 year from whenever you joined (or renewed, if you had lapsed) but they previously ran from January to December, and so many long-time members will be asked to renew sometime this month or next. If you renew before your membership lapses then I just add another year on from when it would expire. The automated reminder system is working well for this. It only sends out a reminder once a month if your membership has lapsed, and it will send a reminder about a month before your membership lapses. A new batch of reminders went out Monday morning. Instructions for renewing are at <http://join.midhudsonastro.org/>

The membership reminders are sent using Google gSuite, but I know that the Webmaster has been working on a reminder system that should do the same thing but running on the website he’s created. There may be some bumps in the road as we transition from what we are using now to the new system, but hopefully nobody notices.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Myers
Acting Membership Coordinator

~~~~~



**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](http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov) to find local clubs, events, and more!

## Binoculars: A Great First Telescope

by David Prosper

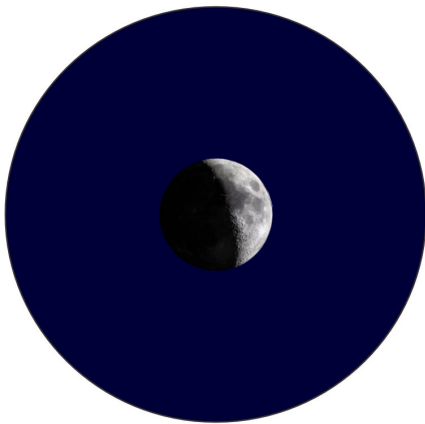
The two most popular types of binocular designs are shown here: roof-prism binoculars (left) and porro-prism binoculars (right). Roof prisms tend to be more compact, lighter, and a bit more portable, while porro-prisms tend to be heavier but often offer wider views and greater magnification. What should you choose? Many birders and frequent fliers often choose roof-prism models for their portability. Many observers who prefer to observe fainter deep-sky objects or who use a tripod with their observing choose larger porro-prism designs. There is no right answer, so if you can, try out both designs and see which works better for you. Do you want to peer deeper into the night sky? Are you feeling the urge to buy a telescope? There are so many options for budding astronomers that choosing one can be overwhelming. A first telescope should be easy to use and provide good quality views while being affordable. As it turns out, those requirements make the first telescope of choice for many stargazers something unexpected: a good pair of binoculars!

Binoculars are an excellent first instrument because they are generally easy to use and more versatile than most telescopes. Binoculars can be used for activities like stargazing and birdwatching, and work great in the field at a star party, along the hiking trail, and anywhere else where you can see the sky. Binoculars also travel well, since they easily fit into carry-on luggage – a difficult feat for most telescopes! A good pair of binoculars, ranging in specifications from 7x35 to 10x50, will give you great views of the Moon, large open star clusters like the Pleiades (M45), and, from dark skies, larger bright galaxies like the Andromeda Galaxy (M31) and large nebulae like the Orion Nebula (M42). While you likely won’t be able to see Saturn’s rings, as you practice your observing skills you may be able to spot Jupiter’s moons, along with some globular clusters and fainter nebulae from dark sites, too.



*The two most popular types of binocular designs are shown here: roof-prism binoculars (left) and porro-prism binoculars (right). Roof prisms tend to be more compact, lighter, and a bit more portable, while porro-prisms tend to be heavier but often offer wider views and greater magnification. What should you choose? Many birders and frequent fliers often choose roof-prism models for their portability. Many observers who prefer to observe fainter deep-sky objects or who use a tripod with their observing choose larger porro-prism designs. There is no right answer, so if you can, try out both designs and see which works better for you.*

What do the numbers on those binocular specs actually mean? The first number is the magnification, while the second number is the size in millimeters (mm) of the lenses. So, a 7x35 pair of binoculars means that they will magnify 7 times using lenses 35 mm in diameter. It can be tempting to get the biggest binoculars you can find, but try not to get anything much more powerful than a 10x50 pair at first. Larger binoculars with more power often have narrower fields of vision and are heavier; while technically more powerful, they are also more difficult to hold steadily in your hands and "jiggle" quite a bit unless you buy much more expensive binoculars with image stabilization, or mount them to a tripod.



*A pair of good binoculars can show craters on the Moon around 6 miles (10 km) across and larger. How large is that? It would take you about two hours to hike across a similar-sized crater on Earth. The "Can You See the Flag On the Moon?" handout showcases the levels of detail that different instruments can typically observe on the Moon, available at [bit.ly/flagmoon](http://bit.ly/flagmoon). Moon image courtesy Jay Tanner*

Would it surprise you that amazing views of some astronomical objects can be found not just from giant telescopes, but also from seemingly humble binoculars? Binoculars are able to show a much larger field of view of the sky compared to most telescopes. For example, most telescopes are unable to keep the entirety of the Pleiades or Andromeda Galaxy entirely inside the view of most eyepieces. Binoculars are also a great investment for more advanced observing, as later on they are useful for hunting down objects to then observe in more detail with a telescope.

If you are able to do so, real-world advice and experience is still the best for something you will be spending a lot of time with! Going to an in-person star party hosted by a local club is a great way to get familiar with telescopes and binoculars of all kinds – just ask permission before taking a closer look! You can find clubs and star parties near you on the Night Sky Network's Clubs & Events page at [bit.ly/nsnclubsandevents](http://bit.ly/nsnclubsandevents), and inspire your binocular stargazing sessions with NASA's latest discoveries 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).