



August, 2025

Website: www.midhudsonastro.org

President : Jack Chastain
Secretary: Jim Rockrohr
Newsletter Editor: Rick Versace
Publicity: Tim Denman
Speakers: Bart Henin

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

groups.io Group: mhaa.groups.io

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

The next meeting is August 19th, 2025, on Zoom and in person. Check MeetUp for details and link. Zoom link will be sent to all those that RSVP.

August Speaker

"The History of Celestial Way Finding"

Richard Wolff

Online link to the MHA A monthly Business Meeting Agenda:

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

~~~~~

"Astronomy at Lake Taghkanic State Park"

<http://spy-hill.net/myers/astro/ltsp/>

~~~~~

**Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association,
July 15, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Jack Chastain in the Coykendall Auditorium at SUNY New Paltz, NY, and on the online application Zoom.

The minutes of the June meeting as published in the newsletter were passed unanimously.

Officer's Reports:

President: Jack Chastain was present.

- He has contact cards (500). Take some!
- Jack has the club's Meade 8" and 10" 'scopes. Steve has the 12". It may have GPS issues.
- We have received a 6" Newtonian; needs cleaning.
- The Celestron has gone to Steve. Needs a mount fix.
- Jack will be away on vacation August 22 through September 5.

Vice President: Dave Sherman was present.

- Nothing to report.

Recording Secretary: Jim Rockrohr was present.

- Nothing to report.

Publicity: Tim Denman was not present.

- (No report).

Newsletter: Rick Versace was not present.

- (No report).

Treasurer: Eric Myers was not present.

- See newsletter for the current numbers.
- Received \$575.00 donation from the recent Gather Green wedding star party.

Outreach: Mike Goldstein was present.

- Nothing new to report

Speakers: Bart Henin was present.

- August: Richard Wolff: "The History of Celestial Way Finding"
- September: Dr. Charles Merguerian: "Exploration and Geology of the Earth's Moon".
- October: SUNY Students: "Seestar Science"
- November: Mike Goldstein: (tentative) ARP objects
- December: Member presentations and holiday party.
- January: Member presentation and Q & A: "Astronomy 101: Or How to Use the Telescope You Got For Christmas".

Membership: Steve Dittmar was present

- Working to automate membership letters.
- Gained 1 student member from Marist University.
- Gained 2 students from SUNY NP.

Solar System Ambassador: Willie Yee was not present.

- (No report)

Webmaster: Steve Dittmar was present

- There is a NEW waiver to sign for access to various dark sites. Please log in and sign it so you can continue to attend our club events.
- Discussed layout adjustments for the printable membership card.
- A 12" Teeter telescope to be donated through Steve.

Summer Picnic: Alex Passas and Scott Ewart were present.

- August 16, 6 PM until whenever.
- Please RSVP to Alex so she can plan food.
- \$15.00 per person payable at the picnic.
- No alcohol
- Dogs? – TBD
- Bring telescopes.

Old Business:

- **Last club star party** – poor sky on Saturday. But still had lots of people.
- **Wedding at Gather Green** – Good crowd, lots of questions.

New Business:

- **Next Club Star Party:** Friday, 7/25, at Lake Taghkanic. Be sure to RSVP.
- **Another Wedding:** 8/9 at Mount Tremper. See Jack

Events:

- **7/25 Club Star Party:** Lake Taghkanic. Rain date 7/26.
- **7/26 Walkway:** See Eric.
- **8/9 Wedding at Mt. Tremper:** See Jack.
- **8/16 Club picnic at Field of Dreams park in New Paltz:** RSVP to Alex Passas.
- **Autocamp** wants an event on 8/23.
 - Will offer \$500 with some sponsorship.
- **John Burroughs's Woodchuck Lodge** in Roxbury, NY, looking for a public star party on September 26 (rain date 27th).
- **Olana, 10/4** - wants a family oriented program for International Observe the Moon Night (IOMN)
- **Innesfree, 10/4** – wants IOMN star party.
- **SUNY New Paltz, 10/4** - is doing an IOMN program and would like our help.
 - Will work out the details as we get closer.

Reminders:

- Paid members get access to club equipment (telescopes, imagers, trackers) and club DVD/VHS video library.
 1. See the website or Jack for a list of available items and how to pay to join.
- Paid members can also get access to the club Slack channels. Contact Jack or Eric for access.

Observing Reports:

- Nothing reported.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM. There were 10 Zoom windows open at the end of the business meeting and approximately 14 people were in the auditorium. **The next meeting is August 19th, 2025, 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 Thomas Evangelist, Assistant Principle of physical sciences at Brooklyn Technical High School: "Getting Oxygen to Another Planet".

Submitted by James Rockrohr, August 16, 2025.

~~~~~

## MHAA Treasurer's Report for August 2025

As of 17 August 2025 we have \$7649.90 in our bank account and \$2,779.14 in our PayPal account, with the Treasurer holding \$211.50 in petty cash. We just paid \$16.99 for Zoom Pro for one month, and our monthly payment for Google gSuite on the first of the month was \$34.97 (it went up this month by \$3.83) We also paid \$193.31 to reimburse Eric Myers for 6 months of Meetup.com.

This month we took in \$148.00 for 6 renewing members and \$73.80 for 3 new members, We received \$240.00 for a wedding event held on August 9th at Foxfire Mountain House.

Our annual picnic was held at the Field of Dreams west of New Paltz on Saturday night, August 16th. There were 19 members and guests in attendance. Income from the event was \$285, while expenses for food and drink were \$298.50, so we came very close to breaking even on the food. The expense for renting the pavilion is probably \$125, but it has not been paid yet so I can't be certain yet.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Eric Myers  
Treasurer

## MHAA Membership Report for August 2025

Since last month's meeting we've gained 3 new members; welcome Bradley, Lindsay, and Leonardo!

As of 18 August 2025 the club has 107 members in good standing including 6 students and 2 honorary members from SUNY New Paltz.

We have 147 participants in our Slack workspace, of which 35 are classified as "active."

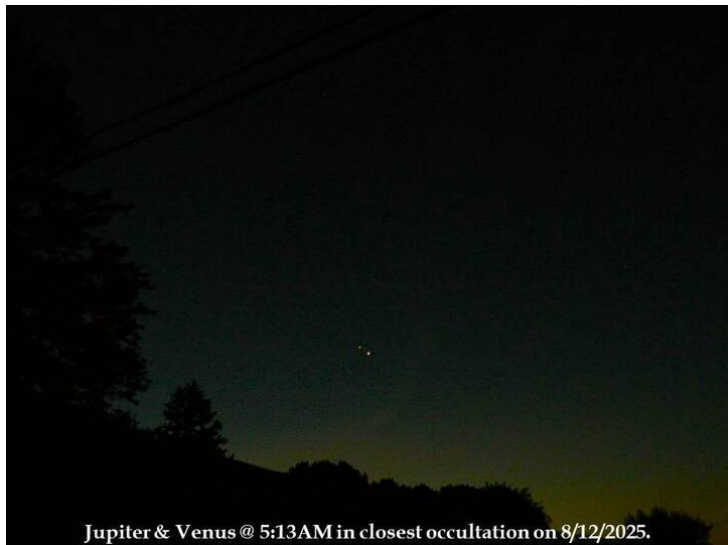
We have 2927 "members" on Meetup.com, which is primarily "friends, fans, and followers," and also actual club members. There are 119 people in our email list on [groups.io](https://groups.io), which includes non-members who are interested in receiving those notifications. We have 1259 followers on Facebook, and 237 followers on Instagram.

Eric Myers has handed over almost all Membership duties to me, though he will continue to help out with processing student members.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Steve Dittmar  
Membership Coordinator

~~~~~

Some images from Karl Loatman



Jupiter & Venus @ 5:13AM in closest occultation on 8/12/2025.



Jupiter with Galilean Moons & Venus @ 5:14AM 8/12/25.

Rick Here is what I got on the Venus-Jupiter Occultation. If they got closer, Venus would have some Galilean Moons. Karl Loatman



Jupiter & Venus @ 5:19AM 8/4/2025 approaching occultation.



This article is distributed by NASA's Night Sky Network (NSN).

The NSN program supports astronomy clubs across the USA dedicated to astronomy outreach. Visit nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov to find local clubs, events, and more!

By Dave Prosper
Updated by Kat Troche

Summer skies bring glorious views of our own Milky Way galaxy to observers blessed with dark skies. For many city dwellers, their first sight of the Milky Way comes during trips to rural areas - so if you are traveling away from city lights, do yourself a favor and look up!

To observe the Milky Way, you need clear, dark skies and enough time to adapt your eyes to the dark. Photos of the Milky Way are breathtaking, but they usually show far more detail and color than the human eye can see – that's the beauty and quietly deceptive nature of long exposure photography. For Northern Hemisphere observers, the most prominent portion of the Milky Way rises in the southeast as marked by the constellations Scorpius and Sagittarius. Take note that, even in dark skies, the Milky Way isn't easily visible until it rises a bit above the horizon, and the thick, turbulent air obscures the view. The Milky Way is huge, but it is also rather faint, and our eyes need time to truly adjust to the dark and see it in any detail. Avoid bright lights as they will ruin your night vision. It's best to attempt to view the Milky Way when the Moon is at a new or crescent phase; a full Moon will wash out any potential views.



The Vera C. Rubin Observatory, located at Cerro Pachón, Chile, under the Milky Way. The bright halo of gas and stars on the left side of the image highlights the very center of the Milky Way galaxy. The dark path that cuts through this center is known as the Great Rift, because it gives the appearance that the Milky Way has been split in half. Image Credit: [RubinObs/NOIRLab/SLAC/NSF/DOE/AURA/B. Quint](https://www.noirlab.org/)

Keeping your eyes dark-adapted is especially important if you want to not only see the haze of the Milky Way, but also the dark lane cutting into that haze, stretching from the Summer Triangle to Sagittarius. This dark detail is known as the Great Rift, and is seen more readily in very dark skies, especially dark, dry skies found in high desert regions. What exactly is the Great Rift? You are looking at massive clouds of galactic dust lying between Earth and the interior of the Milky Way.

Other “dark nebulae” of cosmic clouds pepper the Milky Way, including the famed [Coalsack](#), found in the Southern Hemisphere constellation of Crux. Many cultures celebrate these dark clouds in their traditional stories along with the constellations and the Milky Way. One such story tells of a [Yacana the Llama](#), and her baby, wandering along a river that crossed the sky – the Milky Way. The bright stars Alpha and Beta Centauri serve as the llama's eyes, with the dark sections representing the bodies of mother and baby, with the baby below the mother, nursing.



In the activity, "Our Place In Our Galaxy", if the Milky Way were shrunk down to the size of North America, our solar system would be about the size of a quarter. At that scale, Polaris - which is about 433 light years distant from us - would be 11 miles away. Image Credit: [Astronomical Society of the Pacific](#)

Where exactly is our solar system within the Milky Way? Is there a way to [get a sense of scale](#)? The “[Our Place in Our Galaxy](#)” activity can help you do just that, with only birdseed, a coin, and your imagination. You can also discover the amazing science NASA is doing to understand our galaxy – and our place in it - in the [Galaxies](#) section of [NASA's Universe](#) page.

*Originally posted by Dave Prosper: June 2021
Last Updated by Kat Troche: July 2025*

Star Party Schedule

Date	Arrival Time	Civil Dusk
Jun 20 2025	8:30 PM	21:08 EDT
Jul 25 2025	8:30 PM	20:53 EDT
Aug 22 2025	7:30 PM	20:14 EDT
Sep 19 2025	7:00 PM	19:25 EDT
Oct 17 2025	6:00 PM	18:38 EDT
Nov 21 2025	4:30 PM	16:59 EST
Dec 19 2025	4:30 PM	16:57 EST
Jan 16 2026	4:30 PM	17:20 EST
Feb 13 2026	5:30 PM	17:53 EST

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 Taghanic 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.