



Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association

February, 2019

Website: www.midhudsonastro.org

President : Jack Chastain
Secretary: Jim Rockrohr
Newsletter Editor: Rick Versace
Publicity: Tim Denman
Speakers: Paul Granich

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

Yahoo Group: MHAstro

Vice President: C. E. Raum
Treasurer: Eric Myers
Membership Coordinator: C. E. Raum
Webmaster: Paul Chauvet
Outreach: Joe Macagne
College Liaison: Dr. Amy Forestell

Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association, January 15, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Jack Chastain in the Coykendall Science Center Auditorium at SUNY, New Paltz, NY.

The minutes of the December meeting as published in the newsletter were approved. A new star party schedule will be provided for the next newsletter. Also, it was suggested to remove references to the "hot line" since it no longer exists.

Officer's Reports:

President: Jack has scheduled a Steering Committee meeting for January 28 at 7:30 at the Gateway diner. He would like to finalize changes to the By-Laws and work on documenting club policies and procedures like the speaker honoraria and star party logistics. He also demonstrated the new star party scheduling spreadsheet. It was also decided to set earlier start times to encourage people to get there early and set up while it is still light.

Vice President: C. E. Raum was present.

- He encouraged people to sign up for SLACK as the officers are using it to communicate. It appears to be better than the Yahoo group for working sessions.
- He is maintaining the speaker schedule: January is C. E. Raum. He will create a speaker committee to help find speakers for the rest of the year. If you are interested or have ideas for speakers, please contact him.

- He has the new (to us) Criterion RV-6 Dynascope. He has replaced the cork gasket and the motion is now good. The clock motor is working well. He may want to move the primary mirror to bring the focal point out of the focuser so it will focus on his camera. TBD

Secretary: Jim Rockrohr was present. No news to report.

Treasurer: Eric Myers was present.

- Jack Chastain, Eric Myers, and Ken Bailey now have signing authority.
- The email address will be changed to Eric for online banking.
- Eric is now on PayPal.
- Eric has created a better link to PayPal to make it easier for people to join us.
- Our 2019 insurance was paid by Ken late last year.

Treasurer's Report for FY 2018-19 and Proposed Budget for FY 2019-20

According to the MHAA Bylaws the fiscal year begins on the first day of March, and the Treasurer is to submit a proposed budget for the coming year at the February meeting. Before presenting the proposed budget, I want to report on the finances of the past fiscal year. Both Income and Expenses are summarized here:

<u>Income:</u>	<u>Expenses:</u>
Dues (check/cash x 27): \$675.00	Insurance: \$541.00
Dues (PayPal x 16.5): \$386.57	Speakers x 3: \$300.00
Tips & Donations: \$33.00	Meetup.com: \$179.88
Other/Unclassified: \$140.00	Domain
Credit Interest: \$3.68	Registration: \$27.90
TOTAL: \$1,238.25	Park Permit: \$25.00
	TOTAL: \$1,073.78

We began the period in March 2018 with \$2,365.69 in the bank, and should finish February 2019 with \$2,530.16, for a net gain of \$164.47. This entirely neglects the value of the club's physical assets (primarily our telescopes, but also DVDs).

The proposed budget for next year assumes the same expenses for everything, but adds some small items for promoting the club and for membership management:

<u>Proposed Budget:</u>	
Insurance:	\$511.00
Park Permit:	\$25.00
Meetup.com:	\$179.88
Domain	
Registration:	\$27.90
Business Cards:	\$25.00
Member Planet:	\$30.00
Speakers x 6:	\$600.00
TOTAL:	\$1,398.78

The cost of increasing the number of outside speakers, who we pay an honorarium, would be offset by adding 7 additional members, which seems realistic given the plans of the Vice-President.

Respectfully submitted,
Eric Myers
Treasurer

Publicity: Tim Denman was present. He's working with Paul Chauvet to come up to speed. Eric Myers mentioned he had versions of a business card to share with Tim.

Newsletter: Rick Versace was not present.

Webmaster: Paul Chauvet was not present. The officer email addresses were updated to the new officers for 2019.

Outreach: Joe Macagne was not present.

Upcoming programs:

- None reported.
- See MeetUp page for the latest information.

Membership: C. E. Raum was present. He has created a master list with all members from 2006 to the present. There are 272 unique emails on the list, 70 that are current members, 4 lifetime members, 10 courtesy members, and 77 yahoo members. He is looking for a better membership management solution than a spreadsheet. There are several free and paid solutions out there.

Solar System Ambassador: Willie Yee was not present. He has been renewed as a Solar System Ambassador by NASA for 2 more years.

Old Business:

- The annual dinner at The Would restaurant on January 12 had 14 attendees. A good time was had by all.
- The January Club Star Party on January 11 was very cold. 3 members and 7 others attended.
- Club telescopes are available to paid-up members:
 1. Criterion RV-6, 6 inch reflector on an equatorial mount is with C. E. Raum.
 2. 13" dobsonian, currently with Jack Chastain, is available.
 3. Meade ETX125 maksutov, is currently with Joe Macagne.
 4. 4" Tasco refractor on an EQ mount will soon be junked.
 5. Orion 8" dobsonian had some screws and springs for the mirror mount replaced. It still needs a finder scope (Willie may have one). It has one eyepiece. – Tim Denman currently has the 'scope.
 6. A planetary camera and a "deep space" camera are available. See Willie.
 7. The Meade 80 mm refractor is currently with Karl Loatman.

New Business:

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- **Next Club Star Party:** February 1, 7 PM. Be sure to RSVP with car license plate number, make and model of your car by the Thursday evening before the star party, even if there is only a remote chance that you will attend on Friday evening or Saturday, if postponed due to weather. It's better to have too many people on the list rather than someone who isn't registered.
- **We need speakers:** please let C.E. Raum know if you have any leads or ideas.
- **Several libraries are looking to host events this year.** Let Jack know if you are interested.
- **Observing the Lunar Eclipse on January 20:** SUNY will set up some telescopes by the Planetarium...NOT the Observatory.
- **Proposal for Special Student Membership:** \$10.00 per year applicable to high school or college students. This will be voted on at the next meeting.
- **Reminder that dues are due!** \$25 cash or check, \$26 through PayPal.

Observing Reports:

- Jupiter and Venus will be close on the morning of January 22.

Visitors/New Members:

There were about 20 people in attendance at the end of the business meeting.

The business meeting was adjourned at about 8:28 PM. **The next meeting is on February 19th, 2019, in Room 108 of the Lecture Center at SUNY, New Paltz (note different location!).**

The presentation that followed was about Astrophotography by our own C. E. Raum.

Submitted by James Rockrohr, February 15th, 2019.

Minutes of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association Steering Committee, January 28, 2019

The meeting was called to order at about 6:45 PM by President Jack Chastain at the Gateway Diner in Highland, NY.

In attendance were:

- Jack Chastain, President
- C. E. Raum, Vice President and Membership Coordinator
- Jim Rockrohr, Secretary
- Eric Myers, Treasurer
- Tim Denman, Publicity
- Rick Versace, Newsletter
- Steve Carey, Director
- Karl Loatman, Director
- Joe Macagne, Director
- Willie Yee, Director

The only items discussed were changes to the club By-Laws, Policies and Procedures. There was a lot of discussion and some significant changes were made. The final version will be presented to the membership at the February club meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Submitted by James Rockrohr, February 15th, 2019.

ByLaws:

The Steering Committee has done an outstanding job of reworking the existing ByLaws to form an improved, current version for Membership approval. My thanks to every one of the officers and Board members - we had 100% attendance at a Special Meeting to deal with updating this important document!

The Association does not actually NEED bylaws to operate (NYS appears to only require them for Charitable organisations or Corporations, neither of which we are) but having bylaws is a positive move even if not required. Should they perhaps be renamed to "Articles of Association"? Probably not.

The Steering Committee will present this document to the Membership at the February meeting for approval in March.

Link: <https://goo.gl/2qE1UN>

Policies and Procedures:

The Steering Committee has also been working on other documents for the Association - including a Policies and Procedures document. This document attempts to capture some of the things we do as an Association that may not be formally collected yet. It provides some additional detail to what is in the ByLaws, as well as gives some guidance to what we can expect as Members of the Association.

Link: <https://goo.gl/285DWG>



Springtime Planet Party David Prosper

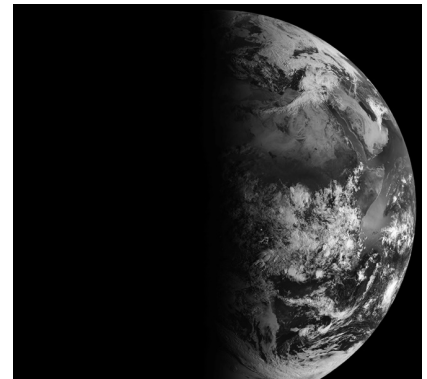
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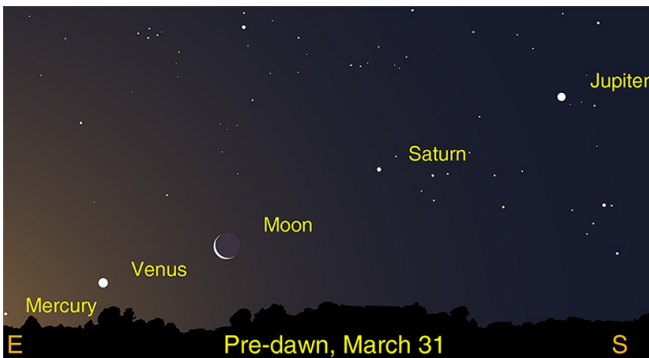
March brings longer days for Northern Hemisphere observers, especially by the time of the equinox. Early risers are treated to the majority of the bright planets dancing in the morning skies, with the Moon passing between them at the beginning and end of the month.

The **vernal equinox** occurs on **March 20**, marking the official beginning of spring for the Northern Hemisphere. Our Sun shines equally on the Northern and Southern Hemispheres during the moment of equinox, which is why the March and September equinoxes are the only times of the year when the Earth's north and south poles are simultaneously lit by sunlight. Exacting astronomers will note that the length of day and night on the equinox are not *precisely* equal; the date when they are closest to equal depends on your latitude, and may occur a few days earlier or later than the equinox itself. One complicating factor is that the Sun isn't a point light source, but a disc. Its edge is refracted by our atmosphere as it rises and sets, which adds several minutes of light to every day. The Sun doesn't neatly wink on and off at sunrise and sunset like a light bulb, and so there isn't a perfect split of day and night on the equinox - but it's very close!

Ruddy **Mars** still shines in the west after sunset. Mars scoots across the early evening skies from Aries towards Taurus and meets the sparkling Pleiades star cluster by month's end.



Earth from orbit on the March equinox, as viewed by EUMETSAT. Notice how the terminator – the line between day and night - touches both the north and south poles. Additional information can be found at <http://bit.ly/earthequinox> Image credit: NASA/Robert



March opens with the morning planets of **Jupiter**, **Saturn**, and **Venus** spread out over the southeastern horizon before sunrise. A crescent **Moon** comes very close to Saturn on the 1st and occults the ringed planet during the daytime. Lucky observers may be able to spot **Mercury** by the end of the month. March 31 opens with a beautiful set of planets and a crescent Moon strung diagonally across the early morning sky. Start with bright Jupiter, almost due south shortly before dawn. Then slide down and east towards Saturn, prominent but not nearly as bright as Jupiter. Continue east to the Moon, and then towards the beacon that is Venus, its gleam piercing through the early morning light. End with a challenge: can you find elusive Mercury above the eastern horizon?

Binoculars may be needed to spot the closest planet to the Sun as it will be low and obscured by dawn's encroaching glow. What a way to close out March!

Discover all of NASA's current and future missions at nasa.gov

2018 Star Party Schedule

January 11	7:00 PM
February 1	7:00 PM
March 8	7:00 PM
April 5	8:00 PM
May 3	8:00 PM
May 31	8:30 PM
July 5	8:30 PM
August 2	8:00 PM
August 30	8:00 PM
September 27	7:30 PM
October 25	7:00 PM
November 29	7:00 PM
December 27	7:00 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:

- ♦ For the foreseeable future, all indoor meetings will be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in Coykendall Science Bldg., SUNY New Paltz (directions above) at 7:30 PM. All indoor events are FREE! All are welcome. The presentations are generally geared towards teenagers and up.
- ♦ 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.