

# THE FOCUS

## The Official Newsletter of United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey

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Volume I Number I

### WHY THE FOCUS?

I certainly hope that you all like the look of the new UACNJ newsletter. In January when I agreed to take this position, I did so with the intent of keeping UACNJ and Jenny Jump supporters well informed regarding the events and happenings with all UACNJ clubs and their memberships. By using the name, The Focus, the intent is to point out that UACNJ *helps* provide the focus for amateur astronomy in the New Jersey area. I hope that you like the change.

With a little luck and some good timing I'll be able to get these issues out on a regular basis. The next issue will come out by the middle of May, so any submissions should be sent to me no later than April 15. Additionally, this newsletter is not possible to put together unless *you* send in your club's upcoming events, but I won't hesitate to publish announcements and articles if they are pertinent.

Please send all submissions to:  
UACNJ Newsletter  
c/o Wayne Zuhl  
717 Brookside Place  
Cranford, NJ 07016

Thanks in advance!

### PHOTOMETRY WORKSHOP

On Saturday, June 17 a workshop will be held on Photoelectric Photometry at the UACNJ observatory facility at Jenny Jump State Park in Hope, NJ.

The workshop will be a one day event with the purpose of bringing together amateur and professional astronomers who are doing, or who would like to do, photometry.

The main focus of the workshop will be on the techniques used for optical and near infrared photometry, using CCD, photomultiplier tubes and photodiode based systems.

Other areas that will be presented are:

- \* *Stellar Photometry*
- \* *Photometry of Asteroids*
- \* *Single Channel Photometry*
- \* *CCD Photometry*

The workshop is being organized as a group effort between several clubs. The organizers are Aaron Krahnert (*HLO*), Mike Brown (*AAI*) and Herb Johnson (*AAAP*).

In addition there will also be a call for papers. More information will be sent out in the coming months concerning registration fees, speakers, etc.

For more information regarding the photometry workshop, write to:

Aaron Krahnert  
39 Watson Ave.  
Elizabeth, NJ 07202  
or give him a call at (908) 289-0118.

### ASTRONOMY DAY HAPPENINGS

UACNJ and several of its' member clubs will be hosting their own *Astronomy Day* events. Unless otherwise noted all events are scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 6.

UACNJ itself will be hosting an event at the observatory at Jenny Jump State

Park. Several speakers will be presenting various topics throughout the day. There will be observing both during the day and in the evening. The event is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. There is no admission charge. Volunteers are needed. For more info contact Barry Malpas at (908) 755-6932.

The North Jersey Astronomical Group will be holding their event on May 29<sup>th</sup> at Montclair State College. The day will feature speakers discussing a multitude of astronomical topics as well as youth oriented workshops. Outside solar viewing will be the main attraction as well as stargazing after dark. There is no charge. For more info contact Kevin Conod at (201) 778-3038.

Amateur Astronomers, Inc. will be hosting their event at Sperry Observatory on the Cranford Campus of Union County College. There will be speakers in the Commons Building on the campus during the day as well as a swap table and commercial vendors. The observatory will be hosting a variety of exhibits during the day. During the day the 10" refractor will look at the sun in hydrogen alpha light and after dark the 10" and the 24" reflector as well as many members' telescopes will be pointed skyward for an evening star party. There is no charge for admission. On Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup> Morris Museum Astronomical Society will be hosting a public star party at the Morristown Museum. Several telescopes will be set up to accommodate what hopefully will be large crowds. There is no charge for admission to this event.





# THE JUMP NOTES

Several events will be taking place in the near future at the UACNJ Consortium observatory at Jenny Jump State Park in Hope, NJ.

There will be regular **Saturday Work Sessions** on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> as well as May 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Work sessions usually begin at 10 a.m. and run all day. Your attendance at these work sessions is sorely needed. During these Saturday work parties, renovations are made to the house and the grounds as well as the work being done to the observatory buildings. If you haven't yet attended a work session, you really should. You'll not only be helping with the site but it's a great way to meet people from other clubs.

There will be regular monthly **Radio Astronomy** meetings held at 4 p.m. on April 1<sup>st</sup> and on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Anyone who has ever done radio astronomy or who is interested in the subject is welcome to attend.

**Public Programs** begin on April 29<sup>th</sup> and will be held every Saturday through October 21<sup>st</sup>. Programs run from 8 p.m. till 10 p.m. Programs consist of a brief talk, usually accompanied by a slide presentation, followed by observing if the skies permit. There is no charge for admission, but donations will be accepted.

Speaking of public programs... We need your support to make these events happen. If you are already a supporting member of the Consortium then you know that yearly dues are due. Regular membership is \$20, while Sustaining memberships cost \$50. Remember, your dues help pay the bills that are incurred at the Observatory to keep it operating. This may sound like a beg-a-thon but that money is needed to help keep this fine dark sky site available to amateur astronomers. If you are not a Consortium member and would like to become one, contact Barry Malpas (see page one for the phone number) for more information.



## Starquest '95

The Amateur Astronomers Assoc. of Princeton will be hosting the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Jersey Starquest at the Beemerville 4-H camp in Sussex, New Jersey. This yearly astrofest runs from 5 p.m. Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup>.

This years Starquest will feature:

- > Dark sky observing
- > Telescope making competition
- > Saturday lecture program
- > Messier contest with prizes
- > Swap tables
- > Registration includes camping
- > Indoor lodging is available
- > Fri. Night Astrophoto workshop
- > Six catered hot meals
- > Door prizes
- > And much, much more!

Registration is only \$25 per person, discounts apply for family and early registration. Registration deadline is May 6<sup>th</sup>. For more information contact Greg Mauro at (609) 585-9465.

## Northeast Astronomy Forum & Telescope Show IV

The Rockland Astronomy Club is once again hosting the Northeast Astronomy Forum. This year's event will be held on Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Holiday Inn in Suffern, NY. The festivities begin at 9 a.m. and continue on until 7 p.m. Admission is only \$10.

Some of the leading astronomical manufacturers and dealers will be set up in a "swap table" type area. Vendors will have almost anything that the amateur could possibly want, such as telescopes, binoculars, eyepieces, CCD's books, meteorites, jewelry and other astronomical accessories and novelties. There will be door prizes and a raffle as well.

A terrific selection of lecturers will be speaking throughout the day. **Bill Gray** will be discussing *Computers and Astronomy*. **Dr. Fred Hess** will be lecturing on the *Assault on Mars*. **Dr. Gregory Maltoff** will speak about the *Urban Astronomer*. **Alan French** will be discussing the *Trouble with Astrology*. The keynote speaker will be **Dr. Donald Parker** who will treat you to *Cosmic Collisions*.

For info call (201) 768-6575 (evenings)

## Light Pollution Study Commission Update

By Rick Kurczewski

One major stumbling block remains to complete the Governors appointments to the 13 member Light Pollution Study Commission, which was signed into law by Gov. Florio on March 17, 1993. The delay concerns the appointment of Richard Stokes from Atlantic Electric to the commission. As of Feb. 24, 1995, John Holub from the Governors appointment's office was fairly certain that Governor Whitman had appointed Stokes. His appointment would then have to be finalized by the Senate Judiciary Committee and then the full Senate.

Knowing the setbacks that have already occurred with the LPSC, there is always the possibility that the appointments did not happen. To push action on these appointments along, I am asking all UACNJ club members to call the Governor's office at (609) 292-6000 and ask for Madeline Ferraro, the appointment's council, and ask her office if the Atlantic Electric appointment has been made and forwarded to the Senate Judiciary Committee. If asked any questions by that office, you can respond that you are a concerned citizen who does not understand the reasons for the lengthy delay in forming the LPSC.

### Good Outdoor Lighting Award

Recently, a very nice certificate from UACNJ, signed by president Bruce Rights and Light Pollution Chair Rick Kurczewski was presented to the Beacon Oil Company for exercising good outdoor lighting practices.

Any UACNJ club can have a copy of this award presented to any business that has installed well-shielded fixtures that minimize glare, light trespass and sky-glow.

If your club members know of a business that deserves this award, please contact Rick at (201) 437-8255 so that the award can be drawn up and given to you for presentation to the appropriate business or corporation.

## UACNJ Board Meeting

The next meeting will be held  
Saturday April 8th at 10 a.m. at the  
Morris Museum.