

# THE FOCUS

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

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### 16 INCH SCOPE AT JENNY JUMP SEES "FIRST" LIGHT

The 16" Cave telescope that *AAI* put on permanent loan to *UACNJ* is in its new home and is up and running. This well traveled scope was acquired by *AAI* in 1993 as a gift from Seton Hall University. Shortly after the Cranford club received the telescope, their executive committee voted to loan the instrument to *UACNJ* for use at Jenny Jump on a permanent basis.

In early June, the telescope was finally placed in its own observatory behind the house at the *UACNJ* Consortium observatory in Jenny Jump State Forest.

It experienced its most recent first light on June 17<sup>th</sup> with Jupiter as its target. From across the observing area you could here Ralph Marantino practically yelling: "Hey, you gotta see this!" Observers were treated to a spectacularly sharp, crystal clear image of Jupiter! There were at least six bands that stood out prominently and many festoons and other details were easily detected. Surprisingly, the large instrument stood up to high magnification, as the eyepiece used for Jupiter was a 9mm Nagler.

As darkness plunged forth, we attempted to point the telescope at some deep sky objects. Unfortunately the Telrad that was ordered for the instrument had not yet been received and the small

finderscope proved to be too poorly mounted to make itself useful. Additionally, the telescope was not even close to polar alignment so using setting circles was out of the question. Later in the evening after some crafty screw turning, we were able to get the finder to stay aligned with the scope.

It turned out to be worth the effort, playing with the finder, that is. Once it was, aligned the scope was moved to M57, the Ring Nebula in Lyra. There in the 24mm Wide Field eyepiece was a glorious sight. The wispy, cosmic smoke ring hanging against a pitch black background. Vast amounts of detail were detected in the Ring (wispy edges were seen) and it too stood well to a boost in magnification. As the night wore on, a few more deep sky objects were seen, all showing exquisite detail.

### SURFING THE ASTRONET

With the influx of computers in our daily rituals, one would be remiss not to get their feet "wet" in the waters of the Internet. Astronomy over the "net" is very common and there is a wealth of information, images and programs available (free of charge, in most cases) via the Internet. Not only is access to the Internet more available, it's fairly inexpensive. While I won't waste "bandwidth" here telling you about all the different Internet providers, I'd like to point out some of the things that are available to the amateur.

One of the greatest tools of the Internet is E-mail. This is a quick and easy way of sending and receiving information with anyone who has an E-mail

address. There are several "mail-lists" set up just for astronomy that will provide you dozens of messages daily on a variety of astronomical topics.

The World Wide Web is probably the most impressive thing to hit the world of computers since color monitors! Through the Web you can begin in one site, such as NASA and through graphically impressive *hypertext* documents go to virtually anywhere in the world. Start at NASA, watch a movie about the shuttle, then *link* to JPL or STScI and view the most recent Hubble images. From there you can link to Pic-du-Midi and view some of the finest planetary images you'll ever see. Getting the picture yet? All this with just the click of a mouse.

Astronomy and Space Science are also found on the Usenet. They're found in a series of discussion groups that you can read, post and reply to. Some of the best and most current news can be found in the Usenet news groups. It's all there, right at your fingertips.

For more information, such as the addresses of some of these sites and other astronomical resources see the August issue of *Sky & Telescope*.

If there is demand for it, in future issues we could post E-mail addresses of *UACNJ* members, etc... Let me know.

Keep on Surfin'!

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### UACNJ Board Meeting

The next meeting will be held on  
Sat., August 12, 1995, 10 a.m. The  
meeting will be hosted by AAAP  
at the Trenton State Museum.





# 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 July 29<sup>th</sup>, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and September 9<sup>th</sup>. Work sessions usually begin at 10 a.m. and run all day. During these Saturday work parties, renovations are made to the house and the grounds and anything else that needs work. 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.

*UACNJ* is now in the AT&T Matching Gifts Program. If you're an AT&T employee and wish to make a donation (of \$25 or more) to help us out, you can double your help by having AT&T match the donation. Call 1-800-424-6030. You will be asked for your SS#, the date of the gift, the Zip Code of *UACNJ* (07059) and the amount.

We are looking for a donation of a full sized refrigerator. If you have any info contact Barry Malpas at 908-755-6932.

The Radio Astronomy Group will hold its next meeting on August 12<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00 p.m. This meeting will consist of discussions on setting up a radio astronomy project for 1996. For more information contact Ron Russo (*MMAS*) at 201-673-1631 or Darryl Foyuth (*AAAP*) at 609-538-8120.

Another activity being pursued at Jenny Jump is a Ham Radio VHF QSO party. This event is run by Al Tencza (*NJAG*) and most recently occurred on June 10-11. This contest consists of making Ham Radio connections by bouncing signals off of the ionosphere and meteors. For more information contact Barry Malpas.

**Public Programs** are 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.

We need your support to make the Observatory a success. If you're already a supporting member of the Consortium then you know that yearly dues are due. Regular membership is \$20, Sustaining memberships cost \$50. 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 for more information.



## It's Here Again, Stella-Della IX

The *Bucks-Mont Astronomical Association* will be hosting this years annual Stella-Della Valley Conference, on October 20<sup>th</sup> thru 22<sup>nd</sup>. The gathering will be held at Camp Onas in Ottsville, PA.

This is one of the very best gatherings of its kind, a fun-filled weekend of camping, discussions of astronomy, observing and friends. Additionally, skies at Camp Onas are rumored to host naked eye stars as faint as 7<sup>th</sup> magnitude.

As of this writing the featured speakers will be Phil Harrington, Allan French, Al Witzgall and Roger Gordon. For more information contact Ed Melnick at (215) 443-7929.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual UACNJ Symposium

This year's *UACNJ* Symposium will take place on Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, from 1 p.m. until whenever. The Symposium will be held at the *UACNJ* Consortium Observatory at Jenny Jump State Forest.

Prior to the festivities, at Noon, the 16" Cave Telescope and it's observatory will officially be dedicated into service.

Ground was first broken on the observatory building in May of 1993. Construction on the building was recently completed.

The instrument housed in the roll-off roof structure is a 16" Cave Newtonian reflector that was put on permanent loan

to *UACNJ* by *AAI*. (See page one for a description of first light.)

Please come out and join us for the official dedication of the observatory. This will surely be an event to remember.

This year's symposium will consist of several speakers who will be discussing general and technical topics. General presentations will be on display, such as antique telescopes and a meteorite exhibit.

During the day, weather permitting of course, there will be telescopes set up for safe solar viewing. Inside, several computers will be running demos of various astronomical shareware. There will also be displays of Astrophotography and other projects done by *UACNJ* members. The newly dedicated observatory housing a 16" telescope will be open for your perusal.

After dark, once again weather permitting, many telescopes will be set up for observing. Be one of the first people to observe through the newly dedicated 16" telescope.

Refreshments will be available. Contact Barry Malpas for more information.

## Galileo Update

*Extracted from the Galileo Homepage*

On Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:32 PDT, the umbilical cable connecting Galileo's probe and orbiter was severed, in preparation for the probes release on Wednesday, July 12<sup>th</sup>.

On Tuesday July 11<sup>th</sup> the spacecraft was commanded to turn to establish the correct attitude to release the probe into Jupiter's atmosphere. Just after midnight on the 11<sup>th</sup> the craft was spun to 10.5 Rpm's. This was done to maintain it's orientation during the remaining trip to Jupiter.

On December 7, 1995 the Galileo probe will enter Jupiter's atmosphere.

### Attention!

For the September issue of *The Focus* and every issue thereafter I'd like to have a regular feature called

### Spotlight On...

Each issues column will deal with a single *UACNJ* club.

To have your club appear in

### Spotlight On...

Contact Wayne Zuhl  
(908) 757-4040 (days)