

# Delaware Astronomical Society

## FOCUS -- July, 2005

### MORE SUMMER ACTIVITIES PLANNED SUMMER 2005 EDITION

Vol. 50 No. 7  
July, 2005

#### FROM THE EDITOR -- Lee Kaser

The DAS Board of Directors hopes you're having a wonderful summer, and that you're getting some good stargazing time. We don't always have a summer issue of the FOCUS, but we always have summer activities, and this time we also have an election to report on, since the vote counting was completed after the June issue of the FOCUS went to print. All elected officers were carried over from 2004. I'll highlight the results of the election for you in the table below, but suffice it to say that three fine people, all strong long-time members and contributors to the DAS, Hank Bouchelle, Bill Hanagan, and Tom Sidowski, were elected as Members at Large (MAL on the list below) of the Board. You will note their principal activities outside Board membership following their name, and they have diligently carried them out for years, as most of you know. We are proud to have them work with us as advisers and co-workers. Here is the new lineup of the Board, followed by a list of other important positions which do not include voting membership of the Board:

#### *DAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS - Jul*

*1, 2005 to Jun 30, 2006*

#### Elected Board Positions

President -- Billie Westergard  
Vice-President -- John Case  
Secretary -- Lynn King - Messier Club  
Treasurer -- Bob Mentzer  
MAL -- Hank Bouchelle - By-laws resource

MAL -- Bill Hanagan -- ATM SIG, AP SIG  
MAL -- Tom Sidowski - food, Sawin maintenance, DAS star parties

#### Appointed Board Positions

Education Chair -- Bob Karcha  
Focus Editor -- Lee Kaser  
Librarian -- Glenn Bentley  
Observatory Chair -- Emil Volcheck - ALCOR, MCAO rep.  
Observing Chair -- Greg Lee

#### Non-Board Continuing Positions

Ad hoc star parties -- Sheila Vincent  
Archivist -- Rene Van Caneghem  
Awards Chair -- Warren Jacobs  
Fiftieth Anniversary Chair -- Emil Volcheck  
Light Pollution resource -- Greg Weaver  
New-member "Welcomer" -- James Morgan  
Webmaster -- Dan Chester  
Yahoo Group -- moderator -- Don Shedrick  
Youth Group Coordinator--Volunteer Needed

#### WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

MARC HUTTON -- WILMINGTON, DE  
ANDREW STELTZ -- NEWARK DE

#### PICNIC NEWS -- Billie Westergard

This used to be a DAS tradition, and we hope it will become one again. Our picnic this year was hosted by the Delmarva Stargazers, and was much enjoyed by all attendees. Below and at the end of the FOCUS are a few pictures. We hope all of you will join us next year. The Board has held planning meetings for next year's programs, and we have some excellent presentations in the works. Stay tuned for the September issue, which will outline our plans. Have a wonderful summer!



**STAR PARTIES** -- Tom Sidowski  
 Summertime is here, and we continue to hold star parties at Mt. Cuba. Come and enjoy a pleasant evening of observing on either or both of the dates below:

Saturday	July 30th	8:00pm
Friday	Sept. 9th	8:00pm

**WOODSIDE CREAMERY OBSERVING**  
 --Tom Sidowski  
 We also have one more opportunity to stargaze with great ice cream this summer. The creamery is located at the intersection of North Star Road and Little Baltimore Road in Hockessin. This is a great chance to

connect with the public and show them some of the objects we view through telescopes, and have an enjoyable summer evening. The evening will end around 9:00-9:30pm, when the creamery closes.

Friday August 12th 7:30pm - 9:00pm  
 (rain date Saturday Aug. 13th)

**2005 BRANDYWINE CREEK STATE PARK SCHEDULE** – Lynn King  
**PICNIC AND THE MOON**

Bring your blanket and a picnic  
 Where: Brandywine Creek State Park  
 When: Saturday, August 13, 2005; 5 p.m.  
 Charge: \$2 per person. DAS members should get in free. Just say you are a DAS member and there to help. Moon observing

provided by the Delaware Astronomical Society and a clear night.

### MCAO PUBLIC NIGHTS

The Mt. Cuba Observatory Public Nights will continue right thru the summer! You can pick up a schedule when you next come to a meeting - or get the latest updated version off the website at:

[http://mountcuba.org/public\\_nights.htm](http://mountcuba.org/public_nights.htm)

### SAWIN OBSERVATORY REMINDER

-- Emil Volcheck

DAS members who are interested in becoming users of the Sawin Observatory and/or the Big Red DOB, should contact Tom Sidowski (239-1844) to arrange for some hands-on training in using the facility. [Emil Volcheck, Observatory Chair, [emilv@ccil.org](mailto:emilv@ccil.org)].

### AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP – Bill Hanagan

The ATM SIG generally meets on weekends to discuss and work on many aspects of telescope making. We are now planning a series of meetings to bring participants steadily along on the path to complete a medium-size tube-based Dobsonian telescope. Apertures of 6" to 10" are typical. Our goal is to have this crop of telescopes completed in time for observing Mars in the fall. If you are interested in building your own telescope, please email me at the address below. If you are interested in joining this group, please e-mail your name, address, and phone number to me at: [HanaganW@attglobal.net](mailto:HanaganW@attglobal.net) using your preferred e-mail account to send the requested information.

### LIBRARY NEWS AND VIEWS -Glenn Bentley

The DAS lending library collection continues to grow, and you will hear more about our newest acquisitions in September. Remember to check the shelves when you are at MCAO, and feel free to sign out any of our fine books on astronomy and related subjects.

### DAS FORUM/E-MAIL SITE ON YAHOO --

--Don Shedrick

This is a restricted e-mail service for use by DAS members for DAS purposes. To use

this site, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com>; search for [delawareastronomicalsociety](http://delawareastronomicalsociety); and click on the link that comes up. To join, you must have a Yahoo ID and password; if you don't, you can register at this time by following Yahoo's instructions. You will then be allowed to "Join the group" upon clicking in that box. You must then register for the DAS group and add your profile by clicking on "add new profile" and completing the form. When adding or editing your profile, you will need to enter your actual name in the "Real Name" box so you can be identified as a DAS member so Don Shedrick can approve your application to join the DAS group, and everyone will know to whom they are communicating. Finally, specify your desired e-mail address for delivery of messages. Note you may choose to not have your name and email address displayed to anyone other than DAS members who are members of the Yahoo DAS email group. For more detailed instructions, go to the DAS web site under DAS Resource Links.

### LOANER TELESCOPES -- Emil Volcheck

The Summer months will be a good time to get out and try your hand with a scope. So, if you are new to the club and/or do not have a scope, you can get borrow either:

- 1) a Celestron 8" Schmidt-Cassegrain
- 2) an Orion 6" Dobsonian reflector

The loan is for at least a month (depends on how long the waiting list is). To get on that list, contact Emil Volcheck, 610-388-1581.

### ASTRONOMY SOFTWARE—Emil Volcheck

MCAO's new digital planetarium runs on a special version of the desktop planetarium software called: StarryNight (from Imaginova in Canada). You can, for a very few bucks get software for your PC or Mac that will let you get a feel for how our system works, while also having a new way to "look" at the sky. I have a few copies of the retail versions of Imaginova's "Night Sky Explorer" – an introductory level program – and "Galaxy Explorer" – also an introductory program that lets you explore some 28,000 galaxies from the Tully database. Either program can be had for \$8 (or \$9 if you want a copy mailed to you).





**Deep Impact Pictures – Compliments of the Hubble Space Telescope**

We all heard a lot about the giant collision in space, but few of us were in a location where it could be observed, or had the kind of equipment which could let us look at it in real time. The giant dust cloud caused by the collision was clearly visible in the sun's rays to Hubble, though, and these pictures show the growth and decay of the visible cloud.

