



NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, June 21, 2005
Space Probe Spectrographs – Jerry Truitt
Univ. of Delaware Mt. Cuba Astronomical Observatory (MCAO), 8 PM
DAS Board of Directors Meeting precedes at 7:15 PM.; open to all members

ANNUAL PICNIC – June 25, 2005

Vol. 50 No. 6, June, 2005

FROM THE EDITOR -- Lee Kaser
 This issue will close out our 2004-2005 Society year. It has been a successful one by almost any measure, and the May meeting recognized the most significant contributions to the DAS. Mrs. Luther (Bertha) Porter, along with her son Stan Williams, are shown below as honored guests at the meeting, where they saw the presentation of the award in honor of her late husband, a founder, member and former DAS president, to Emil Volcheck.



Emil received the Luther Porter Award for

his long-standing and outstanding leadership and guidance. The picture below

shows the celestial globe, made of semi-precious stones, given to Emil as a symbol of the award. It was not very surprising that Emil wasn't there to receive it (his wife came in his stead), because he was serving as a Pennsylvania election official that night -- the DAS is not the only group which receives his attention, nor, I'm sure, the only one grateful for his service.



The Amateur Astronomer of the Year award went to James Morgan (shown below with presenter Carolyn Stankiewicz), a vigorous promoter of amateur astronomy with library and other presentations, a regional vice-president of the Astronomical League, and a long-time contributor to the DAS.



Finally, the lifeblood of the DAS is observer enthusiasm, and Lynn King presented Bill McKibben the Astronomical League Messier Club Certificate he earned locating and observing nebulous heavenly bodies.



ELECTION FOR 2005 – Hank Bouchelle
Enclosed with this FOCUS is a ballot for Member of the Board-At Large. Persons elected to this position are non-officer, voting Board members and advisers to the Society, usually people who have shown great dedication to the DAS and wish to help guide it in service to the membership. Please vote and mail back the card while you have it in your hand.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

– Billie Westergard

Our special May Dinner Meeting was a great success in terms of the number of people who attended. However, it was very crowded. Lamberti's Cucina told me that they could seat 75 people with no problem. Seventy-five was also the number of people required for Goddard to offer a speaker like Dr. Wood for our meeting. When the number of reservations jumped to about 68 with two weeks to go, I contacted Lamberti's and was assured that they could handle a maximum of 82 and not to worry. I informed Bob Mentzer to cut reservations off at 82. We had a number of people on our waiting list above 82 who we had to turn away. All in all, I was very happy with the meeting. I was very pleased with the award to James Morgan for Amateur Astronomer Of The Year. I was especially happy to have family members of Luther Porter in attendance for the Luther Porter Award presentation to Emil Volcheck. I thank Warren Jacobs and Henry Bouchelle for their selection of Emil Volcheck to receive this prestigious honor. Thanks to Carolyn Stankiewicz, Robert Karcha, and Glen Bentley for working together to select James Morgan as our "2004 Amateur Astronomer Of The Year". And, a very special thank you to Bob Mentzer.

Dr. H. John Wood sent a letter to the DAS saying, in affect, that he was very happy with the dinner, the meeting, and his accommodations for lodging. I thought Dr. Wood gave a very good talk that was well suited for the DAS and our guests.

Our June meeting will feature a talk by Jerry Truitt entitled 'Space Probe Spectrographs'. Jerry is also a member of the Delmarva Stargazers and has given many talks for our sister club. Greg Lee will present our "Constellation Of The Month" Scorpius, and Robert Karcha will provide our Mini Talk entitled 'The Messier Catalog.

This will be our last regular meeting for this year and I would like to thank all of the DAS Board Members for all the work that each of you do for me and all the other DAS members. I also thank the members who chair the various committees and special programs that we are involved in each year. And a big Thank You to all DAS members for their support, suggestions, thoughts, and attendance at our meetings.

Our PICNIC will be held in conjunction with the Delmarva Stargazers this year in Dover. This will be a good time to mingle with members from both clubs and just get to know each other. This is not to be a grandioso event with bells and whistles. Just a time to get together and tell lies!!! So come on down, bring a solar telescope if you like or just come and have a great time.

Be sure to mark your calendar for June 25 from 2 to 5 PM for our summer picnic at Dover Park off White Oak Road in Dover. The address is 1210 White Oak Road, Dover DE 19901 for those who want to use Map Quest. Please call me at 302-366-0938 if you would like to be part of a car pool. We will meet at the University Plaza Shops "Acme Market" located at I-95 and route 273 about 1 PM for departure at 1:20 PM sharp. See the note below from Lyle Jones of the Stargazers:

"This year we will share our picnic with the Delaware Astronomical Society. We will supply hot dogs, hamburgers, buns and drinks, and the plates and utensils. Members of the DAS have been asked to bring a favorite dessert dish to share with 6 others. Please call Lyle Jones (302-736-9842) to let us know if you and your significant others are coming. We will set up some solar viewing and see if we can arrange some entertainment. I hope to see a lot of DAS folks at the party."

Note From Don Surles: White Oak Road can be reached from US 13 south - go south past the Dover Mall...past Red Lobster and The Olive Garden...a new large and very noticeable Eckerd's Drug is on the corner of

13 south and White Oak Road. Turn left onto White Oak Road...the Park will be on your right just 1/2 mile from US 13.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS
BASMAH RIAZ -- NEWARK DE
DEBASMITA SAMADDAR -- NEWARK, DE

DAS STAR PARTIES -- Tom Sidowski
Summertime is here! (well, almost, officially), and we will continue to hold star parties at Mt. Cuba. Come on out and enjoy a pleasant evening of observing on any or all of the scheduled dates listed below:

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

WOODSIDE CREAMERY OBSERVING
--Tom Sidowski

Our May 13th (with rain date May 14th) observing session at the Woodside Hill Creamery was canceled due to weather, but we have three more opportunities scheduled 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 maybe provide a memorable summer afternoon/evening, and we get to enjoy some good ice cream too! We'll hold two afternoon sessions for solar observing, and one evening session. The evening session will end around 9:00-9:30pm, when the creamery closes. The scheduled dates, with rain date, follows:

Saturday	June 18th	1:00pm - 2:30pm	(no rain date)
Saturday	July 16th	1:00pm - 2:30pm	(rain date Sunday, July 17th)
Friday	August 12th	7:30pm - 9:00pm	(rain date Saturday Aug. 13th)

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

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].

If you would like to volunteer to help out with clean up or fix up at the Sawin, give Tom a buzz, too. I'm sure that he'll more than welcome the help.

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 using your preferred e-mail account to send the requested information.

LIBRARY NEWS AND VIEWS

-- Glenn Bentley
With the summer months fast approaching and with twilight extending deeper into the evening hours, the opportunity for early evening observing is waning. We could use this time to catch up on our astronomical reading, while we wait for mirrors and tubes to cool and dew-up. Over the last year the DAS Library has grown significantly with contributions from a variety of sources, so much so, that we will either have to add shelves or cull the herd. Anyhow, I would

like to take this opportunity to invite the membership to drop by the library at the June meeting to peruse the summer reading offerings and keep whatever you choose for the entire summer. Hope you have a great summer.

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.

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; 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, promptly, contact Emil Volcheck, 610-388-1581.

LIGHT POLLUTION ABATEMENT

– Greg Weaver

With some help from Emil, I have been working for over a year with Delaware State Senator Copeland to formulate an anti-light pollution bill for the state, this will expand the scope of the New Castle County Ordinance that was passed in April 2000 (also through our efforts). This has finally resulted in the submission of a senate bill (SB127) by Senator Copeland that represents a step in the right direction, although it is a long way from what we would like to have. You may also want to support the bill with your state senator. We have reason to expect that the bill will pass, but words of support won't hurt.

[Our thanks should go to Greg for his persistence in pursuing the light pollution problem in Delaware. – Emil Volcheck]

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). Just give me a buzz (610-388-1581) or email me (emil@mountcuba.org).

MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION NOTICES: If the mailing label on the envelope containing your *FOCUS* is marked with Red Marker, your membership is expiring or has expired. To continue to receive the *Focus*, *Sky and Telescope*, and *Reflector*, send the renewal form on page 6 with your check to:

DAS, c/o Robert Mentzer
605 River Road
Wilmington, DE 19809

DAS CONTACTS

Membership: Any of the following:
 President: Billie Westergard ----- 302-622-7253 Home --- 302-366-0938
 Vice President: John Case ----- 302-836-4888
 Secretary: Lynn King ----- 302-764-8816
 Treasurer: Bob Mentzer----- 302-764-1926
 Chairman, Observatory Committee and Manager, Mt. Cuba Observatory: Emil Volcheck-- 610-388-1581
 Messier Club: Lynn King ----- 302-764-8816
 Observing: Greg Lee ----- --- 302-762-5358
 Archivist: Rene Van Caneghem ----- 410-392-3718
 By-Laws: Henry Bouchelle ----- 302-655-3230
 Board Members at-large:
 ATM and AP SIGs: Bill Hanagan ----- 302-239-0949
 Friday Night Star Parties: Tom Sidowski 302-239-1844
 Light Pollution Strategist; Greg Weaver 302-239-1338
 Library Chair: Glenn Bentley ----- 610-869-0706
 Ad Hoc Star Parties: Sheila Vincent - --- 302-322-4739
 Porter Award Chrman: Warren Jacobs- 610-255-5247
 MCAO Web Page: www.physics.udel.edu/MCAO
 DAS Web Page: <http://delastro.org/>
 Focus Editor: Lee Kaser, Phone 302-995-6251
 E-mail: kaserlo@msn.com

METEORS TO LOOK FOR THIS MONTH

— North American Meteor Network.

NAMN Notes is a monthly newsletter produced by the North American Meteor Network, and is available both via email, and on the NAMN website at:

<http://www.namnmeteors.org>

June Bootids Surprise?...

The June Bootids, debris from Comet Pons-Winnecke, can be observed from about June 26th until July 2nd. The ZHR rate for this meteor shower is classed as variable. What is ZHR? This stands for Zenithal Hourly

Rate, and is the number of meteors that an observer would expect to see in an hour, on average, if they are under a dark country sky, and if the radiant, the point in the sky where the meteors seem to come, from, is directly overhead. In 1998, there was an outburst with ZHR rates ranging from 50 to over 100 meteors per hour visible for over half a day. Will we get a surprise this year? We don't know. We need your observations this year in order to find out! Please try to make an effort to check out this shower for us and send us your meteor reports. Details on what to record are listed in this month's newsletter.

The June Bootids are nice slow meteors with a velocity of about 18 km per second - so will be very distinctive. Even for novice observers, these meteors will stay visible long enough to make an impression. The radiant at maximum will be at 224 degrees, i.e. RA 14h 55.8m, Dec +48, which is about 8 degrees north of the star beta Bootes, the star known as Nekkar. To see a map of this radiant, check out <http://www.imo.net/calendar/cal04.html#June-Bootids>.

MARS IN AUGUST – Lee Kaser

You should take a look at Mars the last week of the month. Ignoring the hype in some of the media over its being closer to Earth on August 27 (TRUE) than any time in the past 60,000 years, it should be a fine view, even though Mars isn't significantly closer than a few thousand other times in that period, most recently in 2003.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

If you have questions, call any of the member representatives listed earlier. Otherwise, just check the appropriate boxes and complete this form. Cut it off (after reading the other side, hopefully) and send it with your check to Bob Mentzer at his address above. The magazine prices are group rates to DAS members. Thanks, and welcome to the DAS if you're just joining us for the first time.

New Member
Renewal

Senior/Family Membership	\$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Junior membership (16/under)	\$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sky and Telescope Magazine	\$33.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Astronomy Magazine	\$29.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

Total Submitted -----

\$ _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ TELEPHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS (optional) _____

Do you have a telescope? _____ If yes, please describe briefly. _____

Any Comments or Requests? _____

**Have a great summer and
we'll see you in September.**