

### Minutes of the August 24, 2002 General Meeting

Vice President Tom Rusek opened the meeting and ran the agenda. Of first note was the excellent report by Phil Schmitz and Doug Wittich on their experience at the Garret County, My. Davis, PA viewing site 8-10 August. Near Sommerset, PA, this site offered outstanding viewing due to the elevation and dark sky location. In addition, the hospitality of the Garret County club members was reported to be sterling! They have invited any members of our club to attend the next new moon date...contact Phil Schmitz (Paschmitz@hotmail.com) for details.

The remainder of the meeting centered around a detailed and typically well thought out presentation by Mark Kregle. Mark and Vice President Tom had been investigating a new location for our public open house evenings. The logistics and bureaucratic burdens of making the observatory operational for PUBLIC use are such that we would likely be into the next century before that was satisfied. In addition, for the public evenings, several scopes in a good location offer more advantage for groups of children and families. The members present agreed that we could maintain our effort to make the observatory functional for club use, and that if we entertained groups from the public, we would institute some process control, such as having them vacate the upper floor if we needed to move the dome.

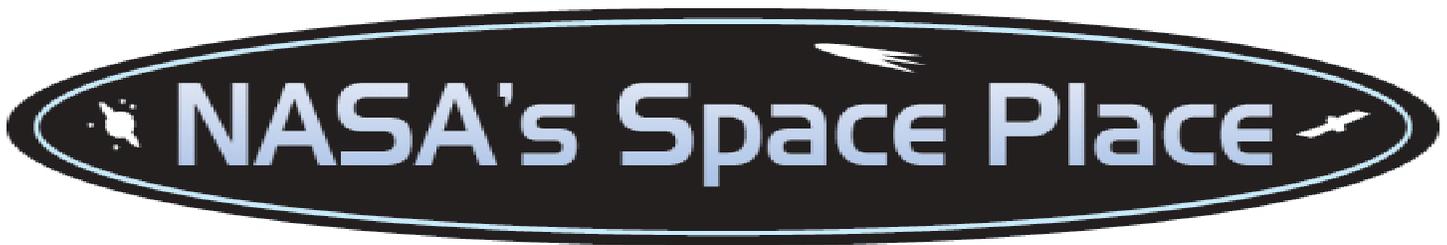
Mark continued to discuss his concept for an exciting alternative site that appears to hold the solution for our desire to entertain public outreach. A small group of members will meet at the proposed location tomorrow (Sunday) for a scouting expedition. They will report back and we'll get the word out to all to report thier findings, necessary funding and requirements to finish the area off for use. The proposed site has ample parking, easy access and is very close to our current location. In addition it will not suffer from the banks of arc-lights we currently contend with. Sentiment was universal among the members present that this is a project we should aggressively pursue with an eye toward having the new site ready for public evenings by this fall.

All should remember that we have a StarBQ scheduled for the 28th of September. Please contact President Lucy for details on that club social gathering.

Finally, we continue to increase the number of members that elect to get AstroViews by EMAIL. On that note, this will be the last issue that we will print and mail to members that have not settled up their dues. Please get with Treasurer Carol Channel (srcac2@Comcast.net) to ensure your dues are current and that you will not miss an issue of the newsletter. I will certainly be able to distribute the AstroViews to all interested parties via EMAIL, since we do not incur the printing and postage costs...so if you know of prospective members or others that would like to see an issue, let me know.

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*Editor's Note: NASA has initiated a new "service" for astronomy clubs across the country. They will provide monthly articles of interest for inclusion into our newsletters. Some articles, like the one below, expand the scope of space exploration to items of interest beyond just the usual "stars and galaxies" topics. In addition, NASA is sending me educational materials that can help in our outreach projects.*

## What Space-age Inventions Have You Touched Today?

Exploring space is not easy. Space engineers and scientists have invented many new devices to make it safe and not too expensive to go into space. Some of the inventions are used to help humans live in space. Showers and toilets that work without gravity are examples of inventions used on the Space Shuttle and International Space Station. Other inventions are used on spacecraft going to Mars and beyond.

Many devices invented for space are also very useful right here on Earth. New inventions or new uses for things invented for space are referred to as "spinoffs." For example, special materials were developed for space suits to protect astronauts from the harsh environment of space. These same materials are used in the special clothing that fire fighters wear to protect them from the harsh environment of a building on fire! Cordless tools were invented for the Apollo astronauts to use on the moon. Cordless drills and vacuum cleaners are examples of spinoffs from these inventions.



Doctors can now take amazing images of people's insides to find out exactly what is wrong with them. These images are possible because of technology developed to process pictures from space. And what about the TV satellite dish you may have on your roof? Space program technology helped to make those pictures and sounds crisp and clear.

If it weren't for the space program, some of these incredible inventions might never have come about! Find out about more space program spinoffs at <http://www.sti.nasa.gov/tto/> and share the fun of spinoffs with kids by playing the Memory Game at The Space Place, <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/spinoffs.htm/>.

This article was provided by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, managed by Caltech in Pasadena.

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## Star Parties of Local Interest

### **Black Forrest Star Party**

September 6-8, 2002

For more information go to <http://www.bfsp.org/starparty>

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### **Stellafane**

August 9-10, 2002

For more information go to <http://www.stellafane.com/>

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### **Blackwater Falls Astronomy Weekend**

September 6-7, 2002

For more details go to <http://www.kvas.org/AstronomyWeekend2002.htm>

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### **Stella Della XVI**

October 4-6, 2002

For more information go to <http://bmaa.freeyellow.com/Sdv.html>

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### **Delmarva StarGazers No-Frills Star party**

October 2-6, Tuckahoe State Park

For more information go to:

<http://www.delmarvastargazers.org/archive/nofrills2002/index.html>

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### **The Eight Annual Mid-Atlantic Star Party**

October 28-Nov 4, 2002

For more information go to <http://www.masp.org/maspindex.htm>

## **Remaining HCAS Club Event Dates for 2002**

### **Open House**

9/14, 11/19, 12/14

### **General Meeting**

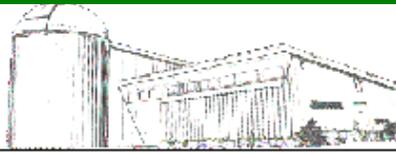
8/24, 9/21, 10/9, 11/23, 12/21

### **Star Parties**

8/31, 9/7, 9/28, 10/5, 10/26, 11/2, 11/16, 11/30, 12/7, 12/28

**Star BQ: Saturday, September 28th.** Call President Lucy for details.

# September



# 2002

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Discussion Night Observatory 7:30PM	3	4	5	6	7 New Moon..... Star Party, Broad Creek / Observatory
8	9 Discussion Night Observatory 7:30PM	10	11	12	13 First Quarter Moon	14 Open House 7:30PM
15	16 Discussion Night Observatory 7:30PM	17	18	19	20	21 Full Moon... Gen. Meeting, Joppa Hall, J70, 7:30PM
22	23 Discussion Night Observatory 7:30PM	24	25	26	27	28 ***Star-BQue*** Observatory
29 Last Quarter Moon	30 Discussion Night Observatory 7:30PM					

## A Blast at Broad Creek!!

Saturday, the 10th of August, was stacking up to be another one of those disappointing "hazy Maryland" days. The prospects for an evening of star viewing weren't good until mid afternoon. Carol and I headed out in hopes of perhaps having a pleasant evening watching the sunset out at the Broad Creek site, but what developed was one of the better skies we've seen since moving to the east coast over two years ago. Joined by club members and a few prospective members, we shot the Milky Way with abandon...enjoying the good seeing as well



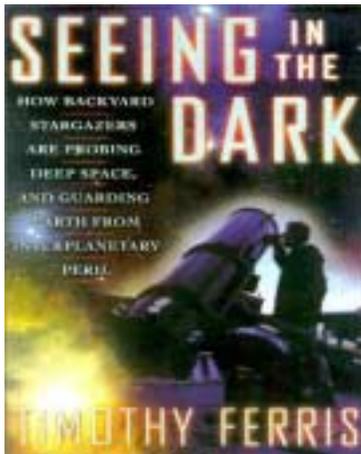
as the opportunity to look through several scopes and binoculars.

As Frank Varisco set up his "mortar", Carol aligned the Channel traveling optics show, including my medical crutches parallel-bino mount with duct tape designer trim!!

Cathy Tingler and Wayne French rolled in just before sunset, as did Roy Zimmerman. We were all up and running. The list of "things seen" was impressive. Carol and Cathy were all over the place...easily nailing objects that I was trying to stumble into. Wayne's big

dob made M13 a real treat, increasing my eagerness to get that Starmaster I have on order! October better hurry up and get here!

Ron worked on his star pattern recognition and found Alberio on his own by the close of the night! See Ron, who needs those 'puters, anyhow! ☺ We had some impressive views of the Dumb bell Nebula through Frank's SCT before it developed some mechanical demons...home that "whirring noise" was easily exorcised once you got back home Frank! All in all, a great evening out...and a big reason why we all stay in the hobby!! Lets hope for more just like it!



*Seeing in the Dark: How Backyard Stargazers Are Probing Deep Space and Guarding Earth from Interplanetary Peril*  
by Timothy Ferris

*From Publishers Weekly*

*Amateur astronomers are the heroes of this latest opus from one of the country's best-known and most prolific science writers. Ferris (Coming of Age in the Milky Way) has a special place in his heart for these nonprofessionals who gaze into space out of wonderment and end up making discoveries about comets, the moon and the planets that change our understanding of the galaxy. Ferris recounts how he, as a boy growing up in working-class Florida, was first captivated by the spectacle of the night sky. He then looks at the growing field of amateur astronomy, where new technologies have allowed neophytes to see as much of the cosmos as professionals. The book introduces readers to memorable characters like Barbara Wilson, a one-time Texas housewife who turned to astronomy after her children were grown and has since helped found the George Observatory in Houston (where a number of new asteroids have been discovered) and developed a reputation as one of the most skilled amateur observers. Ferris also takes stock of what we know today about the cosmos and writes excitedly about the discoveries yet to come. With a glossary of terms and a guide for examining the sky, this book should turn many novices on to astronomy and captivate those already fascinated by the heavens.*

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*<http://www.amazon.com>*

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Webmaster: Charles Jones

**"Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars."  
- Les Brown**

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