



THE FOCUS

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED ASTRONOMY CLUBS OF NEW JERSEY

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UACNJ, P.O. Box 150, Hope, NJ 07844

Karl Hricko UACNJ Community Liaison

UACNJ Joins Chamber of Commerce

In the last Focus, I announced the formation of a UACNJ Community Liaison post. The idea is to create a more positive interaction with the communities surrounding Jenny Jump. This will enable us to better fulfill our mandate to help educate the public in astronomy through direct programs with schools and civic groups. If we can be an asset to these communities, they might be more willing to listen to us when we talk about light pollution or need help promoting our events and fundraising.

I am pleased to announce that Karl Hricko (AAI) has agreed to take up this important position. Karl comes from an educator's background and co-hosts a public access astronomy forum on Staten Island television. He has recently moved to Belvedere, NJ just down the road from Jenny Jump.

In an effort to make contact with community leaders, the UACNJ has joined the Hope Chamber of Commerce and will be hosting a meeting at Jenny Jump on the evening of June 22nd (organized by Karl). Chamber members seemed eager to visit us and we hope this will be the start of mutually beneficial cooperation in the future!

You can check out the Hope Chamber's website at <http://hopenj.org>

Check out the UACNJ website at:
<http://users.erols.com/njastro>

Notes from the President

UACNJ Delegates

Communication: that's what the UACNJ is all about. Clubs and amateurs keeping in touch with each other, sharing ideas and collaborating on projects which are beneficial to our hobby. The UACNJ delegate's main function is to communicate what is going on at UACNJ back to their club but also to bring information back to the UACNJ.

To further aid communications between clubs, the UACNJ provides:

★ This newsletter – please make sure a copy gets posted or distributed to your club's officers. We encourage clubs to enclose copies with their regular newsletter (or perhaps make some copies for your next club meeting). We've had trouble keeping the newsletter on schedule in part due to lack of material. Please consider sending info on your upcoming events to Gordon Bond at tpoastro@hotmail.com. I hope we can get copies posted on the UACNJ web site as well.

★ E-mail List – The UACNJ's e-mail list moved to Yahoo groups in October 2000. About 60 amateurs are members. Make sure your club and/or club delegates are subscribed. See: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UACNJ/> for more info. I hope to get minutes of the Board Meetings posted here for delegates to refer to.

★ E-mail address – we've established a general e-mail address for the UACNJ as an electronic P.O. Box (so to speak). If you need to reach the UACNJ or one of the officers, e-mail us at: uacnj@yahoo.com.

★ Web Page - the UACNJ web page has a wealth of useful material for clubs and observers. Some of it is out of date, but Barry Malpas has had little time to devote to the project. If anyone would like to help

out, please contact him at:
njastro@erols.com.

Bringing Astronomy to the People

Now that the weather has warmed up a bit, another season of great public programs is under way thanks to the state's astronomy clubs. I was up at Jenny Jump on the first public event of the year back in April. It was nice to see two scout groups enjoying the view through the telescopes assembled on the field. One group had come all the way from North Arlington! It was a bit windy at first that night, but the breeze died down after dark. We had a nice view of Comet Ikeya-Zhang and a beautiful clear sky. The comet was not hard to find in binoculars (certainly easier than from the roof of Science Hall at Montclair State!). The first two degrees of the tail were easy to see.

On March 23, Astro2002 was a big success for the Morris Museum Astronomical Society (MMAS). More than 400 people turned out at the Morris Museum for solar observing, moon phase activities and a lecture on meteorites by Derek Yoost. My own club, the North Jersey Astronomical Group (NJAG), helped present a "Skywatch" event with the Dreyfuss Planetarium on April 18. Despite the clouds, well over a hundred people showed up to look at the gathering of planets in the western sky. Meanwhile on April 20, the UACNJ's Astronomy Day was held at the Warren County Branch Library near Hackettstown. The day featured presentations by Dr. Carlton Pryor, Al Witzgal, and Joe Molnar. Evening activities included a presentation on space colonization by Dr. Karl Hricko.

On May 5, Ray Shapp, Don Kruse

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