

# Martian Chronicles

Volume 26 Issue 2

February 2008

Attention!  
Astronomy Magazine  
Calendars may be available at  
next meeting. Calendars are  
\$6.50.

## Up Coming Club Events

February 2006

8<sup>th</sup> M.A.R.S.  
Club meeting  
Presentation by  
Dennis Farr  
“Celestial  
Navigation”



### Inside this issue:

<i>The Scope of Things</i>	2
<i>Computers, the Internet and Astronomy</i>	3
STARCHART (heavens-above.com)	4
<i>Library Lingo</i>	5

\*\*Your Article, Story, . . .  
could be here. This  
Newsletter is for all  
M.A.R.S. Club members.  
Please send your  
Newsletter contribution to  
[newsletter@marsastro.org](mailto:newsletter@marsastro.org) by  
the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month \*\*

20<sup>th</sup> SkyWatch at MOSI Sundown to  
10 PM  
LUNAR ECLIPSE!

March 15  
SkyWatch at MOSI

8<sup>th</sup> M.A.R.S. Club Star Party  
**NO Friday meeting.**



# The Scope of Things

Dennis Farr

Winter weather is here. Well, such as it is in Florida. I watch with interest the weather reports for our friends and relatives up north. Temperatures in the teens with sleet and snow. This is why we live down here.

In times past, like before computers, cell phones, electronic road maps, and GPS, if you wanted to navigate on the open ocean you had to learn celestial navigation.

I had taken a few courses in it a long time ago and remembered some of the basics. So when the idea for making a presentation was presented at an earlier meeting, I volunteered to take it on.

It requires hours of study and lots of practice to become proficient at celestial navigation, but I hope to be able to present the topic in about an hour at the meeting this Friday. So, bring your no doz pills and let me entertain you.

March 8<sup>th</sup> is the date for the Third Annual M.A.R.S. Star Party. Once again this year it will be held at the FarrOut Observatory near Dade City. There will be a pot luck dinner at 5:30 which gives us about an hour before sunset.

Please get with me as soon as possible to let me know if you plan on coming and what you will be able to contribute to the dinner.

Remember, astronomy is looking up.

Dennis Farr  
President

# **Computers, the Internet and Astronomy**

## **Dennis Farr**

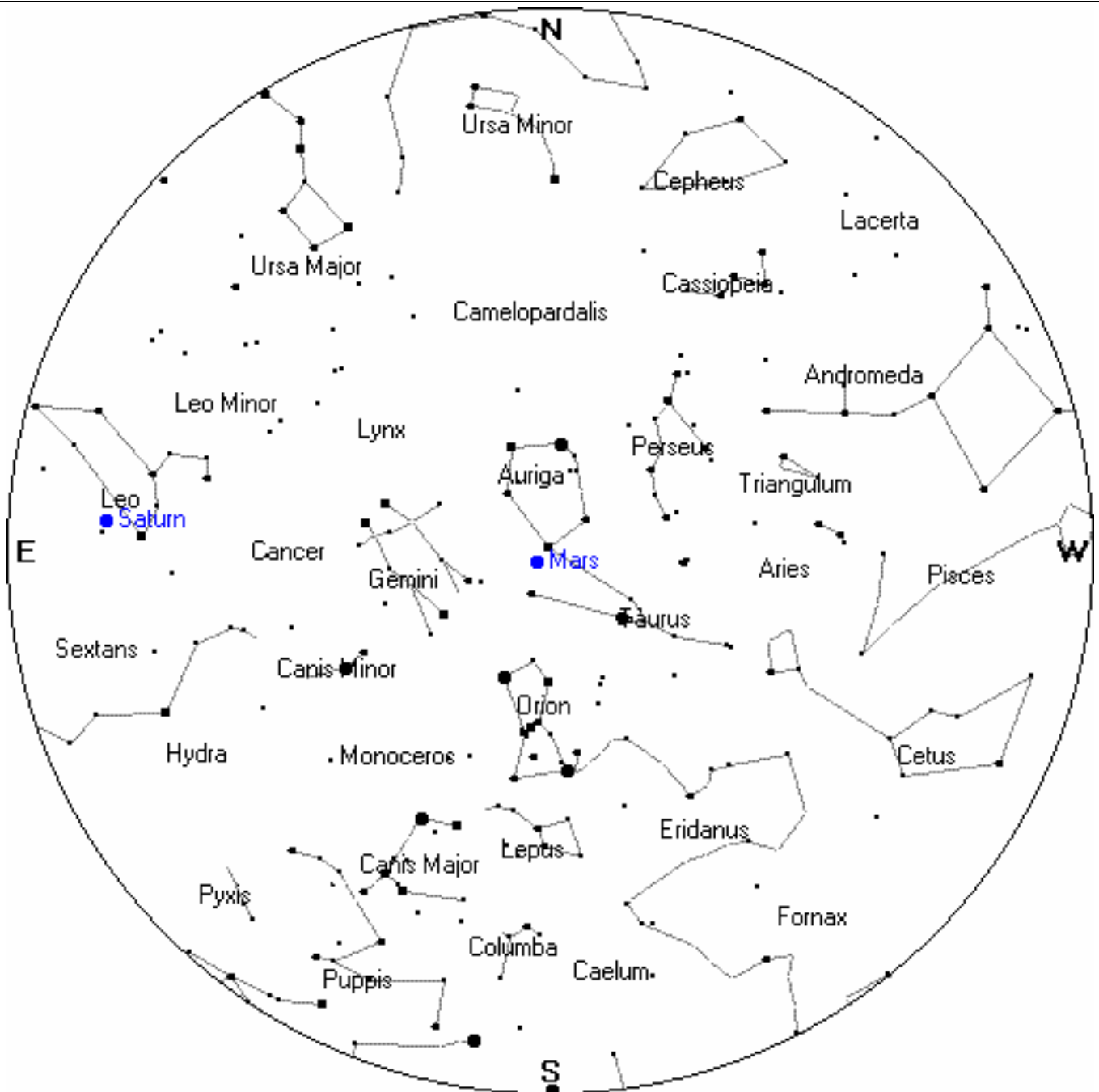
Finding information is a tricky issue for beginners, and even for non-beginners sometimes. No one wants to ask 'the stupid question'. No one wants to become the focus of attention.

The Internet has created the perfect place for people to stay anonymous, not become the focus of attention, and ask questions.

One of the best examples for astronomers is the web site <http://www.cloudynights.com>. The site is a wealth of information on equipment and hardware including user reviews of just about every thing from complete scope systems and accessories, to book and software reviews. But the most used part is the discussion board area.

You can create an 'alias' and ask questions on one of dozens of topics in astronomy. There are hardware specific forums for all the popular makes and models of telescopes. Just reading the past messages in the beginners forum is an education. There is even an 'Off Topic Observatory' where just about anything goes.

Even though you can ask anything, remember that the board has been around for a long time, and someone may have already asked the question. There is an extensive search capability that may assist you in finding the information you seek without ever having to ask it.



**The night sky, February 8 at about 8pm.  
Courtesy of heavens-above.com**

# Library Lingo

## Elizabeth Mueller

These books are new additions that are located at our Hillsborough County Public Library. Thought I'd write a small article to let you all know what is available on the topic of astronomy for you to checkout at your local public library.

### Astronomy – Ian Ridpath

Covers all aspects of astronomy, including its history, the origins of the Universe, the Solar System and its exploration, stars, and galaxies.

### Astronomy: A Beginner's Guide to the Universe – (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) – Eric Chaisson and Steve McMillan (Note – The 5<sup>th</sup> edition is now out in paperback but not in the library yet.)

Comprehensive text discussing the foundations of the history of science and physics as they relate to astronomy.

### Astronomy For Dummies – Stephen P. Maran

This is a basic guide on the study of astronomy and explores the cosmic objects and celestial happenings.

### Exploring the Solar System: A History with 22 Activities – Mary Kay Carson

Traces the history of human exploration of the solar system.

### The Planets – Dava Sobel

Explores the creation and evolution of the solar system's planets through a lens of popular culture, drawing on sources from astrology, science fiction, the fine arts, and other genres to chronicle planetary history in an accessible format.

### Planets – Lisa Jo Rudy

By the editors of Time for Kids this book describes the planets of the solar system.

### Solar System Observer's Guide – Peter Grego

Describes how to observe not only planets but also the moon, sun, comets, meteors, asteroids, and other celestial objects found within our Solar System.

### Space Rocks: the Story of Planetary Geologist Adriana Ocampo – Lorraine Jean Hopping

**SPACE ROCKS** is the engaging story of a scientist and science. Tells of the adventure of the life of Adriana Ocampo.

## NEWSLETTER OF THE MUSEUM ASTRONOMY RESOURCE SOCIETY ASTRONOMY CLUB

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**M.A.R.S Club's Website**  
**[www.marsastro.org](http://www.marsastro.org)**

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and \$20.00 for families. Dues can be paid to any club officer/  
at a meeting or event or mailed to the Club Membership/*

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