

Martian Chronicles

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May 2006

Attention!

The next MARS club meeting will be held at MOSI in the Saunders Planetarium on May 12 from 7:30 - 9:00 PM.

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****Your Article, Story, . . . could be here. This Newsletter is for all M.A.R.S. Club members. Please send your Newsletter contribution to tanjad@mosi.org ****

Up Coming Club Events.

May 2006

6th SkyWatch at MOSI
Sundown to 10 PM.



12th M.A.R.S. Club meeting. Program:
Open to everyone.

JUNE 2006

3rd SkyWatch at MOSI Sundown to 10 PM

9th M.A.R.S. Club meeting.



THE SCOPE OF THINGS

DENNIS FARR

PRESIDENT

I have always been involved in technology and technical things. I learned early on that using correct terminology makes life easier in dealing with like minded people. Scientific endeavors are no exception. Medical doctors have to be precise when discussing anything about your health. And we all know that lawyers have their own language that many of believe is designed just to confuse the rest of us.

The universe is a pretty big place, and there is a lot going on. We use a lot of words and terms to describe it. It can be confusing if we don't agree on the words.

For instance, what's the difference between an eclipse and ellipse? How about a major conjunction and an inferior one? And why would we refer to Venus as an inferior planet?

One of my son's, who has an MBA degree, recently referred to me to a group of friends as an 'Astronomist'. While I presume those around him understood what he meant, I hope those same people don't use the word going forward.

Many courses in technical or scientific subjects start with an introductory lesson in terminology. The better to move on to understand the rest of the topic. Simply learning the terminology and understanding the words associated with astronomy is a big step in learning. And being able to converse with others is obviously easier if we speak the same language.

The topic of the next meeting will be 'Speaking of Astronomy'. It will cover basic words and concepts that are essential to the study of astronomy. It is often said that it never hurts to go back to restudy the basics of any topic. For many, this will be a rehash of areas you have learned, or taught, many times. For others, some of the material may be new or something you hadn't been clear on. Either way, it will provide us a basis on which to continue to grow our study of astronomy.

We will continue to have our normal monthly features including information about items in the club library and monthly sky object trivia. By the way, if you have a club name badge, please wear it to the meetings. We are getting a lot of new people attend each meeting and it's easier for them to feel welcome when you walk up to them and they can read your name.

We have already started planning our Annual Star Party at Homeland for March 17, 2007. Mark your calendars now. Let's all hope that the date finds us all healthy.

Computers, the Internet and Astronomy

Dennis Farr, President

After getting a telescope, many astronomers find the next thing they need to do is find something to look at. Strange as this may seem, it isn't intuitive and this is where the astronomy part starts as opposed to simply observing.

There are computer programs available to help you learn the night sky in much the same way the excellent shows at the MOSI planetarium do. Many of the programs are free and can be downloaded from the internet and run on your home PC in just a few minutes.

I have found five free planetarium programs. They have different features but all do the basic function of showing you the sky and assist in planning your observing times.

Sky Index

<http://www.uv.es/jrtorres/index2.html>

Cartes Du Ciel

<http://www.stargazing.net/astropc/>

HN Sky

<http://hnsky.org>

Sky Globe

<http://astro4.ast.vill.edu/skyglobe.htm>

Winstars

<http://winstars.net/>

I started using Sky Globe years ago. The group that created it has apparently gone out of business and it is no longer supported. However, I find it still the one I use most often. Winstars has an incredible feature called 'Solar System Mode' that allows you to observe the sky from the surface of any planet. Sky Index is nice for printing star charts for any time from any place on earth. Cartes Du Ciel is widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive free programs available.

You can find the links to these programs, and many other interesting astronomy related sites, on the links page on the club web site at <http://www.marsastro.org>.

Astronomy and Flight-Space History

- May 01-07 - [Astronomy Week](#)
- May 02 - [Asteroid 5000 IAU](#) Closest Approach To Earth (2.171 AU)
- May 03 - [Comet P/2006 F4 \(Spacewatch\) Perihelion](#) (2.339 AU)
- May 03 - [Asteroid 6223 Dahl](#) Closest Approach To Earth (2.004 AU)
- May 04 - [Jupiter](#) at Opposition
- May 05 - [Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower](#) Peak
- May 05 - 45th Anniversary (1961), [Freedom 7](#) Launch (Alan Shepard, 1st US Man in Space)
- May 07 - [Asteroid 5035 Swift](#) Closest Approach To Earth (1.784 AU)
- May 09 - [Asteroid 4169 Celcius](#) Closest Approach To Earth (2.921 AU)
- May 10 - **NEW** [Apr 17] [Comet Schwassmann-Wachmann 3-Y Near-Earth Flyby](#) (0.062 AU)
- May 12 - **UPDATED** [Apr 21] [Comet Schwassmann-Wachmann 3-V Near-Earth Flyby](#) (0.053 AU)
- May 13 - [Asteroid 2004 BF68 Near-Earth Flyby](#) (0.099 AU)
- May 16 - [Comet P/2006 G1 \(McNaught\) Closest Approach To Earth](#) (1.783 AU)
- May 16 - **NEW** [Apr 15] [Asteroid 2006 GY2 Near-Earth Flyby](#) (0.017 AU)
- May 20 - [Cassini, Titan Flyby](#)
- May 24-31 - [Symposium: Astronomical Telescopes and Instrumentation 2006](#), Orlando, Florida
- May 25 - 45th Anniversary (1961), [John F. Kennedy's Moon Goal Speech](#)
- May 28 - 35th Anniversary (1971), [Mars 3](#) Launch (USSR Mars Lander)
- May 30 - 35th Anniversary (1971), [Mariner 9](#) Launch (USA Mars Orbiter)
- May 30 - 40th Anniversary (1966), [Surveyor 1](#) Launch (USA Moon Lander)

The Library Will be a Changin'!

Elizabeth Mueller, Librarian

Since I am a librarian by profession I have some thoughts to make this a really good and functioning library. I realize all the items we have received to date were donated. For this the members and I thank you. This is my plan of attack with this collection to date. As you know this collection will be moving to the new planetarium at the end of this year. I don't know about you, but I don't want to move that many books! So, I plan to weed this collection and let the members have first pickings. I will donate books to agencies who are in need. The rest I will be cataloging so we know exactly what we have in the collection, and they all will have a rubber stamp with the club name on them and a dewey decimal number and cutter on each item. For example: 523 ASIMOV.

If anyone knows where we can obtain a donated locked cabinet that we could use, I would appreciate it for the club library. After this the boxes of books that are waiting for me to add to the collection will then be added. I will open the collection each time we meet so members can check out items. I have created a form so people can fill out the form for each item they checkout. I will keep track of what goes out and when it comes in again. I am keeper of the library books! Starting in April at our presidents request I will be highlighting a book from our collection at each meeting. If you have any questions or concerns, please see me at the club meetings.

StarHopping For Beginners: May 2006

Tanja Diederich

Jupiter is finally back at sundown. Look for Jupiter to come up in the east. Third brightest object in the night sky after the Moon and Venus. Easy to spot. Orion will set in the west with Taurus and the Pleiades. Above Sirius in Canis Major, you will find Canis Minor. Above the bright star Procyon, in the constellation, Cancer the Crab, is a brighter "star", which is yellow and not twinkling. This "star" is Saturn. Above Orion in Gemini, the red "star" that isn't twinkling is Mars.

The Big Dipper is high in the north. The pointer stars, Merak and Duhbe, point straight to the north star, Polaris. Follow the stars in the opposite direction and they point to Leo the Lion, the backwards question mark outline his head and mane. Use the handle of the Dipper to find Arcturus, the brightest star in Bootes, the herdsman, who follows the Big Bear through the sky. The handle of the dipper forms an arc, so Arc to Arcturus and then speed on to Spica, the bright blue star, which represents the piece of wheat Virgo holds in her hand.

Have fun star hopping through the spring sky.

NEWSLETTER OF THE MUSEUM ASTRONOMY RESOURCE SOCIETY ASTRONOMY CLUB

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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/
Renewal Address listed below. Newsletters are available to
nonmembers by requesting a complimentary issue. Please
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the address below. The deadline for submitted contributions
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*Membership/Renewal
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