



# DESERT SKY

## Presidents Message - May, 2007

We all have memories and items that mean a lot to us. Perhaps the most dearly held ones are mementos from our childhood.

I can easily identify the one thing that I have kept and treasured longer than any other personal possession. It is a tattered book, "The Golden Book of Astronomy". There is a handwritten note on the inside of the hardcover which says, "Merry Christmas to Mike Thomas from your father Wm. Thomas, 1956". I was nine years old at the time, and I still have that book. Inside, pressed between some pages is a black and white photograph of my father, my brother Carl and I, looking at the book on that day 51 years ago.

One of my earliest memories is of my dad and I frequently sitting outside watching the night sky. My father would point out the constellations, naming them for me. Brief moments in a lifetime of events.

I have held on to that book through college, Vietnam, marriage, raising children, a career, and countless moves. My father is 88 years old. He has given me many things. That book and those moments under the stars are his greatest gift, the gift of wonder.

Show your children or others the wonders of the night sky, it may change their lives.

April 17th Minutes

Mike Thomas convened the April WNAS general membership meeting at 7:00 pm. There was a good showing of members with 18 folks present. Mike outlined his 2007 goals for the WNAS: 1. To continue with the new monthly meeting format, 2. Have an interesting speaker for each meeting on various scientific subjects, 3. Get a new version of the WNAS website up and running (Jim Bean is working on this as the new webmaster), 4. Encourage and enhance the Saturday night star parties at the observatory, 5. Encourage more junior astronomer participation, and finally have a Messier Marathon this October at a site to be selected. Previous meeting minutes were approved, but the Treasurer (me) wasn't present for a report. Old business discussed was the new light ordinance being developed by Carson City to help eliminate stray light. Robert Collier gave a report on the meeting Robert and Brian G. had with the City. New business covered a Spectroscopy class that was to be given and AST 105 (an introduction to the night sky and basic astronomy), the summer Friday night class to be given by Red Sumner (contact Robert Collier for details). This was followed by an incredible talk given by Ann Maybury on her experiences in the Apollo and Hubble space programs. This was followed by snacks, refreshments and open discussion from WNAS members. Mike closed the meeting at 9:00 pm.

**Next WNAS General Membership Meeting—MAY 15th**

### WNAS Officers

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### **MAY WNAS Membership Meeting GUEST SPEAKER!!**

Steve Gillett will present "Lunar Geology" Mr. Gillett has a PHD in Geology, has worked with Eugene Shoemaker at Caltech and taught planetary geology at the University of Nevada, Reno.

# Events Calendar

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday                         | Wednesday               | Thursday     | Friday          | Saturday  |             |
|--------|--------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---|-------------|
| 13     | 14     | 15 <b>WNAS Meeting, 7:00 PM</b> | 16 New Moon             | 17           | 18              | 19 Star Party, Dark Skies, <b>BOG Mtg 6:00 pm</b> | <b>May</b>  |
| 20     | 21     | 22                              | 23 First Qtr Moon       | 24           | 25              | 26 Star Party                                     |             |
| 27     | 28     | 29                              | 30                      | 31 Full Moon | 1               | 2 Star Party                                      | <b>June</b> |
| 3      | 4      | 5                               | 6 Jupiter at Opposition | 7            | 8 Last Qtr Moon | 9 Star Party                                      |             |
| 10     | 11     | 12 <b>WNAS Meeting, 7:00 PM</b> | 13                      | 14 New Moon  | 15              | 16 Star Party, Dark Skies Weekend                 |             |



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