



# DESERT SKY

## Presidents Message - August, 2008

The Saturday evening star parties at the Observatory are a great opportunity for us to get people interested in Astronomy. Those of us who greet visitors during these weekly events find that it's very rewarding to introduce people to the wonders of the night sky.

Recently we began showing a digital power point projection "slide show" of images taken by the Hubble Space Telescope. This show is composed of one hundred color astrophotographs, and it has become a big hit with our Observatory guests. One of us narrates during the presentation, describing the objects in the photos. This includes many stunning images of planets, nebulae, star clusters, comets and galaxies. In the course of the presentation the meaning of terms like "light year" and "big bang" are defined.

On a recent Saturday all the seats were taken in the classroom and several people stood throughout the lecture. There is always a question and answer period after the talk, and then the visitors go out on the patio where some of our members show them objects on view through and answer more questions.

Nearly everyone who comes to the Observatory also receives a guided tour of the facility, including the telescope deck and it's three large scopes.

We have received a lot of positive feedback from people who have come up to see us on Saturdays. Often it comes from parents who have brought their kids. For many this is the only exposure to science they will ever get, and it is an experience the creates a wonderful memory. I hope more of our members will volunteer to assist us on Saturday evenings, because it will make for great memories for them as well.

Mike Thomas

July 15th Minutes

Mike announced Robert Collier's recent retirement from WNC. As of present Robert will continue to hold the position of Observatory Director. It was the unanimous hope of the members that Robert would keep that position. It was agreed that we would do something special to express our appreciation for Robert's efforts in support of the Observatory and the WNAS.

Tim Burns mentioned that there is a job announcement in the newspaper for a part time Physics and Astronomy Instructor.

There will be a guest speaker coming to the WNC campus to give a talk for us. The speaker's visit is covered by grant funds. More on this at the August 19th meeting.

There is a balance of \$4,230.23 in the WNAS treasury.

Mike read a letter that he wrote to the Astronomical Society of Nevada (ASN), our Reno based friends. The letter contains an invitation to their membership to visit us, and a description of the Observatory's activities and equipment. The ASN will place the letter in their next club newsletter.

A powerpoint presentation on Sir Isaac Newton was given by Mike.

**Next WNAS General Membership Meeting - Tuesday, August 19 @ 7:00 PM**

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

Jim Bean will present a lecture on "Atom to Cosmos"

### **WNAS Officers**

**President**  
Mike Thomas  
mnethomas@sbcglobal.net

**Vice President**  
Robert Collier  
collier@wncc.edu

**Treasurer/Secretary**  
Brian Guerin  
zapkgbg@msn.com

**Newsletter Editor**  
Brian Guerin  
zapkgbg@msn.com

**Webmaster**  
Jim Bean  
jbean@carson.k12.nv.us

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

August September

***Events Calendar***



WNC Foundation (WNAS)  
 2201 West College Parkway  
 Carson City, NV 89703