



Presidents Message - November, 2010

There was an interesting article in the September Planetary Report, a bimonthly magazine published by the Planetary Society. The article reported that "The Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) successfully deployed a solar sail in deep space, between Earth and Venus". The mission is called "IKAROS" (Interplanetary Kite-craft Accelerated by Radiation Of the Sun). That's a big mission name, but this is an important step in the effort to find alternative spacecraft propulsion.

The idea to use a "solar sail" to propel a craft by utilizing the momentum imparted by photons emitted by the Sun has been around for quite awhile. JAXA managed to get the sail to unfurl without tangling, and used it to steer the spacecraft. The article goes on to say that it takes almost an Earth day just to turn the IKAROS just a few degrees, but the rig works, and that is significant. The Planetary Society tried and failed to deploy a solar sail a couple years ago. They intend to launch another attempt next year. Their intent is to deploy & use a sail system which will have the ability to change course in a matter of a few minutes. Good luck to them.

On another note: My wife and I spent most of last month touring Egypt. This was the most interesting trip we have ever taken. In fact, the experience was so memorable that I have put together a slideshow presentation about our journey, which includes images of truly amazing historical monuments and a bit of their history, our cruise up the Nile River, and scenes depicting the people of this ancient land. This presentation will be our program at this month's membership meeting at the Observatory, 7 PM, Tuesday, November 16th.

Mike Thomas

October 2010 Minutes

October meeting...for the minutes:

- Robert ran the meeting, & that he talked about Comet 103P/Hartley.
- Dr. Steve Gillett, Planetary Geologist gave a lecture on Asteroids.

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Speaker info for the *****Tuesday, November 16, 2010 @ 7pm*****membership meeting:

"Grand Tour of Egypt"

A slideshow program: A Journey through an Ancient Land.

Presented by Mike Thomas

Events Calendar

~ November 2010 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Juno-Moon Occultation	2	3 Moon @ Perigee	4	5	6 Dark Skies Star Party New Moon
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Star Party Moon 1 st Quarter
14	15 Moon @ Apogee	16 <i>WNAS Meeting 7pm JCDO</i>	17 Leonids Meteor Shower	18 Leonids Meteor Shower	19	20 Star Party
21 Moon Full	22	23	24	25 Partial Lunar Eclipse- Antarctica	26	27 Star Party
28 Moon Last Quarter	29 Juno-Moon Occultation	30 Moon @ Perigee	Notes:			

~ December 2010 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 Star Party Dark Skies
5 New Moon	6	7	8	9	10	11 Star Party Dark Skies
12	13 Moon 1 st Quarter Geminids Meteor Shower	14 Geminids Meteor Shower	15	16	17	18 Star Party
19	20	21 <i>WNAS Meeting 7pm JCDO</i> * Winter Solstice	22	23	24	25 Star Party
26	27	28 Moon Last Quarter	29	30	31	Notes: * Full Moon- Lunar Eclipse 9:27p-3:06a

