



### Presidents Message – February, 2013

The very popular Michio Kaku recently spoke at the University of Nevada, Reno. The professor of theoretical physics at City College of New York has become the go to guy, "Futurist", of science media. He has a gift for explaining scientific topics via a simplistic, easy to understand manner. The following are some of Kaku's statements from an interview he had for the Reno Gazette-Journal article about his visit to UNR.

"It's hard to think of another advanced capitalist country with an educational system as dysfunctional as the United States, but, yet the U.S. still produces Nobel Prize winners, is still at the forefront of technology, at least for now. America has a secret, the "Genius Visa". If you're a genius in a field like math or chemistry you go right to the U.S. One day the brain drain will reverse...it is starting to happen. That's why our education cannot continue to be one of the worst known to science".

Also: In answer to the Question, "Isaac Newton or Albert Einstein?" He replied, "It's no contest. If you look at where they started and where they left off. Newton started with a world of darkness, a world (where) magic and witchcraft was the dominate thinking. I think Newton is the greatest scientist who ever lived".

And: "When I was a child, it was cool to be a scientist. When Sputnik went up, it just shocked the country, and all of a sudden physicists were superstars. It was your patriotic duty to learn nuclear physics to go head to head with the Russians; because the future of the country depended upon it...we lost all of that momentum. However, I think we're starting to turn the corner a little bit. Physicists now are beginning to enter the public arena and engaging the public".

Well, that increasing awareness of science is in no small part due to Kaku himself and others like Neil deGrasse Tyson and Alex Filippenko.

Lastly, I am writing this on 13 February, which is the 90th birthday of General Charles "Chuck" Yeager (ret). Thirty years ago I had the honor of working with the general on two different fund raising projects, and later visiting him on occasion. He has always been one of my personal heroes. Happy birthday Chuck!

Mike Thomas.

Jan. 2013

#### **January 2013 Meeting Minutes**

- Mike gave a brief talk, with some slides, of his visit to Galileo's Tomb in Florence, Italy.
- Professor Collier gave a report on the progress of planning the Observatory's 10th Anniversary.
- Mike presented his lecture, "The History of Flight".

#### *WNAS Officers*

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Monthly Membership Meeting 7:00PM, Tuesday, February 19, 2013

**"Nikola Tesla"**  
**Inspired Inventor or Mad Scientist?**  
Lecture/slideshow by Mike Thomas

# Events Calendar

~ February 2013 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Star Party
3 Moon Last Qtr 	4	5	6	7	8	9 Dark Skies Star Party Lecture @JCDO 6:30 pm
10 New Moon 	11	12	13	14	15	16 Star Party
17 Moon 1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 	18	19 WNAS Meeting 7pm JCDO	20	21	22	23 Star Party Lecture @JCDO 6:30 pm
24	25 Full Moon 	26	27	28	Notes:	

~ March 2013 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Star Party
3 Moon Last Qtr 	4	5	6	7	8	9 Dark Skies Star Party Lecture @JCDO 6:30 pm
10 Comet Pan-STARRS Closest Approach to the Sun	11 New Moon 	12	13	14	15	16 Star Party
17 Conjunction of the Moon and Jupiter	18	19 WNAS Meeting 7pm JCDO  Moon 1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 	20 Vernal equinox (11:02 UTC)	21	22	23 Dark Skies Star Party Lecture @JCDO 6:30 pm
24	25	26	27 Full Moon 	28	29	30 Star Party
31	Notes:					