



The Newsletter of United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey

FOCUS

Editor, Diane Jeffer, astrodiane@gmail.com

August 2010

THREE-DAY SYMPOSIUM SEPTEMBER 24-26

Diane Jeffer, UACNJ Treasurer

The annual UACNJ Symposium will be extended to three days this year. Activities will take place from 7 PM to midnight on Friday, 10 AM to midnight on Saturday, and 10 AM to 11 PM on Sunday at the UACNJ site in Jenny Jump State Forest. Lectures, displays, demonstrations, tours, a swap table, food, and star parties are all planned to keep you busy. There will also be lectures by noted experts at nearby Centenary College in Hackettstown on Saturday afternoon.

A registration form and a brochure with complete details are available on the home page at www.uacnj.org. Registration closes September 1, so be sure to check out all the details and mail your form today.

UACNJ CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS REVISITED

Dale Gary, UACNJ President

Over the spring and summer, the UACNJ Executive Committee and Board of Trustees (see box at right), have been carefully reviewing the UACNJ Constitution and Bylaws. Our two purposes were to make sure that UACNJ is following the procedures and practices laid out in these governing documents and to identify areas where the documents are unclear or need updating.

Some needed updates are a result of the recent construction to house instrumentation belonging to NJIT and equipment obtained through donations. The State of New Jersey is requiring UACNJ to create sublease documents for NJIT and the member clubs that have observatories on the site. A clause has been added to the Constitution stating that the Board of Directors (the Executive Committee plus representatives of the member clubs) has the responsibility to oversee and authorize all leases and subleases.

This update process is nearing completion, and the proposed changes will be brought before the entire Board of Directors at the November board meeting for a vote. Following the procedure stipulated in the current Constitution, the proposed changes will first undergo review by the Credentials Committee, and will then be sent to each of the member clubs at least 30 days prior to the November meeting. We ask that each member club review the changes and send your Club Representative to the November meeting to vote on the changes. We hope that you will agree that these changes make UACNJ a stronger and more adaptable organization.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 1

Symposium registration deadline

September 24-26

Symposium

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President

Dale Gary (AAI)
dgary@yahoo.com

Vice President

Gil Jeffer (NWJAA)
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Secretary

Krishnadas Kootale (MMAS)
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Treasurer

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Membership Committee

Diane Jeffer (NWJAA)
astrodiane@gmail.com

Observatory Committee

Gil Jeffer (NWJAA)
gil.jeffer@gmail.com

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trustee 2008-2010

Walter Rothaug (RAC)
wrothaug@gmail.com

Trustee 2009-2011

contact@uacnj.org to be considered for this position

Trustee 2010-2012

Jim Norton (NWJAA)
norton@optonline.net

AN ENJOYABLE PICNIC

Gil Jeffer, UACNJ Vice President

The annual UACNJ picnic was held in Blairstown at the home of Alan and Cindy Midkiff on July 17. All who attended report good food, good company, and a great day. Many thanks to Alan and Cindy for opening their home and pool for UACNJ members and for sharing their pet bobcats with us.



Photo by Gil Jeffer

The new Brady Observatory
with electronic roll-off roof.

FACILITIES UPDATE

Gil Jeffer, UACNJ Vice President

Work has progressed steadily and the new Brady Observatory is now operational! The observatory structure and the 7-inch Astrophysics APO refractor that it houses were donated by Maureen Brady. The structure had to be dismantled and moved to the UACNJ facility and reconstructed. Many thanks to all the volunteers who have helped see this project to completion. A dedication ceremony is being planned for the beginning of the 2011 public season.

The foundation is awaiting completion of engineering plans for the roll-off structure that will house NJIT's ITEK telescope. We hope to see construction on this next phase begin this fall.

The Park Service has recently repaved a large portion of the road leading into the UACNJ facilities and arranged for the septic system to be pumped. We appreciate this support from the Park Service.

Lois Walters
Marcus Valdez
Toby Terranova
Ray Shapp
Walter Rothaug
Gil Jeffer
Dale Gary
Bill Eberly
Jim DeLillo
Kevin Conod
Ann Blazier
Amaru Alzogaray
Vladimir Alexandrov

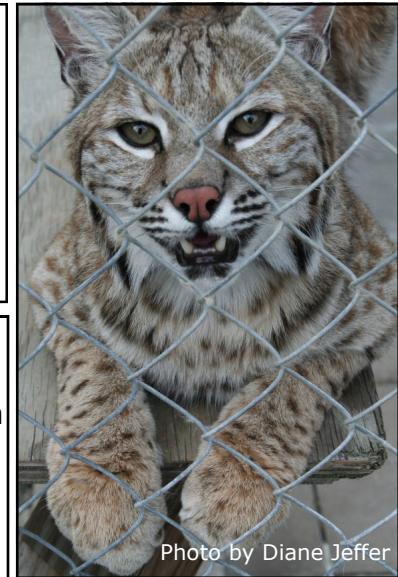


Photo by Diane Jeffer

THANK YOU

The Observers and Friends listed at left have made donations to UACNJ in 2010.

PLEASE SIGN IN!

Please be sure to sign in whenever you visit the observatory. If you are a UACNJ Observer, use the log book in the upstairs meeting area and note the approximate number of hours spent working on UACNJ projects if applicable. A separate log book for guests is located in the downstairs lecture area.

The Superintendent of Jenny Jump State Forest asks for this information for an annual report to the state. Consideration is given to the number of visitors and volunteers when state funds are being allocated.



Photo by Gil Jeffer

The 20 by 40 foot foundation for the NJIT telescope awaits the next phase of construction.

THE PURPOSE OF UACNJ: WHY YOU SHOULD GET INVOLVED

Dale Gary, UACNJ President

It is useful from time to time for an organization to clearly state its purpose and goals for the benefit of its members. UACNJ is reaching out to new clubs and seeking more proactive involvement of individuals from current member clubs. As our aspirations grow, so does our need for ever more active involvement, so this seems like a good time to restate our purpose and goals.

The UACNJ Constitution states that UACNJ "is organized exclusively to promote astronomical activities, education, interpretation, and public awareness of astronomy and related subjects, and to promote and assist the sharing of resources and information throughout the New Jersey area astronomical organizations, and to administer the Jenny Jump Observatory and Education Center." Thus, UACNJ serves two distinct purposes.

First, we exist as a consortium of astronomy clubs from northern New Jersey and neighboring states such as New York and Pennsylvania, to provide services, advocacy, and infrastructure for dark-sky observing. As part of this function, we also act as a conduit for inter-club activities (such as the annual picnic, Astronomy Day activities, the Symposium, and star parties on the lawn) and cross-fertilization between clubs (such as the UACNJ Yahoo group, and the opportunity to meet active members of other clubs at Board meetings, on duty nights, or at work sessions).

As an all-volunteer organization, UACNJ relies completely on people from member clubs to pitch in and get involved.

Our second purpose is public outreach and popularization of astronomy to the public. As a result of our public program, consisting of talks and star parties every Saturday evening from April to October, we have contact with hundreds of members of the general public each year. Each Saturday night, we ask those who are interested in learning more about astronomy to tell us where they live, so that we can have a member club nearest to their locality contact them. To help us be more effective in advertising your club, we ask that each member club provide brochures for us to share with the public that describe the club and its programs, and provide information on how to join.

As an all-volunteer organization, we rely completely on people from our member clubs to pitch in and get involved. Devoting time to the organization through work sessions, duty nights, and serving on committees is highly rewarding, the more so as we embark on some significant new projects that will greatly add to the infrastructure at our facility in Jenny Jump State Forest for dark sky observing.

New buildings are springing up to accommodate new equipment including NJIT's 48" Itek telescope and six-foot solar radio telescope, and the donation by the Brady family which includes a 7" Astrophysics APO refractor, a 16" Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain, and a modern roll-off roof observatory.

The UACNJ facilities are more active than ever, but to sustain our activities requires full participation by our member clubs, especially through individuals becoming UACNJ Observers. Please contact us to get involved.