

Martian Chronicles

Volume 24 Issue 9

September 2006

Attention!

Astronomy Magazine
Calendars may be available at
next meeting. Calendars are
\$6.50.

Inside this issue:

<i>The Scope of Things</i>	2
<i>Computers, the Internet and Astronomy</i>	3
<i>Astronomy and Flight- Space History</i>	3
<i>Library Lingo</i>	4
<i>StarHopping for Beginners</i>	5
STARCHART (heavens-above.com)	6
August 2006 Minutes	7

****Your Article, Story, . . .
could be here. This
Newsletter is for all
M.A.R.S. Club members.
Please send your
Newsletter contribution to
newsletter@marsastro.org by
the 15th of the month ****

Up Coming Club Events

September 2006

8th M.A.R.S.
Club meeting
Presentation by
Al Peche

“Seasonal Sun” and update on New
Planetarium. **Members pay dues.**

30th SkyWatch at MOSI Sundown to
10 PM

(Since SkyWatch is near the 1st Quarter
Moon, there will be two in September,
but none in October.)

October 2006

No SkyWatch at MOSI

13th M.A.R.S. Club Meeting. 7:30-
9:00 PM in the Saunders Planetarium.



The Scope of Things

Dennis Farr

President M.A.R.S.

Is Pluto a planet?

The world is all a buzz with the question. How can this loveable little rock that we all learned about in elementary school be demoted? What ever will happen to all those solar system models still in boxes waiting to be assembled by inquisitive children everywhere?

On August 25 the newspapers around the world ran the story “Astronomers To Pluto: You're Out!” which, in part stated “The baby in the solar system's familiar nine-planet pantheon, a favorite of schoolchildren everywhere, was disowned Thursday by the world's astronomers.”

For amateur astronomers everywhere, this is the greatest thing that could have happened.

Why? Because now millions and millions of people are taking notice. The level of awareness is raising and people are asking questions. As amateur scientists, that is something we all dream of.

The IAU did more to increase the level of interest in astronomy in one week than all of the efforts by all the colleges, universities, and NASA combined.

How many people who know that you enjoy astronomy have approached you since the news came out and asked for your opinion. Email has been flying; discussion boards are flooded. Who could ask for anything more?

Strangely enough, Pluto is seen by very few astronomers. It's still there. Strangely enough, it's in perfect position for viewing this month. Just east of Jupiter up about 47 degrees, and due south at approximately 8:30 in the evening. Go out and look up, and let me know if you see it.

We are all looking forward to the September presentation “The Seasonal Sun” by Al Peche. He will also give us a progress report on the new planetarium. Seems like just about a year ago we had the last one. (Sorry Al, I couldn't resist that.)

Last month we asked for a member to step forward and fill the newly created position of Membership Chairman. Unbelievably, we had two. James and Joyce Zachary have volunteered and will be assisting Frances, Carolyn, and myself in the continuing efforts to improve the club.

Remember, astronomy is looking up.

Computers, the Internet and Astronomy

Dennis Farr

President M.A.R.S.

Finding information is a tricky issue for beginners, and even for non-beginners sometimes. No one wants to ask 'the stupid question'. No one wants to become the focus of attention.


The Internet has created the perfect place for people to stay anonymous, not become the focus of attention, and ask questions.

One of the best examples for astronomers is the web site <http://www.cloudynights.com>. The site is a wealth of information on equipment and hardware including user reviews of just about every thing from complete scope systems and accessories, to book and software reviews. But the most used part is the discussion board area.

You can create an 'alias' and ask questions on one of dozens of topics in astronomy. There are hardware specific forums for all the popular makes and models of telescopes. Just reading the past messages in the beginners forum is an education. There is even an 'Off Topic Observatory' where just about anything goes.

Even though you can ask anything, remember that the board has been around for a long time, and someone may have already asked the question. There is an extensive search capability that may assist you in finding the information you seek without ever having to ask it.

Astronomy and Flight-Space History September 2006

- Sep 01 - [Comet P/2006 H1 \(McNaught\) Closest Approach To Earth](#) (1.588 AU)
- Sep 03 -  [Aug 28] [SMART-1](#), [Moon Impact](#)
- Sep 03 - 30th Anniversary (1976), [Viking 2](#), Mars Landing
- Sep 05 - [Uranus](#) at Opposition
- Sep 06 - 10th Anniversary (1996), [Galileo](#), [Ganymede 2 Encounter](#)
- Sep 07 - [Partial Lunar Eclipse](#)
- Sep 08 - 40th Anniversary (1966), 1st Star Trek Episode on TV
- Sep 14 - [Soyuz TMA-9 Soyuz FG Launch](#) (International Space Station 13S)
- Sep 21 - [Herbert G. Wells](#)' 140th Birthday (1866)

Library Lingo

Elizabeth Mueller

These books are new additions that are located at our Hillsborough County Public Library. Thought I'd write a small article to let you all know what is available on the topic of astronomy for you to checkout at your local public library.

Astronomy – Ian Ridpath

Covers all aspects of astronomy, including its history, the origins of the Universe, the Solar System and its exploration, stars, and galaxies.

Astronomy: A Beginner's Guide to the Universe – (3rd edition) – Eric Chaisson and Steve McMillan (Note – The 5th edition is now out in paperback but not in the library yet.)

Comprehensive text discussing the foundations of the history of science and physics as they relate to astronomy.

Astronomy For Dummies – Stephen P. Maran

This is a basic guide on the study of astronomy and explores the cosmic objects and celestial happenings.

Exploring the Solar System: A History with 22 Activities – Mary Kay Carson

Traces the history of human exploration of the solar system.

The Planets – Dava Sobel

Explores the creation and evolution of the solar system's planets through a lens of popular culture, drawing on sources from astrology, science fiction, the fine arts, and other genres to chronicle planetary history in an accessible format.

Planets – Lisa Jo Rudy

By the editors of Time for Kids this book describes the planets of the solar system.

Solar System Observer's Guide – Peter Grego

Describes how to observe not only planets but also the moon, sun, comets, meteors, asteroids, and other celestial objects found within our Solar System.

Space Rocks: the Story of Planetary Geologist Adriana Ocampo – Lorraine Jean Hopping

SPACE ROCKS is the engaging story of a scientist and science. Tells of the adventure of the life of Adriana Ocampo.

StarHopping For Beginners: September 2006

Tanja Diederich

September will be our last month for Jupiter to be easily visible in the evening sky for this year. Catch him while you can. The Summer Triangle shines brightly in the Milky Way at sundown. Find a dark sky and grab a pair of binoculars and sweep through the Milky Way from Scorpius to Cassiopeia. You'll be surprised at what you can find.

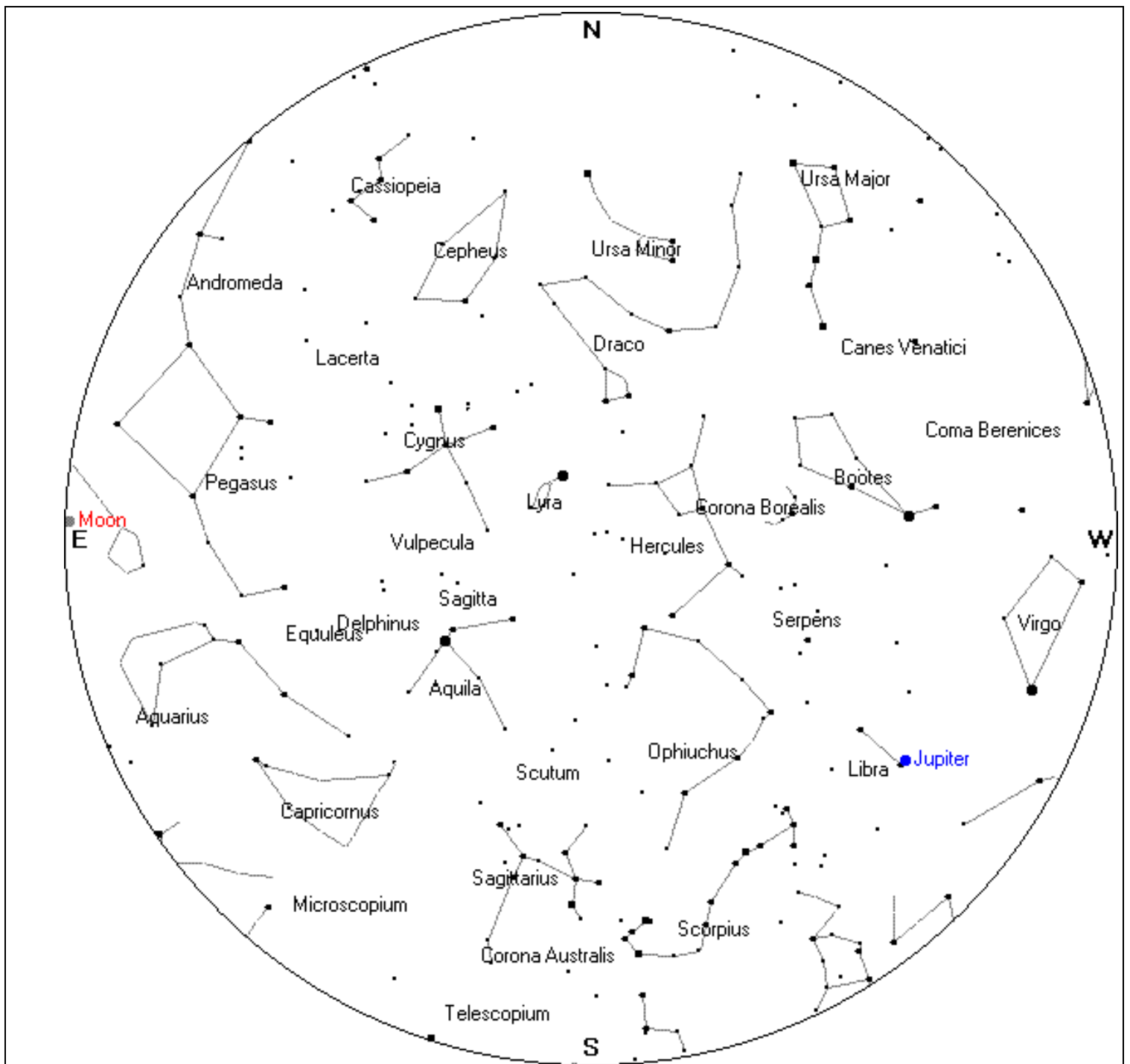
The big story right now is the decision from the International Astronomical Union. In early August we were told that the IAU would vote to rename asteroid Ceres, moon Charon and 2003 UB₃₁₃ as planets. On August 24, the IAU surprised the Astronomical community by downgrading Pluto to a dwarf planet, upgrading Ceres and 2003 UB₃₁₃ to join Pluto as dwarf planets. Charon was left as Pluto's moon. In July (?) Pluto's two small moons first seen through the Hubble Space Telescope were given their names: Nix and Hydra.

The criteria to be considered a planet are: 1.) Orbit the Sun (not another body) 2.) Large enough to be round in shape 3.) Able to clear orbit of debris.

Enjoy your StarHopping.

<http://www.space.com/php/multimedia/imagegallery/igviewer.php?imgid=4162&gid=298>





<http://www.heavens-above.com/skychart.asp?Y=2006&M=9&D=8&H=20&N=30&Lat=27.947&Lng=-82.459&Loc=Tampa&TZ=EST&SL=on&SN=on&BW=1&SZ=600>

M.A.R.S. club – minutes of the meeting on August 11, 2006
Recorded and submitted by Carolyn Olivero

There were 24 members & guests in attendance.

Member Gregory T. Shanos gave a presentation entitled: The Solar Eclipse Experience based on his trip to Greece for the recent solar eclipse. This detailed and informative presentation concluded at 8:47PM.

The business portion of the meeting was conducted by president, Dennis Farr. Treasurer Frances Ferguson has ordered 30 Astronomy Calendars (2007) that will be sold for \$6.50 each. They should be in for next month's meeting. She is also updating our membership with the Astronomy League.

Dr. Joe Carr mentioned that he had (?) a piece of the actual chart from a research presentation by Prof. VanAllen on the radiation belt named after him.

Jimmy Thomas mentioned the possibility of linking the club library presentations with the club meetings. The library presentations are on alternating months. Jimmy does the library presentations 6 times a year. Dennis mentioned the difficulty of coming up with 12 club presentations – linking the library & club presentations would cut that number down to 6. There was an objection raised by a member. No decision was made.

There is a new position – membership coordinator. A membership packet is being developed for distribution to new members.

Sky Watch at Florida Frontiersman property in Homeland will be in March, '07

Members dues are due in September.

MARS club library presentation “Constellations” will take place on Friday, September 1 at 7:00 PM

A reminder that the club has its own library of materials that is available for check out

Greg made a comment about how good the website is looking.

One of the members has a telescope for sale (still in the box); an LX 200 12” with wedge (GPS model) for \$2300

Tanja Diederich did a “Night Sky” presentation & asked to receive newsletter contributions by the 15th of the month. Material may be sent to: newsletter@marsastro.org

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 PM

**NEWSLETTER OF THE MUSEUM
ASTRONOMICAL RESOURCE SOCIETY**

M. A. R. S. Astronomy Club
Dennis Farr
Phone: 813-833-3918
Email: president@marsastro.org



Newsletter of the Museum Astronomical Resource Society Martian Chronicles is published monthly by the Museum Astronomical Resource Society (also known as M.A.R.S. Astronomy Club), to provide club news and other items of interest to its member. MARS is sponsored by MOSI Tampa Florida. Annual club membership dues are \$15.00 single and \$20.00 for families. Dues can be paid to any club officer at a meeting or event or mailed to the Club Membership/Renewal Address listed below. Newsletters are available to non members by requesting a complimentary issue. Please send all inquiries, comments and newsletter contributions to newsletter editor, shown on the right. The deadline for submitted contributions is the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. Contribution may be delayed in publication due to available space.
Membership/Renewal Make checks payable to:
Frances Ferguson, (Club Treasurer)
M.A.R.S.
C/O Frances Ferguson
1522 W. River Lane
Tampa, FL 33603

2006 M.A.R.S. Club Officers

President—Dennis Farr
(president@marsastro.org)
Vice President—Your name could be here
Secretary—Carolyn Oivero
(secretary@marsastro.org)
Treasurer—Frances Ferguson
(treasurer@marsastro.org)
Newsletter Editor— Tanja Diederich
Web Master— David Yarger
(webmaster@marsastro.org)
Education Outreach Coordinator—
Jimmy Thomas, 813-888-7187
Librarian—Elizabeth Mueller
(librarian@marsastro.org)
MOSI Contact— Tanja Diederich
813-987-6339 tanjad@mosi.org

*Membership/Renewal
Make checks payable to: Frances
Ferguson, (Club Treasurer)
M.A.R.S.
C/O Frances Ferguson
1527 W. River Lane
Tampa Florida 33603*

PAY DUES IN SEPTEMBER