



# The Celestial Observer

*Newsletter of the North Shore  
Amateur Astronomy Club*

**September, 2007**

## From the President

I hope everyone's summer has been going well. Seems to me that it has been cloudier than normal, however, we have managed three new moons in a row at Starport, and I believe that's a record!

The NSAAC Annual Picnic in July had four members plus their families, for a total of about twenty people in attendance. We had a lot of fun in spite of having to duck inside a few times to avoid showers. We played Bocce Ball, Horseshoes, Frisbee, and went swimming in the pool. We cooked burgers and hot dogs and ate on the deck. No solar observing this year, but we'll try again next year as I plan to host this event again, date to be announced.



Members Rick Margolies, Ilane Walberg, John Hobbs, and their families enjoying a summer feast on Kevin Ackerts deck.

It was announced at the August meeting that the board had granted Associate Member status to Lew Gramer. Lew is the father of our email list server. Back in the mid-90's Lew convinced a pessimistic board that an email list server would be a good thing for the club. As the current steward of the list server, I can very much appreciate how much

work it was for Lew to create and configure it. Lew's current situation is that he is living in Florida with no plans to move back to New England. His need to cut back expenses, combined with already being in five astronomy clubs, led him to the decision not to re-join NSAAC. By granting him Associate status Lew will be able to remain in contact with his friends on the list server, which he calls "his baby."

The club is changing the way we buy and distribute calendars to members. Please make sure you read the article describing the new procedure. Calendars must now be pre-ordered and purchased in September.

We managed to observe two nights in August at Starport. The second night had more people present than I've ever seen at Starport! Barrie and Danni served up lasagna and strawberry pie and we did dusk till dawn. The first night was clearer, but Perseid meteors helped us enjoy the second night in spite of poor transparency. It's nice to see more members taking advantage of this wonderful dark sky site which is available to NSAAC members via Barrie Sawyer. I'm already looking forward to the September new moon!



The Northern view at Starport. Members Dan Smoody, John Boudreau (behind Godzilla), and John's guest await sunset. Note: Godzillas head is not yet on the telescope.

I will attempt again to set up a meeting with officials from the new venue in early September regarding using the park for observing. I understand that there are several unused buildings on the site which has my interest up as potential storage, or possibly a clubhouse!

Fall is approaching with its cool clear nights and earlier sunsets. We have a Mars opposition to look forward to in late fall. For those of you who haven't been out much this summer, there are some great nights ahead!

*Kevin Ackert,  
President*

## **NSAAC Welcomes Our New Members:**

William Pinksten of Revere, MA  
Danny Smith of Kingston, NH

*Jim Koerth,  
Membership Director*

## **Minutes of the NSAAC Business Meeting, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007**

President Ackert called the August Business Meeting of the NSAAC to order at 8:12 PM. There was one new guest: Jim Holland. There were 8 members present plus 4 Board members. There was an official quorum.

Secretary: The minutes of the June business meeting were accepted by acclamation.

Treasurer:  
No report. The Board is waiting for the FY 2006 Annual Report from the treasurer.

Membership:  
There are two new members: William Pinksten and Danny Smith since the last Business Meeting.

Early Meeting Announcements:  
No announcements. Open forum on the agenda after New Business

### Committee Reports:

Young Astronomers Program:  
No progress. Board will take up options at the next board meeting.

Merrimack College:  
The observatory was open on only one Wednesday last month with about 15 visitors.

Salem State:  
Dennis Gudzevich reported that the observatory is closed for the summer and will reopen in September. Lou Grocki has resigned his position as a member of the working staff so Dennis has to find another helper. Dennis will try to get together with the Collin's to see if they can help.

Entertainment Report:  
Kevin Ackert has contacted Mario Motta to give a talk on light pollution at an early fall meeting. John Hobbs has made contact with John Briggs to see about another presentation on historical instruments in either September or October.

### Star Party Committee:

There has been a request from Kim Szotfried for a star party for the Eveleth Elementary School in Marblehead. The chairman responded that the club would do one and that we should do this after daylight saving time so the kids are not up late. Garry Meehan is having a star party October 13 at the IRWS and this will be his last star party so someone from NSAAC will have to step up for these events at IRWS.

### Telescope Clinic:

We have had 3 requests for help in the past week. Several were helped prior to this evenings meeting.

### News, Correspondence and Upcoming Activities:

Former member Michael McCoy contacted the club regarding a donation of astronomy books and was turned down due to the club's lack of a facility to store them.

Linda Budd contacted us trying to sell a 1940's vintage brass telescope.

Sue Blaeslack contacted the club to thank them for the spring and July 7<sup>th</sup> presentations as IRWS.

Four members and their families participated in the club picnic at Kevin Ackert's house and pool and Kevin has volunteered to host the club picnic next year.

IRWS blackout dates are:  
Halloween Program nights of Oct 26 and 27

Member Barrie Sawyer has volunteered the use of Starport for the new moon week in August. Those wishing to attend please let Barrie know so he can provide ample food for those coming. Food donations or money for food is welcome.

### Old Business:

Ron Sampson has sent another letter to Long Hill Farm. We have not heard back from them.

Member John Tulik has made contact with the officials at the new venue and they would like to meet with President Ackert to discuss using the park as an observing venue. Kevin has not yet been able to schedule a meeting.

The hat purchase is on hold until we get a new logo or decide to keep the old one. Board thought that we could update and correct the comet on the logo. We are looking for pictures of comets that we could use.

### New Business:

The September newsletter will be mailed out around August 22.

Rick Margolies is now doing infor@nsaac.

Sky and Telescope renewal process has been changed. See e-mails on the list server. We now renew directly and not through the treasurer.

The board voted to assign the status of Associate Member to Lew Gramer, the creator of our list server.

Next year we will try to take pre-purchase orders for the calendars so that we may more accurately purchase the correct number. We need to take orders in September.

The entertainment for the evening was a constellation conversation talk on Cygnus by Kevin Ackert.

Board Meeting will be Tuesday August 21st at 8:00 PM at VMP.

Meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM.

*Respectively submitted,  
John Hobbs, Secretary NSAAC*

### **2008 Calendars and Observer's Handbooks: *Order by September 15th***

Each autumn, the club purchases the following astronomy calendars and handbooks for discounted resale to members:

#### **Deep Space Mysteries Calendar**

From Kalmbach, publishers of Astronomy magazine.  
See <http://kalmbachcatalog.stores.yahoo.net/68150.html> for info.

#### **Observer's Calendar**

From the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC).  
See <http://www.rasc.ca/calendar/index.shtml> for info.

#### **Observer's Handbook**

From the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC).  
See <http://www.rasc.ca/publications/index.shtml> for info.

Examples of the 2007 version of each item will be available for your perusal at the September meeting.

This year we are asking members to pre-order their calendars and handbooks, and to pay when ordering. This will enable us to purchase the appropriate number of items and to better handle our sales accounting and distribution.

The calendars are \$10 each; the handbook is \$20. You save between \$3 and \$8 per item by purchasing through the club. If you need your items shipped to you, the club will charge a flat fee of \$5.

There are three ways to order:

1. Come to the September business meeting and see Dennis Gudzevich or Theresa Earle. Bring cash or a check to pay for your order.
2. By September 15, send email to [treasurer at nsaac.org](mailto:treasurer@nsaac.org) and mail a check to the club address at Veasey.
3. By September 15, mail a written order along with a check to the club address at Veasey.

If you email or mail in your order, please tell us your name as well as the name and quantity of each item you want. If you need your items shipped to you, please state that on your order and add \$5 to your total. If you do not request shipping and/or you do not include \$5 for shipping, we'll expect you to pick up your order at a business meeting.

If you email or mail your order, receipt of your order will be confirmed by email if we have your email address on file; otherwise it will be confirmed by U.S. mail.

All items should be available for pickup by the November business meeting, possibly as early as the October meeting.

*Theresa Earle,  
Treasurer*

### **Star Party News**

Jim Foy is going to give a presentation at a star party Friday Oct 19th in Danville, NH for the cub scout pack 13. He will be giving the inside presentation and would like support from club members with scopes for outside viewing. Details to be given at the club business meeting and in the next month's newsletter. We will also post the request for scopes and directions on the list server. Please let the star party committee know if you plan to help with a scope. The email address is [starparty at nsaac.org](mailto:starparty@nsaac.org).

*John Hobbs  
Star Party Coordinator*

# Astrotalk

## The Bridal Veil Nebula by Barrie Sawyer

The Veil Nebula in Cygnus is my favorite summertime deep sky object. I first observed it with an 8" scope many years ago. It is most likely a supernova remnant of a star that exploded thirty to forty thousand years ago, although remains of the progenitor have never been identified. The Veil consists of three sections spanning about 2.6 degrees. The easiest to locate runs through the 4<sup>th</sup> magnitude foreground star 51 Cygni. There is a well defined pointed wisp on one side of the star and a gradually fading fan on the other. Either an ultrablock or O-III filter greatly improves the nebula's definition though most sources suggest the O-III filter.

The western section is actually the brightest portion of the nebula but is more difficult to locate due to a lack of bright stars in the area. Use low power and a filter to find it. I have seen it in my 10X70 binoculars (without filters) and I have spotted it in 7X50 binoculars as a faint glow from Starport by putting an ultrablock in one of the eyecups. This section responds well to magnification showing well defined filamentary structure.

Once you have found both the eastern and western sections, try to follow the arc of one to the other and back. Between the outer arcs is the central portion known as Pickering's Wisp about 1 degree NE of 51 Cygni. This is the most difficult section to locate and observe, but well worth the effort. I have been able to detect some filaments in my 10" reflector.

Burnham's notes the source of the nebula's glow is still somewhat of a mystery and remarks that its relative brightness may be due to our seeing the expanding cloud edge-on. Roaming around the Veil is one of my favorite activities. I've seen it from IRWS with a 6" reflector. Has anyone seen it from VMP? Try it. You will you be treated to one of summer's best objects and get a chance to hone your hunting skills.

Clear skies,  
Barrie

## Help Wanted

Below is a list of positions which need to be filled in our club. Please consider volunteering for one of these positions

if you have the means. Please contact any Board member with questions about these positions

### *Star Party Volunteers:*

As we get into the star party season, please watch for announcements and provide support when you can. It is a rewarding experience!

## Entertainment for September

The entertainment for the business meeting on September 7<sup>th</sup> will be a Constellation Conversation on Cepheus to be presented by Alan Peters.

If you have a suggestion for an entertainment idea please submit it to us with no obligation to do it yourself.

## Getting to Veasey Memorial Park

From Interstate 95 north, take the Route 133 west (54B) exit, and follow it into Georgetown Center. Go straight through the light, now on Route 97N. Go about 1.5 miles and take a left onto Salem Street (Tea Garden Restaurant at this intersection). Stay on Salem Street and turn left onto Washington Street. VMP is down a bit on the right.

Directions to all of the NSAAC observing sites are available on our web site's "About" page at:

<http://www.nsaac.org/about.htm>

## Contact Information

For more information about the club and its activities, contact Jim Koerth, Membership Director, email: [membership at nsaac.org](mailto:membership@nsaac.org) or contact Kevin Ackert, President, e-mail at [president at nsaac.org](mailto:president@nsaac.org). If you have no email access, you may phone Kevin Ackert at (978) 663-5305

Our club web site is: <http://www.nsaac.org>.

The *Celestial Observer* is edited by Leor Zolman. Feedback, and member contributions are welcome. Contact: [newsletter at nsaac.org](mailto:newsletter@nsaac.org).

New development on the NSAAC web site is currently being coordinated and implemented by Mike Deneen. Suggestions regarding the content of the NSAAC web site are always welcome; Please email [webmaster at nsaac.org](mailto:webmaster@nsaac.org) with your ideas.



Barrie Sawyer vs. Godzilla, at Starport