



The sky calls to us. If we do not destroy ourselves,
we will one day venture to the stars.

Carl Sagan

Newsletter of the Pomona Valley Amateur Astronomers

Volume 30 Number 1

nightwatch

January 2010

President's Address

Here we are in the new year. Happy 2010! I hope Santa brought you that new telescope, eyepiece, or sky atlas that you wanted.

The speaker for January is PVAA's own Larry Kawano. Larry graduated from Cornell in 1983 with a degree in physics. His PhD was earned at the University of Chicago in Cosmology. He now works as the "Science Interpretives Creator " at Astrocamp in Idyllwild. His presentation is titled "Astro Mythbusters." Don't miss it.

Also at the January 29th meeting, we will be accepting nominations to fill John Stover's board seat. (John and Claire are in the process of moving to the Sacramento area.) A special election will be held during the February meeting.

Our next star party is February 13th at Mesquite Spring in Death Valley. For some of us this is a 3-day-weekend. Mesquite Spring Campground is one of the two darkest dark sky sites that PVAA visits. It is at the north end of Death Valley, far from city lights and near both Scotty's Castle and Ubehebe Crater. The Devil's Racetrack is another of the many natural wonders to see in the area. This a great site with plenty to see both day and night. This time of year it can be cold though and sometimes windy so come prepared. Although it is a bit of a drive getting there (260 miles), in my opinion, the clear dark skies make it well worth the long journey.

Ron Hoekwater

Book Report

Recently I bit the bullet and bought a book on Astronomy, "The Amateur Astronomer's Essential Reference" Third Edition, 2008. It is nearly coffee table in size, 368 pages, and the cost (\$49 at retail) takes it out of the category of an impulse buy. It helped that Ellie had a 40% off coupon at Borders. The book shows two isbn #'s, ISBN-13:978-1-55407-344-3 and ISBN-10:55407-344-8. I recommend the Third Edition as it has very fresh reviews of the latest hardware and software.

I wish I had run across this book a couple of years ago as it would have saved me a great deal of frustration and also money. It is encyclopedic in its coverage from beginner to serious intermediate. It has details for for dealing with maintenance issues of scopes and optics, has procedures for collumating optics using different tools, and realistic guidance for choosing hardware beginning at binoculars, and ending at intermediate astrophotography.

I have learned quite a bit in the last couple of weeks, and it is helping me to decide where I will go next with this hobby. I will bring it to the next meeting but I suggest you check it out yourself at a library or book store.

Bill Connelly

ROAD TRIP

On January ninth, we had our star party at Salton Sea State Park. Mecca beach is still closed due to budget cuts. The night sky was not as good as our November star party We got about 3 hours of viewing in for the night. There was Bill, Ken, Gary and his son, Ron and Laura and a new member Matt and myself. On Saturday afternoon Bill, Ken and I walked down to the waters edge to watch the thousands of birds arriving. Less than 50 yards from us in the trees were hawks, owls, pelicans and other kinds of birds, just sitting there. They say there are more than 400 species of migrating birds that use the park from October to January.

Hope to see you all at our next star party on February 13 at Death Valley.

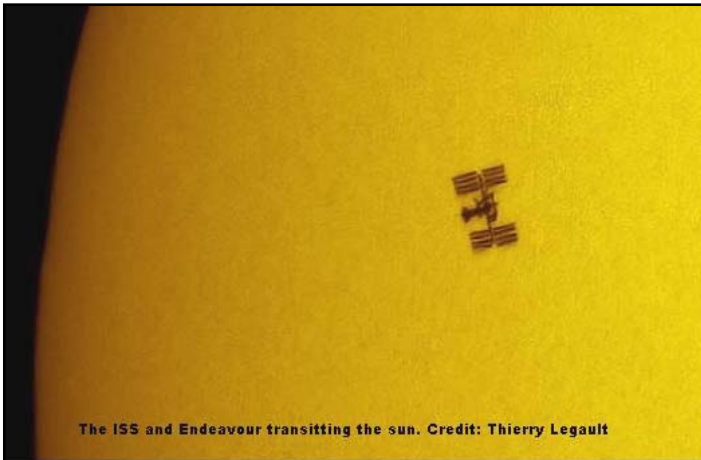
Jim Bridgewater

Salton Sea Observation

Member Matt Wedel and others went to the Salton Sea January 9, 2010 for our monthly star party. You can read about his experience in his blog at :



<http://10minuteastronomy.wordpress.com/2010/01/10/observing-report-salton-sea-and-claremont/>



The ISS and Endeavour transitting the sun. Credit: Thierry Legault



Shuttle and Hubble Transiting Sun. Photo Credit: (NASA/Thierry Legault)

- ### Club Events Calendar
- January 29, General Meeting
-Larry Kawano on “Astro Mythbusters”
 - February 13, Star Party – Death Valley
 - February 18, Board Meeting
 - February 23, Colony Branch Library Ontario 6 – 8 PM
 - February 26, General Meeting

 - March 13, Star Party
 - March 18, Board Meeting
 - March 26, General Meeting

 - April 10, Star Party
 - April 15, Board Meeting
 - April 20, 2010, – Main Branch, Ontario Library 7 – 9 PM
 - April 23, General Meeting

 - May 6, Board Meeting
 - May 12 - 16, RTMC
 - May 21, General Meeting

 - June 12, Saturday – Mt. Wilson 60” viewing
 - June 17, Board Meeting
 - June 25, 2010, General Meeting

 - July 10, Star Party – White Mountain
 - July 23, General Meeting



Shuttle Transiting Sun. Photo Credit: (NASA/Thierry Legault)

PVAA Officers and Board

Officers

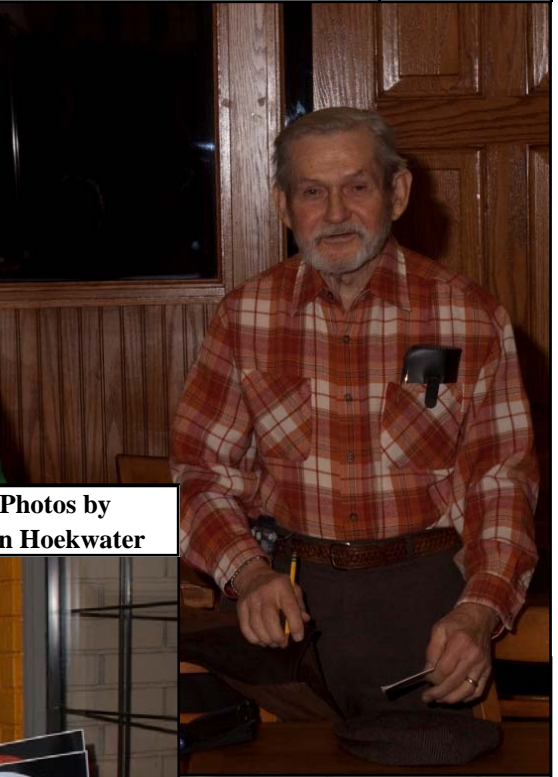
PresidentRon Hoekwater.....909/391-1943
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Board

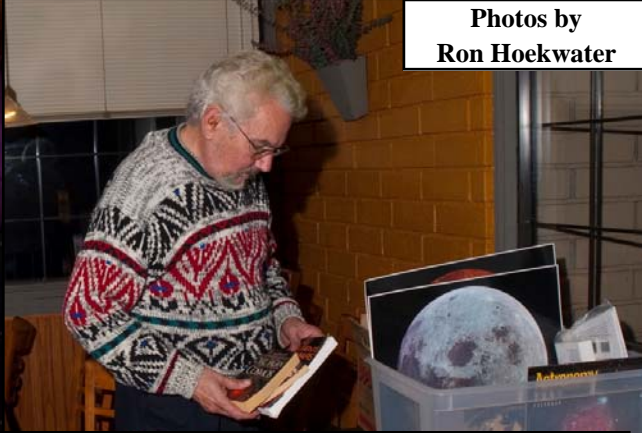
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Photos by
Ron Hoekwater





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Ron Hoekwater

