

The Refractor

The Bulletin of the Eastbay Astronomical Society
 Founded in 1924 at Chabot Observatory, Oakland, California

Volume 79
 Number 10
 June 2003

This month's talk: Members' Night

Saturday, June 14, 7:30 pm
 Chabot Space & Science Center
 Physics Lab, Spees Building

Speakers: You

It's been a while since we had one, so our Program Director, Dave Rodrigues, has deemed the next meeting a Members' Night, where, you, the members of the EAS, can do presentations on what you've been up to so far this year. Have you visited an observatory, recently? Did you take any astrophotos, or some pictures of the recent lunar eclipse that you're particularly proud of? Did you just get back from the Riverside Telescope Makers Conference and buy a new CCD camera, light-intensifier eyepiece, or even a nice t-shirt? Or do you just have a story to tell about sighting Planet-X? (See Editor's News 'n Views.) Then here's your big chance to come share them with us! Dave will start the ball rolling with a masterful demonstration of prestidigitation in the dark (sky) arts as the amazing, the incredible AstroWizard! If you have something you'd like to bring along, give Dave a call at (510) 483-9191 or email him at daverod@aol.com. ★



On Astronomy Day at Jack London Square, AstroWizard Dave Rodrigues uses his outgoing personality and vivid descriptions to bring astronomy to life in the minds of young and old, alike.

Special CSSC Members' Only Nights June 23, 24, 25 – 8:00pm to 11:30pm

Free entry, planetarium shows, and hands-on activities for members of Chabot Space & Science Center before viewing through Nellie begins. **Reservations are required.** Call 510 336-7372 to reserve your tickets. Space is limited, so be sure to make your reservations early. Maximum 6 per party. ★

Countdown! 3...2...1...Nellie!

Chabot is holding a GRAND OPENING for its newest addition to its family of large telescopes; the 36" classical Cassegrain reflector, *Nellie*, which will come on-line to the public on Saturday, June 21, 2003. They will open the Center at 8:00pm, and viewing will commence at 9:00pm. Admission for both members and non-members will be \$8.00 for adults, and \$5.00 for children 12 and under. This price includes a planetarium show and access to the exhibits. Call the Chabot Space & Science Center Box Office at (510) 336-7373 for tickets to this truly historic occasion! ★

DINNER WITH THE SPEAKER

5:30 pm
 Saturday, June 14, 2003
HUNAN YUAN
 4100 Redwood Rd., #11
 (next to Safeway)
 Oakland
 (510) 531-1415
 Contact Dave Rodrigues
 at 510/483-9191 or
 daverod@aol.com by Fri-
 day, June 13th to confirm

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Editor's News 'n Views

Howdy Astro Fans! Yet another interesting month come and gone in the world of astronomy. Astronomy Day for the East Bay was covered pretty well, with the EAS holding events at Jack London Square (behind the Barnes and Noble bookstore) and at the Oakland Zoo (next to the pink flamingos).

Chabot, of course, had special daytime activities for their visitors. **Dave Rodrigues**, **Paul Hoy**, and myself covered the Jack London Square location, while **Carter**, **Linda Lazaretti**, and **Alan Roche** worked the Zoo. We handed out several hundred Chabot flyers to visitors at both locations, and wowed them with images of sunspots, prominences, and (later on) the moon, Jupiter, and even a bit of Saturn. This was a perfect opportunity for both Dave and Carter to utilize their new Coronado SolarMax telescopes (they both got one each at the same time!) Those little buggers are sure pricey, but they never fail to get the 'ooohs' and 'ahhhs' from the public (or, for that matter, from us amateurs, too). And besides that, I have to say it's always a hoot working with Dave when he's in **AstroWizard** mode. It never fails to draw the kids in, and bring smiles to the parents as they watch him cast his educational spell on them using his bits of magic (which he will demonstrate to the club this next meeting!)

Minor Planet Naming Announcement at the May Meeting of the EAS: Thanks to the efforts of **Don Stone**, **Morris Jones** (Mojo), his wife **Jane Houston Jones** (Jane), and **Dave Rodrigues** (the AstroWizard), have all been immortalized in space! Minor planets 22338 and 24626, both discovered by Carolyn Shoemaker, are now officially named **Janemojo** and **Astrowizard**! Now just how cool is that?

Still in the news: the days are growing short (and not just because we're approaching Summer Solstice) for the Chabot/EAS Library Project, as the opening date in early July grows ever nearer. Please remember that if you've got a few hours to spare on Saturday afternoons between 2pm and 5pm, they could *really* use as much help as possible, and they're still looking for donations

of good, contemporary astronomy books suitable for kids. If you've got either books, volunteer time, or even monetary donations to give to this most worthy of causes, please contact either Carter Roberts or Don Saito (their contact information is located on the back of each issue of *The Refractor*). Books are veritable fountains of knowledge and inspiration to future professional and amateur astronomers, and libraries are the bastions of books. **Whatever you can do to help these institutions, the opportunity should not be missed.**

The first total lunar eclipse we've had since 2000 happened on May 15th, and as usual, when something astronomically significant occurs, the people of the Bay Area flock to Chabot! They made a special night of it, with a totally sold out weeknight planetarium show, hot drinks and munchies, and volunteers with scopes to look at Jupiter, Saturn, and eventually, the Moon, which was already in full eclipse by the time it rose above the trees to the southeast. Chabot should arrange more astronomical events; it would really augment their income.

And finally, this odd tidbit from the Twilight Zone: Did you know that we were all supposed to be doomed on May 15, 2003? According to *her* True Believers, it still might happen (they wish!), but since all of the other major signs of the Planet-X near-pass apocalypse have failed to occur, the likelihood is getting fainter every day. Let's all heave a collective sigh of relief! Former Bay Area resident, Nancy Leider, who supposedly channels with, and gets all her information from, the alien race called the *Zetas*, has been warning us for many years about the coming of Planet-X. It's eccentric orbit



L-R: Dave Rodrigues, Morris Jones, Jane Houston Jones, and Don Stone.

is supposed to bring it near the Earth every 3,500 years, causing the magnetic poles to flip, and the planet's crust to slip. Unfortunately, except for a few doctored photos, pictures of "sun dogs" (flares which appear on either side of the sun caused by high, thin ice crystals) or internal camera lens flares, no evidence of this astronomer's-dream-come-true-if-they-discovered-it has yet appeared. Our favorite Bad Astronomer, Phil Plait, has been debunking this Planet-X/

ZetaTalk gunge for a long time, and darned if his website isn't under a DOS (denial of service) attack as of this writing; probably by those crafty Zetas!

Remember: when Planet-X turns the world upside-down, and the continents heave and buckle, be sure to duck and cover! Yeahhh, that's the ticket... ☆

Spare Shots

This month's collection as gathered from various contributors. Enjoy, enjoy!

▼ Dave "The AstroWizard" Rodrigues in action! (Photo by Don Saito)



► Mojo's first reactions upon hearing the news of his and Jane's



minor planet
 ◀ Imagine having a whole (minor) planet named after you!

► Carter and Linda watching the sun and the flamingos for Astronomy Day

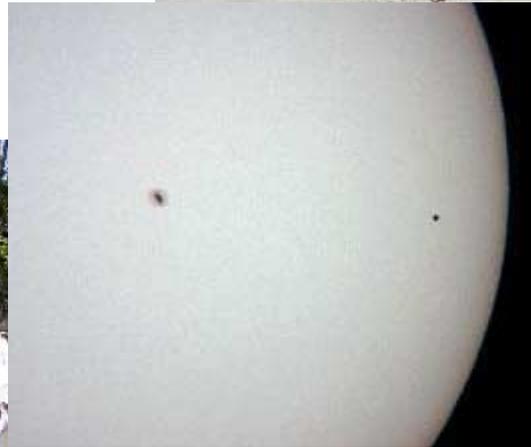


◀ Don Stone, chief conspirator, arranged the whole Janemojo and Astrowizard minor planet-naming plot. Well done!



► A crane lifts Nellie's mounting fork into the sliding roof observatory on April 23rd. Photo by Conrad Jung

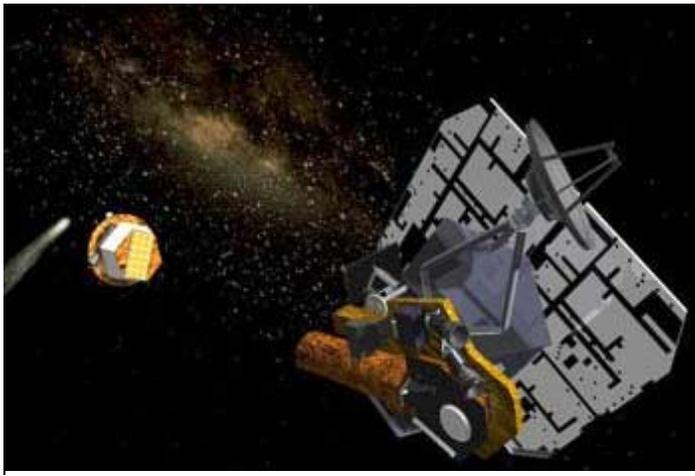
► Kevin Medlock, Mike Martinez, and Alan Roche assembling Nellie's parts.



◀ The May 7th transit of Mercury across the face of the sun (Mercury to the far right – sunspot left of center)

► And here at Planet Chabot, we can see that Rachel is, indeed, at the facility's core! (Photo with Mark Vandewettering's new fisheye lens for his Nikon 4500 digital camera.)





This is an artist's rendition of the flyby spacecraft releasing the impactor 24 hours prior to the impact event. Image from NASA JPL website

YOUR NAME COULD MAKE A "DEEP IMPACT" ON A COMET

People worldwide may celebrate July 4, 2005, as the day their names reach a comet. NASA is launching a campaign to send hundreds of thousands of names to comet Tempel 1.

The names will be carried on board NASA's Deep Impact spacecraft, the first deep-space mission designed to really reach out and touch a comet. Mission scientists are confident an impact on a comet's nucleus will answer basic questions about the nature and composition of these celestial objects.

"This is an opportunity to become part of an extraordinary space mission," said Dr. Don Yeomans, an astronomer at JPL, a member of Deep Impact's science team. "When the craft is launched in December 2004, yours and the names of your loved-ones can hitch along for the ride and be part of what may be the best space fireworks show in history."

Deep Impact's larger flyby spacecraft will carry a smaller impactor spacecraft to Tempel 1 for release into the comet's path for a planned collision. The flyby spacecraft will take pictures as the 370-kilogram (816 pound) copper-tipped impactor plunges into Tempel 1 at about 37,000 kilometers (22,990 miles) per hour. The impactor is expected to make a spectacular, football field-sized crater, seven to 15 stories deep, in the speeding comet. Carried aboard the impactor will be a standard mini-CD containing the names of comet, space, and other enthusiasts from around the world.

"This campaign will allow people from around the world to become directly involved with Deep Impact and through that get them thinking about the scientific reasons for the mission," said Univ of Maryland (UM) astronomy professor Michael A'Hearn, Deep Impact's principal investigator. "We particularly hope to capture the interest of young students, as they will become the explorers of the next generation."

People may submit their names for this historic one-way mission by visiting NASA's Deep Impact Web site, from

May 2003 – February 2004: <http://deepimpact.jpl.nasa.gov/>

The collision between the impactor and Tempel 1 is not forceful enough to make an appreciable change in the comet's orbital path around the sun. The comet poses no threat to Earth.

Deep Impact was selected in 1999 as a NASA Discovery mission. The goal of the Discovery Program is to launch many smaller missions with fast development times, each for a fraction of the cost of NASA's larger missions. The main objective is to enhance our understanding of the Solar System by exploring the planets, their moons, and small bodies, such as comets and asteroids.

The UM is the home of Deep Impact's principal investigator, Michael A'Hearn, who oversees scientific investigations. Project manager, John McNamee, from JPL, manages and operates the Deep Impact mission for NASA's Office of Space Science, Washington. JPL is managed for NASA by the California Institute of Technology Pasadena, Calif. John Marriott, Ball Aerospace & Technology Corp., manages the spacecraft development in Boulder, Colo.

Information about the Deep Impact mission is available on the Internet at: <http://deepimpact.jpl.nasa.gov/>. A mirror site is available at: <http://deepimpact.umd.edu> For information about NASA and other space flight missions on the Internet, visit: <http://www.nasa.gov> ★



This just in: **Paul gets one too!**

**MPC 49393, 2003 May 1, (12321) Zurakowski=1992 PZ1
Discovered 1992 August 4 by H.E. Holt at Palomar**

This must be minor planet month for the EAS! Paul R. Zurakowski (1927 -), volunteer Director of the Chabot Observatory Telescope Makers' Workshop for more than 30 years, has helped thousands of students make their own telescopes, and has also judged telescopes at the Riverside Telescope Makers Conference for many years. Citation by Carter Roberts. Paul received a standing ovation from the crowd of 600+. Jean Mueller did the legwork on this. ★

Lumicon is back!

Longtime provider of excellent astronomical telescopes, accessories, and specially treated photographic film, Lumicon was saved from oblivion by Parks Optical, another manufacturer of fine optical instruments based out of Southern California. Thanks to Parks Optical, the fine line of filters designed to view various types of deep-sky (and other) objects will continue to be available for purchase. This includes the Oxygen III, Deep Sky, UHC, H-Beta, H-Alpha, 48mm Color Filters, Minus Violet, Infra-Red Blocking, UV Dust Seal, Comet, and their unique Multiple Filter Selector. Of course, there's a wide selection of other astronomical accessories that cannot possibly all be listed, here. Their contact info is as follows:

Phone: (805) 520-0047
Fax: (805) 520-3030
Order Line: 1-800-420-0255
E-mail: lumicon@lumicon.com ★

6th International Mars Society Convention August 14-17, 2003 Hilton Hotel



Eugene, Oregon

The Mars Society was founded to further the exploration and settlement of the Red Planet. This year's convention is a unique opportunity for those interested in Mars to come together and discuss the technology, science, social implications, philosophy and other aspects of Mars exploration.

Highlights will include the report from the fourth field season of the Devon Island Flashline Mars Arctic Research Station, the second season of the Mars Desert Research Station, the building of the EuroMARS in Iceland, status reports from the Translife Mars Gravity Biosatellite Mission and Analog Rover teams, panels and debates concerning key issues about Mars exploration and settlement, and keynote addresses from many prominent leaders of the effort to get humans to Mars.

Prior conventions have drawn thousands of participants from all over the world and received extensive press coverage in many leading international media. This year's conference should be the most exciting event to date.

Conference Registration Fees: \$150 for MS members if paid before June 30th, 2003, \$240 for non-members. After June 30: \$190 for members, \$280 for non-members. Students and Seniors: \$35 for members, \$80 for non-members.

Register online at www.marssociety.org ★



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

(Please print clearly)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Day Phone: _____

Eve Phone: _____

Do not print address in Membership Directory listing

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

- Regular..... \$24
- Family \$36
- Contributing \$40
- Sustaining..... \$60 or more
- Student (digital newsletter only)... \$10

Optional discounted magazine subscription:

- Sky & Telescope \$29.95
- Astronomy \$29.00

Optional tax deductible donations:

- Burns Library \$ _____
- General Fund \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

To help save the club money, I prefer to receive the newsletter in digital format.

Please cut out and mail this form and your check or money order payable to:

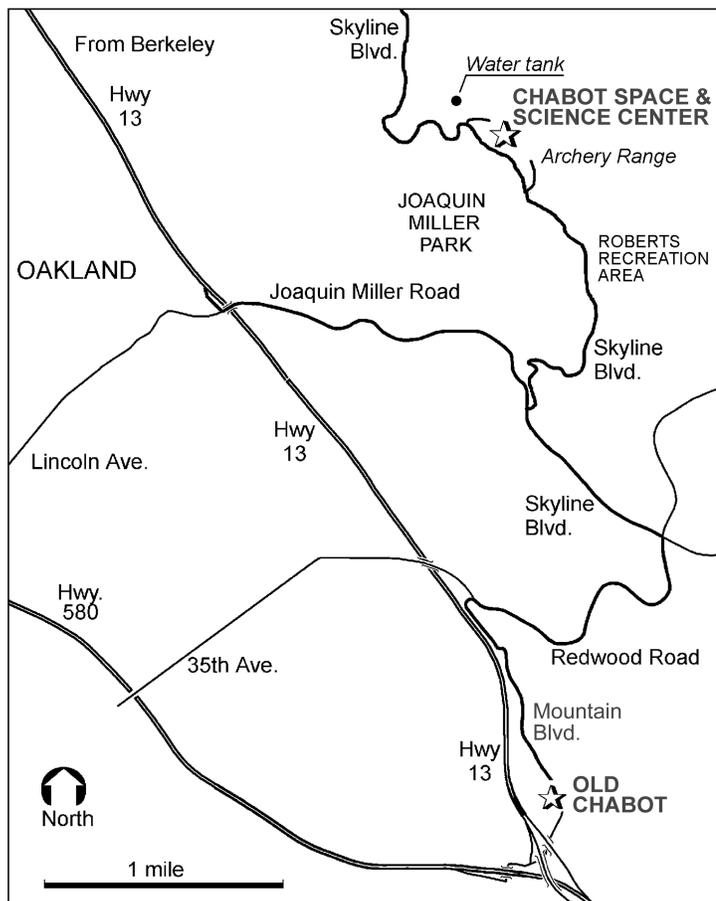
Eastbay Astronomical Society
19047 Robinson Road
Sonoma, CA 95476-5517

For more information, contact Treasurer Don Stone at:
(707) 938-1667, or ddcstone@earthlink.net, or the address above.



Eastbay Astronomical Society

At Chabot Space & Science Center
 10000 Skyline Boulevard ● Oakland, CA 94619
 July 2003
 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



FUTURE CONJUNCTIONS

- June 12 7:30pm EAS Board Meeting at Chabot
- 14 2pm – 5pm EAS Library Work Party, Dellums Bldg
- 14 7:30pm EAS General Meeting at Chabot
- 21 2pm – 5pm EAS Library Work Party, Dellums Bldg
- 28 2pm – 5pm EAS Library Work Party, Dellums Bldg
- July 10 7:30pm EAS Board Meeting at Chabot
- 12 7:30pm EAS General Meeting at Chabot
- 24 – 30, Annual Barcroft High Altitude Star Party
- Aug 14 7:30pm EAS Board Meeting at Chabot
- 9 7:00pm EAS General Meeting at Chabot

Eastbay Astronomical Society

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		cwroberts@earthlink.net
Vice President:	Phil Crabbe II	(510) 655-4772
Treasurer, Membership:	Don Stone	(707) 938-1667
		ddcstone@earthlink.net

Articles and photos for *The Refractor* are encouraged. Deadline for the July issue is June 20, 2003. Items may be submitted by mail to the editor, Don Saito, 3514 Randolph Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602-1228. Internet email address: donsaito@pacbell.net Hm: (510) 482-2913.

Join the Eastbay Astronomical Society

- Regular, \$24/year
 - Family, \$36/year
 - Contributing, \$40/year
 - Student, \$15/year (digital newsletter, only)
 - Sustaining, \$60/year or more
- Contact: Don Stone, EAS Membership Registrar
 Telephone: (707) 938-1667 Email: ddcstone@earthlink.net
 Mail: 19047 Robinson Road, Sonoma, CA 95476-5517