

Dear New Member,

I would like to welcome you to the Mahoning Valley Astronomical Society. We are a diverse group of people of all ages, walks of life and levels of astronomy knowledge with the common goal of learning about astronomy and promoting the wonders of the Universe to the general public. This new member packet will acquaint you with many of the varied aspects of your new club.

MVAS was founded in 1939 by local enthusiasts to further the hobby of amateur astronomy in the Mahoning Valley. We own and operate a dedicated astronomical observatory in Trumbull County that houses four major telescopes. The 16" Draper-Prather Cassegrain Reflector, the 8" Draper-Hoynos Refractor and the 25" Titan Dobsonian Reflector all featuring optics made and assembled by MVAS members. The club also has a 12" Meade Newtonian donated by Lakeview High School. We have a partnership with Youngstown State University and spend the winter months at the YSU Planetarium where we have our talks, attend the planetarium show and conduct our meetings. Our monthly newsletter, *The Meteorite*, will keep you informed on astronomy and club happenings and give you optional assignments to help you learn more.

At monthly club meetings, members hear presentations on a variety of topics, learn about the constellation of the month and hear a brief Astronomy 101 Lecture for novices. MVAS offers you the opportunity to become involved in many areas of astronomy. Several MVAS members submit observations on variable stars to the American Association of Variable Star Observers. This information is used by professional astronomers to further our understanding of the Universe. Some members also belong to the American Lunar and Planetary Society and inform our members about activities of this organization. Some club members belong to the Astronomical League and can participate in their many observing programs. A number of members are involved in astronomy imaging, taking pictures of subjects such as Solar and Lunar Eclipses, the Moon, Sun, planets, galaxies and other deep sky objects and using specialized software to process these images. Some club members have constructed their own telescopes and can give advice to others who are interested in doing likewise. We have members who know their way around the night sky and use the star-hopping method to find interesting objects while others have GOTO telescopes that employ a computer to help find things. Some members have been avid astronomers all their life and can answer most questions you may have about the night sky.

MVAS has an active community outreach program. We have partnered with the Columbiana Public Library to maintain and train patrons in using the six telescopes available for check-out with the library. We will soon be adding a similar partnership with Hubbard library. Each year club members host a number of free public star gazes. More details of these events can be found in this packet and on our website.

Whether you joined to learn more about astronomy or from a desire to share your astronomy knowledge with others, you have come to the right place. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask!

Jodi McCullough President MVAS

MVAS In A Nutshell

Meetings

Monthly meetings are held April-October at the Mahoning Valley Cortese Observatory (MVCO). During November, January, February and March we meet at Youngstown State University in Ward Beecher, right across from the Planetarium. Our December meeting is the annual Christmas party, held at an area venue. Meetings generally begin with talks from 7 pm-8 pm. At MVCO we have a business meeting at 8 pm, then social time with snacks and observing if it is clear. When we are at YSU, we attend the planetarium show from 8-9 and follow with our business meeting and snacks.

Snacks are provided by hosts. Sign-up for hosting occurs at the annual Christmas party. You are welcome to bring food to any MVAS event but it is not necessary nor expected.

Meeting agenda is as follows:

1. Roll call -you are asked a preassigned astronomy question. This question can be found in the current issue of the Meteorite, our club newsletter.
2. Introduction of Visitors
3. Call for the Reading of the Minutes
4. Treasure's Report
5. Reading of Correspondence
6. Observatory Director Report
7. Librarian Report
8. Imaging Committee Report -images sent to the Committee Chair during the month are presented in a slide show.
9. Visual Committee Report -members are encouraged to share observations. Visual Committee Report forms are to be given to the Observatory Director.
10. Old Business
11. New Business -please fill out a Proposal form and submit to officers for items that will involve discussion.
12. Good of Society

OTAA

We are members of the Ohio Turnpike Astronomy Association, a group of clubs that border the eastern to central parts of the Ohio Turnpike. During the summer months, clubs take turns hosting the other clubs at their meeting location. Our date is usually in August. As hosts, all members are asked to bring potluck dishes to share with guests at our OTAA meeting. We also have door prizes and a raffle. Members are encouraged to donate items for the door prizes.

OFB

Open For Business occurs from May through October. When we have good skies, we will be observing at MVCO during these dates. The event host will unlock and close the observatory at the end of the evening. Open times range from dusk until 11:30 pm. Sign-up to be a host happens at the Christmas party and is open to all key holders.

Star Gazes

We conduct a variety of star gazes each year. These are free and open to the public and occur at various locations throughout the tri-county area. Members bring scopes or binoculars to share with the public.

Astronomical League

Some members belong to the Astronomical League. There is a separate quarterly magazine and the ability to complete projects for recognition and pins. Cost is \$7.50 a year. Annual dues for AL are paid in July.

Getting Keys

Training to operate the telescopes is done during the Open For Business events or by other arrangements. The Observatory Director will ask you to open and close the various telescopes before you can get a key. Cost of the key is \$25. Keys should be returned and you will be refunded should you decide you no longer want one.

Meteorite

This is the club newsletter. It is available online or through the mail and is also on the club website. The mail version is black and white.

Club Apparel

The Treasurer has t-shirts, hats, hoodies and sweatshirts for sale that have the club logo.

Club Website mvobservatory.com

Lots of information including an event calendar, the Meteorite, directions to star gaze locations, member images and sketches.

Club FaceBook Page www.facebook.com/astronomy

Club List Serve mvas@mvobservatory.com

Have a question or comment that you want to post to the club members? Use this address and all members will receive it.

Library

We have a variety of books that can be checked out by members. See the librarian to check out a book. We hope to have a complete listing of books on the club website soon.

Who To Contact

President- Jodi McCullough	jmccul@hotmail.com
Vice President- Don Cherry	celidon1@aol.com
Treasurer- Steve Bartos	cometbaby@sbcglobal.net
Secretary- Phil Plante	pplante@zoominternet.net

Host List for Meetings

Check the club calendar on the website for complete listings.

MVAS Events

Check the club calendar on the website for complete listings.