

PAS-Times



The newsletter of the Pontchartrain Astronomy Society
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October 2018
Volume 59, Issue 10

June 15, 2018



21:29 CDT

Dia 43"



21:38 CDT

Bruce Housey

Next PAS General Meeting
Friday, October 19th, 2018 at 7:30pm
UNO Science Bldg. Room 1001

Jupiter with Io & shadow
Photo of the Month
by PAS member
Bruce Housey

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President's Message

By: Bill Johnson

Ahhh, October! Cool weather, longer, clearer night skies, and a LOT of PAS activities this month!

As we look over the celestial calendar, we see Jupiter slowly start to leave the night sky, setting earlier and earlier each day. Best to get a final glimpse of the giant of the solar system before it leaves our night sky. At least we still have Saturn to dazzle us for a few more months. And we will soon be seeing our winter favorites. Andromeda, the most famous galaxy in the Northern hemisphere is now a prime target from 9:00PM to 11:00PM, between Cassiopeia and Pegasus. It is one of the brightest galaxies, and can be seen with the naked eye. Did I mention it's over 2.5 MILLION Light years away? Spend some time observing this wonder. Orion will soon take its position as Master of the Winter sky, and many other winter favorites are already working their way into our preferred viewing window. Several summer favorites are still hanging around, so October gives us the best of both summer and winter viewing. Take advantage of it while you can.

October is a busy month for the PAS. We have the Bogue Chitto Outreach on October 20th. This is usually very well attended by the public. Please come out and assist us, with telescopes, or just come out and enjoy the event. A week later is the Observe the Moon event in Madisonville. Bill Davis will spearhead, and could use some helping hands for this event. Finally, we have our

Annual PAS Picnic held on October 27th at Walter Sarrat's home in Covington on the Bogue Falaya River. All members and immediate family are invited. Keep your fingers crossed for good weather at each of these events. Details for all these events are on the AstroNola.org website. You can also vote for our Photo of the Month while checking out other events.

The November calendar is also looking a bit full, as the Deep South Star Gaze will be held Nov 6-11 at its new location, Whitehorse Retreat center near Columbia MS. We have a promise of much better dark skies at this location. While not a PAS event, many of our members attend this yearly fall event. It's the best event around for anyone interested in night sky observing, and is open to all-- beginners and experienced alike, for a very reasonable fee. Check our web site for details.

Nominations are currently open for all officer positions for the 2019 year. If you are interested in running for office, please contact us for details on the specific positions.

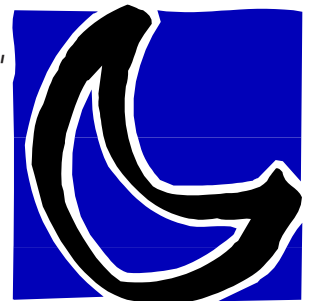
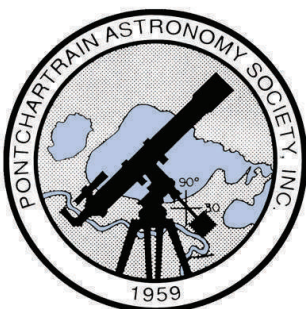
Our next meeting will be held on Friday, October 19th, at 7:30PM at UNO Science Building, and the presentation will be "The Incredible Parker Solar Probe" by our own PAS member Leon Zebrick. I hope to see all of you at the next meeting. Bring a guest!

Bill Johnson
PAS President 2018

The PAS is participating in the annual NASA "Observe the Moon Night" on Saturday, October 20th, from 7:00 – 9:00 pm at the Madisonville Branch Library, located at 1123 Main Street in Madisonville. We currently have a few volunteers but more are needed to make the night a success. The Library will be open and we will be continuously showing a four minute video of sunrise and sunset across the lunar surface, all set to beautiful music.

Bill Davies will be exhibiting his collection of lunar maps, atlases, and photographs, and there will be a ten minute lecture presented every fifteen minutes about the earth/moon system.

PAS telescopes will be set-up just outside the Library. We will choose one or two lunar features for each of you to focus on and Bill will provide you with a map or picture together with pertinent facts about the features. Bill realizes this may be a little outside the comfort zone for some of you deep sky observers, so he will help you to understand what the public will see through your scope if you join him on this night of observation.



Secretary's Report September 2018 General Meeting By: Nanette Johnson

7:30 Meeting called to order by President Bill Johnson

Bill welcomed members and guests to the meeting. 30 attendees 2 new/guests

Officer Reports:

PAS 1st VP-David Williams: Presentation at our next PAS general meeting in October will be given by PAS member Leon Zebrick and is titled The Incredible Parker Solar Probe.

PAS 2nd VP-Kent Birkle: not present. Bill encouraged members to read the article on Capt Kirk's future birth place in the current newsletter and encouraged members to contribute to the newsletter.

Treasurer: John Scholl: John mentioned to everyone to pay their dues.

Secretary-Nanette Johnson: Photo of the Month award for August was presented to Barry Simon for his entry Comet Pan Starr and Crescent Moon. Nanette encouraged members to submit their photos to the contest.

SPMOS Coordinator-Ron Marcella: Ron reported that the well issues at SPMOS are solved now and thanks Walter Sarrat and Richard Erb for their help in resolving this issue.

ALCOR Rep-Jerry LaBauve: Nothing new to report. Jerry mentioned that the Award program on the Astronomical League website is a very good way to learn the night sky.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bill asked if anyone had been able to do any observing lately. Walter Sarrat mentioned he had done some observing but there was nothing impressive in the sky lately. Other members mentioned they have been able to observe Orion and that the dust on Mars seems to be clearing finally.

NEW BUSINESS:

Sept 22: Bill mentioned he and Nanette will be going to SPMOS on Saturday evening and invited any new members to come up for an orientation to SPMOS.

Oct. 13: Bouge Chitto star party. Usually a very good crowd. Bill encouraged members to participate if at all possible.

Oct. 20: International Observe the Moon Night. This will be a moon party held in conjunction with the St. Tammany Parish Library in Madisonville, LA at the library on Main Street. Bill Davis will be heading up this party. Please contact Bill if you would like to volunteer for this event.

Oct. 27: PAS Member picnic held at Walter Sarrat's place.

November: Officer elections. If you are interested in running for an office, please speak to one of the current officers.

November 6-11: Deep South Star Gaze. Barry Simon gave a brief presentation on the new site for this event- White Horse Christian Camp near Columbia MS. This location has darker skies and lower horizons than previous sites, and promises to be a wonderful site for the Deep South Star Gaze this year.

12/11: Possible outreach in Hammond for a local Boy Scout Troop.

12/14: PAS Annual Christmas Party to be held at Porter and Luke's restaurant in Metairie.

Bill then mentioned we have received a request for help with a Celestron telescope located in Cocodrie.

8:15 Raffle/Break

8:30 David Williams introduced John Martinez for his presentation entitled Variability In the Solar Constant and It's Influence on Climate Control.

9:50 Motion to adjourn, second, meeting adjourned.

Find an Observing Program for You with the Astronomical League!

Looking for something to jump-start your stargazing? Maybe need a bit of direction? Or possibly you are tired of looking at the same set of objects every time you observe? If so you should definitely check out one of the Astronomical League's observing programs!

The League has run their excellent observing programs for the past 50 years. Since 1967, the Astronomical League's observing programs have awarded over 10,000 observing certificates to skilled amateurs in recognition of their stargazing achievements - along with some great pins, too! These programs have helped amateur astronomers shore up their observing legs as well.

Many folks might eventually observe all of the Messier objects, for example; but the League's requirements for their Messier program will make that observer carefully take into consideration the factors around their observation, such as the time and observing conditions present that night, as part of their needed documentation. Some harder to spot objects may even go unnoticed but for the need to complete the observing list - helping to sharpen those eyes and starhopping skills, with a cool pin and certificate as a reward - although the true reward is the boost in confidence and knowledge gleaned from working towards these observations for the participating observers.

There are programs for observers of all levels and interests. Beginners can start with programs like the Binocular Messier or Constellation Hunter programs.



Image Credit: The Astronomical League

The Caldwell Observing Program, Two in the View, or Asteroid Observing programs are great programs for stargazers who have gotten a few observations under their belt and want to further sharpen their skills! Experts can test their mettle and go deep with programs like the Binocular Variable Star Observing Program, Herschel 400, or Master Observing Program. Even stargazers who are surrounded by light pollution in urban areas can participate in programs like the Urban Observers Program or Lunar Observing Program - or help fight light pollution and attain the Dark Sky Advocate award. Fans of astronomy outreach, like many members of Night Sky network clubs, can pursue the Outreach Observing Award - and snag another pin to feature alongside their NSN award pins! You don't even need a telescope to participate in an observing program; there are programs for naked-eye observations and binocular-wielding observers. Participants aren't even necessarily restricted by observing in visible light, as there is even a Radio Astronomy Observing Program.

There are many, many more programs you can find on their program list. Find one today and take up the challenge. Keep it up and one day you too will become a recognized as a master observer!

Article credit - NASA Night Sky Network nightsky.jpl.nasa.org

Check out the pins and logos from the Astronomical League's many excellent observing programs- there are even more than seen on the previous page!



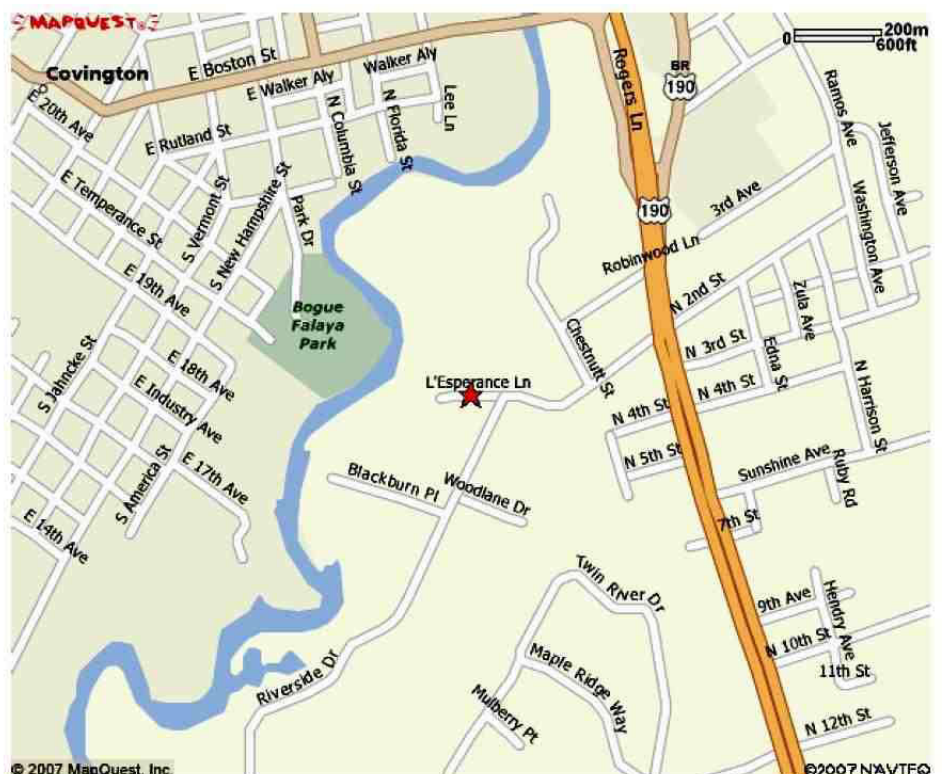
Annual PAS Picnic October 27, 2018

The Sarrat Family Estate
19045 Lesperance Dr
Covington, LA

Driving Directions:

After getting off of the Causeway on the way toward Covington, go exactly 7 miles after getting off the Causeway bridge over Lake Pontchartrain. You will see a Popeye's on the left at Riverside drive. Take that left and go 1/8 mile along Riverside drive. At the end of an "S" curve, go through the gate with the "PAS" sign. Follow that road straight to the back

There is nothing to sit on so be sure to bring along folding chairs, a TV tray if desired and a canopy. Don't forget to bring your solar telescopes.



Observe the Moon

By Jane Houston Jones and Jessica Stoller-Conrad

This year's International Observe the Moon Night is on Oct. 20. Look for astronomy clubs and science centers in your area inviting you to view the Moon at their star parties that evening!

On Oct. 20, the 11-day-old waxing gibbous Moon will rise in the late afternoon and set before dawn. Sunlight will reveal most of the lunar surface and the Moon will be visible all night long. You can observe the Moon's features whether you're observing with the unaided eye, through binoculars or through a telescope.

Here are a few of the Moon's features you might spot on the evening of October 20:

Sinus Iridum-Latin for "Bay of Rainbows"-is the little half circle visible on the western side of the Moon near the lunar terminator-the line between light and dark. Another feature, the Jura Mountains, ring the Moon's western edge. You can see them catch the morning Sun.

Just south of the Sinus Iridum you can see a large, flat plain called the Mare Imbrium. This feature is called a mare-Latin for "sea"-because early astronomers mistook it for a sea on Moon's surface. Because the Moon will be approaching full, the large craters Copernicus and Tycho will also take center stage.

Copernicus is 58 miles (93 kilometers) across. Although its impact crater rays-seen as lines leading out from the crater-will be much more visible at Full Moon, you will still be able to see them on October 20. Tycho, on the other hand, lies in a field of craters near the southern edge of the visible surface of the Moon. At 53 miles (85 kilometers) across, it's a little smaller than Copernicus. However, its massive ray system spans more than 932 miles (1500 kilometers)!

And if you're very observant on the 20th, you'll be able to check off all six of the Apollo lunar landing site locations, too!

In addition to the Moon, we'll be able to observe two meteor showers this month: the Orionids and the Southern Taurids. Although both will have low rates of meteors, they'll be visible in the same part of the sky.

The Orionids peak on Oct. 21, but they are active from Oct. 16 to Oct. 30. Start looking at about 10 p.m. and you can continue to look until 5 a.m. With the bright moonlight you may see only five to 10 swift and faint Orionids per hour.

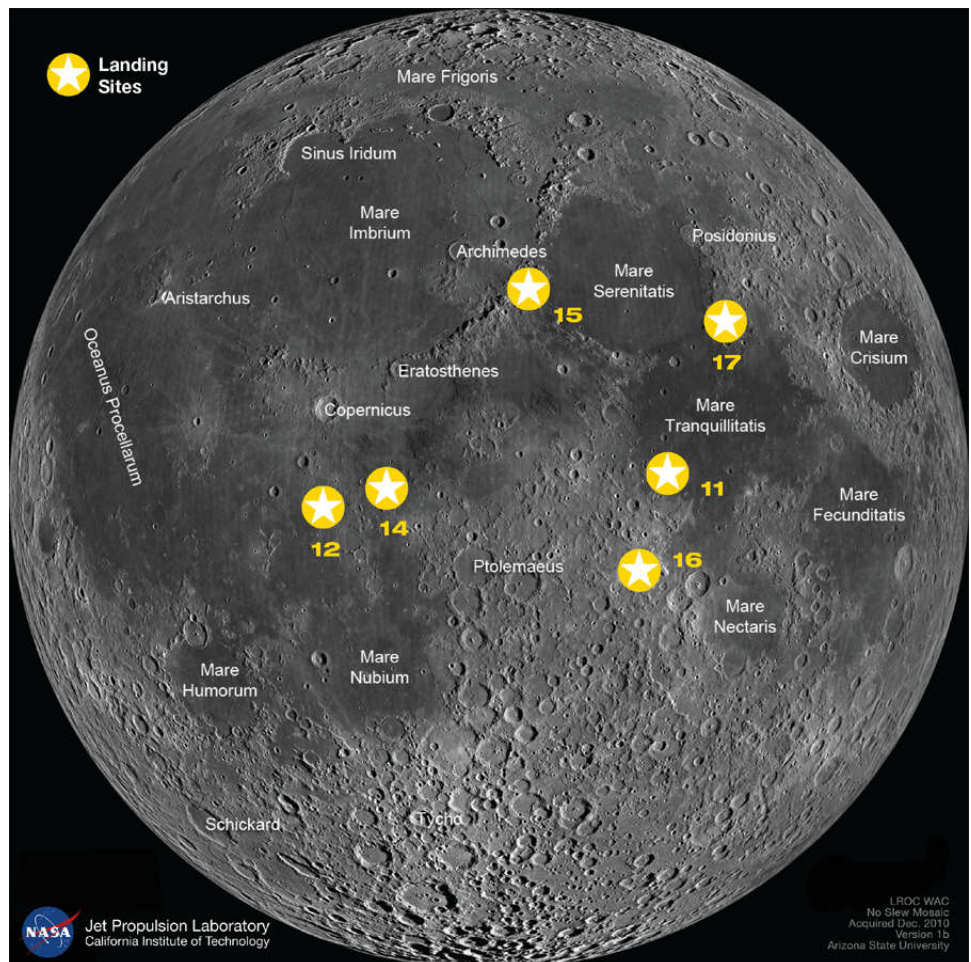
If you see a slow, bright meteor, that's from the Taurids meteor shower. The Taurids radiate from the nearby constellation Taurus, the Bull. Taurids are active from Sept. 10 through Nov. 20, so you may see both a slow Taurid and a fast Orionid piercing your sky this month. You'll be lucky to see five Taurids per hour on the peak night of Oct. 10.

You can also still catch the great lineup of bright planets in October, with Jupiter, Saturn and Mars lining up with the Moon again this month. And early birds can even catch Venus just before dawn!

You can find out more about International Observe the Moon Night at <https://moon.nasa.gov/observe>.

This image shows some of the features you might see if you closely observe the Moon. The stars represent the six Apollo landing sites on the Moon. Credit: NASA/GSFC/Arizona State University (modified by NASA/JPL-Caltech)

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Upcoming Events

PAS Outreach - Oct 13th - Bouge Chitto State Park Star Party

PAS General Meeting - Friday, Oct 19th, 2018 at 7:30pm UNO Science Bldg. Rm.1001

Presentation - *"The Incredible Parker Solar Probe"* by PAS member *Leon Zebrick*

PAS Picnic - Saturday, October 27 - Sarrat's Family property in Covington, LA

Deep South Star Gaze - 36th Annual - Nov. 6th to 11th at White Horse Retreat Center

Go To
www.astronola.org

On the Cover

Photo of the month winner
Photo of the month by PAS Member Bruce Housey
Jupiter with prominent red spot, Io's shadow, and Io

On the Back Cover

A star chart of Ursa Major
from Urania's Mirror - A View of the Heaven

October 19th PAS General Meeting Presentation : "The Incredible Parker Solar Probe"
It's 7-year mission: To seek out new facts useful to our civilization; to boldly go where no probe has gone before.

By: Leon Zebrick
(PAS Member)

Description:
Leon Zebrick will present on the unique challenges faced by NASA, The Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, and others in designing and launching, the most interesting, Parker Solar Probe.

The PAS is a proud member of these organizations:



2018 PAS Meeting Dates

October 19

Picnic - October 27

November 16

December 14
Holiday Party

November 2018 PAS-Times Deadline

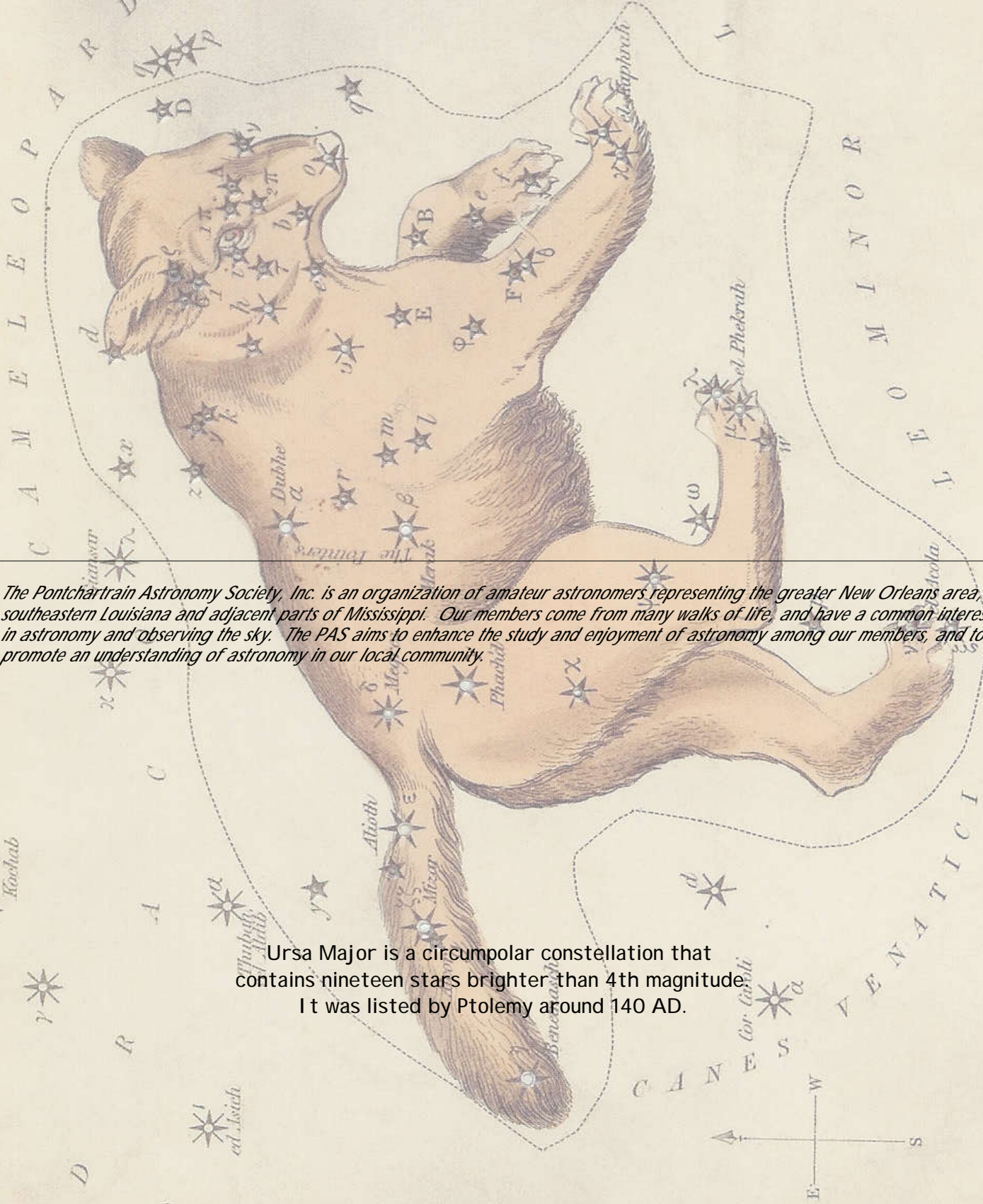
Sunday, November 4th
Please submit all things astronomical to be included in the next edition of PAS-Times to the editor at the following address:
pas2vp@astronola.org



Pontchartrain Astronomy Society, Inc
Kent Birkle, PAS-Times Editor
21067 Lowe Davis Rd.
Covington, La. 70435

Widely used, 1850

URSA MAJOR.



The Pontchartrain Astronomy Society, Inc. is an organization of amateur astronomers representing the greater New Orleans area, southeastern Louisiana and adjacent parts of Mississippi. Our members come from many walks of life, and have a common interest in astronomy and observing the sky. The PAS aims to enhance the study and enjoyment of astronomy among our members, and to promote an understanding of astronomy in our local community.

Ursa Major is a circumpolar constellation that contains nineteen stars brighter than 4th magnitude. It was listed by Ptolemy around 140 AD.