

# PAS-Times



The newsletter of the Pontchartrain Astronomy Society  
*visit us online [www.astronola.org](http://www.astronola.org)*

September 2018  
*Volume 59, Issue 9*



**Next PAS General Meeting**  
**Friday, September 21st, 2018 at 7:30pm**  
**UNO Science Bldg. Room 1001**

**Comet Pan Starrs**  
**with Crescent Moon**  
**Photo of the Month**  
**by Barry Simon**

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## President's Message

**By: Bill Johnson**

Welcome to September, with promises of cooler weather and longer nights soon to come. We've been fighting the Cloudy Nights syndrome this last month, which leaves precious little time to get out and observe. I hope you take advantage of any clear night you get, as they seem to be few and far between. We still have Saturn and Jupiter in the evening sky for a few more months, and Mercury is prominent in the morning sky fresh off its greatest elongation from the sun. I hope you take advantage of this and get in some viewing time with our celestial neighbors. How about a comment on what you're looking at on the PAS website?



*The 2013 Picnic at Walter Sarrat's family property in Covington, scheduled for October 27, 2018*

Mars, while getting smaller and smaller, is still prominent. Having completed its retrograde motion on Aug 27th, it will be (apparently) changing direction in the night sky in relation to background stars.

Retrograde is the same effect obtained when you pass another car on the highway: Both cars are going in the same direction, but one is moving more slowly. As they pass, the slower car will appear to be moving backward in relation to the faster one. Now that Earth has "passed" Mars on the oval racetrack, we both appear to be going in the same direction. Can you notice this effect as you observe our red celestial neighbor?

For those who want a challenge, try to view Neptune and Uranus. Neptune is at Opposition on September 7th. The blue giant planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. This is the best time to view and photograph

Neptune. Due to its extreme distance from Earth, it will only appear as a tiny blue dot in all but the most powerful telescopes. Uranus is at Opposition on October 23rd, and appears as a tiny blue-green dot. It's about 2 hours behind Neptune in the evening sky. If you get some clear sky, take a look and let us know what you saw.

Congratulations to Barry Simon on winning the Photo Contest for August. We need some competition out there. I'm sure you have some astro-pictures you are proud of. How about showing off your talent and putting it up against other members work. Don't forget to peruse our AstroNola.org website, and vote for your favorite picture in our monthly Photo Contest.

Coming events include our annual Picnic in October, an outreach event at Bogue Chitto State Park, and the Deep South Star Gaze at its new home, the Whitehorse Center near Columbia, MS.

We will have an announcement at the September meeting regarding the location of the annual PAS Christmas Party. Thanks to all who voted, and we had a lot of votes! A strong majority made it pretty clear where you want to go. Find out where at the meeting. Mark your calendars now for December 14th.

Our next meeting will be held on Friday, September 21st, at 7:30PM at UNO Science Building, and the presentation will be by our own PAS member John Martinez

I hope to see all of you at the next meeting. Bring a guest!

Bill Johnson  
 PAS President 2018

## Secretary's Report August 24th 2018 General Meeting By: Nanette Johnson

7:30 Bill Johnson called the meeting to order. Bill asked for visitors and new members to introduce themselves. Bill advised the visitors and new members to ask questions about PAS during the break. He offered a new member packet of information to those interested.

### Officer's Reports:

David Williams: 1st VP - PAS John Martinez will give the September presentation.

Kent Birkle: 2nd VP - Deadline for PAS times submissions is September 9th

John Scholl: Treasurer - Not present

Nanette Johnson: Secretary - Not present. In her place, Bill gave out Photo of the Month awards to Phillip Woldenberg for June 2018 and to Barry Simon for July 2018.

Ron Marcella: SPMOS Site Manager - There has been a little trouble with the water pump at SPMOS. Ron and Walter will take care of getting someone out for repairs and will let everyone know when the pump is working again. In the meantime it may be best to bring your own water when going to SPMOS.

Jerry Labauve: ALCOR - programs and forms are available on the ALCOR website.

Bill then asked if anyone has been able to do any observing this month. Not much chance to observe was the general response. A conversation then began about the Mars viewing at UNO.

Barry announced the registration forms for the Deep South Star Gaze in November are now available. White Horse near Columbia, MS will be the venue for this Star Gaze. The dates are November 6th through November 11th.

Bill went through the list of PAS upcoming events which are as follows:

September - no activities as of now.

Oct 6th This date has changed for the PAS Picnic.

Oct 13th - Bouge Chitto State Park Star Party. This event usually has a large turn out of both PAS members and the public. Be sure to attend if possible.

Oct 27th - This is the new date for the PAS picnic this year. It will be held at Walter Sarrat's place in Covington. Tentative time 10:30-3:00 pm.

November - Officer elections - if you think you are interested in running, talk to an officer.

December - Christmas Party Tentatively set for Dec 14th. Options for venue discussed. A vote will be done by email to the entire membership. Majority rules for selection of venue. PAS club will pay \$25.00 per membership towards cost of party.

Break for 15 minutes. No raffle

8:30 David Williams introduced Phillip Richardson for our program tonight titled "A Look at the Younger Dryas Impact Hypothesis".

9:30 Motion to adjourn. Second. Meeting adjourned.



Pictures taken at Walter Sarrat's family property in 2013 by PAS Times Editor and 2nd Vice President, Kent Birkle



## Riverside, Iowa - Future Birthplace of James T. Kirk



*"Helpful Kirk banner marks the alley that leads to his birthplace"*

### **James T. Kirk, captain of the Starship Enterprise, will be born in Riverside, Iowa, on March 22, 2228.**

Steve Miller, a Riverside councilman, knew this before anyone else. Steve was a Trekkie, and he read in Gene Roddenberry's book, *Making of Star Trek* (1968) that Kirk would be born in a small town in Iowa. The book didn't name the town. Miller thought, "Why not Riverside?" At the next council meeting (March 25, 1985) Miller proposed that Riverside declare itself the Future Birthplace of James T. Kirk. The motion passed unanimously.

Riverside quickly altered its town slogan from "Where the best begins" to "Where the Trek begins," and changed its annual summer festival from River Fest to Trek Fest. Miller jabbed a stick into the ground behind the town barber shop (he owned the property) and declared that it was the future birth spot. An engraved monument was eventually placed on the spot for present (and future) fans. Later, a bench was added for contemplation along with a Shuttlecraft-shaped donation box for upkeep.

Miller's inspiration became official Star Trek canon in May 2009, when Riverside was identified as Kirk's hometown in the Star Trek reboot movie. The entire town was invited to a special secret preview screening of the film, a day before its official release. It wasn't screened in Riverside, but in Iowa City, which was the nearest town with a movie theater.

Star Trek fans, as finicky stewards of series factoids, sometimes wonder why the March 22, 2228 date on the Riverside monument differs from the March 22, 2233 date usually accepted as Kirk's birthday. The answer is that the 2233 date wasn't promoted until eight years later -- 1993 -- with the publication of the book, *The Star Trek Chronology: The History of the Future*. Take your pick which to believe, but both agree that March 22 is the day, which also happens to be William Shatner's real birthday.



"Ground Zero Kirk. A bench offers relief to those whose knees go weak."

Future Birthplace of James T. Kirk

Address: 51 W. 1st St., Riverside, IA

Directions: US Hwy 218 exit 80. Drive west on Hwy 22/E. Hickory St. for 1.8 miles into town. The birthplace is on the right, behind the small hair salon building; you reach it through an alley. Look for the Captain Kirk banner on the light pole next to the street. Admission: Free, donations appreciated. RA Rates: Major Fun

This article was submitted by PAS member, Jack Huerkamp by way of Matt Harmston, a member of the Cedar Amateur Astronomers <https://www.cedar-astronomers.org/>

To see the article online go to <https://www.roadsideamerica.com/story/2081>

## A Trip Through the Milky Way

By Jane Houston Jones and Jessica Stoller-Conrad

Feeling like you missed out on planning a last vacation of summer? Don't worry-you can still take a late summertime road trip along the Milky Way!

The waning days of summer are upon us, and that means the Sun is setting earlier now. These earlier sunsets reveal a starry sky bisected by the Milky Way. Want to see this view of our home galaxy? Head out to your favorite dark sky getaway or to the darkest city park or urban open space you can find.

While you're out there waiting for a peek at the Milky Way, you'll also have a great view of the planets in our solar system. Keep an eye out right after sunset and you can catch a look at Venus. If you have binoculars or a telescope, you'll see Venus's phase change dramatically during September-from nearly half phase to a larger, thinner crescent.

Jupiter, Saturn and reddish Mars are next in the sky, as they continue their brilliant appearances this month. To see them, look southwest after sunset. If you're in a dark sky and you look above and below Saturn, you can't miss the summer Milky Way spanning the sky from southwest to northeast.

You can also use the summer constellations to help you trace a path across the Milky Way. For example, there's Sagittarius, where stars and some brighter clumps appear as steam from a teapot. Then there is Aquila, where the Eagle's bright Star Altair combined with Cygnus's Deneb and Lyra's Vega mark what's called the "summer triangle." The familiar W-shaped constellation Cassiopeia completes the constellation trail through the summer Milky Way. Binoculars will reveal double stars, clusters and nebulae all along the Milky Way.

Between Sept. 12 and 20, watch the Moon pass from near Venus, above Jupiter, to the left of Saturn and finally above Mars!

This month, both Neptune and brighter Uranus can also be spotted with some help from a telescope. To see them, look in the southeastern sky at 1 a.m. or later. If you stay awake, you can also find Mercury just above Earth's eastern horizon shortly before sunrise. Use the Moon as a guide on Sept. 7 and 8.

Although there are no major meteor showers in September, cometary dust appears in another late summer sight, the morning zodiacal light. Zodiacal light looks like a cone of soft light in the night sky. It is produced when sunlight is scattered by dust in our solar system. Try looking for it in the east right before sunrise on the moonless mornings of Sept. 8 through Sept 23.

You can catch up on all of NASA's current-and future-missions at [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov)





### Upcoming Events

**PAS General Meeting** - Friday, Sept 21st, 2018 at 7:30pm UNO Science Bldg. Rm.1001

Presentation - *"Variability of the Solar Constant and it's Influence on Climate Change"* by PAS membr John Martinez

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

**PAS Picnic** - NEW DATE Saturday, October 27 - Covington astronola.org for more info

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

Go To  
[www.astronola.org](http://www.astronola.org)

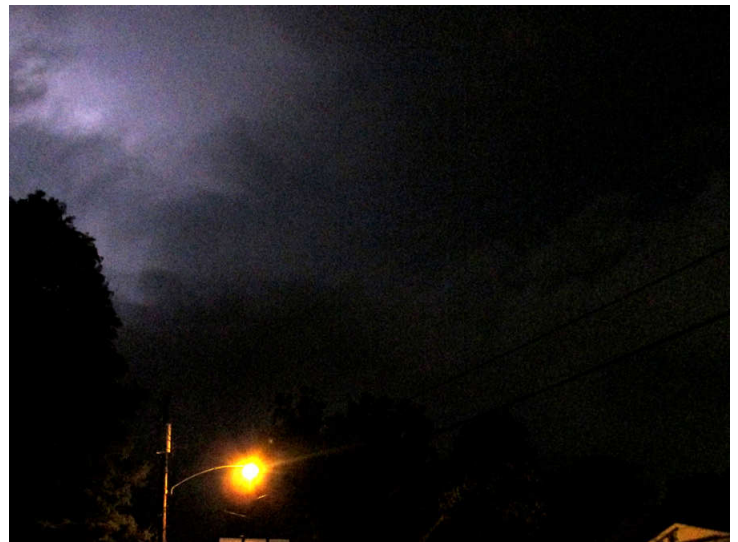
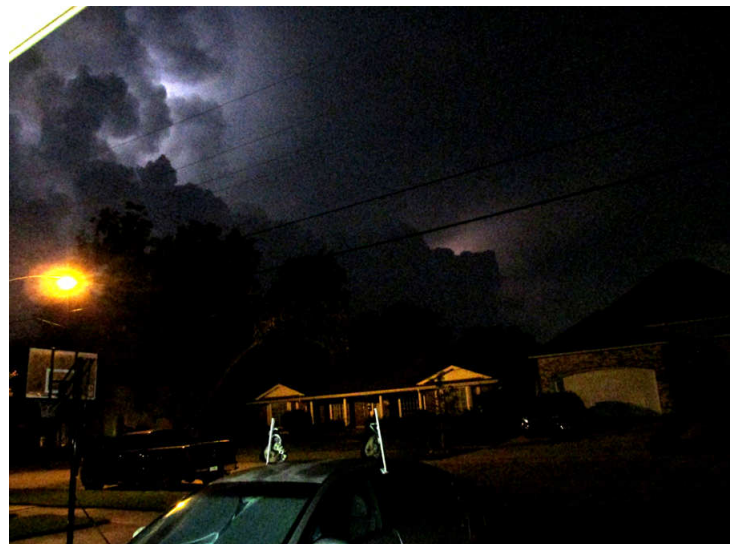
### On the Cover

Photo of the month winner  
Comet Pan Starrs & Crescent Moon taken by Barry Simon

### On the Back Cover

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

*PAS member Norman Jacobs sent these faint lightning photos in on, Wednesday, August 22, 2018 5:01 AM*



The PAS is a proud member of these organizations:



## 2018 PAS Meeting Dates

September 21

October 19

Picnic - October 27

November 16

December 14  
Holiday Party

### September 2018 PAS-Times Deadline

Sunday, October 7th  
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](mailto:pas2vp@astronola.org)

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CAMELOPARDALIS, TARANDUS AND CUSTOS MESSIUM.



*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.*

The constellation Camelopardalis is a faint group of stars stretching from Draco to Perseus, Cassiopeia and Auriga. Formed by Jakob Bartschius around 1614 as a camel and later retitled by Proctor as Camelopardis.