

The Bulletin – The monthly publication of the Indiana Astronomical Society

December, 2006  
Volume 73, Issue 12  
www.iasindy.org



# The Bulletin

**The December General Meeting, December 16, 7:00 PM Holcomb  
Observatory at Butler University**

**It is time to Party!!!!**

**We have moved the general meeting date to December 16 so that we have more room for the Christmas party. All food and snacks are furnished so bring your family and come and have a good time. See you there.**

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## **Elections**

The following candidates were elected at the November general meeting.

President -

Jeff Patterson

Vice President and Program Chairman -

Brian Murphy

Treasurer:

John Shepherd

Secretary:

Betsy Brown

Board of Directors

Gerald Venne

Gary Schoppenhorst

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## **Thinking About the Year**

I was sitting here in my warm office thinking about the wind and snow outside and dreaming about the IAS and what we did this last year and what we need to do next year.

I think we have had a good year. We have seen several new members who have become active in the various activities of the Society. We completed a project at McCloud Nature park and developed a dark observing site for us. It was great to see the members who donated their time and sweat to build the barn and the pads. Due mainly to the efforts of John and Vicki Switzer, we developed the New Astronomer's Group outreach program at

The Bulletin – The monthly publication of the Indiana Astronomical Society

McCloud and provided public programs. We even picked up new members from this program. We had several people get involved in outreach programs providing telescopes for the public to look through.

We had a great Hog Roast and picnic. Thanks to Mike Kirsch and his wife, we had plenty of food and plenty of time to make new acquaintances and get reacquainted with old friends. The field trip to IU's Observatory in the woods was very interesting.

Our outreach activities seemed to slow down this last year. Daylight savings time about killed us but thanks to Gerald Venne's hard work we still did do several activities.

All in all this last year provided a good chance to make friends and to have some memorable observing experiences.

Next year I hope to see the Society to grow more . I want to see us develop the Link as an outstanding historical site and a place for us to go and observe. We are in discussions with IU on how we can do this. We will have more on this next year.

I want us to have fewer cloudy days or nights next year. I really have no control of that but we can all hope.

I would like to see more of us support the public outreach programs of the Society. There are far too few of us who volunteer for these events. The thing to remember is you do not have to be an expert in star gazing. Each and everyone of us knows more about the sky than the normal public participant. And you will find this becomes fun after a while. Let's get out and support Gerald in this important focus of the Society.

We are planning field trips to Cincinnati and to Rose-Hulman this next year. Who would like to go to Yerkes? Adler is another point we could visit. Let us know what you want to do.

I wish each of you a happy holiday and a fantastic New Year.

*The Pres*

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## **Observer's Corner**

### **Geminid Meteor Shower Peaks on December 14th**

December brings another fine meteor shower for your viewing pleasure. Each year, the Geminid meteor shower lights up the skies around December 14th. This year should bring good viewing, since the Moon is a waxing crescent around that time and the skies should therefore be dark (which makes it easier to spot faint meteors). The source of the Geminids is a strange object called 3200 Phaeton, which may be an unusual asteroid or an "extinct" comet (astronomers aren't quite sure). Meteors may be visible for a few nights before and after the 14th, though the best viewing is expected on the 14th when more than 100 meteors per hour could appear (the intensities of meteor showers are notoriously difficult to predict!).

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### **Observer's Handbooks**

After our second request for interest in buying the Observer's Handbooks in bulk, we find that only 12 members want the books. We have to have 25 to get a discount. Therefore we will not be buying them this year. They can be obtained from the Royal Canadian Astronomical Society (<http://www.rasc.ca/handbook>).

### *The Pres*

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### **Mercury Transits the Sun**

We got a little peek in the afternoon as the clouds over Indiana separated for a while. This picture was taken by Jon Williams. Man Mercury is small but a real nice sun spot!



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### **Logo Clothing**

We still have IAS logo hats, t shirts, polo shirts, sweat shirts and insulated jackets. Please contact Gerald Venne at the next general meeting.

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### **Mentor Program**

The Board has been studying retention of members. Of the 50 or so members that do not renew their membership each year over half are first year members. So we want to do some things to

The Bulletin – The monthly publication of the Indiana Astronomical Society

reduce that exodus. We are reinstating the mentor program which will provide the new member with lots of information and help them assimilate into the Society. Thad Hatchett has volunteered to lead this program. We need your help. If you are interested in becoming a mentor please contact me at Jeff Patterson [KB9SRB@hotmail.com](mailto:KB9SRB@hotmail.com) or Thad Hatchett at [astronomynut@sbcglobal.net](mailto:astronomynut@sbcglobal.net). We will put your name on the list and assign a new person to you. Our goal is to retain people and make this hobby a lot more fun.

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## Upcoming Star Parties and Registrations

**Winter Star Party** – February 12-18, 2007- Registration has closed but tickets are always available on Astromart and elsewhere.. Check [www.scas.org](http://www.scas.org) or call the registrar at 386-362-5995. This party is always sold out and you need to get a ticket early. This is a premium party and the weather is fantastic in the Florida Keys in February.

**Tennessee Spring Star Party** - Fall Creek Falls State Park      Mar 16-18,2007  
<http://www.personal.bna.bellsouth.net/s/p/spsmith/default.htm>

**Mid-South Stargaze**    The Observatory is one mile southeast of the Natchez Trace Parkway at French Camp. French Camp is about half-way between Jackson and Tupelo, Mississippi, at Natchez Trace mile marker 181. Mississippi      Apr 11-14  
<http://www.rainwaterobservatory.org/stargaze/index.htm>

**Texas Star Party** West Texas May 13-20,2007 1500 miles. This is a premier party with very dark skies and a great site. Just a long way. Online registration is open now.  
[www.texasstarparty.org](http://www.texasstarparty.org)

**Cherry Springs Star Party**    PA      To be announced  
<http://www.astrohbg.org/s4>

**Heart of America Star Party MO**      June 12 – 17, 2007  
<http://www.askconline.org/index.htm>

**Nebraska Star Party** - Jul 15-20, 2007 North Central Nebraska - 950 miles 18 hour drive. This is a premier dark site and has fantastic observing. However, the weather is brutal. Temperatures this last year reached 108 degrees. However you can cool off in the shade of the tree. There have been some changes this year and all activities will be at the Snake Creek Campground this year. No activities will be at the resort. <http://www.nebraskastarparty.org/>

**Indiana Family Star Party**      Camp Cullum, Frankfort, IN      To be announced  
<http://jmmahony.home.insightbb.com/pgo/starparty/>

**Black Forest Star Party** PA Sep 14-16  
<http://www.bfsp.org/starparty/>

**Astrofest**                              Kankakee, IL      To be Announced  
<http://www.chicagoastro.org/>

**Illinois Dark Skies** IL      To be announced  
<http://www.sas-sky.org/>

The Bulletin – The monthly publication of the Indiana Astronomical Society

**Prairie Skies Star Party** IL To be announced  
<http://www.prairieskies.org/>

**Twin Lakes Star Party** Pennyville State Park, Western KY Oct 6-13, 2007  
<http://www.wkaa.net/>

**Okie-Tex Star Party** OK Oct 6-14  
<http://www.okie-tex.com/>

I am working on a new list of parties for next year. If you know of events coming up let me know and I will get them in the Bulletin

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## Local School Events and Star Parties

Gerald Venne is our Public Program Chairman. He will be responsible for coordinating Public Events for the IAS. He needs your help. Let Gerald know if you would like to show the public our sky.

To schedule a public event contact Gerald Venne 1 317 826-2680 or Jeff Patterson at 1-317 882-8055.

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## Orchids and Onions

I want to thank all of those of you who helped this past year. Those of you who helped are what makes this Society fun to be in. Hopefully next year will be bigger and better.

*The Pres*

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## Astro Ads

Are you changing or upgrading your equipment? Do you have or are you looking for astronomical materials and equipment? The Indiana Astronomical Society as a service to its members, will publish non-commercial ads at no charge. The ad will stay in the Bulletin for 4 months and may be renewed at the owner's request.

### To place an ad contact:

Bulletin Editor

Jeff Patterson  
1780 S. Morgantown Rd.

Greenwood, IN 46143  
(317) 882-8055

E-Mail: [KB9SRB@Hotmail.com](mailto:KB9SRB@Hotmail.com)

**FOR SALE** – Celestron Nexstar 8 , field tripod, 40 and 24mm eyepieces, Barlow, carrying case, Orion accessory case. There is a wedge available at an additional expense. If interested, please call Robert Kaiser at 317-339-2759 or e-mail at [rwkai@aol.com](mailto:rwkai@aol.com).

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## **Loaner Equipment Program**

The Loaner Program has been helpful to those new to the hobby and others in need of observing equipment. We consider offers of equipment you may not have need for any longer.

Did you know you can borrow a scope or piece of astronomy equipment from the Society and take it for a test drive? The Society has a program where members who are trying to determine what kind of equipment to buy can borrow one of the Society's scopes for a month or two and see how they like it. John Molt is the chairman of the program and can arrange for your pickup and training on the use of the particular instrument. This is a great way to see what telescope you want to purchase. We have several scopes, eyepieces and binoculars to loan.

John Molt ([1stargazer@indy.rr.com](mailto:1stargazer@indy.rr.com)) or 317-844-1799)

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## **List Server Online - Don't be left in the cold - Sign up!**

This service is our main communication tool. The list server is in the "Members Only" section of the site and is accessible only by IAS members. Make sure we have your correct e-mail and you will have access for late updates to events and functions.

Note: The list server is for use of Society business. It can only be used according to the rules as outlined previously. Members abusing the service will be eliminated from the service.

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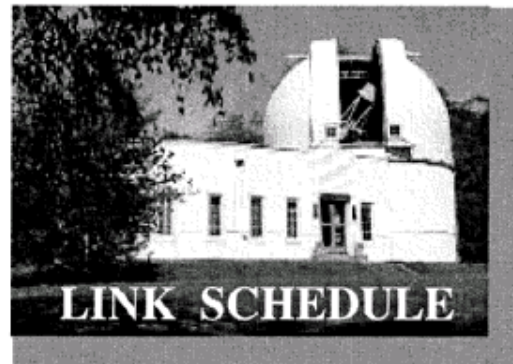
## **Board Meeting -- Cancelled for December**

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### **Goethe Link Observatory Observatory Address**

**Goethe Link Observatory  
8403 N. Observatory Lane  
Martinsville, IN 46151**

**Observatory 's Phone:  
(317) 831-0668**



This schedule is being published to assure proper access to the Link Observatory for programs that are designed as observational, general education, astronomy conferences or amateur research projects. Training programs are tentatively scheduled for Saturday evenings only. Although other requests can over-ride these sessions. It is the purpose of this listing to prevent activity conflicts.

If you need to acquire use of the 36-inch telescope: remember two important IAS guidelines:  
1) *There has to be two or more IAS members present.....* 2) *contact the Observatory Manager: Gary Schoppenhorst (317)297-1405. DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO MAKE YOUR REQUEST OR YOU MAY NOT GET ACCESS.*

The Bulletin – The monthly publication of the Indiana Astronomical Society

## **Link Activities for December: None Planned**

### **Observing Activities**

We are able to go to the Link, Prairie Grass Observatories and McCloud Nature Park at non scheduled times if they do not conflict with reserved activities:

For those interested in going to The Link Observatories for observing call Gary Schoppenhorst 1 317 297-1405.

For those interested in going to Prairie Grass Observatories for observing call Hoppe at 1-765-296-2753.

For those interested in going to McCloud to observe, please call Paul Miner at the park office 765 676 5490 before 5PM on the day you want to go out. As a last resort you can reach him on his cell phone at 317-371-8222 before 5 pm.

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### **Bulletin Stats**

All personal and professional opinions presented herein do not, in any way, represent the opinion or policy of JPL or NASA.

### **Accessing the Bulletin**

The current bulletin can be found on the website [www.iasindy.org](http://www.iasindy.org)

### **Bulletin - Bulletin deadline on the 20th of every month**

The monthly newsletter welcomes articles of local astronomical interest information and want ads:

Please submit to  
The Indiana Astronomical Society, Inc  
Jeff Patterson, editor  
1780 S. Morgantown Rd  
Greenwood, IN 46143  
Phone: (317) 882-8055  
[KB9SRB@hotmail.com](mailto:KB9SRB@hotmail.com)

### **Membership information**

Contact any IAS officer or the Treasurer  
John Shepherd (317) 862-3442

### **Link Observatory**

Latitude: 39 degrees, 33 minutes North  
Longitude: 86 degrees, 24 minutes West  
Phone: (317) 831-0668  
IAS Internet address  
<http://www.iasindy.org>

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### Executive Officers

President: Jeff Patterson (317) 882-8055

Vice-President and Program Director: Brian Murphy (317) 841-8511

Secretary: Betsy Brown 1-317-872-4050

Treasurer: John Shepherd (317) 862-3442

### Board of Directors

Gary Schoppenhorst (2006)

Gerald Venne (2006)

Thad Hatchett (2007)

Doug Brown (2007)

Bill Conner (2007)

Marion Hakes (2008)

John Molt (2008)

### Public Event Chairman

Gerald Venne [gvenne@iquest.net](mailto:gvenne@iquest.net) 1 317 826-2680

### Library Committee Chairman

Ed Otto [ecottol@comcast.net](mailto:ecottol@comcast.net)

## December Calendar, 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Full Moon	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Last QTR Moon	13	14	15	16 Christmas Party
17	18	19	20 New Moon	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 1 <sup>st</sup> QTR Moon	28	29	30
31						



## Membership Application to the IAS

### Benefits:

- Use of the Goethe Link Observatory
- Formal monthly programs with guest speakers
- Local and regional astronomical functions
- Discounted Astronomy publications
- New Moon observing activities
- Access to IAS member experts and problem solving
- The Bulletin monthly newsletter
- Free admission to the Holcomb planetarium
- Star party events and observing sessions

Please mark whether this is a new or renewal application

New

Renewal

Note: Magazine subscription renewals forms and payment must be submitted to the Treasurer in order to maintain publisher's club discount.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

How do you want to receive the IAS monthly newsletter?

Downloadable from Website  Hard Copy\*

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\* Please note that hard copy costs the Society about \$1.50 per issue. Please consider this when selecting mode of receiving the newsletter.

Annual Regular Membership (\$25.00)	
Annual Student Membership (\$10.00)	
Astronomy Magazine Renewal (\$34.00)	
Sky and Telescope Magazine (\$33.00)	
Total Enclosed	

Make checks payable to: The Indiana Astronomical Society, Inc

Please complete Member Profile and include with the application

Mail Application to: John Shepherd, Treasurer  
4609 Callahan St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46239

Member Profile

Spouses Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's names and ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

How many years associated with Astronomy? \_\_\_\_\_

Special astronomical interests or projects: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

-

Equipment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What can the Society do for you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What can you do for the Society? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Note: Profile information is not a requirement for membership to the Society. This information is entered into the IAS database and is not given nor sold for solicitation purposes. It does provide for a brief welcoming article for new members and may be used by the society to match people with similar interests.