



# THE OBSERVER

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

Member of The Astronomical League  
*Celebrating Fifty Years of Amateur Astronomy*

<http://sbvaa.org/>

Volume #50, Issue 12

Since 1958

December 2008

## Meeting:

December 13, 2008

## Main Feature:

***Annual Holiday Get-Together***

**Location: Roberto's  
Italian Dining & Pizza**

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## Program

### **Annual Holiday Get-Together**

**Roberto's Italian Dining & Pizza  
from 2-6pm**

Roberto's is located at:

**3669 E. Highland Ave.  
Highland, CA**

There will also be a "pirate gift exchange." If you haven't done one of these, it's where you can pirate another's gift by trading your's for his/her's. To keep things "reasonable, there is a \$25 maximum on gift value.

*Buon Appetito*

## SBVAA Officers

President: *Vacant*

Vice President: John Deems 909-584-7568

Treasurer: Fidel Hernandez 909-864-0615

Secretary - Educational Outreach: Chris Clarke  
909-384-8539 Work  
909-875-6694 Home

Star Party Coordinator: Tom Lawson 909-8828198

SBVAA Webmaster: Steve Miller 626-859-7776

Newsletter Editor: Jim Sommer 909-792-3587

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 13, Annual holiday “get together” and gift exchange.

January 17, 2009, Club Meeting at the museum

January 24, 2009, Star Party, Loc. TBD

February 21, 2009, Star Party, Loc. TBD

28 March 2009, Messier Marathon [Riverside Astronomical Society's GMARS Site in Landers, CA.]

*(Watch for upcoming outreaches this fall and winter. SBVAA is a popular guest at many of our local schools,*

## Editor's Message

By Jim Sommer

Wanted: Involvement. This past presidential election season saw an unprecedented level of participation by members of both major parties and by “independents.” There was a huge level of enthusiasm generated at all levels. Well, your club needs a bit of that enthusiasm and involvement too.

Club involvement doesn't take a lot of time. I can speak from experience on that subject. When I volunteered to take over the newsletter, it was to be only for a year. Well I'm now going on two years and it's turned out to be not a hassle at all. In fact, it's kind of fun.

Now we need someone to help Tom with star party coordination. It's not hard, just help with picking the sites and the dates, check the weather, and give the info to me for publication in your newsletter and to Tom Lawson for an e-mail reminder. You might also have to give a short report on the star party at a monthly club meeting. (Great oration skills are not required.) You might also have to field a few phone call calls from people who need clarification on where, when and what to bring. It's kind of like what we chat about after the meetings.

Another area in which you can help is in obtaining programs. Speakers, videos, DVD's, or any thing pertaining to astronomy.

A third area is bringing in new members. With new members come new ideas and a fresh outlook.

We have a 50-year history of learning, fun, and public service. Let's keep that tradition growing!



## Star Party Planning

From Tom Lawson

As of this time the following Star Party dates are:

December 27, Johnson Valley

As a side note, it is proposed that those wanting to save some gas and willing to brave the poor road conditions to consider Angelus Oaks as an alternate Star Party site. This is a good option with level ground and reasonably dark surroundings. However, once the first heavy winter rains/snow arrives, you'll need 4x4 drive.

***List of star party dates for 2009 are below.***

## Star Party Dates, First Half 2009

**\*\* Dates are tentative at this point \*\***

\*\*\*\*\*

January 24, 2009, 2 BNM, loc. TBD

February 21, 2009, 3 BNM, loc. TBD

*28 March 2009 2 ANM Messier Marathon [Riverside  
Astronomical Society's GMARS Site in Landers, CA.]*

April 25, 2009, 1 ANM, loc. TBD

May 23, 2009, NM, loc. TBD

*May 22-25, 2009 NM RTMC*

June 20, 2009, 2 BNM, GrandView

BNM = Before New Moon

ANM = After New Moon

NM = New Moon

TBD = To Be Determined

*As always, star party dates may be subject to change  
because of scheduling conflicts or other club events*

## Club Meeting and Star Party Dates

### 2009

We expect to have the full schedule of dates for the meetings and star parties included in the January issue.

## 2009

## *The International Year of Astronomy*

You have probably read by now that 2009 has been designated as The International Year of Astronomy by the International Astronomical Union (IAU). It has also been endorsed by UNESCO and the UN General Assembly. The IAU picked 2009 for the event to mark the 400th anniversary of Galileo's first telescope observations. This is a global event with an emphasis on education, public encouragement and youth involvement. Thousands of people in more than 125 countries and 50 organizations around the world are already involved.

This is truly an international collaboration with participants from nearly every country on Earth, all with one objective -- to expose as many as possible of the world's 6.8 billion people to the wonders of the universe.

So what can we do? What are you going to do? At our club level we are continuing our public outreaches in conjunction with the museum and with local schools. Individually we can be "sidewalk astronomers" setting up our scopes in our front yards or driveways and called passer-bys to come see the Moon, a star cluster, a galaxy or even the Sun. You can answer their questions about telescopes, eye pieces, what it takes to get started... and you can invite them to come to one of our club meetings. You can be the inspiration for some young person who just might become the next George Ellery Hale.

This is an ambitious project that will, in a time of adversity and conflict, bring people together. Every culture on Earth has marveled at the Sun, Moon and stars. For as long as humans have walked the Earth, we have looked up at the night sky and wondered about what we saw. The allure of discovery continues.

*(Excerpts from Sky & Telescope, January, 2009)*

Make no small plans,  
Dream no small dreams.

George Ellery Hale

