Howdy and Welcome to the Texas Astronomical Society!

The Texas Astronomical Society of Dallas (TAS) is a group of individuals sharing and promoting their common interest in astronomy. People with all levels of interest are welcome to join us; novice and veteran observers, telescope makers, and "armchair" astronomers can meet and learn from our members. TAS is a member of the national Astronomical League (AL), Night Sky Network and the International Dark Sky Association (IDA).

Meetings are held on the 4th FRIDAY of every month (except December) at The University of Texas at Dallas campus in Richardson. The meeting begins at 7:30 PM in either the Science Learning Center, or Founders North in the Kusch auditorium; both locations are highlighted on the UTD campus map below. Important: Only park in lots H, I, or J. Parking anywhere else on campus could result in a ticket. Click here for a campus map. You can also click here to get a Google map. The main switchboard number is (972) 883-2111.

Visitors are welcome—you need not be a member to attend! The meetings include programs presented by members or guest speakers, a presentation of the current "Constellation of the Month" and a traveling library from which members may withdraw books.

The TAS Web site has current information, including a calendar of events, astrophotography by members, maps to the meeting sites, library listings, and current topics at http://www.texasastro.org. The club’s public observing coordinator also maintains a Web site with information on star parties and other club observing events. You can access the observing website at http://www.tasobserving.org. You can also send an email message to the club’s general email address: info@texasastro.org.

The benefits of membership include a subscription to The Spectrum (the club’s award-winning monthly newsletter) and the Astronomical League’s quarterly national newsletter, The Reflector. Dues are $40.00 per year. Family members can be added for $4.00 per person (maximum $12.00 per family).
Membership also allows you access to the club’s 40+ acre dark sky observing site in Atoka County, Oklahoma. Located about 100 miles north of Dallas, this site offers a fine location to pursue observational and photographic astronomy. Concrete pads with electricity are available for general use at no charge, and there are also restroom facilities, city water and ample area to camp overnight. The site is locked by a combination lock, and you will be provided the combination upon joining.

As mentioned above, members may withdraw books from the club’s library. You can access the current library inventory on the TAS web site. The librarian brings a representative sampling of books to the general meetings, but if you want to be sure that the book you are interested in will be brought, and for more information, contact the Librarian.

TAS also supports the following Special Interest Groups (SIGS):

**APSIG – Astrophotography**

**ATMSIG - Amateur Telescope Makers**
Club Events Include:

**Messier Marathon** is usually held in March at the dark site. This is the best time of year to view all 110 Messier objects in a single night.

**Annual Picnic** held early summer at the club’s Atoka, Oklahoma observing site. It includes outdoor cooking, door prizes, and lots of fun.

Participation in **Texas Star Party** in Fort Davis, TX. Known worldwide as one of the premier national gatherings of amateur astronomers for over 30 years.
Public Outreach

The Texas Astronomical Society is committed to bringing the night skies to the general public. Besides public star parties we also visit schools and hold monthly Astronomy 101 classes.
**Member Benefits**

Besides access to our dark site you get access to our TAS forum where many members share ideas and techniques.

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**Got a great astronomical story to tell? Or you just like to have your images published. Contribute to our award-winning monthly newsletter “The Spectrum”.

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**Texas Astronomical Society of Dallas**

**SPECTRUM**

**Farewell Atlantis**

Photo by John Dowd

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**About the Cover**

John Hovis had the privilege to watch Atlantis take its final mission this month. Read more about his trip in *Farewell Atlantis* on page 3.

The month's banner features Jupiter. This image was shot by Fred Dall from his back yard in Reno. In the coming months Jupiter will be prominent in the early evening skies. The spectrum of Jupiter shows some of the elements that are a part of the planet, including methane and ammonia.
Public Star Parties held at various sites around the Dallas area. Club members are encouraged to bring their telescopes and other observing aides, and help the general public discover the universe.

First Saturday - Garland

Second Saturday - Frisco

Astronomy Day, a bi-annual event typically observed once in the spring and in the fall and is sponsored by the Astronomical League. Featuring solar observing, lectures, demonstrations, raffle and public observing.

Annual Holiday Party

Held in lieu of the December general meeting. Featuring a banquet, speaker and awards. A nominal fee is charged for the dinner.

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Photo by Tom Heisey