

THE DENVER OBSERVER



Newsletter of the DENVER ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

One Mile Nearer the Stars

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The Executive Board conducts the business of the DAS at 8:00 pm at Chamberlin Observatory: please see schedule for day of meeting. Everyone, and their input, is invited.

SCHEDULE

Volume XLVIII,
Number IX,
September, 2000

Sept. 8 – Friday -- E-Board Meeting @ 8:00 pm.

Sept. 15 - Friday -- General Meeting at Olin Hall, D.U. Campus, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Sept. 16 – Saturday -- Colorado Astronomy Day. See p 7.

Please note that this is a date change from previously published issues.

Sept. 23 – Saturday -- Work Day at Chamberlin. LOCAL STAR PARTY. Please see p 6.

Sept. 30 – Saturday -- LOCAL STAR PARTY. Please see p 6.

Sept. 29-Oct. 1 -- Pawnee Grasslands Star Party; See pp 4-5.

October 6 – Friday -- The Sky Show. See pp 2-3.

October 13 – Friday -- General Meeting at Olin Hall, D.U.

Campus, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Annual Show N' Tell. Please see p 7.

October 14 – Saturday -- Work Day at Chamberlin.

October 20 – Friday -- E-Board Meeting @ 8:00 pm.

October 21 – Saturday -- Annual Auction. Setup at Chamberlin begins at 11:00 am, Auction begins at 1:00 pm. Please see p 7.

October 28 – Saturday -- LOCAL STAR PARTY. Please see p 6.

**** Chamberlin Observatory; Mirror Grinding Class starts at 10:30 a.m. Please see p. 2 for schedule. ****

SKY & TELESCOPE sends only one notice before your subscription ends. Remember, the cost of this, and the other magazines, is over and above our yearly dues. The DAS sends only one issue of The Denver Observer after your dues run out. Also, for questions concerning new memberships, renewal memberships, address changes, and magazine subscriptions, please contact DAS Treasurer Chuck Carlson (chcarlo@du.edu). Send in your money, with the renewal form on the back page to; DAS Treasurer, Chuck Carlson, 1521 South Vine St., Denver, CO 80210-2835

I hope that as many as possible are going to the Dark Sky Site to take advantage of that wonderful site. The cement pads are in and we have electricity to those pads. The next project is a warming hut or trailer of some kind. Observatories and large telescopes are possibilities for the future.

We currently have about \$4,800 in the Dark Sky Fund, which is not enough to buy a warming hut/trailer. We need more funding for a hut. This is something that will benefit everyone, especially in the colder months. We are asking members to donate money and time. Money should be sent to Chuck Carlson the treasurer (with the stipulation that the donation is for the DSS Fund), and time volunteers should call me and I'll forward you name. We especially encourage the heavy users of the site to donate generously.

Whether you donate or not, you should get out to the site. You don't need a telescope to use the site. Other members love to share their scopes. If you need a ride, call or email me and I will try to set something up.

If you have any questions call me at (303) 986-5255 or email me at Lbrooks100@aol.com
Carry Brooks

Mirror-Grinding Classes

The schedule for mirror-grinding classes is as follows: Sept. 2, 16, 30; Oct. 14, 28. These are at 10:30 AM. Please call Terry Chatterton at 303-621-2442.

The DAS now has its own mail list serve. For more info, and to subscribe, go to;

<http://www.cudenver.edu/~lguatney/DAS>

Astronomy classes at the University of Denver: All levels of instruction available at Chamberlin and Mt. Evans Observatories. For current schedule, contact Dr. Bob Stencel (303-871-2135); rstencel@du.edu; www.du.edu/~rstencel) and/or the DU Registrar's Office (303-871-2284).

LEARN TO OBSERVE VARIABLE STARS

If you are ready to go beyond sight-seeing with your telescope, now you can learn how to observe and report variable star magnitudes. DU will offer free variable star observing classes this fall at Chamberlin Observatory. Please email rstencel@du.edu to sign up for further info. If you would like to preview the subject, visit the AAVSO website at www.aavso.org. --Prof. Stencel, Director, DU Observatories.

the Sky Show in Denver, CO.

Hosted by

Astronomy Magazine and the Denver Astronomical Society October 6, 2000

Please join us for a new kind of star party; one that we hope will excite and inspire the general public, as well as expert amateurs. We are proud to invite you to participate in *Astronomy Magazine's* "Sky Show" in Denver on October 6th (rain date October 7th). The event will be held at Aurora Reservoir.

Although we anticipate vendors and activities, *the star party rules the night!* The largest area of the star party will be completely geared to the general public unfamiliar with astronomy and stargazing. There will be basic "observing stations" — one for constellations, one for lunar and planetary, and one for deep sky observing. Each station will introduce the types of telescopes in use, and some observing etiquette. The visitors will be given handouts at each station to take home with them.

Constellation Station - A quick tour of the sky and constellations. We'll introduce the summer triangle and the Milky Way along with the use of binoculars for stargazing.

Lunar/Planetary Station - We'll have a first quarter moon that evening that the public loves to look at. As for planets, we'll have Mercury and Venus in twilight, then Saturn and Jupiter rising mid-evening.

Deep Sky Station - A talk (still brief, here) will discuss the difference between nebulae (i.e., reflection, dark, planetary, supernovae remnants), star clusters (globes and open), and galaxies. The telescopes at this station will be separated into these three categories. The tricks to observing some objects will also be discussed.

We are looking for volunteers and telescopes to work these stations. we need station captains (constellation, deep sky, lunar and planetary) -- folks who feel comfortable about their knowledge



Also -- as for times -- setup starts at 2:00 p.m. for vendors and telescope people. The event starts at 6:00 and goes til midnight.

\$2.00 per person*
Dress warmly.

Does not include nominal entrance fee to reservoir charged by the City of Aurora. (\$4.00/car)

Children under the age of three (3) are free.

Music Provided by RAS
 Music

Thank you so very much and best regards --- Patti Kurtz

(you don't have to be astrophysicists for this) and could give folks a 2-3 minute spiel about their specialty. For instance: You like galaxies, talk galaxies. If you like Jupiter, talk Jupiter. Additionally, we need a constellation person who can point out constellations. Besides the station captains, we'd like people with telescopes at each of the stations. Perhaps you have a preference? It's pretty easy and slides right into what you already know and love to share.

It will be very helpful to have an approximate count of folks with telescopes so we can get you special car passes and/or arrange special parking, if needed.

Additionally, the front range clubs can make a strong presence – you are welcome to bring information and set up a booth with your representatives. You might see new membership from this event!

Please respond by email anytime, or telephone Patti Kurtz at (303) 948-5825. Email: pkurtz@uswest.net.

Aurora Reservoir is located 2 miles east of S. Gun Club Rd. on E. Quincy Ave.



So you want specific about what we're planning with the Dark Sky Site? Okay. Try this; a warming hut or trailer. That's the next thing planned for the DSS. Unfortunately, we just plain don't have enough money for it yet. We have ~\$4800 in the DSS fund, which puts us short of even the cheapest solution. We aren't asking for a few large donations, but those *would* be nice...

How about a number of people make donations of \$30-\$75?? Then we could get something built and/or installed in time for the colder months. Come the winter, a hut or trailer to warm up in would be something that EVERYONE in the DAS would want and appreciate. Send donations to our Treasurer, Chuck Carlson at; 1521 S. Vine St., Denver, CO 80210-2835. Make sure that you specify that your donation is for the Dark Sky Site fund. Remember, *everyone* will want a place to warm up in

(Continued on page 4)

DAS Pawnee Grasslands

Star Party

September 29 – October 1, 2000

Location: Crow Valley

Recreation Area

Directions: Turn east from either Highway 25 or 85 onto Highway 14. On HW 14 (25 miles after passing 85), turn north (left) onto Weld County Road 77. Go 1/4 of a mile to the sign that proclaims the Crow Valley Recreation Area (see **first map below**). Turn left and follow the signs to the Stewart J. Adams *Education Site* just beyond the Farm Implement Museum (see **second map on opposite page**).

This site has toilet facilities and RV hook-ups. However, we could not be assured that the water would still be on, so you had best bring your own. Everyone, from EVERY club & society, is invited!



(Continued from page 3)

once winter hits.

Next spring we would like to get an observatory in, possibly for the society-owned 17" that's presently gathering dust at Chamberlin Observatory. We are already part way there with the donated dome that's out at the edge of the field that we use. That dome, however, will need a building and foundation under it! But it will be worth it, especially with that scope's *Jerry Wilkerson* figured optics. I've used it myself, and it's quite a performer. You'll get the chance to watch it perform as well, once we get an observatory built.

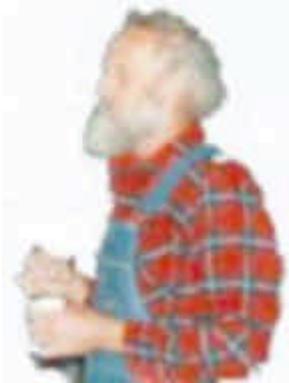
Most likely, next spring, more concrete pads, with electricity, will be installed on the land that we lease. The ones that we have at the north end of the field have been very successful and well used.

There are two essential ingredients missing in order to get all of this done; YOU and funding. Remember, your donations are tax-deductible.

At this point I would like to thank Ted Cox, our Construction Foreman for the Dark Sky Site, as well as all the volunteers who have helped us so far. Thanks, people, you are why this is an astronomical society, and not just a gathering of names of people who just go about doing their own thing.

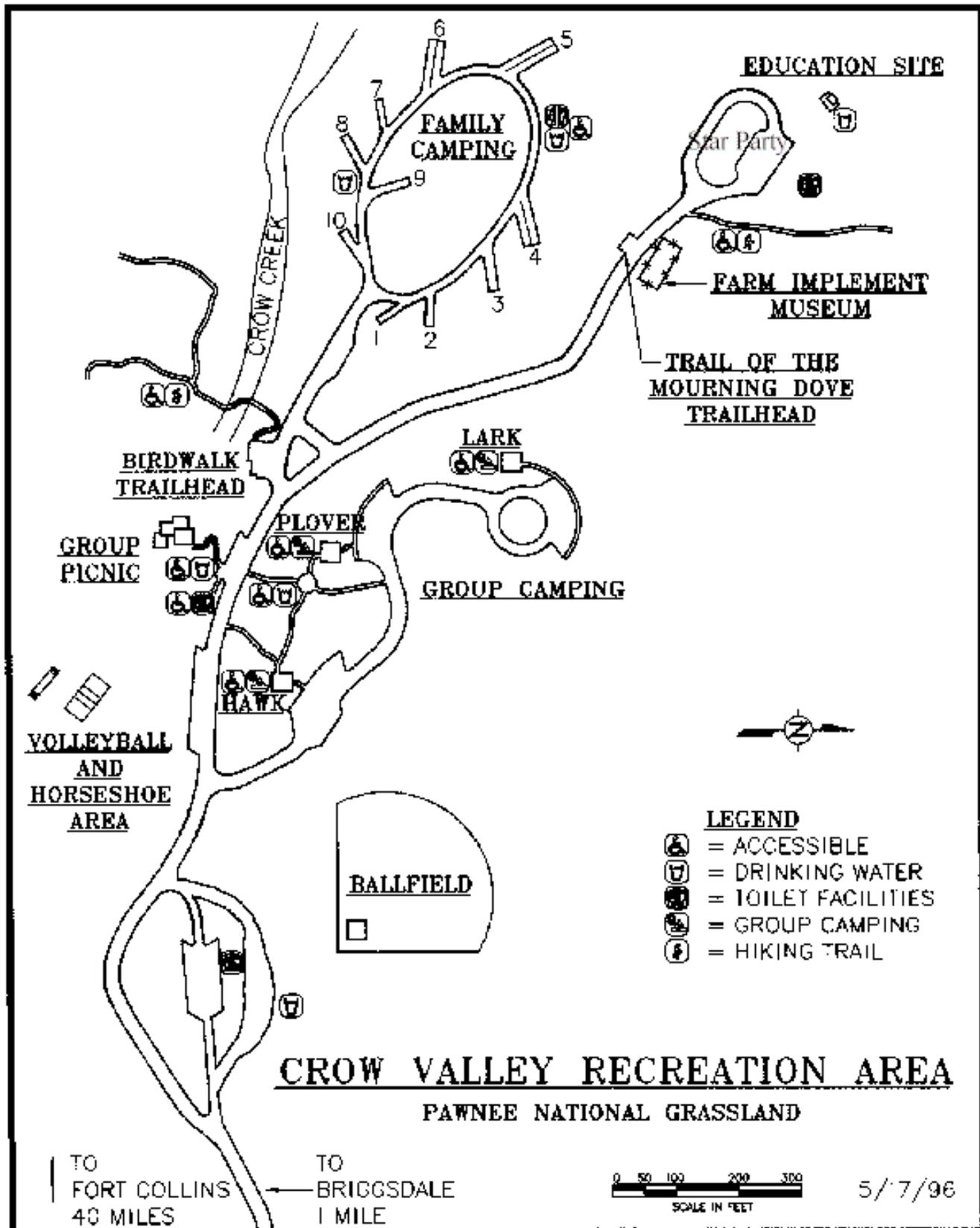
Patrick Ryan

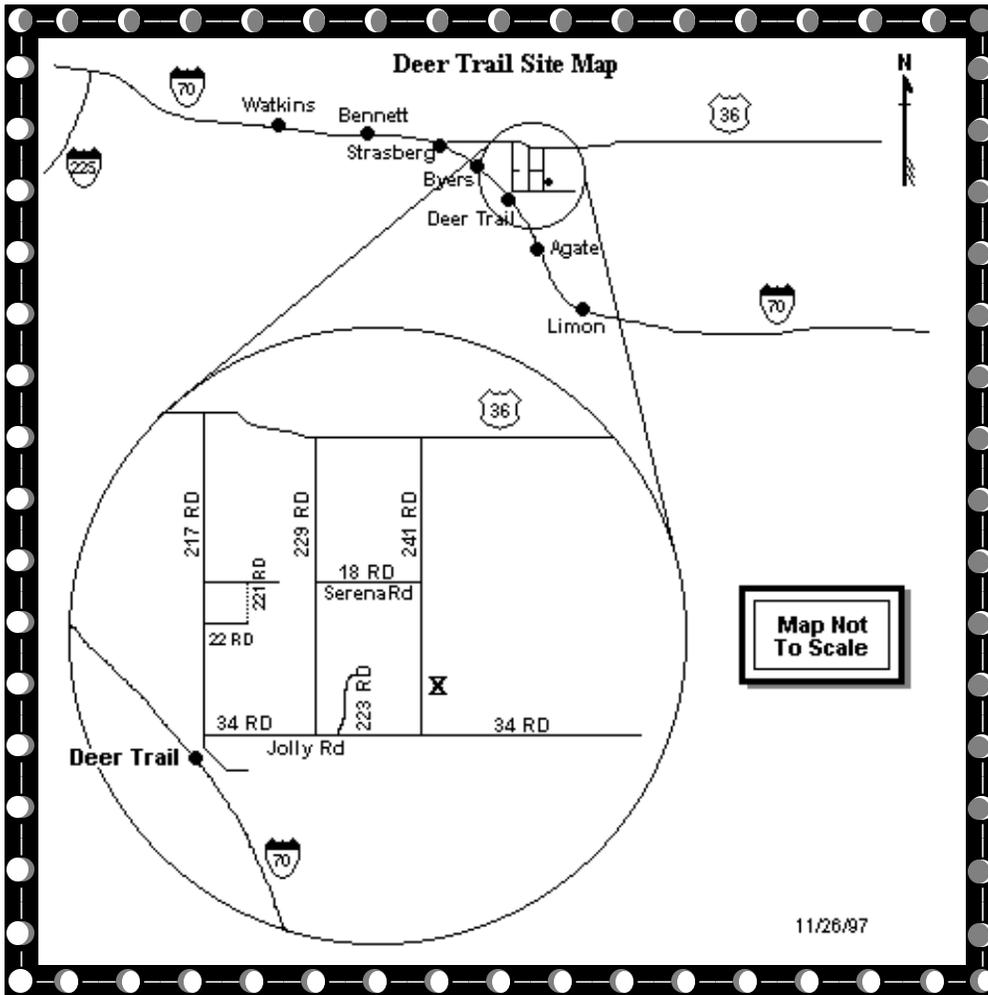
Jack
Eastman
The Man
The Myth
The...



CHIEF OBSERVER!!!

As if that was ever in any real doubt! But now it's official. In July, the Board gave the position of Chief Observer, someone who could review and sign off on A.L. observing lists and certificates, to Jack. Please congratulate Mr. Eastman when next you see him.





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 The DAS Deer Trail dark site is located about 60 miles due east of the Mouse Trap. To get there, take I-70 east to the Deer Trail exit (exit 328), turn left at the end of the exit ramp and turn left again after you pass the Texaco station on to CR 217. Take CR 217 a little over 1/2 mile to CR 34 and turn right (East). Stay on 34 about 6 miles until you get to CR 241. Turn left (North) on CR 241 and continue about 1.5 miles; there's a culvert with a wide gate on the right (East) side of the road.  
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Dark Sky Site Guidelines

The Dark Sky Site is for the use of DAS members and guests. If you are neither of these, contact an officer of the DAS so that you may be their guest at our Site. Please remember that white light disrupts the eye's dark adaptation and can ruin astrophotography. Following these simple guidelines will improve the experience for all:

Try to arrive before dark. If you have to arrive after dark, turn off headlights when turning into site, and try to arrive from the north. Do not park on the graded, graveled roads. If you have to leave while the field is full of observers, ask assistance in getting out of the site, so that you don't have to turn your car lights on. Turn off all dome and trunk lights. If a light can't be turned off, pull the fuse, use layered red tape or just duct tape over it. Use only dull red flashlights. Never shine a flashlight in someone's face. No open fires, *EVER*. The last person to leave the site at night/in the early morning should close the gate.

Other suggestions:

Wear warm clothes. The nights can be extremely cold in the winter and surprisingly cold even in summer. When approaching the telescope of someone, who does not know you, introduce yourself and ask before looking through the scope. Most members (with the exception of astrophotographers) will be happy to share their scopes. Bring your own toilet paper in case the porta-potty runs out. Serious astrophotographers may wish to use the alternate observing area, which is shaded from the road and main parking area.

Larry Brooks
Lbrooks100@aol.com
 (303) 986-5255

Greg Marino

September 16, 2000

COLORADO ASTRONOMY DAY

Events at Chamberlin will begin at 6:00 and go until 11:00.

Events include viewing with the 20-inch Clark, viewing through members' telescopes on the lawn. Past Astronomy Day events have included; demonstrations of cryogenics, meteor displays, binocular viewing workshops, a 6 foot mosaic of the Milky Way, and a children's book display.

We will need a lot of help at Chamberlin. We need help at Chamberlin with as many scopes of all sizes that we can muster. We need help with crowd control, assisting with the 20-inch, tables, and displays and demonstrations.

I would especially encourage those of you who have not worked public events as well as new members to get involved. It is a lot of fun and very rewarding. If you can volunteer at either or both places, either call or email

Larry Brooks

at (303) 986-5255 or Lbrooks100@aol.com

OCTOBER MADNESS!!

It's the month so wacky that they named it twice... Well... not really... BUT October does play host to two big DAS annual events; *Show 'n Tell Night* & the *Annual Auction*.

Show 'n Tell Night is actually the October General Meeting (Oct. 13), starting at 7:30 at the usual place; Olin Hall on the D.U. campus. So come on over with your astronomically-oriented crazy stuff, wiggled out projects, kluges, thingamawatsitz, or whatever.

The *Annual Auction*, which benefits the dark Sky Site fund, takes place Oct. 21, at Chamberlin Observatory. The doors will open at 11 a.m., and the auction will start at 1 p.m. If you are going to sell

stuff, please come early enough so that you can get set up in time for the auction. Remember, at least 10% of money gained at the auction goes to the DAS. You can give more... if you want...!

...And please, people, only bring ASTRONOMI-CALLY and PHOTOGRAPHICALLY oriented items to sell!

S&S Optika

Colorado's premier astronomical
supply store.

5174 South Broadway, Englewood, Colorado
80110 (303) 789-1089

Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10
am to 6 pm; Thursday from 10 am to 8 pm;
Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm.

About the Denver Astronomical Society

The DAS is a group of amateur and professional astronomers sharing a mutual interest in the heavens. The DAS operates the University of Denver's Chamberlin Observatory with its venerable 1894, Alvan Clark, 20" refracting telescope. Our members have been involved with the first public planetarium at the Denver Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian Astrophysics Observatory's "Moon Watch" program. The DAS successfully petitioned to have the Chamberlin Observatory listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Our Credo is to provide members a forum for increasing and sharing their knowledge, to promote and to educate the public about astronomy, and to preserve the historic telescope and observatory in cooperation with the University of Denver. To these ends we have established three tax deductible funds; the Van Nattan Scholarship Fund, the Chamberlin Restoration Fund, and the DAS Dark Site Fund. This last fund was established to construct and maintain observing facilities sites near Deer Trail in eastern Colorado.

Please call our Info Line at (303) 871-5172 and drop by one of our General Meetings. Become a member and enjoy speakers, facilities, events, and our monthly newsletter, The Denver Observer.

Application for Membership to The Denver Astronomical Society

New Renew

Name: _____

Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip: _____
Home Phone : _____
Work Phone: _____
E-Mail: _____
Occupation: _____
Other Interests: _____

(Associates Only) School: _____ Grade _____

Do you want to download the newsletter from the web site, as a PDF file, instead of receiving it in the mail?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you want this information **kept out** of the yearly roster?

Yes _____ No _____

Please Circle All That Apply:

Regular - \$30 Associate - \$10 up to age 22

\$ _____

Sky & Telescope;/\$29.95 Astronomy/\$29

\$ _____

Dark Site Fund Donation\$ _____

VanNattan Scholarship Fund\$ _____

Chamberlin Fund Donation\$ _____

Total Amount Paid\$ _____

Complete this form, or a copy, and send it with a check or money order payable to The Denver Astronomical Society to:

DAS Treasurer, Chuck Carlson, 1521 S. Vine St., Denver, CO 80210-2835



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