

AAI Research Committee Report for April 2019

Since 80% of the nights were cloudy many people just went to NEAF, the large convention of amateur astronomers, and listened to talks and checked out the equipment for sale.

Solar system: Clif Ashcraft imaged Jupiter just before dawn.

Stars: Dennis Conti has done another exoplanet transit observation.

Isbel Gonzalez composed a beautiful landscape with the *Big Dipper with its handle in the trees* against a red sky at Jenny Jump.



Presentations: Steve Lowe and I gave a presentation on “Spectroscopy with a Small Telescope” at the Pro/Am session at the North East Astronomy Forum in Suffern, NY. I organized the seven speakers for the Pro/Am collaboration session at NEAF. The others were: Josh Walawender, W.M. Keck Observatory and Olivier Guyon, University of Arizona - PANOPTES Project to find Exoplanets
Richard P. Schwarz and Harvey Patashnick, Patashnick Voorheesville Observatory - The TESS Exoplanet Mission: How Amateur Astronomers Are Making a Difference
Danielle Adams, Lowell Observatory - Arabian Astronomy
Ted Blank, International Occultation Timing Association - IOTA in the Kuiper Belt – Amateur Astronomers Supporting the New Horizons Mission to Ultima Thule
Christopher Go, Philippines - Supporting the Juno Mission
Rachel Freed, Sonoma State University - Immersing students within the Community-of-Practice: making a difference in science education

Other: John Kozimbo sounded the alert that the little asteroid 2019 GC6 (only 14 m across) would pass Earth on April 18. This was from an Australian rocket company that surveys asteroids for valuable mineral content.

John also urged us to visit the Rutgers Geology Museum which has a new exhibit by Dr. Juliane Gross (our speaker in September 2018) on meteorites including a *Martian Shergottite* donated by Al and Bonnie Witzgall.



Clif also commented on the exciting report of first picture of the shadow of a Black Hole in M87 on April 10. He questioned the resolution and focal ratio calculations.

Tolga Gumusayak is now in charge of the programming on The Astro Imaging Channel (Sundays 9:30 PM at theastroimagingchannel.com).

Respectfully submitted, Mary Lou West, Research Chair