



News from the Society for Astronomical Sciences

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Invitation to the 2016 SAS Symposium

The SAS Program Committee invites you to participate in the Society for Astronomical Sciences' 35th Annual Symposium. The Symposium will be held June 16-17-18, 2016 at the Ontario Airport Hotel in Ontario, California. This is the premier annual conference devoted to small-telescope astronomical science.

The SAS Symposium consistently brings together amateur astronomers who are engaged in scientific research, professional astronomers, and students for in-depth discussions of small-telescope research results.

The SAS Symposium is an excellent venue for highlighting recent results, identifying targets or phenomena that will be the subject of upcoming observational campaigns, formulating collaborations for observation and analysis, and bringing together the community of practice to share expertise and experience. You need not be an expert to benefit from participating in SAS: one goal of SAS is to provide a mentoring environment where you can learn how you can contribute to astronomical science.

The 2016 Symposium will feature educational workshops, technical presentations, and special sessions.

Date & Location: The 2016 SAS Symposium will be held on Thursday-Friday-Saturday, **June 16-17-18, 2016**, at the Ontario Airport Hotel, Ontario CA.

Workshops: On Thursday June 16, two workshops are planned. The morning workshop will be "Going from Image to Spectrum", in which Dale Mais and John Menke will explain the process for translating your spectrum-image into a scientifically useful



Attendees at the 2015 SAS Symposium (photo by Earl Wilson)

wavelength- and intensity-calibrated spectrum.

The afternoon workshop will be "What publishable science can we do with spectrographs on small telescopes?", featuring presentations and discussion by several professional astronomers.

Technical Presentations: Friday and Saturday (June 17-18) will be the Technical Sessions, including both presentations and poster papers. Presentations and Posters will span the wide range of topics of interest to the small-telescope research community: results of studies of solar-system objects, variable-stars, and atmospheric phenomena; instrumentation for photometry and spectroscopy; and related subjects.

Proposals for presentations and posters are now being accepted – see the "Call for Papers" below.

Special Sessions: Friday evening (June 17) will be an "Evening with the Pro's", featuring talks by professional researchers who are making use of data collected by amateur and student astronomers.

Saturday lunchtime will feature a "Show-and-Tell" discussion. Quite a

few SAS participants last year were interested in spectroscopy, but were unsure of the quality of their efforts; and some beginning photometrists are also a bit shy about reporting their projects. In order to help bridge the gap between "wanting to" and "doing successfully", participants are invited to bring 1-3 slides showing their images, lightcurves, and/or spectra. A panel of friendly experts will offer suggestions and advice. Hopefully, with this feedback you will be able to move forward with confidence.

Saturday evening we will have the traditional banquet, including an after-dinner talk by a respected astronomer.

Sponsors: SAS Sponsors – developers, suppliers, and retailers of astronomical equipment – will be on hand with displays of their featured products. Their knowledgeable representatives will be happy to discuss their products with attendees.

Registration information for SAS 2016 will be on the SAS website www.SocAstroSci.org starting on February 1st.

Call for Papers: 2016 SAS Symposium

The SAS Symposium is the premier annual conference devoted to small-telescope astronomical research. The Symposium brings together professional astronomers, amateur astronomers, and students who are engaged in research projects that are facilitated by the capabilities of small telescopes with modern instrumentation, for in-depth discussions of recent results, upcoming observational campaigns, instrumentation, and related topics.

Papers are solicited on all aspects of astronomical science, including

- Instrumentation for small-telescope research [photometry, spectroscopy, polarimetry, fast-cadence observations (e.g. occultations)]
- Investigations of variable stars, eclipsing binary stars, double stars and stellar systems
- Investigations of asteroids and other solar system objects
- Plans for upcoming events such as the 2016 eclipse of VV Cephei
- Investigations of atmospheric effects, light-propagation and scattering, light pollution monitoring
- Observation planning and campaigns that can benefit from small-telescope photometry and spectroscopy
- Innovative use of astronomy in undergraduate education.

Format: Papers for Presentation consist of a 20-minute presentation (including Q&A), and a written paper that will be published in the Symposium Proceedings.

Poster Papers are welcomed, and size is flexible. Abstracts or a paper based on the poster can be included in the Symposium Proceedings.

English is the working language for the Symposium.

Important Dates:

Abstract submission begins: Feb 1, 2016

Abstracts due: March 15, 2016

Authors will be notified of acceptance by March 22.

Final papers due: April 26, 2016

Symposium Early Registration opens: February 1, 2016

Abstract submissions will only be accepted via the SAS Online Abstract System, at

www.socastrosci.org/PHP/SASAbstractSubmission.php

(case-sensitive). The Abstract submission page will be "live" on Feb 1st. You may propose more than one paper, but normally only one Presentation per author will be scheduled. There is no limit to the number of Posters.

You can read the Proceedings from recent SAS Symposia, and view videos of many Presentations, on the SAS website (www.SocAstroSci.org).

Survey Results & Comments from SAS-2015 Symposium

Thank you to all of you who provided your comments and opinions after the 2015 SAS Symposium. Every year we do our best to provide you with interesting contributions and scientific discussions, and we succeeded in that; but we also heard about a few problems, which we'll try to address as we plan for the 2016 Symposium.

There is general satisfaction with the Ontario hotel facility, but there is still fondness for Big Bear. Unfortunately, SAS has outgrown Big Bear.

There were issues with the audio (and one projector) in 2015 – we'll have those fixed for 2016.

We received requests to provide more help to beginners. We hope that the 2016 "Show and Tell" session will be useful in this regard. We also received a suggestion to have a "beginner's lunch", with facilitator(s) who can answer everyone's questions. We'll see if we can fit something like this into the 2016 agenda.

Our sponsors were no doubt pleased to hear that several people in 2015 were inspired to buy spectrographs.

Regarding presentation topics, several commenters asked for "more asteroids" and "more projects that need small-telescope spectroscopy". We'll bear those in mind as we review the Abstracts that are submitted for 2016.

If you have any ideas for the SAS Program Committee, you can always send an e-mail to us at program@SocAstroSci.org.

Keeping in Touch ...

SAS Yahoo Group "SocAstroSci"

The SAS Symposium is a premier forum for small-telescope researchers to discuss ideas, observing procedures, and equipment insights; to share project results; and to form collaborations. Since our membership is scattered across the United States and around the world, we're trying an experiment to help people keep in touch between Symposia: a Yahoo Group called SocAstroSci has been set up as a forum for discussion of any topic related to SAS and small-telescope astronomical research. Kevin Hearst volunteered to be the moderator of the group. (Thanks, Kevin!).

You can reach the group at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SocAstroSci/>, or by searching the Yahoo Groups page for SocAstroSci. Check it out and see what's happening.

Reminders ...

Membership Renewal: Even if you can't attend the annual Symposium, we value your support of the Society for Astronomical Sciences, and your interest in small-telescope science. You can renew your membership on the SAS website (SocAstroSci.org), by going to the MEMBERSHIP/REGISTRATION tab.

Symposium Proceedings: Published proceedings from all recent Symposia are freely available in PDF format at the PUBLICATIONS tab of the SAS website (www.SocAstroSci.org).

Symposium Videos: If you missed a recent Symposium, you can still watch the presentations. Videos of most of the technical presentations have been posted on the SAS website at the PUBLICATIONS tab.

Workshop Videos: Video recordings of most of the Workshops from recent years are available from SAS. If you were registered for the Workshop, then the recording is free. If you were not a registered attendee, then the price is \$50 per workshop. Contact Bob Buchheim (Bob@RKBuchheim.org) for the details.

Contact Information: If you haven't been receiving e-mail messages about the Newsletter or the SAS Symposium, perhaps it's because you've changed

your e-mail address. You can update your contact information on the MEMBERSHIP/REGISTRATION tab of the SAS website. SAS never sells or shares your name or contact information without your explicit permission.

For the college students who you know

The CUREA program (aka "Mount Wilson Summer School") will be held at Mt Wilson Observatory, June 19-July 2, 2016. Applications are now being accepted.

The program combines classroom instruction with hands-on solar and stellar observing to introduce students to the physics of stars. It is aimed at

undergraduate students who are considering careers in astronomy, astrophysics, or science teaching.

The program is open to applicants 18 years and older who have completed college coursework including at least one year of college physics, preferably including some modern physics or general astronomy.

Students will engage in an intensive two-week course using historic and modern facilities at Mount Wilson Observatory, learning to use instruments and techniques including:

- the Snow Solar Telescope and high resolution spectrograph
- a 16-inch Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope and detectors

- the historic 60-inch reflector, used by early astrophysicists including Shapley and Hubble

- image processing for photometry and spectroscopy.

During the second week, each student will pursue an independent observing project, acquiring observations, processing and analyzing data, and reporting results. Additionally, students will tour historic telescopes and other facilities at Mount Wilson Observatory, interact with observatory staff and volunteers, visit ongoing research projects at the observatory, and enjoy field trips to other astronomical sites in the Los Angeles area.

The CUREA tuition cost is \$1500. For details, see <http://www.curea.org>



John Hoot is shown helping a student with a Solar Spectroscopy project at the Snow Solar Telescope on Mt. Wilson, during CUREA 2014 (photo by Bob Buchheim)

SAS Leadership

Corporate Officers:

Bob Buchheim – President
Robert Stephens – Treasurer
Robert Gill – Secretary

Newsletter Editors:

Dale Mais
Robert Buchheim

Program Committee:

Jerry Foote
program@SocAstroSci.org

Registration:

Margaret Miller
Cindy Foote

All SAS Leaders are volunteers, serving without compensation.

Advisors:

Dr. Arne Henden
Dr. Alan W. Harris
Dr. Dirk Terrell

Membership Information

The Society for Astronomical Sciences welcomes everyone interested in small telescope astronomical research. Our mission is to provide education, foster amateurs' participation in research projects as an aspect of their astronomical hobby, facilitate professional-amateur collaborations, and disseminate new results and methods. The Membership fee is \$25.00 per year.

As a member, you receive:

- Discounted registration fee for the annual Symposium.
- A copy of the published proceedings each year, even if you do not attend the Symposium.

Membership application is available at the REGISTRATION page of the SAS web site: <http://www.SocAstroSci.org>.

The SAS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization. Your Membership dues and donations may be tax deductible.

SAS Contact Information

9302 Pittsburgh Avenue, Suite 200,
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

Robert Stephens:
rstephens@socastrosci.com

Newsletter Editors:
Dale Mais: dmais@socastrosci.com
Bob Buchheim: Bob@RKBuchheim.org

On the web:
www.SocAstroSci.org

