

SCAS COAL SACK

EDUCATING SOUTH FLORIDA SINCE 1922

MARCH 2006

MARS & AWARDS NIGHT March Public Program

-Barb Yager

FRIDAY, MARCH 17th- 8 pm, SOUTHERN CROSS members proudly present two world-renowned astronomers: DR. DON PARKER, Coral Gables and JOSE OLIVAREZ, popular astronomy instructor at the Discovery Science & Outdoor Center in Ocala, Florida. They will provide latest updates on the 2005 close encounter of MARS. JOSE will present the "Imagination & Reality" of the 'warrior planet' and DON will conclude the lecture with the "latest research and discoveries" on MARS and his professional planetary images. This program had to be cancelled October 21st as Hurricane Wilma churned toward our Gulf coast and wiped out all our public countywide Mars Watches during its closest visit.

Three lovely high school students: Jessica Barreto, Senior, Mast Academy; Antonina Kulchitskaya, Senior and Natalie Beigel, Junior, at Dr. Michael Krop Sr. High will receive SCAS awards for their excellent astronomy exhibits in the Miami-

Dade Public School Science & Engineering Fair 2006, and have their display boards on exhibit. SCAS FIU senior GREG AZARNIA will receive the SCAS Astronomy Scholarship 2006. Meet our distinguished speakers and students in the FIU Astronomy Center, Physics Bldg., CP-145 at 8 pm, FRIDAY, MARCH 17th.

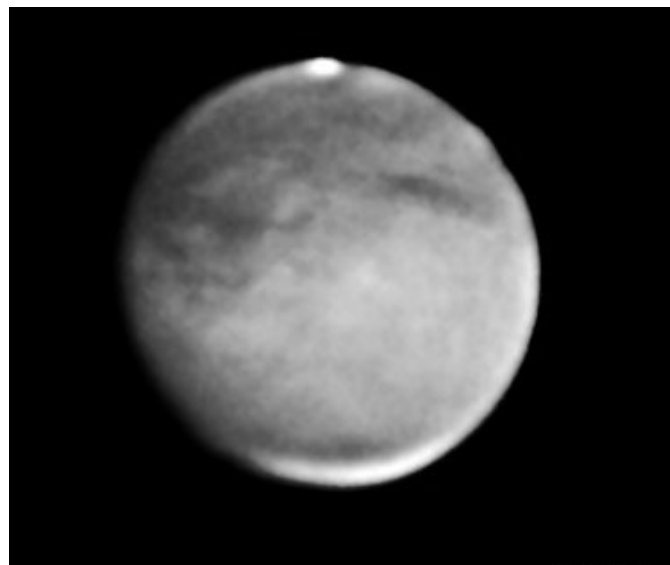
DON and JOSE are recognized by international science organizations and give lectures nationwide. They both have been honored to receive the prestigious Walter H. Haas Award for their professional levels of solar research by the Association of Lunar & Planetary Observers (ALPO) among many other awards.

JOSE, former Director of the Wichita Omnisphere &

Science Center for 21 years in Wichita, Kansas, became Director of the Chabot Science Center in Oakland, California 1997-2001. A planetarium director for 32 years, in his semi-retirement, JOSE recently became instructor of astronomy at Central Florida Community College.

DON continues to impress astronomers and research scientists with his superb planetary images of MARS, SATURN and JUPITER, taken from his Coral Gables home, and often published in national astronomy magazines. DON, a SCAS Life Member, is often the keynote speaker at ALCON-the annual conference of the Astronomical League- and always a favorite at the SCAS Annual Winter Star Party in the Florida Keys.

Bring family and friends to our free SCAS program that includes prizes, food buffet, lively discussions, and a SkyWatch on the terrace if weather permits. The FIU Physics Bldg., at University Park, is opposite the large open parking lot, SW 109th Ave./SW 8th St. Accessible to the disabled. Reservations are not required. Call: 305-661-1375 www.scas.org



Mars, October 11, 16-inch Newtonian and a ST9XE CCD camera, showing small southern polar ice cap (up) and large northern polar hood. Photo by Don Parker.

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305 661-1375

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NEW SCAS WEB SITE:

[HTTP://WWW.SCAS.ORG](http://WWW.SCAS.ORG)

The Coal Sack

The Coal Sack is a monthly publication of the Southern Cross Astronomical Society, Inc., Miami, Florida

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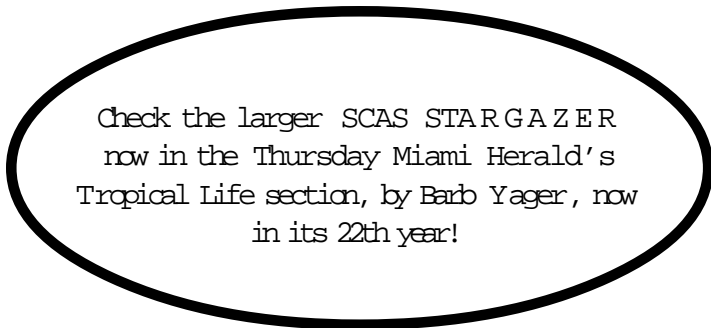
Material for the Coal Sack must be submitted to the Editor by the 25th of the month prior to publication. Please use e-mail when possible.
Change of Address: Please notify Managing Editor Barb Yager with change of address or other membership information.

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* IN SYMPATHY *

Southern Cross members were saddened to learn that Sharon Grant's Aunt Shirley had recently passed away during surgery in San Francisco. Many of us had met Shirley during her regular visits to Sharon's home. She had a genuine warmth and jovial enthusiasm that made our brief visits with her so much fun. We send our sincere sympathy to Sharon.

CLASSIFIED

SCAS SUPER SALE

For SCAS members: royal blue POLO shirts with white lettering front & back \$10. S - 2XL

THE ART OF COLLECTING METEORITES, an in-depth 232-pg. entertaining guide-book with color photos and references by astronomer/explorer Kevin Kitchinka who describes this exciting and educational hobby based on his adventures in the Andes and his friendships with renowned scientists and collectors. Only \$10.00 ! Call: 305-661-1375.

SUPER IMAGING OFFER!

Do you have top-quality solar/celestial images & photos? SCAS member LARRY APPLE, President, Associated Photo & Imaging, 19 SW 6th Street (near Miami River) has offered to enlarge your color graphics to any size (including large wall murals) FREE! Pls contact LARRY: larrya@apimaging.com or 305-373-4774/ 305-495-7709 (cel).

Send in your classified ads to PegasusLM@earthlink.net or BarbYager@aol.com

FEBRUARY EVENTS

-Barb Yager

GULLIVER ACADEMY-

This year the skies were magnificent, revealing Mars, silver-ringed Saturn & the Beehive cluster, Orion's Great Nebula, first-quarter Moon, Pleiades and Hyades clusters. A tidal wave of 300 students from Gulliver Middle School rushed onto the soccer field following their Annual Astronomy Night Pageant to gaze at the clear winter sky in hi-tech equipment arranged by SCAS Astros: Russell Brick, Scott Crawford, Jim Rose, Steve & Vicki Van Ryn and Barb Yager. Dozens of parents and faculty were speechless at the sharpest views they had ever seen of the beautiful winter celestial wonders and enjoyed talking with our friendly Southern Cross astronomers. Saturn and the Moon were the obvious favorites!

Enjoy a sample of 75 thank you notes written and illustrated by the 5th grade youngsters.

"Thank You Southern Cross".....

-The thing I liked most was the binoculars that looked at the Moon. I could see all the craters. I have a telescope and I look at different things like stars, Moon and much more. I may want to be an astronomer one day, but it will be hard.

-I had a blast looking at all the different planets and constellations and moons thru the telescope. I have a telescope at home and I am going to find out how to work it so I can look at the stuff I saw that night. I am definitely interested in going to the site where I can look at stars some more, that evening was a blast. Thank you so much.

-My favorite view was Saturn because my science project was about Saturn and I learned many facts about Saturn. I look forward to being an astronomer

when I grow up.

-The telescopes were very cool especially when you could see Mars., Thank you for letting us see Nebulas, Stars and Planets You guys rock because your doing things like showing us outer space without getting any money. This Saturday I want to come to Fairchild tropical gardens and see more of outer space. You have me as a friend.

-The views I saw through the telescopes were amazing. I really liked Saturn, it was so close that it looked fake, but I know it's real. All of your telescopes had really cool sights They were the best part of "Picnic Under the Stars", followed by the desserts. I hope you guys had fun.

GREATER MIAMI YOUTH FELLOWSHIP-

On a frosty evening, Friday 10th, about 100 youngsters, with parents, attended the SCAS Star Party at the Alligator Farm near Florida City thoroughly enjoyed the superb views of a bright Moon, planets clusters and nebulas. Our SCAS Astros: Jim Rose, Mike Smith, Nick Stingone and Steve & Vicki Van Ryn received thank you gifts from the Fellowship staff

VALENTINE'S NIGHT at DEERING-

Despite pesky clouds and a chill sea breeze, several 'holes' opened up to show some blazing constellations, Saturn, Orion's Nebula and the full Moon at the very popular Jazz Concert at Deering, Tuesday Night the 14th. Out of the 1245 attendees who picnicked across the spacious lawn, dozens came over to catch brief superb views and visit with SCAS Astros: Judy Elkins and George, Steve & Vicki Van Ryn, Ashley Stevens and Barb.

Comet Pojmanski

This comet is barely visible to the naked eye, hanging low in the east left of Venus before sunrise. It is a pleasing target for backyard telescopes, displaying a vivid green head and a long sinuous tail. Mike Holloway of Van Buren, Arkansas, snapped this picture on March 3rd (from Spaceweather.com.) Comet Pojmanski is receding from Earth and fading; catch it while you can.



FEBRUARY ALMANAC AT A GLANCE

FIRST QTR. Monday, 6th 3:16 p.m.
 FULL MOON Tuesday, 14th 6:35 p.m.
 LAST QTR. Wednesday 22nd 2:11 p.m.
 NEW MOON Wednesday 29th 5:15 a.m.
 14th- Penumbral Eclipse occurs at 6:35 pm, during Moon-rise.
 17th- bright Moon meets Spica at dawn.

SUNRISE: 6:33 a.m. (mid-month) SUNSET: 6:30 p.m.

MORNING SKIES: 4 planets visible in the predawn:
 SATURN sets in the NW before dawn breaks.
 JUPITER & its Moon System, in Libra, drift into the SW.
 VENUS, blazing Morning Star in Capricornus, rises in the SE by 5 a.m.
 25th- VENUS will reach its highest altitude today and remain visible all summer.
 Comet Pojmanski cruises to the left of VENUS.
 26th- Dim blue NEPTUNE shimmers 2 degrees to the right of VENUS.
 MERCURY appears to the lower left of VENUS late this month.
 The Big Dipper hangs in the NW, its 'bowl' always faces Polaris, North Star.
 The Little Dipper's handle is 'attached' to Polaris.
 Arcturus, Herdsman, sparkles in the west.
 Spica, in Virgo, Spring Maiden, descends lower in the SW.
 Huge Scorpius slinks across the south.
 The Sagittarian Teapot drifts higher in the SE.
 In the NE, Vega brings the Summer Triangle onto the Zenith.
 The pointer stars: Deneb shimmers in the NE.
 Altair, in Aquila the Eagle, sparkles in the east.
 Cygnus, Flying Swan, soars within the Triangle.

EVENING SKIES: 4 planets visible
 MERCURY descends onto the western horizon the first week.
 MARS lies between the PLEIADES & HYADES star clusters in the west.
 SATURN glows overhead near the dim BEEHIVE cluster in Cancer.
 JUPITER rises in the east, in Libra, late evening.
 Winter constellations drift lower in the west:
 The Seven Sisters (Pleiades) lead Taurus the Bull westward.
 10th- MARS meets Aldebaran in the V-shaped Hyades cluster.
 Capella guides Auriga, Charioteer, into the NW.
 Cassiopeia swings around Polaris and settles low in the N W.
 Gemini Twins: Castor & Pollux lie overhead near SATURN.
 The Big Dipper clears the NE horizon.
 Leo the Lion climbs higher in the east.
 Bright Arcturus, Herdsman, sparkles low in the NE.
 Orion, Hunter strides into the SW, followed by his Big Dog, Canis Major, and the Pups

Blazing blue Sirius sparkles in the Big Dog's collar.
 Procyon, Little Dog, lies between Orion & SATURN.
 Brilliant Canopus radiates rainbow colors low in the south.
 Corvus the Crow leads Spica, in Virgo the Spring Maiden, up in the SE.
 20th-The VERNAL EQUINOX occurs at 1:26 p.m. Spring begins in the N. hemisphere and Autumn begins in the S. hemisphere. Day and night hours are about equal for a few days.
 The northbound Sun crosses the Equator, rises due east and sets due west. Drivers need to be cautious on E-W roads.

CHECK THE SOUTHERN CROSS STARGAZER in THURSDAYS MIAMI HERALD

Moon Set/Rise Table for MAR/APR

Date (m/d)	Moon Rise	Moon Set
18/3/2006	21:57	8:18
19/3/2006	22:56	8:54
20/3/2006	23:57	9:35
21/3/2006	—	10:24
22/3/2006	0:59	11:20
23/3/2006	1:59	12:23
24/3/2006	2:54	13:30
25/3/2006	3:43	14:40
26/3/2006	4:26	15:48
27/3/2006	5:06	16:56
28/3/2006	5:43	18:02
29/3/2006	6:19	19:08
30/3/2006	6:56	20:14
31/3/2006	7:35	21:20
1/4/2006	8:17	22:27
2/4/2006	10:04	—
3/4/2006	10:56	0:30
4/4/2006	11:51	1:30
5/4/2006	12:49	2:23
6/4/2006	13:46	3:09
7/4/2006	14:42	3:50
8/4/2006	15:36	4:25
9/4/2006	16:28	4:56
10/4/2006	17:19	5:25
11/4/2006	18:10	5:53
12/4/2006	19:02	6:20
13/4/2006	19:55	6:49
14/4/2006	20:51	7:20

March Evening Skies

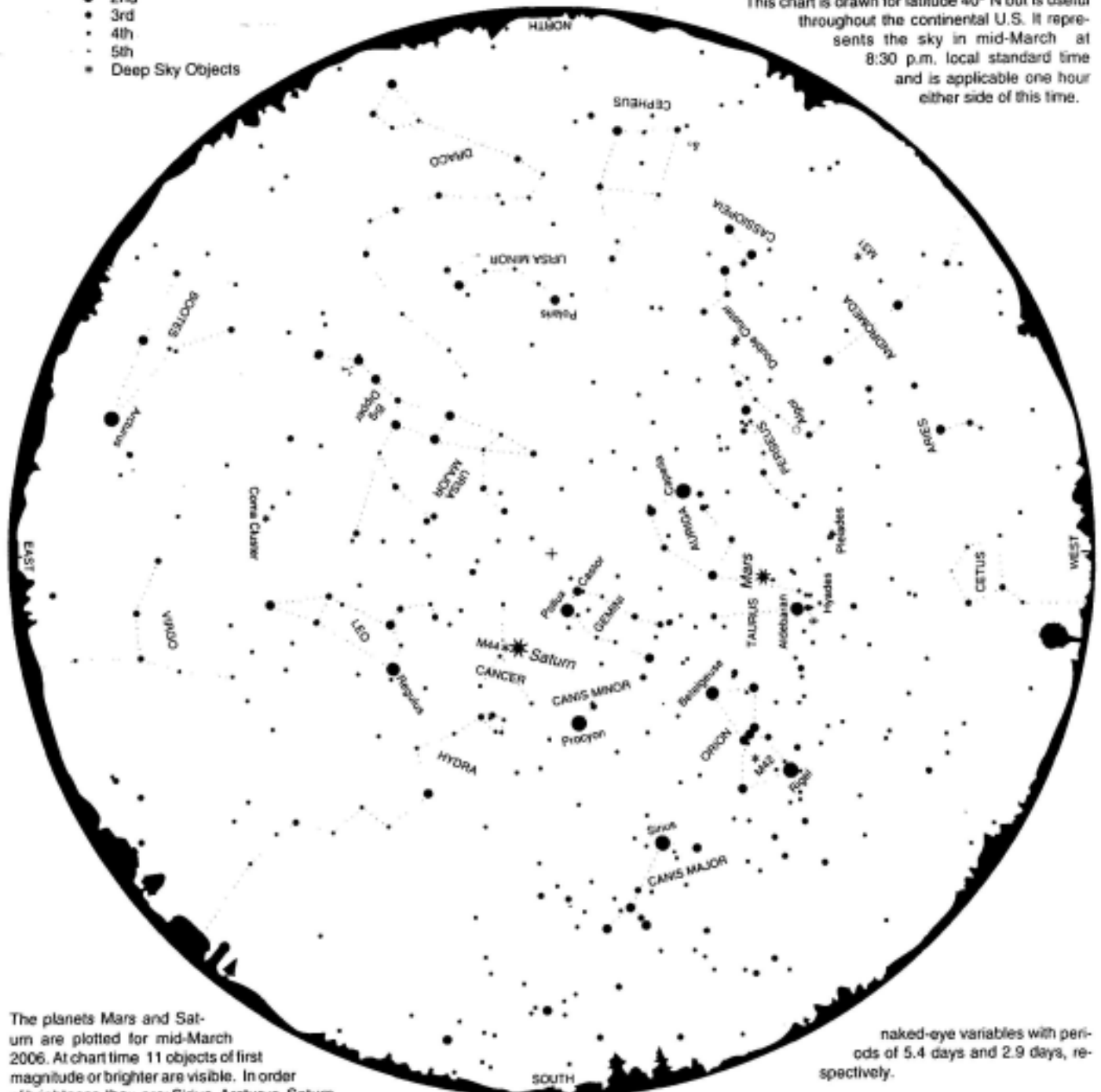
LEGEND
Star Magnitudes

- Zero or brighter
- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
- Deep Sky Objects

© 2006 Abrams Planetarium

Subscription: \$11.00 per year, from *Sky Calendar*,
Abrams Planetarium, Michigan State University,
East Lansing, MI 48824-1324.

This chart is drawn for latitude 40° N but is useful throughout the continental U.S. It represents the sky in mid-March at 8:30 p.m. local standard time and is applicable one hour either side of this time.



The planets Mars and Saturn are plotted for mid-March 2006. At chart time 11 objects of first magnitude or brighter are visible. In order of brightness they are: Sirius, Arcturus, Saturn, Capella, Rigel, Procyon, Betelgeuse, Aldebaran, Mars, Pollux, and Regulus.

Our usual monthly maps are designed for stargazers just beginning to find their way around the sky. This month's map is useful for serious stargazing from dark locations. It contains many more stars, inclusive to magnitude 4.5, and some fainter stars as needed to complete patterns or assist in locating special objects.

A selection of double stars (labeled with Greek letters) and "deep sky objects" is also plotted. All are visible with modest equipment; most are within the range of the unaided eye or binoculars.

The double stars, in order of decreasing angular separation, are ζ in Ursa Major, and θ in Taurus. The stars δ in Cepheus and Algol in Perseus are

naked-eye variables with periods of 5.4 days and 2.9 days, respectively.

Five open or galactic clusters are noted: the Pleiades or Seven Sisters, and the Hyades, both in Taurus; the Double Cluster in Perseus; M44, the Beehive or Praesepe, in Cancer; and the Coma Cluster, a loose group of naked-eye stars.

M42 is the famous Orion Nebula, a gas cloud out of which stars are forming. M31 is the Andromeda Galaxy, a collection of 300 billion stars located 2 million light years from Earth.

WINNERS at WSP 2006

The entire list of happy prize winners will appear on our SCAS Website: www.scas.org but space will allow the SCAS and top prize winners:

IMAGING CONTEST R. Scott Ireland, Director

DEEP SKY-

Name	Topic	Prize	Vendor
1st Prize- Brian Lula	IC2177	Planisphere Watch	APM Telescope
2nd Prize- John O'Neill	Omega Centauri	Way of the Water	Dr. Musgrave, NASA

DIGITAL IMAGING-

Name	Prize	Vendor
1st Prize - Mark Schroeder	Superview 15mm Wide	OPT View Eyepiece

SOLAR DIGITAL CAMERA-

1st Prize - Tom Davis	Autostar Suite Lunar- Planetary Imager Software	Wolf Camera
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GRAND PRIZE

John Molt	8" LX200 Telescope	Meade Deep Sky Imager Pro
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SCAS RAFFLE WINNERS

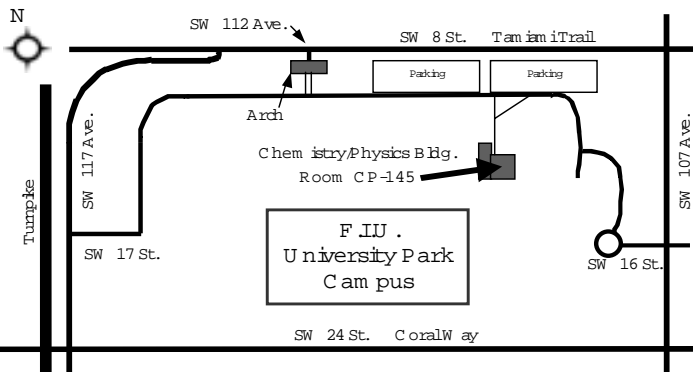
Name	Prize	Vendor
Chad Cantrell, Miami	Optical Filter Set	Burgess Optical
Tippy D'Auria, N. Miami WSP Founder	26mm Prism Binoviewers	Denkmeier
Richard DeLuca, N.Y.	Sky Atlas 2000 Deluxe Sky Atlas Companion	Sky & Telescope
Mary-Ann Feller, N.Y.	32mm Wide Scan Eyepiece	J.J. Biggs
Art Mullis, Brandon, FL	10mm SuperView Eyepiece	OPT
Oscar Ortega, Ft. Worth, FL	Duffel Bag/ Calendar	Astronomy Magazine
Dr. Don Parker, Coral Gables, FL	Calendar	APM Telescope
Harry Pickering, N. Miami	Padded Tripod Case	JMI
Steve Van Ryn, Miami	Handbook of Astro-Image Processing, Intro. To Digital/Image Processing, Photoshop Astronomy	Willmann-Bell R. Scott Ireland
Vickie Van Ryn	BindMite Binoculars	
Dr. Bill Williams, Boca Raton, FL	31mm Type-5 Eyepiece	TeleVue/Nagler

JANUARY CLEAN UP

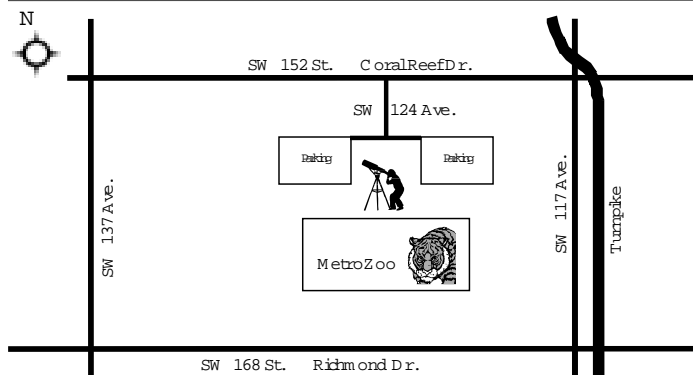
Did you know that before there could be a Winter Star Party, the Girl Scout Camp had to be cleaned up from last year's hurricanes? It was a big job, but Southern Cross workers Tim Kahn, Nick Stingone, Borris Ortiz, Mike Smith, Mike Mooney, Art Mullis, and Russ Brick met at the camp in January. Photos by Nick Stingone.



SCAS General Meetings - Third Friday of every Month



Saturday Solar Viewing - 10am - 12noon

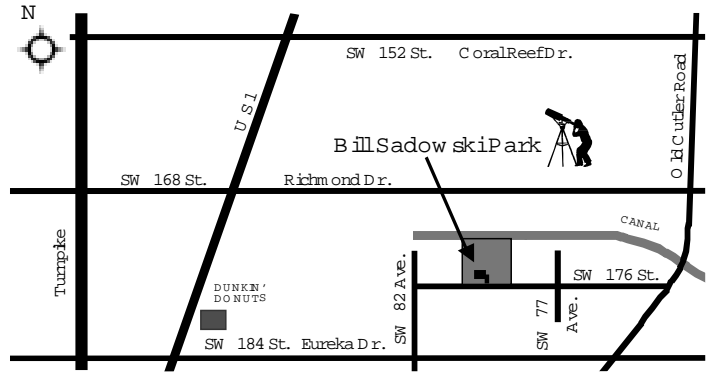


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SCAS Star Gazing - Every Saturday Night 8-10pm



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