**nomical Society of Greenwich**
**ruce Museum of Arts & Science**
**One Museum Drive**
**Greenwich, CT 06830**
**(203) 413-6762**
anneburns@brucemuseum.org
http://www.seocom.com/asg/

# May 2013

# Monthly Meeting

### Wednesday, May 1 – 7:30 PM
***IPad Astronomy***
**Presentation by Rick Bria**

Just when you thought Rick couldn't get more technologically advanced, he comes up with something new! Hope to see many of you at our last monthly meeting before the summer break. We'll also have a progress report on the Bowman Observatory upgrade.

### Bowman Observatory Public Nights
### (Weather Permitting)

May 14 & 28 – 9-11 PM

June 11 & 25 – 9-11 PM

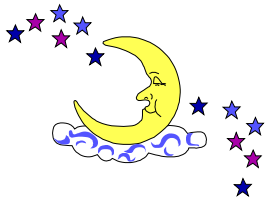
July 9 & 23 – 9-11 PM

## Stargazing in the Meadow a great success!

Below is a letter from Ginny Gwynn of Greenwich Land Trust:

Dear Rick,
Happy Earth Day! Thanks so much to you and Lou for joining us last night for a wonderful evening of star gazing. What a great night we had! Unlike last year, we ended up with "all the stars aligned" for a terrific event. I've spoken today to several people who came last night who really raved about seeing Jupiter and its moons so clearly – as well as the ISS. Those of us who stayed late enough to see Saturn rise above the trees loved that sight as well. Thank you for taking the time to brave the cold and share your knowledge with our group. We will send a donation to ASG this week. With thanks and best wishes, Ginny

## Lunacy



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| May | 2 | *Last Quarter* |
| | 4 | Moon passes **Neptune** |
| | 6 | Moon passes **Uranus** |
| | 9 | *New Moon* causes an annular solar eclipse, visible from Australia and the south Pacific. A partial eclipse is visible from Hawaii. |
| | 10 | Moon passes **Venus** |
| | 12 | Moon passes **Jupiter** |
| | 13 | Moon at apogee (252,168 miles from Earth) |
| | 18 | *First Quarter* |
| | 22 | Moon passes *Spica* |
| | 23 | Moon passes **Saturn** |
| | 25 | Full Moon – "Flower Moon" – is at perigee (222,685 miles from Earth), causing extra high and low tides. The Moon also undergoes a penumbral eclipse, 11:43 PM-12:37 AM, visible from North America - but unfortunately, only 1.6% of the lunar surface is affected, and its light only dims by mag.0.041 - not really worth staying up for. |
| | 27 | Moon passes **Pluto** |
| | 31 | *Last Quarter* Moon passes **Neptune** |

## News of the Worlds

In the early evening, **Venus** (mag.-3.9) heads east, climbing to meet **Jupiter** (mag.-1.9), which is moving west. The pair are joined by **Mercury** (mag. varying from -0.9 to -0.6), which passes **Mars** on May 7, leaves the morning sky (reaching superior conjunction May 11), and arrives in the evening sky around the 15th. The three planets stay close together, gradually changing their relative positions, May 24-28. You'll need to get out early to see them; they all set by 9:30 or so.

**Saturn**, just past opposition, dominates the sky all night, giving multiple opportunities to observe the rings - which are spectacular this year, tilted 18° toward Earth – and the planet's many moons.

**Neptune** (mag.8) rises around 2 AM, and **Uranus** (mag.6) follows an hour later. Mars hovers in the morning twilight and won't really be visible until much later this year.

The **Eta Aquarid Meteor Shower**, part of the dust trail of *Comet Halley*, peaks the morning of May 6. The radiant (the point in the sky where the meteors seem to originate) rises around 3 AM, luckily before moonrise (3:45 AM). Look east-southeast to see 30-55 meteors per hour.

**Comet PAN-STARRS**, now faded to mag.7, can still be tracked through *Cepheus* and *Ursa Minor* (the Little Dipper).

Asteroid **Ceres** moves through Gemini, approaching the star *Pollux* on May 31

**May Day** (May 1) marks the midpoint between the Spring Equinox and the Summer Solstice. (Incidentally, the distress call, "Mayday" has nothing to do with this date. It's from the French phrase, "M'aidez!" – "Help me!")