

# diablo Moonwatch

## Mount Diablo Astronomical Society

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### Killer Asteroid Project

### A NASA Near Earth Object Observations Program

#### MDAS December Meeting

Michael Kran

Students from 200 high schools around the world have worked with an Illinois Observatory, a Texas astronomy professor, and a NASA grant to gather information about asteroids.

Learn the difference between the designations: **Virtual Earth Impactor**, **Near Earth Object** and a **Main Belt Asteroid** and the difference between a discovery, a confirmation and a measurement. Students, working with amateurs like the members of MDAS, get the chance to participate in science.

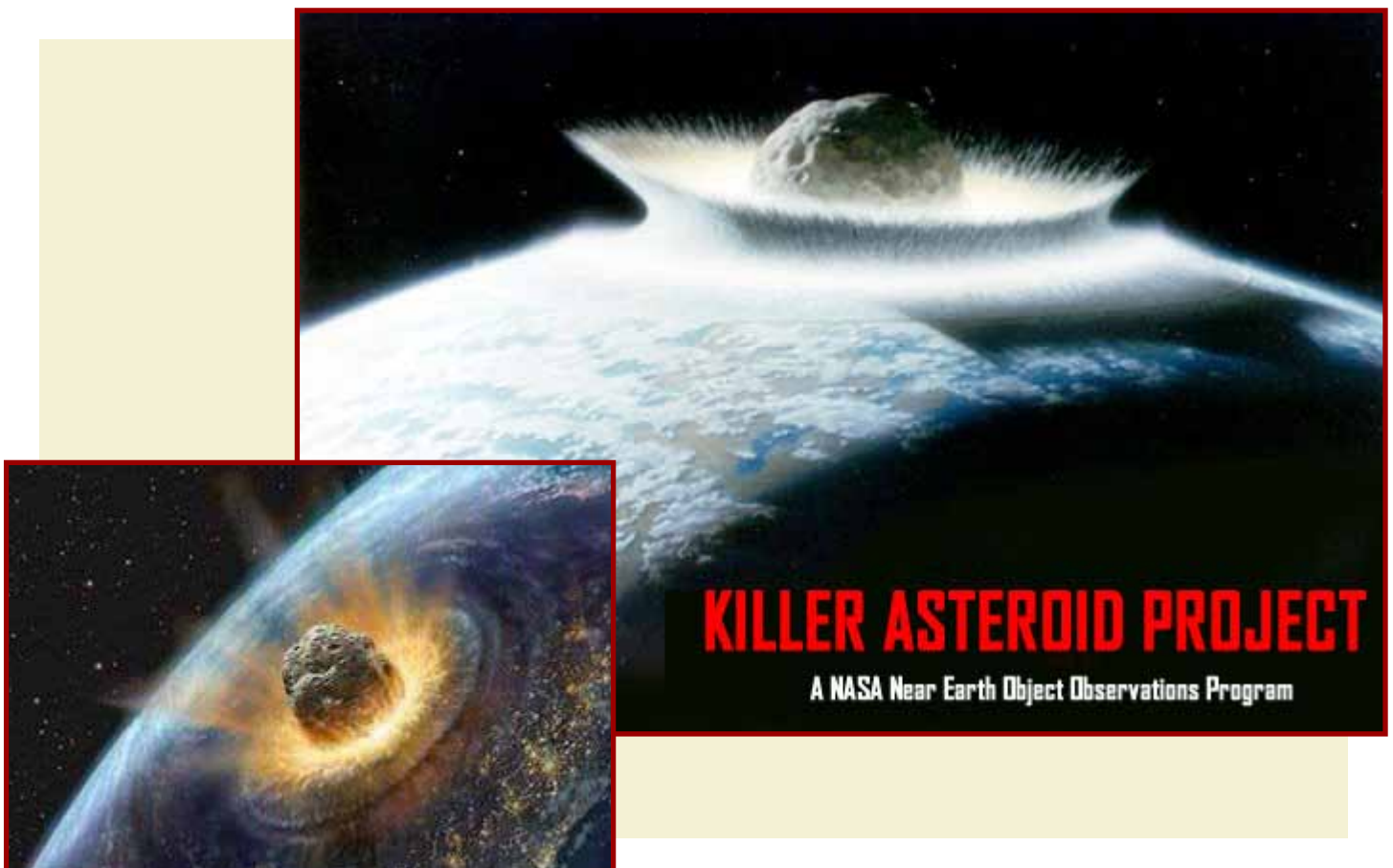
More information on the web about the project: <http://killerasteroidproject.org/>

The two telescopes that supply the images:

<http://ari.home.mchsi.com/phase3.htm>

<http://ari.home.mchsi.com/phase2.htm>

And the educational program: <http://iasc.hsutx.edu/>



# President's Corner

## End of the Year Message

Liede-Marie Haitsma

Another year will be coming to an end soon and what a year it was: **The International Year of Astronomy 2009!**

Events all over the world brought peoples together to look up at the night sky as well as during the day at solar events. Telescopes were purchased, let us hope that they will be in continued usage and not find their way to some dark closet collecting dust. There is so much to see in our Universe. So much is discovered each day by Astronomy amateurs and professionals alike.

As members of the Mount Diablo Astronomical Society it is our responsibility to spread our Club information to everyone that we meet and who is interested in Astronomy. That is why and how we joined the MDAS...so speak about it and show your interest in it... that is how a club grows! We should see ourselves as proud Ambassadors for MDAS and make each year The International Year of Astronomy!

I would like to wish every member of the Mount Diablo Astronomical Society a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Holidays and a Joyous New Year.

## MDAS Meetings and Viewing Events in December

Date	Event	Location	Time	Notes
December 8th	Imaging SIG Meeting	Walnut Acres School (W.C.)	7:00pm	See website
December 15th	MDAS General Meeting	Concord	*	*
December 19th	Society Night	Mount Diablo	See website	See website
* Refreshments and conversations start at 6:45pm. Meetings begin at 7:15pm.				



# Open Position for 2010

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## MDAS Publicity Position Open for 2010

Liede-Marie Haitsma

Publicity for MDAS, whether in the various local newspapers (Contra Costa Times; The Concordian; and The Clayton Pioneer) and through the web (BayNature; and the AANC) have brought interested people to our Public Nights and Club meetings.

This is not a difficult job, but it would take some dedicated time to submit information about our events to the newspapers and websites mentioned above. This position would not require going to Board meetings, but only to give reports via email. Going to a Board meeting though, would give you an awareness of its goings on.

**Always remember that it is through these modes of information that the Club grows in membership.** Please let me know if you would be interested.

Thank you.

# New Mount Diablo State Park Trail Map (6th Edition) is Available

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Liede-Marie Haitsma

My friend, Rich McDrew, President of the **Mount Diablo Interpretive Association**, recently gave me the new, 6th Edition, of the Mount Diablo State Park Trail Map. It is available at the Mitchell Canyon and Summit Visitor Centers and kiosks within the park. Outside the park, it can be found at local bookstores and sporting goods stores. It is sold for \$6 at the park. The map is in full color and is printed on weather-resistant waterproof plastic. This is the most detailed and up-to-date map of the park available.

One side shows all 187 miles of trails within the park. They are clearly shown, and for those hiking into the park, adjoining trails have also been included. Trails suitable for bicyclists and equestrians as well as for those hiking on foot are detailed along with elevations. Users with GPS will be pleased with the new UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator) grid provided. The other side of the map welcomes you to the mountain with general information and park rules for visitors as well as specific information about the history, natural environment, and points of interest within the park. Notes for campers and picnickers have also been included.

Enjoy the new map through many hikes.



# International Year of Astronomy 2009 Leads Us Into Astronomy in the Next Decade

Marni Berendsen

Our December 15th meeting closes IYA 2009 and kicks off the new year with Board elections and an introduction to the new and expanded NASA Night Sky Network.

Find out how you can benefit from the new free services offered by the Night Sky Network as well as techniques to make sharing the universe with the public even more enjoyable. Whether you're just getting started or are an old pro, amateur astronomers often have questions about doing outreach.

Do any of these sound familiar?

- I like astronomy, but how do I get started with outreach?
- What if someone asks me a question I can't answer?
- How do I get people as excited about astronomy as I am?
- What should I do when people ask me questions about aliens, UFO's, and conspiracy theories?

Watch entertaining videos and try out new skills.

The screenshot shows the NASA Night Sky Network website. The main heading is "Night Sky Network" with the tagline "Astronomy Clubs bringing the wonders of the universe to the public". Below this, there is a navigation menu and a statistics bar showing "Events Held Since 2004: 9607" and "People Reached: 843904". The central part of the page features a large yellow text overlay that reads "Launching Dec 1, 2009!". To the left of this overlay is a search bar with fields for "City", "Name", and "Zip", and a "Search" button. The page is divided into several content tiles, including "Join the Network & FAQ's", "About the Network", "Experiences the wonders of the night sky with your local Night Sky Network club.", "How Telescopes Changed our Understanding of the Universe", "Your one-stop planning resource for astronomy events.", "Astronomy clubs who regularly share the sky and the inspiration of NASA science with their communities.", and "A list of the Stars in the Night Sky Network: Mount Diablo Astronomical Society, Apollo Astronomical Society, Concordia NACATC". The footer contains "ASP Home", "Contact", and "Copyright".

Night Sky Network (NSN)





## IYA 2009 in December

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Celebrate the **International Year of Astronomy 2009** with the IYA Discovery Guides:  
<http://www.astrosociety.org/iya/guides.html>

The IYA theme for December: **Discovering New Worlds.**

Find out how NASA astronomers are finding planets around other stars and what characteristics they are hunting for in search of extraterrestrial life with the activity, **What is the "Habitable Zone"?**

The December Discovery Guide gives tips on observing one of the most beautiful star and planet nurseries in our sky: **The Orion Nebula.**

Get your December IYA Discovery Guide here:  
[http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/download-view.cfm?Doc\\_ID=311](http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/download-view.cfm?Doc_ID=311)



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Meetings are held:  
Fourth Tuesday every month, except on the third Tuesday in November and December.  
Refreshments and conversations are at 6:45pm.  
Meetings begin at 7:15pm.  
Where:  
Concord Police Association Facility  
5060 Avila Road, top of the hill.  
Take Avila Road from Willow Pass Road.  
Directions to facility:  
[http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-view-directions.cfm?Address\\_ID=18](http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-view-directions.cfm?Address_ID=18)

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