

2008 NATIONAL YOUNG ASTRONOMER AWARDS



By Carroll Iorg, Vice President

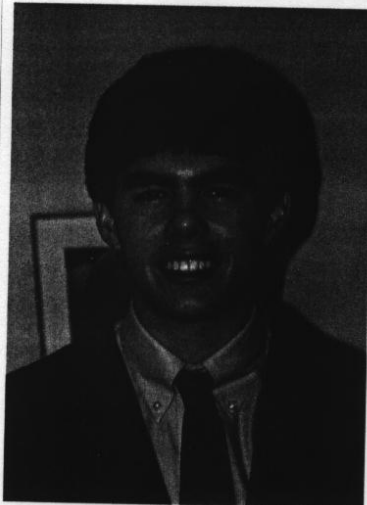
The Astronomical League is pleased to announce the top finishers for the 2008 National Young Astronomer Award program. Thousands of high school students from across the country were eligible to compete for the 2008 award. Our national judges, all noted astronomers, once again were Dr. David Hans Hough, professor at Trinity University, Dr. David L. Lambert, from the University of Texas, and Dr. Robert Stencel, professor at the University of Denver.

Our 2008 NYAA winner is **John Hodge II**.

John is a senior at Spring Valley High School in Columbia, South Carolina.

Among the research work he has done while at Spring Valley

JOHN HODGE II



High School has been a project entitled "Light Curve Analysis of Cataclysmic Variable Star Systems: Cam Var 06, FS Aur, HT Cas, IP Peg, and EQ Aqr." This project was submitted with his application.

The purpose of his project was to "create light curves and determine the orbital period of selected cataclysmic variable stars using photometry to measure short term changes in brightness, in a matter of minutes over the course of one to four hours. From constructed light curves, one star system was to be selected for an in depth analysis of its stellar properties and orbital characteristics." His research was conducted at the



LARA KNOREK

Bethune Observers Group facility.

The conclusions of John's research are that "eclipsing cataclysmic variables, such as IP Peg provide the opportunity to derive quantitative properties of short period compact binary star systems. More quantitative calculations can be derived from eclipsing CVs than non-eclipsing CVs. From analysis of the light curve of IP Peg, the eclipse of the white dwarf by

the accretion disk, red dwarf, and bright spot may be identified."

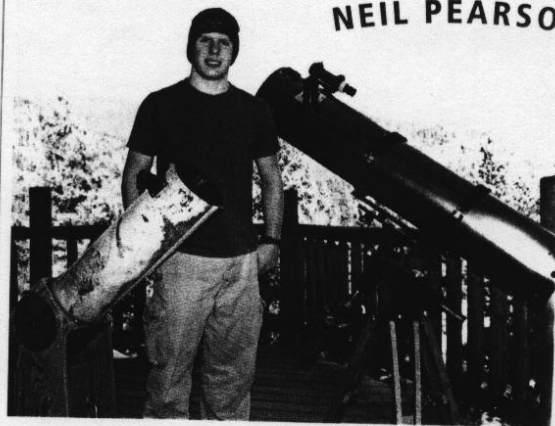
He has won an all-expenses-paid trip to ALConExpo 2008, the Astronomical League's annual convention, which will be held July 18-19 in Des Moines, Iowa. Other prizes include a League plaque that will be presented to John at the Saturday night banquet at ALConExpo 2008 and a complimentary membership in the International Dark Sky Association.

NYAA Honorable Mention finishers are **Lara Knorek** and **Neil Pearson**.

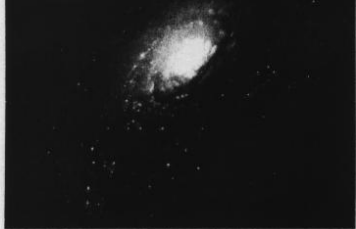
Lara Knorek is a senior at Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Her project was entitled "Analysis of Light Curves of Supernovae." The purpose of the investigation was to analyze the anomalies from the normal light curve classifications of supernovae and possibly suggest new categories for classifying these

Continued on next page

NEIL PEARSON



Observing Awards



Editor's Note: Congratulations to all these outstanding astronomical observers! These are all the observing awards reported to us as of our press deadline. All awards except the Herschel 400 require current Astronomical League membership for eligibility.

This issue's list includes all awards available by the production deadline.



Arp Peculiar Galaxies Observing Award

No. 53V, George Robert Kepple, Huachuca Astronomy Club; No. 21C, Richard Jakiel, Atlanta Astronomy Club
Binocular Deep Sky Award

No. 254, George Robert Kepple, Huachuca Astronomy Club; No. 255, Ed Jarrett, Warsaw Astronomical Society; No. 256, Terry Zimmerman, Amarillo Astronomy Club; No. 257, Bill Bond, Omaha Astronomical Society; No. 258, Lawrence Sevigny, Boise Astronomical Society

Binocular Messier Award

No. 789, Barb Hubal, Richland Astronomical Society; No. 790, Glenn Frank, Denver Astronomical Society; No. 791, George Robert Kepple, Huachuca Astronomy Club; No. 792, Jason Oliphant, Member-at-Large; No. 793, Terry Zimmerman, Amarillo Astronomy Club; No. 794, Larry Wadle, Houston Astronomical Society; No. 795, Joyce Jentges, Northern Cross Science Foundation; No. 796, John Marchetti, Minnesota Astronomical Society; No. 797, Jeremy Baker, Astronomical Society of Kansas City; No. 798, Daryl Stager, Member-at-Large; No. 799, Pamela Lubkans, Westminster Astronomical Society of Maryland; No. 800, James Taylor, Huachuca Astronomy Club; No. 801, Elaine Carlson, The Rose City Astronomers

Comet Observers Award—Silver Certificate

No. 44, Paul Morgam, Umpuqua Amateur Astronomers; No. 43, Amar A. Sharma, Member-



New Astronomical League office email addresses

Society rosters: rosters@astroleague.org
National office: leagueoffice@astroleague.org
League Sales: leaguesales@astroleague.org

at-Large, Bangalore, Karnataka, India; No. 42, Robert W. Magnuson, Astronomical Society of Southern New England; No. 41, Mike Ramirez, Northeast Florida Astronomical Society; No. 40, Curt Roelle, Westminster Astronomical Society of Maryland; No. 39, Chris Waldrup, Raleigh Astronomy Club; No. 38, John L. Goar, Olympic Astronomical Society; No. 37, Becky Ramotowsky, Albuquerque Astronomy Club

Double Star Observer Award

No. 368, Neta Apple, Astronomical Society of Kansas City; No. 369, Paul Henze, Westminster Astronomical Society, Inc; No. 370, Jim Kvasnicka, Prairie Astronomy Club of Lincoln; No. 371, Diane Ketchum, Middle Georgia Astronomical Society; No. 372, James Taylor, Huachuca Astronomy Club; No. 373, Albert L. Allen, Astronomy for Youth; No. 374, Todd Lindley, West Texas Astronomers' Club; No. 375, David P. Rudeen, The Etna Astros; No. 376, Barry Lieb, Fort Worth Astronomical Society; No. 377, Rob H. Wood, Springfield Astronomical Society

Master Observer Award

No. 76, Gordon L. Houston, Houston Astronomical Society; No. 77, Marc Feuerberg, Howard Astronomical League of Central Maryland
Urban Skies Observer Club
No. 107, Clayton L. Jeter, Houston Astronomical Society; No. 108, Gordon L. Houston, Houston Astronomical Society; No.



A BENEFIT FOR LEAGUE MEMBERS

StarDate, the bi-monthly publication of the nonprofit McDonald Observatory, is offering our members a 15% discount. Their magazine provides easy-to-read articles on the latest astronomy research, skywatching, the history of astronomy, and many other topics. *StarDate* also offers starcharts for each month, a sky calendar, and Merlin's answers to reader questions. The discounted rate is \$18 for members in the continental USA, \$22 for Canada, and \$30 to other foreign countries. Members-at-large should send their check (payable to the Astro League) to Tammy Plotner, Executive Secretary, at the Astronomical League office. The appointed person in each club should gather the subscriptions, and send the appropriate amount to: **The University of Texas at Austin, Friends of McDonald Observatory, P. O. Box 7727, Austin, TX 78713-9953.** You can read more about *StarDate* at: www.stardate.org. If you have any questions, please contact Tammy Plotner at: execs@astroleague.org.



McDonald Observatory



109, Jon Zander, Member-at-Large
Herschel 400 Award

No. 382, John Marchetti, Minnesota Astronomical Society; No. 383, David Hofland, Member-At-Large; No. 384, Ken Pryor, Oklahoma Astronomical Club; No. 385, Robert Payne, Astronomy for Youth; No. 386, Brian Morton, Stillwater Stargazers; No. 387, James Taylor, Huachuca Astronomy Club

NYAA/Continued from previous page

anomalies. The conclusion was that even though the study suggested that new categories are needed for classifying these anomalies, further research is needed to validate the necessity for doing this.

Neil Pearson is scheduled to graduate from Clear Creek High School in Evergreen, Colorado, this spring. In 2007 he received the Colorado School of Mines Math and Science Medal, an award given to one junior student who has demonstrated excellence in math and science. Other awards have included the Bausch and Lomb Honorary Science Award and the National Honor Society. He is an active member of the Denver Astronomical Society and has built his own telescopes in addition to learning the art of mirror polishing. He plans to attend college at either the U.S. Naval Academy or the Colorado School of Mines. He wants to stay involved in the field of astronomy.

For more information about the NYAA awards program, please contact Carroll Iorg, Vice President, at carroll-iorg@kc.rr.com (phone: 816-444-4878). Information is also available on the League's Web site: <http://www.astroleague.org/>. Astronomy club officers and members, please encourage your young club members and other young people you may come in contact with to apply for this award. There is a good deal of variety in the subject matter of submissions received. Whether building an astronomy-related business, completing a science project related to astronomy, or research done at a summer astronomy camp, these types of projects have a good chance of being top finishers. *

Support Reflector advertisers!

Buy a new telescope or other gear!

Reflector advertisers support many League activities.

Let's support them!

Astronomical League Sales is open for business.