

The Willingboro Astronomical Society (WAS) was founded 41 years ago by three 15-year-old boys whose passion for exploring the cosmos led them to form an organization where they could share this interest with others. Today, WAS is a nonprofit group with a large active membership who vigorously support formal and informal society activities.

The mission of the Willingboro Astronomical Society is fourfold:

- To promote astronomy as an interesting, wholesome activity for people of all ages
- To educate the public about the natural wonders that make up our universe and the need to preserve the beauty of our night sky
- To serve our members through the sharing of ideas, expertise, and equipment at meetings and observing sessions
- To provide an opportunity for members who share this passion for astronomy to socialize at society sponsored picnics and parties

You do **not** need a telescope to join WAS. All of our meetings are open to the public, so you can “try” us before deciding whether to join.

Annual Club Activities

- WAS hosts 9 free public star watches in association with the New Jersey Division of Parks & Forestry
- WAS hosts several school-sponsored star watches
- WAS holds two member-only picnics
- WAS holds a members-only holiday party that includes door prizes

Informal Club Activities

- When observing conditions are good, members will meet at several observing sites, including Carranza Field and Coyle Field
- Members communicate via Yahoo Groups (wasociety@yahoo.com)
- Groups of WAS members attend events such as Winter Star Party, Stellafane, Black Forest Star Party, Northeast Astronomy Forum (NEAF)

Meetings

- WAS meets twice a month (usually the first and last Friday) at the St. Peter Celestine School in Cherry Hill (on Kings Highway)
- Meetings begin at 7:50 PM.
- Meetings include discussions of observations, equipment, astronomical challenges, and audio-visual presentations via WAS’s digital projector

Membership

- Membership dues are \$24 per year
- Dues are prorated depending on the month one’s membership begins
- A monthly newsletter is available on the WAS website.

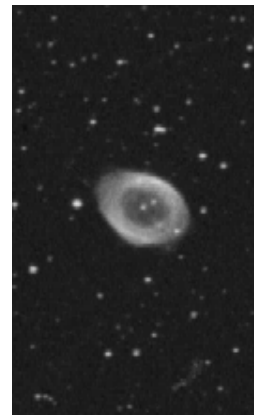
WAS Member Expertise

If you are just starting out in astronomy or have some experience as an observer, WAS members can offer knowledge and practical expertise in these areas:

- Basic astronomy
- Telescopes and observing equipment
- Observing techniques
- Lunar / solar / planetary observing
- Deep sky objects (DSOs)
- Astrophotography
- CCD and DSLR digital imaging
- Presentations and activities for school students

WAS Meeting Site

Our regular meeting site is at **St. Peter Celestine School**, 402 N. Kings Highway, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034. St. Peter Celestine Church is about ¼-mile north of Chapel Avenue on the left-hand side of the highway. The entrance is adjacent to the north side of the church building. The school building is behind the church. WAS meets in the second floor faculty lounge (turn left at top of stairs).



M57, the Ring Nebula, can be found in the constellation of Lyra. Though called a *planetary nebula*, it has nothing to do with planets. When stars like the Sun die, they eject a huge shell of gas that glows from the heat of the dying star, which we call a white dwarf. At a WAS Star Watch, you will see M57 and other celestial wonders.