



October 2011

Dear Friend of the ASP:

In today's world, where the things we do often seem to lead to unintended consequences, isn't it nice to know that generosity remains one of those acts where *intended* consequences can still result? It is to provide such intended consequences that we ask for your generous support in our annual fall appeal.

Let me tell you of one such consequence: his name is Aaron Leifheit. Aaron is the Environmental Education Program Director at Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association near Las Vegas, and he attended last fall's ASP Sky Rangers workshop at Yosemite National Park. The program trains people like Aaron, who work at national parks and other outdoor educational venues, to effectively incorporate astronomy into their programs for the benefit of their visitors.

At the Yosemite workshop, Aaron received some Galileoscopes, developed during the International Year of Astronomy, to teach the principles of optics and provide a ready-made way for kids to explore their world as Galileo did. Aaron used his new telescopes for the After School Allstars program, in which a group of Las Vegas inner city kids came to the canyon for an overnight camping trip last November. Aaron taught a lesson on Galileo, who he was and what he did, followed by observations of Jupiter. He then gave the telescopes to the kids, who practiced using them on a night hike and again the next day. They went home the excited owners of a new way to study the world around them—perhaps to spark a life-long interest in science, and to consider becoming scientists themselves one day, making new discoveries all their own.

Aaron wrote: "These events would not have been possible without the kindness of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific's generosity! Thank you!" What this really means is that these events—and so many others around the nation and beyond, sparked by Sky Rangers and other ASP programs—would not be possible without the kindness of *your* generosity.

Your gift, and the work it supports, has real impact, reaching into the classrooms of Project ASTRO teachers, into the public events of amateur astronomers, into the outdoor programs of people like Aaron Leifheit, who work every day to advance science literacy using the tools and training that our Society provides, even as we help to advance science through our professional publications, meetings, and other activities as well.

It's important work at a time when public understanding and appreciation of science is urgently needed, when science education leading to new generations of scientists and science-literate citizens is crucial to our future. Astronomy has proven, time and again, to be an appealing and effective avenue toward these goals.

I ask you to help us advance these goals with an investment in the work of the ASP and in the science future of our national and global societies—to be generous as we work together to achieve the intended consequences of a future of science enlightenment and achievement. In the meantime, please accept the enclosed pocket guide to next year's transit of Venus (and other celestial highlights) as a small token of our appreciation and to help you prepare for this rare event. Thanking you in advance for your support, I remain

Sincerely Yours,

James G. Manning  
Executive Director, Astronomical Society of the Pacific

*P.S. Please give generously so that we can, together, help more Aaron Leifheits introduce kids to science!*