WHAT IS A "STAR PARTY"?

A star party is an invitation to anyone wishing to enjoy and learn more about the wonders of the night sky.
At a star party, AAAP members setup their personal telescopes (a wide variety of models) and offer visitors the opportunity to view celestial objects.
Visitors can bring their own scopes to take advantage of viewing conditions at the site.
Other use the occasion to simply view the stars and planets with their own eyes.

Star parties begin just before sunset.
Unpredictable celestial events such as meteors or an Aurora Borealis often make our public star parties memorable events.

At AAAP star parties our members are happy to answer questions about astronomy, recommend the proper telescope to buy, or help you set up and align your own telescope.

GETTING READY FOR A STAR PARTY

Check the sky conditions before departing.
If the sky is overcast or the forecast suggests rain, consider postponing your visit until the next event.
If there are just a few scattered clouds in the sky (with the Moon and stars visible in between), the star party will be a "go".

The observatory in Mingo Creek Park is close to Shelter 10, which has a handicap environmental restroom.
A portable toilet may also be available on the observing hill. Food and beverages are not served at our star parties and alcoholic beverages are prohibited in Washington County Parks.

WHAT EQUIPMENT SHOULD YOU BRING?

You don't need to bring a telescope or other observer equipment to a star party. However, some items may make the night more comfortable and enjoyable.
It often gets cool on a clear night, even in summer, so bring a coat, light jacket or sweater.
Blankets, head cover and extra layers of clothing (including socks) are recommended for continued comfort during star parties in the spring and fall.
To avoid neck strain from constant sky gazing, it helps to bring some type of portable folding chair.

IS THERE A FEE?

All AAAP star parties are free to the public.
However, the AAAP appreciates any donations to help cover facility-operating costs.

WHERE ARE THE STAR PARTIES HELD?

Mingo Creek Park Observatory: The Observatory is located 10 miles east of Washington PA in Nottingham Township in Mingo Creek County Park. The park is in the northeast section of Washington County.
The observing location is on the top of the hill past Shelter 10. The park is located off Route 88 or Route 136 in Washington County. See the back of this flyer for the map to the observatory site.

The Mingo Creek Park Observatory has two permanently mounted telescopes in separate rooms, a refractor and a reflector telescope. The building also houses a small planetarium where the night sky can be displayed indoors when there's bad weather, or for special educational events.
(phone# 724-348-6150)

Wagman Observatory: The Wagman Observatory is located in Deer Lakes Regional Park near Russellton, PA in the northeast corner of Allegheny County.
The observatory entrance is at the top of the hill in the middle of the park. Wagman observatory is a small building with a conventional gable roof design.
(phone# 724-224-2510)

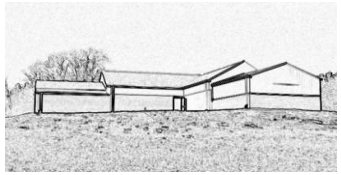
Tips for driving: If you are unfamiliar with either location we recommend that you drive during daylight to help spot landmarks. Always observe speed limits in the parks. Additional maps and directions are also available on the club's web site (see below).

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the activities of and membership of the AAAP, please write us at:
AAAP, P.O. Box 314, Glenshaw, PA 15116
Or access the homepage on the Internet:
http://www.3ap.org
Or send email to: aaap@3ap.org

Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh

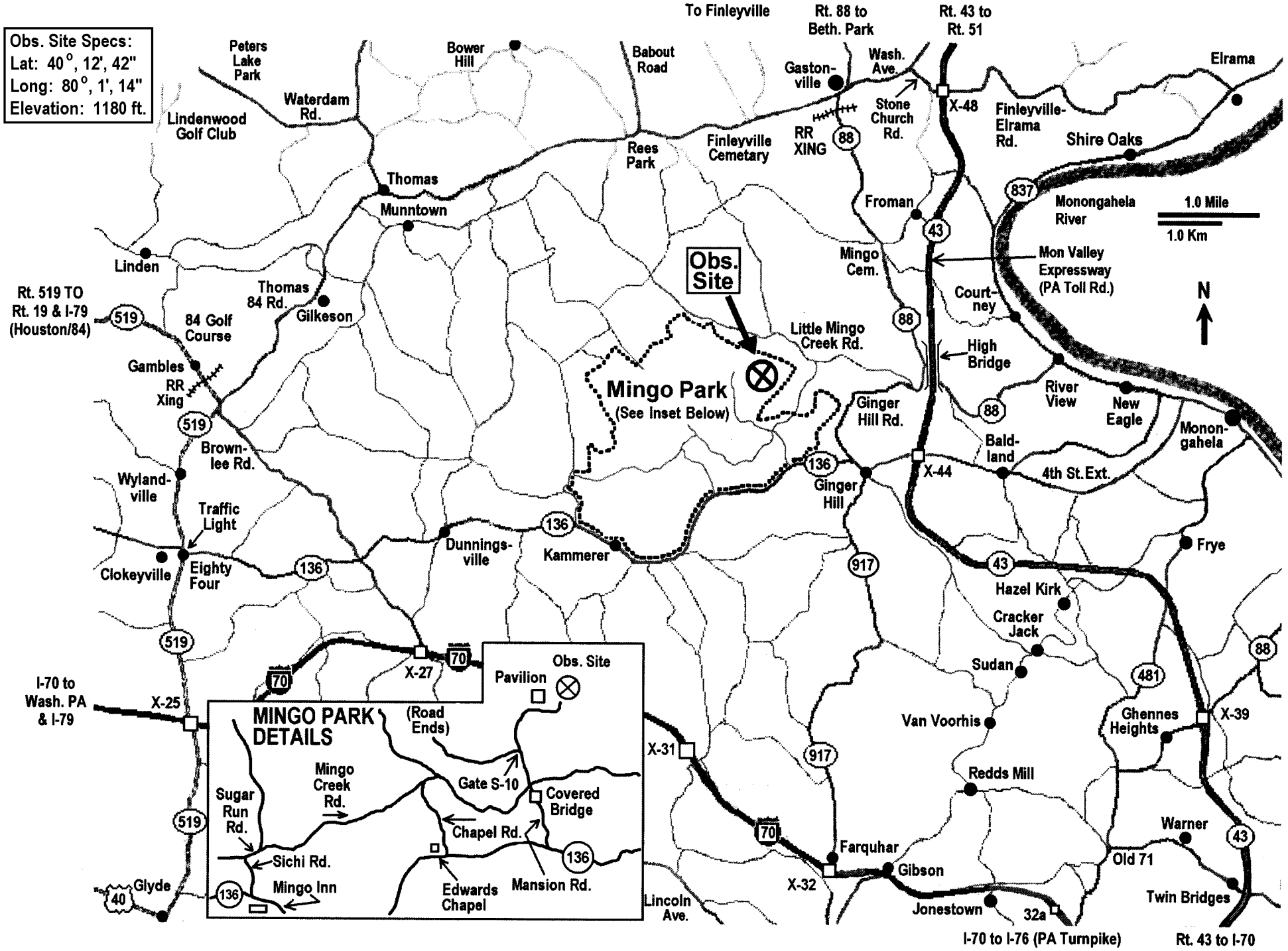
Mingo Creek Park Observatory



2010 Star Party Schedule

Mingo Creek Park Observatory
April 16 & 17
May 7 & 8, 21 & 22
June 18 & 19
July 16 & 17
Aug 13 & 14
Sept 10 & 11
Oct 2, 16, 23 Moonrise

Nicholas E. Wagman Observatory
Feb 20, Winterfest
April 16 & 17
May 21 & 22
June 18 & 19
July 16 & 17
Aug 13 & 14
Sept 11 & 25, Dark Sky
Oct 16 & 23 Moonrise


Obs. Site Specs:
Lat: 40°, 12', 42"
Long: 80°, 1', 14"
Elevation: 1180 ft.
To Finleyville
Rt. 88 to Beth. Park
Rt. 43 to Rt. 51
Peters Lake Park
Bower Hill
Babout Road
Gaston-ville
Wash. Ave.
Elrama
Lindenwood Golf Club
Waterdam Rd.
RR XING
Stone Church Rd.
X-48
Finleyville-Elrama Rd.
Shire Oaks
Rees Park
Finleyville Cemetary
Thomas
Munntown
Froman
837
Monongahela River
1.0 Mile
1.0 Km
Linden
Obs. Site
Mingo Cem.
Mon Valley Expressway (PA Toll Rd.)
Rt. 519 TO Rt. 19 & I-79 (Houston/84)
Thomas 84 Rd.
Gilkeson
84 Golf Course
Court-ney
N
Little Mingo Creek Rd.
High Bridge
Gambles
RR Xing
Mingo Park
(See Inset Below)
River View
New Eagle
Monon-gahela
Ginger Hill Rd.
Brown-lee Rd.
Bald-land
Wyland-ville
Ginger Hill
X-44
4th St. Ext.
Traffic Light
Dunnings-ville
Kammerer
Frye
Clokeyville
Eighty Four
917
Hazel Kirk
Cracker Jack
Sudan
I-70 to Wash. PA & I-79
X-25
X-27
Pavilion
Obs. Site
MINGO PARK DETAILS
(Road Ends)
Van Voorhis
Ghennes Heights
X-39
X-31
Mingo Creek Rd.
Gate S-10
Covered Bridge
Redds Mill
Sugar Run Rd.
Chapel Rd.
Warner
Sichi Rd.
Farquhar
Old 71
Glyde
Mingo Inn
Edwards Chapel
Mansion Rd.
X-32
Gibson
Lincoln Ave.
Jonestown
32a
Twin Bridges
I-70 to I-76 (PA Turnpike)
Rt. 43 to I-70