



Wright State University Astronomy Club joins “StarPeace”

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The Wright State University Astronomy Club has joined StarPeace, a “special project” of the International Year of Astronomy 2009 (a year-long celebration of the 400th anniversary of Galileo Galilei's revolutionary telescopic discoveries) that is dedicated to the peaceful pursuit of astronomy between neighboring nations. Our organization found out about StarPeace through the IYA 2009 web site (<http://www.astronomy2009.org>). Our initial visit to the StarPeace web site, <http://www.starpeace.org>, revealed that no partners had yet joined from North America, so I contacted the administrators via e-mail to see if our club could qualify for an event. I spoke to Irene Shivaie, a physics student at the University of Tehran in Iran. Irene told me that StarPeace invitations for North American astronomy organizations to participate had gone unanswered, and then she asked me if WSUAC would be interested in joining StarPeace as its first American partner. “We would be honored!” I replied.

A StarPeace 'star party' basically consists of organizations from countries sharing a mutual border coming together and holding a stargaze in the name of international peace. If the mutual border is not free, the two organizations stargaze in close proximity to each other with the sky as their common canopy. An event has already been held between India and Pakistan. As of this writing, the project has 21 participating clubs from 18 countries.

Being a club with few financial resources, we began looking at the possibility of holding a stargaze with an organization based in nearby Canada. To this end, we have contacted the Windsor Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (<http://www.rasc.ca>) to see if they might be interested in joining us. We are now awaiting a reply and will keep everyone updated on the status of this wonderful project!