



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

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August 2002

In Remembrance...

Carl Peck passed away June 5, 2002. Carl was born August 5, 1929. He was a retired quality controller. Carl had a life long interest in astronomy and was a very active amateur astronomer for many years. Carl was an avid planetary observer and had a particular interest in Mars and Jupiter. He was an ACA member in the early 1990's and was active in the OTAA having served as a council member for many years. In 1994 Carl coordinated a successful OTAA eclipse expedition to the Toledo area for the annular eclipse on May 10th.

Carl supported just about every OTAA club by being a member at one time or another. Many ACA members remember Carl as a dedicated amateur astronomer who would enthusiastically participate in any discussion of the aspects of astronomy. We will all miss Carl's valuable contributions and expertise.

Over the years, Carl accumulated many astronomy related items. These are now being offered for sale. If you are interested in what may be available, please contact Carl Peck Jr. at: cmpeck@attbi.com

Next Meeting

Seems like it has been all summer since we had our last meeting. <grin>. I am looking forward to our next meeting on Friday, September 27 at 8:00 pm.

It will be a good chance to meet some of the new club members and to see members that may not have had a chance to get out to the summer programs.

Our speaker will be our own Jay Svitko, who will finish up his series on the Messier objects.

ACA Cans for WCHS

By Becky Kelly

I would like to thank everyone who remembered to put their empty soda can in the recycle bin at both the Dog Days program as well as the club's picnic.

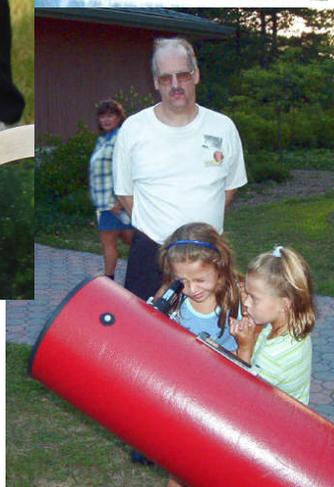
We collected a total of three bags full of cans which were donated to the Wayne County Humane Society. WCHS recycles aluminum cans and the money goes toward the care of the animals.

Also, I made a small contribution to the Second Chance Fund in the name of the ACA, Manny (my kitty) and myself. The Second Chance Fund is money set aside specifically for the care of sick and injured animals that come into the shelter. As any pet owner knows, vet

bills are not cheap. I received a brief note from Brenda Myers, (Continued on Page 3)

Pops In the Park By Gregg Crenshaw

Club members had fun talking about the wonders of astronomy and promoting the ACA to the public at the Metro Parks "Pops In the Park" concerts. Concerts by the Akron Pops Orchestra took place at Firestone Metro Park's Coventry Oaks Pavilion June 27, July 18, and August 15. Many of the people we talked to came to public programs at the ACA Observatory during the summer. A big "ACA Thanks" to Jeff Hudson, Gary Smith, Jay Svitko, Lynn Laux, and my wife Debbie for helping me out with these events.



Activities Calendar

Club

August 30, Wilderness Center Star Gaze
September 6-8, Astro Tour 2002
September 6-8, Black Forest Star Party
September 14, ACA Observatory Program
September 14, Black River OTAA
September 27, ACA Monthly Meeting 8 PM
October 4 + 5, Hidden Hollow '02
October 12, Scope Out 2002

Celestial

September 6, New Moon
September 21, Full Moon
September 23, Autumnal Equinox
September 26, Venus at Max. Brightness

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The deadline for article submission is **two weeks before the next meeting**. All word processing files should be saved in straight ASCII text files or any version of Word to minimize import problems. We will not turn away **any** submission, as long as the article's subject is astronomy or a related topic. If you don't have access to a computer, don't hesitate to write something out long hand. As long as it is legible, I will slave over the keyboard and get it published.

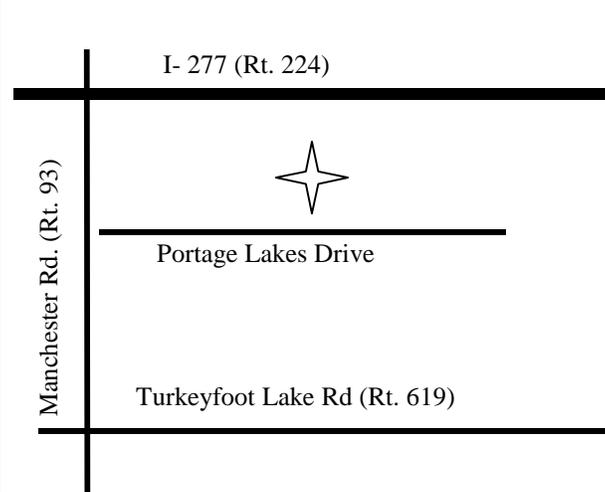
PLEASE SEND IN YOUR ARTICLES!!!!

Send your articles, items for sale, and comments to:

Ray Hyer, 725 Brewer St. Akron, OH 44305 Email: rhyer@neo.rr.com

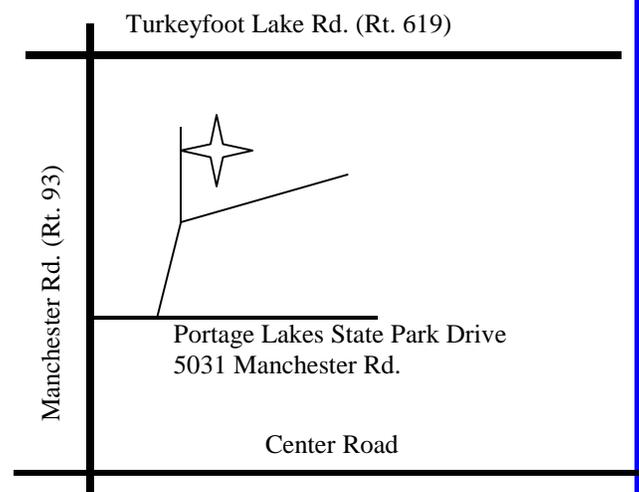
MONTHLY MEETING LOCATION:

The Astronomy Club of Akron meets at 8:00 PM at the Kiwanis Hall, 725 Portage Lakes Drive.



OBSERVATORY LOCATION:

The ACA Observatory is located within the Portage Lakes State Park on Manchester Rd. (Rt. 93). Turn left off Manchester Rd, then left at the first drive. Observatory is across the street from the Park Office.





Ether Drag

By Jeff Hudson

Thanks!

Thank you to the following people:

Gregg - for allowing me to use the Firestone Park scope with the solar filter. I made good use of it and realize I really want a solar filter for my own telescope.

Vic - for lending me an adapter to use my binoculars on my camera tripod.

Jim - for setting up the ACA picnic at Craftsman Park.

Debbie for cooking at the picnic and Debbie and Becky for cooking at the Solar/Lunar program.

More Astronomy on the Road

My family and I went to Niagara Falls, NY. We actually stayed at a friend's house located just a few miles from Lake Ontario. I did not have room to pack a telescope but managed to take along my binoculars.

We were located north of the falls and the big power plants, but the light pollution was not that bad to the south.

The first night there, I easily spotted the thin crescent of the few days old moon. The next night, I actually set up the binoculars. I could easily see the scorpion's red heartbeat, but could not make out its tail. Straight overhead and to the north, the seeing was excellent. The milky way band arched from Cassiopeia down toward Scorpius.

Instead of really looking for objects, I just laid back in a lawn chair and scanned the sky. After a while my friend's father-in-law came out and he told me about being in the desert during WWII and just laying

back and looking at the heavens.

I think I just need to buy a couple of more telescopes and just leave them at my friend's house and at my parent's house. That way I will have a telescope at both dark sky locations.

Another Meteor Shower

The next night I stayed at my parents. They live in western PA in the middle of no where. I think the milky way was a little brighter at this location, but it was well after midnight and I was so tired from driving all day. My wife did catch a glimpse of two meteorites streaking across the sky. That was when I realized it was the start of the peak time for the Persids. Hopefully, I did not miss much that night, because I was asleep within minutes.

The next night I was safely back home, so I woke up around 4 am, to catch a glimpse of the meteor shower. Wouldn't you know it, the weather for Ohio, was our normal partially cloudy, so I only saw a handful before I headed back inside.

NASA News

NASA officials are considering what to do about a problem discovered August 12 with the two giant crawler transporters that move the space shuttle back and forth between the Vehicle Assembly Building and pads 39A and B at Kennedy Space Center.

The trouble is with the bearings that are part of the crawler system that keeps the entire space shuttle stack level while the transporter moves up and down a gentle incline at the launch pad.

Routine inspections on the Apollo-era equipment revealed cracks in some of the bearings and, in at least one case, a bearing that essentially was just taking up space as a collection of parts, officials said. The crawler originally was

built 37 years ago.

Ignoring any potential for delay because of the crawler transporter concern, space center workers are scheduled to install Atlantis' three main engines and continue to target launch for Saturday, Sept. 28.

Until next month ...

LAST CHANCE FOR TELRAD DEW SHIELDS

All the info on these was in last month's news letter.

The cost is \$10.00 for the regular hard shell cover and \$20.00 for the Deluxe model with a mirror so it works like a 90 deg finder.

You must send the money in NOW.

Make checks payable to Astronomy 1 on 1 and send to:

Telrad Dew Shield
704 S. Sheraton Cir
Akron Oh 44319-1955

You snooze, You Loose!

ACA Cans

(From Page 1)

an agent for WCHS. It reads:

"Thank you to Manny and the Astronomy Club for the donations. The Second Chance pets are so much in need. Manny - I remember him. He is such a good looking spokeskitty."

I will continue to collect soda cans at the observatory so please remember to place your empties in the white bin.

If you would like more info on WCHS, you can visit them on-line at www.wchs.org or if you're in the Wooster area, stop by 1161 Mechanicsburg Road and visit the animals.



Astro Tour 2002

By Rich Ruggles

The Sandusky Valley Amateur Astronomy Club

(Home of the 12.5 inch McMillin refractor)

What: The fourth annual Astro-Tour '02

When: September 6-8, 2002

Where: Ballreich Observatory near Tiffin, Ohio

Web Site: www.friendlynet.com/astronomy

History: www.phy.ilstu.edu/~wenning/McMillin/McMillin.html

The Sandusky Valley Amateur Astronomy Club will be hosting the 4th annual Astro-Tour star party.

The location will be the club's dark sky site just north of Tiffin, Ohio.

The site is also the location of the Ballreich Observatory and the 12.5" McMillin refractor.

This telescope was originally built for Ohio State University around 1890. The lens assembly was designed by Brashear. It was refurbished and installed in its current site in the mid 1980's.

Weather permitting; this scope will be available for observing during the star party! The Astro-Tour will commence Friday evening September 6 at 6:00 p.m. and end Sunday morning September 8 at noon.

The star party will be held at the Tiffin Ranger Camp. There is a large tree lined grass field that will accommodate your tents, cars and telescopes. There is also a parking area for RV's. Open campfires are prohibited but camp stoves are fine. There are new showers facilities available, but not phones or water spigots. There are three restrooms available on site.

This is the fourth year for the Astro-Tour and we are still making improvements. Recent improvements include a new main restroom/shower facility and a much needed cleaning of the McMillian optics. In addition, we will be try-

ing our luck with weather in September this year to avoid the rain and cold weather that has been prevalent in past years. Our wish is to provide a setting for a relaxed gathering of amateur astronomers. On-site concessions will be available during meal times. Breakfast will not be served and if desired, you will have to rely on the local restaurants in the Tiffin area. In case you would like to be "out of the weather" to sleep, there will be bunks available.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

*

Got photos, display items to talk about, stuff to sell? Bring them! We will have indoor tables for your use.

* Observatory is visible from the road, on the south side, behind a tree line.

* There is plenty of room to pitch a tent room if you stay, bunks will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

* Electric available for telescopes.

* No RV's on field - park in entry parking lot.

* No white lights after dusk.

* There will be no registration fee for walk-in's that do not bring telescopes or stay the night.

* Hot dogs / hamburgers / concessions will be available for a nominal fee

* Many restaurants are available in Tiffin.

* Solar observing Saturday, weather permitting.

PRICES

Individual Registration - \$15

Family Registration - \$20

Bunk - \$10 (as available)

(Prices are for the weekend)

DIRECTIONS

From the Turnpike:

Exit from the Ohio Turnpike onto Rt 53 South in Fremont. Stay on Rt 53 South and go around Fremont toward Tiffin. You will pass through the town of Fort Seneca. Keep going south. Approximately

2.5 miles past Fort Seneca is County Road 38. Go Left (East) on County Road 38. (There is a modern gray barn on this corner) Go about 1/4 mile on CR 38. Go down the hill and over the river. Take a left on County Road 33 (north) after going over the river. About 1/2 mile on this road you will see Ballreich Observatory in the field on your right. Pull into the stone parking lot and you are there.

If interested, please reply to this email and let me know!

Also, feel free to forward this to anyone you may feel is interested.

Thanks,

Tom Day – SVAAC Secretary



For Sale

1948 Starliner 10" f 5.3 Newtonian on a heavy duty 1 3/4" shaft EQ mount.

A.C. motor drives on both RA and DEC. with 8" diameter setting circles.

1 1/4 rack & pinion with Helical fine adjustment. 6 x 30 finder scope.

6" diameter pier with eyepiece rack and 3" adjustable leveling pads on all 3 legs.

Comes with 5 Eyepieces 40mm, 25mm, 18mm, 12mm, 4mm, 2x Barlow and solar filter in a fitted box.

Price \$875.00 Roger Oakley

To see the scope call Rich at 330-644-5912 or astronomy1on1@cs.com.



Astronomy On the Road

By Rich Ruggles

1) Sept. 6-7-8

Black Forest Star Party at
Cherry Springs State Park.
Located in central PA.

This area is dedicated to the hobby of astronomy. There are many light pollution laws and regulation in place to protect the night sky. The park is located about 5 1/2 hours East of Akron in central PA. Vic DeChristoforo went last year and said "It's worth the drive".

For more Info and directions go to there web site black-forest@pop.psu.edu.

2) Sept. 6-7-8

Astronomy Weekend hosted by the Kanawha Valley Astronomical Society and Black Water Falls State Park in West Virginia.

This location is about 20 mi north of Spruce Knob at an elevation of 4,420 ft. This is also about a 5 1/2 hour trip north central W. VA. Gregg Crenshaw has been there and said "The skies were incredible".

For more Info contact Chuck Spann at 304-346-3422 or Email him at cwspann@aol.com

3) Sept 6-7-8

Astro-Tour 2002 sponsored by The Sandusky Valley Astronomical Society.

It will be held at the Ballrich Observatory near Tiffin Ohio. This one is only about 2 hours West of Akron straight out SR 224.

I went to this one 2 years ago and gave it a rave review. They will have good size swap table so take any items you want to sell and look for the bargains for yourself. They have made many improvements to the telescope, and the Ranger camp where it is located, has also made many improvements to it's facility. You can camp in the field or stay in

a cabin.

The Info for this Star party is in this newsletter. Or contact the web site of the SVAAS at www.accnorwalk.com/~tddi/tech2000/skytour.

4) Sept 13th 8:30 pm

Aurora Parks Astronomy Series "Deep Space Splendors" Hosted by the Aurora Astronomical Society.

This will be held at the Moore Outdoor Education Center on Bissell Rd in Aurora. There will be a slide program followed by a star party.

For more Info and directions contact Rich Ruggles 330-644-5912 or Email astronomy1on1@cs.com

5) Sept 14th 8:00 pm

The Autumn Constellations program to be held at the ACA observatory in Portage Lakes State Park

6) Sept. 14th

Black River Astronomical Society OTAA Star Party and pot luck dinner. Take a covered dish and share in the feast. 1/4 lb hot dogs will be provided. The drawing will have some terrific items, the swap table will be packed with bargains, not to mention the Midnight wiener roast.

This is a good time star party that is held rain or shine in Birmingham Ohio at the picnic pavilion and hall of Strawberry Mountain Park.

For more Info and directions contact BRAA at www.friendlynet.com/astro

7) Sept 20th 7:30pm

Aurora Astronomical Society monthly meeting.

Held at The Moore Outdoor Education Center Bissell Rd Aurora Ohio. The meeting will be followed by a observing session

8) Sept 27th 8:00pm

The Astronomy Club of Akron monthly meeting held at the Port-

age Lakes Kiwanis hall.

This is a early notice for those who want to make advance plans to attend the 2 October conventions

Oct 4-5-6

Hidden Hollow Convention and OTAA Star Party Hosted by The Richland Astronomical Society

This alternating year gathering bring in top speakers from across the country. It also boast the largest scopes available for viewing, a 32" and a 36".

There are many hotels/motels at exit 169 off SR 71 at SR13, if you don't wish to camp. They are Baymont, Amerihost, Travel Lodge, and Motel 8. You can find discount coupons for some of these on www.roomsaver.com.

For more Info contact the RAS at www.wro.org.

Oct 12th

Scope-Out 2002 at the historical Cincinnati Observatory, the birth place of astronomy in the United States.

One of the two observatories houses the oldest daily used telescope in the world. There will be speakers all day Saturday with the keynote speaker starting after dinner.

For all the info on this one go to www.cincinnatiobservatory.org. Contact me for the best deal on a motel at the Montgomery Rd exit off SR 71. this is 2 blocks from Dick Clarks restaurant, bar and nightclub. It's a lot of fun on Friday night. Contact Rich 330-644-5912 astronomy1on1@cs.com

As always if you need more Info or directions to any of these gatherings, call or Email me. Clear Skies

ASTEROID 2002NY40

By Ray Paul

What a week! It all started last Sunday when Tom Erickson from WNIR radio contacted Phil Hegenferfer about someone from the club joining Tom on the air to talk about and answer questions about “the asteroid.” It took a couple of more days to get in touch with Tom which was a good thing since I didn’t know beans about “the asteroid” at that point. After a little research Ted Faix and I went to the studio in Kent on Thursday night to spend an hour on the air from 8-9 PM which stretched until 10 PM.

Tom immediately made us feel right at home (we were even allowed to smoke) and I felt it surprisingly easy with no real sense of stage fright to talk into a microphone to a voice coming out of a small speaker on the desk in front of us. I was fully expecting a variety of questions about crop circles, ufos, and planet X but we really had nothing but very good serious questions about astronomy and the club. Between Ted and I we didn’t have much trouble coming up with responses except for one “smartie” who was trying to test us by asking what the largest crater in the solar system was. He said it was on the far side of the moon according to the Guinness Book of World Records?

Tom made it a point to plug the club and our program on Saturday night a number of times. It’s a real pleasure to have a local radio personality with a strong interest in the night sky. If you haven’t already, tune him in some time at 100.1 FM weekdays from 7-11 PM.

And what a night on Saturday! If you were like me I thought it was a bust. Although clear early on, by the time we started the slide show by Gregg Crenshaw we were totally socked in. I had the main scope on the moon as it occasionally peeked out of a small gap and

a few people were patiently waiting at the eyepiece for a glimpse of craters.

Then, lo and behold, about 9:30 this huge clearing appeared. It couldn’t have been timed any better if planned. I started looking for the asteroid right away but was having a rough time of it. I had printed charts of the fields along the predicted path but unfortunately only used star mags down to 10th. At the eyepiece I was easily seeing 12th and recognizing star fields was difficult in that area even at 60 power (Meade 40mm).

Dave Jesse came to the rescue with his laptop and we were more reliably able to position the scope. Even then, after several more attempts at parking the scope on a known star pattern and waiting for something to move, nothing. Frustration was starting to set in and I thought “one more time.” Dave picked out an obvious pattern about five minutes away and I waited. Bingo, there it was.

At first it was only perceptible as a change in the star pattern after a minute or two. Quite a line had formed for a peek at a barely moving pinpoint of light which was an object 1/3 of a mile across at a distance just beyond the moon’s orbit. Dave later estimated its speed at about 46,000 mph. I had to return to the eyepiece after each viewer to re-center – I didn’t want to lose it after a half hour search. Miraculously, the clearing stayed with us until nearly midnight. By this time it had picked up speed and could be recognized as moving against the background.

I was so sorry about the couple that had traveled from PA as a result of the radio show and had waited patiently for their turn but, just as I was repositioning the scope, the clouds returned and wiped out the field. Still, it was incredible that we were able to get a solid two hours of viewing on a night like that.

MVAS / OTAA Star Party a Big Success

By Gregg Crebshaw

Many ACA members made the annual trek east to the Mahoning Valley Astronomical Society / Ohio Turnpike Astronomers Association picnic and star party at the Mahoning Valley Cortese Observatory near Newton Falls, August 10th. As about 100 people were in attendance, many old friends not seen in a year were reacquainted and many new friendships were begun. For the first time in three years the skies were cooperating. Clear skies greeted attendees as well as a multitude of telescopes of all types. Big refractors, light bucket truss tube Dobsonians, as well as computer controlled SCTs graced the hill to accompany MVCO’s 16” Cassegrain and 8½” Refractor on this night. Even a Questar or two could be seen.

After the potluck picnic, many attendees won door prizes. Rob Landis of the JPL/Cassini team was the night’s speaker. He spoke on NASA’s successes and trials over the past year. During his lecture an announcement was made that a magnitude -3 Iridium flare was about to take place. All eyes looked east as the satellite flared in brilliance. Soon after the lecture the International Space Station made a pass directly above the site. It seemed appropriate that some of man’s greatest space triumphs and biggest follies were passing over us seemingly in review.

Once darkness came the attendees commenced to doing what everyone really came to do. Telescopes pointed skyward to gather photons of distant objects to delight the crowd. Of particular interest was Comet Hoenig, a 9th magnitude comet cruising through Cepheus. Many meteors were seen as the Southern Delta Aquarid shower was nearing its end and the peak of the Perseid shower was only a few days away. This annual event is a fun time for all. Hope you can attend it next year.