



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

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Monthly Meeting November 22



President's Column

By Jay Svitko

The cloudy days of winter are upon us. Somewhere I missed fall this year. I think I saw the colors of the leaves change, but when that storm/wind came through the week before last, that pleasant scene was over. It went from 80 degrees and clear with star-filled skies to 40 degrees, rainy and constantly overcast. This is, of course, a detriment to our hobby of gazing outward towards the infinite, as our life-giving atmosphere works against us. But it is Ohio, the 2nd cloudiest state in the USA. This seems work against what our club's primary function is, so we must turn to our second function, and that is as a social group.

At our monthly meetings, (next one is Nov. 22nd) members talk about what they have seen in the sky, what they have read about the future of space exploration and pictures they have found but I have also heard people who talk about more personal things. It is my hope for the holidays that our group and its members might function as refuge for persons

who don't want to be locked up in their house, thinking they have to be confined to their homestead, wishing the clouds would go away.

I, myself, have found that some of our planned events may not have gone according to plans because of the weather. The November Deep Sky Party at Barber Airport and The Halloween Observers Party may not have gone according to plans because of the weather but for the people who were there, they had a great time. There was a campfire at both events (The Halloween fire was fake, I assure you), we gathered as friends and observers, knowing full well the possibility of the sky being blotted out was overwhelming, but we showed up anyway, and I had quite the stimulating time at both.

The 2003 schedule will be in print soon thanks to our Observatory Director, Ray Paul. In the upcoming year, I hope to see more people coming out to future events. Even while the eyes cannot see past the clouds and into the heavens, the brain can always use the stimulation of friendly conversation.

THANKSGIVING, ASTRONOMICALLY

Several of our members provided Thanksgiving wisdom:

Rich Ruggles: I'm thankful that Saturn cleared the trees just in time for the last 2 Cub Scout camp out programs.

Ella Griffin: I'm thankful I have students who want me to come out and show them the night sky.

Glenn Cameron: I'm thankful for my sight, my temperament, music by Bach, time to enjoy, NASA, the night, the Internet, the present, and the future, all of which make astronomy as exciting as it is right now during my lifetime.

Lynn Laux: I would like to thank MEADE for shipping my new LXD55-AR5 to me in time to go to Spruce Knob and see the most beautiful site: the Milky Way so bright it made shadows and for making it possible for me to finally be able to see M 51!! Thanks to Becky, Ray, Jim, Ted and Phil for a fun weekend down at Spruce Knob. Secondly I would like to thank all "my people" for a great time at Hidden Hollow. Observing with friends doesn't get any better than that!!

Dave Jessie: A wonderful group of people with which to share the wonders of the night sky. Sounds a little trite, but I honestly mean it.

Activities Calendar

Club

November 22, ACA Monthly Meeting
December, No Monthly Meeting

Celestial

November 19, Penumbral Lunar Eclipse
December 6, Venus at max. brightness, -4.7
December 14, Geminid Meteors
December 17, Saturn at Opposition
December 21, Winter Solstice

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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.

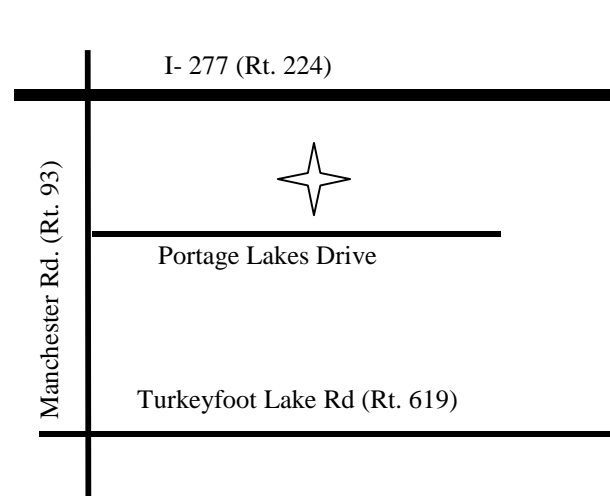
PLEASE SEND IN YOUR ARTICLES!!!!

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

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

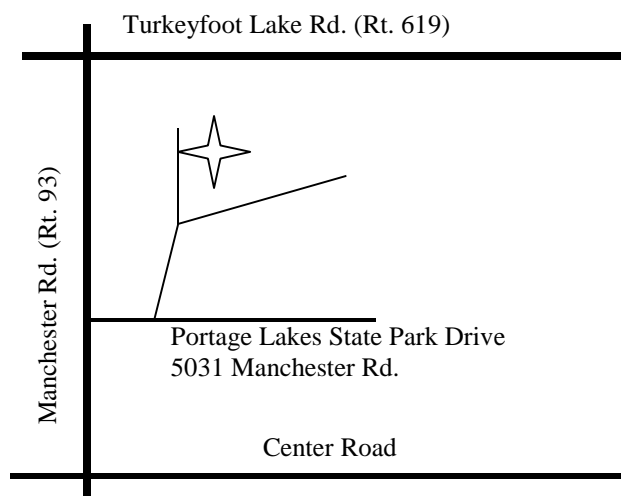
MONTHLY MEETING LOCATION:

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

Spreading Astronomy To The Kids

A couple of Friday's ago, I rode down with Rich to a cub scout camp. This was the night before our club's dark sky event. While Rich did a great job with the slide show and explaining the complicated stuff to the youngsters, I loaded up on coffee and hotdogs.

It was cloudy when the program started, but after the slide show it had cleared up that we unloaded a couple of telescopes onto a near-by field and started looking at Saturn. The new clouds were moving in and our visibility of Saturn was fading fast.

All the cub scouts got through the two lines, but a couple of adults may have missed the view. This was my first chance this season to get a look at Saturn and the rings look great. This is due to Saturn's tilt toward the Earth which allows greater visibility of the ring separation.

The next night was the ACA dark sky star party. If you did not show up, you did not miss any great viewing because it was cloudy. I did have a good time socializing with the members that were there. Also, I was able to try out Jay's new binoculars on some stars on the horizon.

The following Friday was the programs as Camp Ledgewood and Camp Manatoc. I want to thank everyone that came out to the camps. We did a quick slide

show at each camp while waiting for Saturn to rise above the tree line. I was not disappointed with the views I had of Saturn that night.

From the comments I got that night, I know the boys and girls really appreciate looking through the telescopes.

We have several members in the club who really enjoy going out and doing these kinds of programs. If you know of a group, kids or adults, that would like someone from the ACA to come do a presentation or have an observing session, contact me and we will work on getting it done.

In fact, I will be doing a presentation at the Norton Middle school sometime next month. I will be presenting to several classes though out the day. If you can make it and would like to help, contact me.

Web Site

I appreciate all of the great feed back I have received on the website. If you have not done so, go to <http://www.acaoh.org> to view the new version. I usually try to update the upcoming events about once a week. The upcoming events are not just about our club, but any astronomical-related gatherings in the area, presentations, meetings, etc. To have an event published on the upcoming events page, send an email to me at jeff@hudsonstuff.com. Along with the date, time and location of the event, include a brief description and a website or phone number for more information on the event.

NASA News

By the time you read this, the Space Shuttle Endeavour should

be docking with the International Space Station or close enough that the two teams can wave at each other. The launch was delayed because of an oxygen leak in Endeavour's mid-body. An oxygen flex hose fitting was identified as the source of the leak. The new assembly has been tested and cleared for flight. But during the troubleshooting efforts, the robot arm sustained damage. The robot arm is used to lift the parts for the IIS out of the payload bay and hand them to its station counterpart, the Canadarm2.

This mission will change out the crew on the IIS and deliver fresh supplies. In addition, the Endeavour will deliver the P1 truss. The P1 truss will be the fourth piece of the Integrated Truss Structure delivered to the station and will be attached to the port side of the S0 Truss. Like the S1, the P1 will provide structural support for the station's Active Thermal Control System with three radiators that contain eight panels each. The new truss has mounts for cameras and lights and contains a UHF antenna system and an S-band antenna system. Also mounted to the P1 is the second CETA cart. The first CETA cart is on the S1 truss. The carts are manually operated by a space walker and can also be used as a work platform.

The wall calendars and astronomical guides are in. I have ordered some of the weekly planners too. I will have all of these items at the next club meeting.

Astronomy Vehicle Contest!

The automobile - where would (or wouldn't) we be without one? There are millions on the roads every day - different makes, models and colors. But have you noticed how many of them have some sort of reference to astronomical things in their name? After seeing several cars, trucks and vans that fit this category, I decided to look into it and just see how many there were. Then I got this idea - why not have a contest to see who can come up with the most auto makes and models that have something to do with our stellar past time?

So here it is - let's see how many vehicles you can name that have something to do with space and all that's in it (like a star, planet, constellation, celestial event, etc.). Just to make things a little easier, if part of the name contains some "space," it will count. So those of you who write down a PONTIAC SUNFIRE will get credit. (See, there's a gimme for your list.)

I haven't decided on a prize yet but I'll make it a good one. In the mean time, get your brain in gear and see how many you can come up with. These have to be real names, people! If I can't verify that it's a real vehicle, it won't count. And no, it doesn't need to be a current model to be on the list (that was a question asked by Greg Crenshaw).

You can get your answers to me by e-mail at: KB8YSC@aol.com

Or for those of you who are "e-mail - challenged," snail-mail me at:

Becky Kelly

1684 Mechanicsburg Rd. Lot 70
Wooster, OH 44691

I'll leave the contest open until one week before our Holiday Party in January to give everyone a chance to get in on this.

HAPPY HUNTING!

Homework Assignment

By Jay Svitko

I would like to start a new feature called: Cosmic Web Site of the Month.

For those of you who prefer to do your astronomy on the computer during the cold months, I suggest some interesting sites. Check them out, then send the Newsletter editor (rhyer@neo.rr.com) your comments on the site.

This way we will be able to evaluate several sites a month.

For next month, try these:

Phases of the Moon:

<http://www.astro.wisc.edu/~dolan/java/MoonPhase.html>

or for the positions of the Moons of Jupiter:

<http://www.geocities.com/jl1n/a.html>

or a virtual tour of Mars:

<http://members.aol.com/edhobbs/applets/vmars/>



For Sale

New 8" Discovery Dob
With 2 eyepieces & dust cover
\$500.00

10" Star-liner E.Q. on pier mount
Dual drives RA and DEC setting
Circles
\$800.00

4" f7 Dob with 26mm eye piece
and Red dot finder
\$150.00

60 mm Meade Refractor with
25mm and 10 mm eyepiece
\$50.00

Complete set of 1 1/4" RKE eye-
pieces: 28mm 21.5mm 15mm
12mm 8mm and 2.5 barlow with
case.
\$200.00

E.Q. mount on pier ready for scopes
Up to 12". It has the Gearing
mounted Only needs motor
mounted Motor included
\$100.00

12v 2 1/2" cooling fans
\$3.00

Contact Rich Ruggles
330-644-5912
astronomy1on1@cs.com



**Astronomy
On the Road**

By Rich Ruggles

The year is coming to an end and so has the road trip star parties. The next trip will be to the Wagmen Observatory in Pennsylvania for the AAAP's Winter fest in March. All the details will be in the February Night Sky. Until then Happy Holidays to all and most of all Clear Skies.