



# The Night Sky

The Newsletter of  
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

Volume 27 Number 11

November 2005

## Next Meeting - Friday, November 18

### Ramblings of the President / High as a Kite!

by Dave Jessie

First things first... The November ACA meeting will occur on the THIRD Friday in November – that's 11/18/2005 – due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Now for some club news. The membership voted to purchase a DLP (digital) projector. The Optoma was selected and purchased for \$999.99 from Best Buy. It has a two year warranty and will be a very welcome addition to the arsenal of tools we use to educate the public at observatory events, our meetings and at public outreach. It can be used to project images from a computer or from any other video source like VHS tape or DVDs. No more burrowing and returning. Hurray for us!

Speaking of outreach, we have another opportunity: MARS! We had two events on Saturday night, Oct 29 when Mars was at its closest. Mark and Diane North were at the observatory showing Mars to about a dozen members and another dozen or so visitors. When they tired of Mars, a tour of the night's globular clusters kept all entertained.

I had been asked by the Stow Parks & Recreation Dept. to participate in a rather strange event at the campgrounds in Silver Springs Park. ACAers in attendance were Freddy Huffman, Andy Marek, Paul & Linda

Koberg, Terry Taylor, Rosaelena Villaseñor and me. Why was the event strange?

We were there with the 'Ohio Society for the Elevation of Kites' who put on a 'Night Kite Flight'. They have done this event twice a year in Stow for several years and Saturday was the night – same as Mars close approach! Oh brother, I thought, light pollution is bad enough without adding to it by illuminating reflective kites *above our heads*, no less! Oh, the horror! Well, guess what? We had a fantastic time! The kites were something to behold...just plain spectacular! Those lights we were worried about? Well, if I told you I saw three different ACA members each with a one million candlepower spotlight in their hands pointing it up in the sky, and with HUGE smiles on their faces, would you believe me? Well, it's true! You can ask

Trustee Freddy if you doubt me.

The spot lights were illuminating a kite, well actually fifty kites on the same line, about 10 feet apart made of reflective Mylar with colored reflectors on the tips of each. It undulated rhythmically high above our heads reminding me of a Chinese New Year's celebration. I wish I could adequately explain what it looked like, but alas I can not. I

swear, we were like a bunch of little kids at our first party. Take my word for it. It was spectacular, especially with my trusty green laser pointer giving it a glowing green eye. OK, enough of the kites... back to our duties!

We'd set up telescopes for observing Mars and the public and kite flyers all joined us for some wonderful observing. It was a clear cloud-free night and the views were spectacular...both of Mars and of other deep sky wonders, especially open clusters. About fifty guests or so were even more excited by the views through the scopes than at the amazing illuminated kites. Lots of ACA brochures were passed out and many expressed interest in

...we don't necessarily need pristine conditions to do successful outreach...

what we do. All in all, a very successful night for everyone despite the thin layer of ice on all the equipment.

This brings up a thought, we don't

necessarily need pristine conditions to do successful outreach and there's always something going on somewhere in which we could participate. Keep an open mind and let's get out there and show the Universe! Our little corner of it, anyhow.

Have I mentioned lately how dearly I love this hobby?

## OFFICERS 2005 – 2006

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| <b>OTAA Representative</b>           |              |                          |
| Lou Poda                             |              |                          |

## Activities Calendar

### Club

November 5.... Mars Program at Observatory  
 November 18.... Monthly Meeting 8 pm  
 December 10.... Observatory Open House  
 January 27.... Monthly Meeting 8 pm

### Celestial

November 7 ....Mars at Opposition  
 November 15 .... Full Moon  
 November 17 ....Leonid Meteor Shower  
 December 1 ....New Moon  
 December 9 .... Venus at brightest  
 December 12 ....Mars 1 deg. From Moon  
 December 13 ....Peak of Geminids Meteors  
 December 15 ....Full Moon  
 December 21 .... Winter Solstice

The deadline for article submission is **the second Tuesday after each 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

**Minutes of the ACA General Membership Meeting on Friday October 28, 2005.**

- Rosaelena Villaseñor,  
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Ronald Hahn gave a very interesting talk about weather with emphasis on high altitude phenomena.

Business meeting began at 9:25 pm.

Secretary Pete Flohr was absent so Rosaelena Villaseñor filled in for him.

Treasurer's Report is now included in each newsletter.

Discussed recent improvements including new heaters, power supply and counterbalance weights.

Mark North discussed *Special Mars Event* on Saturday, Nov 5<sup>th</sup> at the observatory as well as the installation of three dew heaters on the 14" and repair of the ladder. For the mars program, please bring your telescopes and have fun.

Members were thanked for supporting the Kiwanis Rose sale last month when at least 20 dozen roses were purchased.

Discussed two outreach events occurring on Saturday Oct 29.

November meeting will be held on the THIRD Friday in November instead of the 4<sup>th</sup> due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Jeff Haren was introduced as the newest Trustee replacing Jim Anderson following Jim's resignation.

Members discussed, then voted to purchase, a digital DLP projector for use by the club for programs and meetings.

Mark Kochheiser turned over the ACA's library to Freddie Huffman.

Members decided to hold our normal meeting in January and delay deciding on the dinner until next meeting.

Andy Marek renewed his loan agreement for the club's 8" Discovery Dob, since nobody else was interested at this time.

There was a discussion of scopes in the observatory that are to be sold. Tom Mino is chairing a committee to look into the best way of accomplishing this. Tom is compiling a list with suggested prices to be discussed at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:25pm

**Treasurer's Report: 10/1/05 - 10/31/05**

Diane North, Treasurer

**Total Beginning Assets**..... \$8,467.94

Income

Dues ..... \$106.64

Interest on balances ..... \$6.88

Kiwanis Rose sales ..... \$270.00

Donation ..... \$11.50

50/50 Raffle ..... \$21.00

Expenses

Dues prorating ..... \$(19.17)

Newsletter Expense ..... \$(23.52)

Observatory upkeep ..... \$(13.04)

Observatory Improvements ..... \$(4.17)

Office supplies ..... \$(9.27)

Telescope ..... \$(69.99)

Public Event Expense (DLP Projector)..... \$(999.99)

Bank fees..... \$(2.50)

**Total Ending Assets**..... **\$7,742.31**

**New Members!**

The ACA would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new members...

Norm Schmidt  
Dr. Paul Dawson

We are thrilled to have you as members and look forward to seeing you at ALL club meetings and events!

**ACA Executive Board  
Meeting/summary Oct.23 2005**

***Mars event at the observatory,***

Saturday November 5th!! Can we expect the crowd we had in August, 2003? Probably not due to the much colder temperatures this late in the year, but **BRING YOUR SCOPE** to show Mars to the public and explain that it's closer now and better placed for viewing than it will be until 2018.

**Unusual event - Meeting to be held in January!**

There WILL be an ACA meeting in January – on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday, January 27, 2006. At the October meeting, members voted to re-think the dinner the club usually has in January and agreed to have a normal meeting instead. When will the dinner be? How will it work? Come to the November meeting and make your opinions known. We will probably decide then how and when this dinner will occur.

**Another Astro Quiz**

Test yourself! Each question is worth five points. Score yourself using the chart below the answers.

**CHEATERS GET ZERO POINTS ;-)**

- 01. What is the apparent magnitude of the Sun?
- 02. What is the apparent magnitude of the full Moon?
- 03. In what constellation does the star Rigel appear?
- 04. True or False. The world's largest radio telescope is in Green Bank, WV.
- 05. True or False. Alcor in the constellation Ursa Major is a double star.

- 06. What is the surface temperature of Venus?
- 07. What year was Sputnik 1, the first man made object to orbit earth, launched?
- 08. What is the spectral class of the star Vega?
- 09. How many miles are in one Astronomical Unit (AU)?
- 10. How many miles are in one light-year (ly)?

(Answers are on the next page.)



- 1) The Board unanimously approved nomination of Jeff Haren as Trustee to fill spot vacated by Jim Anderson's resignation. His term will expire in July 2007. Tom Mino's term expires in July of 2006 and Freddy Huffman's in July of 2008.
- 2) Term dates of Trustees will always be listed in the newsletter
- 3) Trustees are in the process of creating an inventory of club-owned telescopes to sell
- 4) Board approved Observatory Director's budget of \$750 to cover new electrical wiring, indoor lighting and other improvements at the observatory
- 5) Observatory program schedule for 2006 (including rain dates) is to be assembled by a committee of Board members.
- 6) Reviewed loaner scope sign-out procedures & agreements
- 7) Discussed possibly moving holiday dinner to the spring with vote of membership to decide
- 8) Discussed need for digital projector. Membership to decide at general meeting on Friday, Oct 28, 2005

ACA Secretary  
Pete Flohr

**Looking for a Loaner?**

Just because you don't own a telescope is no excuse for not enjoying close up view of the heavens. If you are a member of the ACA you may borrow a scope to use for three months of celestial awe.

If you are interested please contact Mark North, observatory director.

## ANSWERS

Give yourself five points for each question answered correctly.

01. What is the apparent magnitude of the Sun?

A: magnitude -26 (-26.75)

02. What is the apparent magnitude of the moon?

A: magnitude -12 (-12.7)

03. In what constellation does the star Rigel appear?

A: Orion

04. True or False. The world's largest radio telescope is in Green Bank, WV.

A: False. The world's largest radio telescope is the Arecibo radio telescope in Arecibo, Puerto Rico.

05. True or False. Alcor in the constellation Ursa Major is a double star.

A: False. Observations reveal that what was once thought to be a binary system is really a single star.

06. What is the surface tempera-

ture of Venus?

A: 900 degrees Fahrenheit (482 degrees Celsius)

07. What year was Sputnik 1, the first man made object to orbit earth, launched?

A: Sputnik 1 was launched October 4, in the year 1957.

08. What is the spectral class of the star Vega?

A: A (A0 V)

09. How many miles are in one Astronomical Unit (AU)?

A: 93 million miles (92,955,730 miles)

10. How many miles are in one light-year (ly)?

A: 6 trillion miles (5,878,499,834,000 miles)

### SCORE YOURSELF

50 pts = Expert Astronomer!

45 pts = Amateur Expert!

40 pts = Serious Amateur.

35 pts = Amateur Astronomer.

30 pts = Armchair Astronomer.

25 pts = UFOlogist.

20 pts = I watch documentaries!

15 pts = I saw a UFO!

10 pts = Average Joe/Jane

5 pts = Are you in the right galaxy?

### SOURCES:

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New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company; 2000

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Engelbert, P, Dupuis, DL, The Handy Space Answer Book

Canton, MI: Visible Ink Press; 1998

Mitton, J, The Penguin Dictionary of Astronomy 2nd Edition

England, UK: Penguin Books; 1991, 1993

Strauss, S, The Sizesaurus

New York, NY: Kodansha America, Inc.;1995



### From the October Meeting

Left, Dave Jessie welcomes our speaker, Ronald Hahn

Above, Observatory Director Mark North wonders what a snow flake this size would do to the observatory roof...

# The Night Sky

Newsletter of the Astronomy Club of Akron

c/o Ray Hyer, Editor

725 Brewer St

Akron, OH 44305-2103

To join the ACA, **or to renew your membership**, please fill out the form below, place in an envelope and mail to the address shown in the return address area of the form.

*Please be sure to enclose payment for the membership level desired.*

**The Astronomy Club of Akron**  
c/o Diane North, Treasurer  
795 Mohawk Ave  
Akron, OH 44305-1811

Yes! I want to become a member of the Astronomy Club of Akron

[www.acaoh.org](http://www.acaoh.org)  
(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

**Astronomy Club of Akron** annual memberships renew in the month of May.

ADULT (ages 18 and older)..... \$30.00

JUNIOR (ages 12 to 17).....\$15.00

ADDITIONAL ADULT member ..... \$15.00

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP .....\$40.00

I realize the full color version of *The Night Sky* newsletter is available for download by members from our web page at [www.acaoh.org](http://www.acaoh.org), but I would rather have the B&W version mailed to my address via USPS.