



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

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July 2008

RAMBLINGS OF THE PRESIDENT

by Glenn R. Cameron

Hi all.

If you didn't get out to the observatory for the July 5th star party, you really missed a great night of viewing. This was in spite of heavier than usual traffic due to the fireworks display down at the lakes at 10 PM. Lots of car traffic and lights. Fortunately most of the traffic was down the south fork of the road but there was plenty up at our end too. The fireworks display was spectacular and all of the smoke drifted to the southwest and avoided being too much of a nuisance to our telescopes. There was still traffic at 11:30 PM when I left. Thanks to the Franklin Township cops and the park rangers for keeping things moving.

So despite all of the extra activity in the park, the sky was remarkably clear and steady. The turn out by both the club and the public was a little disappointing. Ron Kalinoski gave his excellent presentation on the Crab Nebula to an audience of six or eight club members and no public! Oh well, nobody's fault. The fireworks were a better draw. After the fireworks, we got some public attendance.

As to the skies, they were wonderful. I saw beautiful views of several globular clusters, Jupiter, Saturn, the ring nebula, and lots more. Dave Jessie's large refractor gave a tack sharp view of the double double! I was blown away!

On another note, I had just returned from a vacation on Emerald Isle in North Carolina. We stayed on the beach and had a beautifully non-light polluted southern view over the ocean. At about 35 degrees north latitude I got to see more of Scorpius and Sagittarius than I am used to seeing. The Milky Way was also bright and gorgeous. That said, you couldn't have gotten me to set up my telescope anywhere near there, unless you had me at gunpoint. The salt spray was ever present. My eye-glasses would get a thin salty rime in only five minutes. It would have been death to my telescope or binoculars. It was a nice place to visit but I wouldn't want to observe there.

Rambling on, I am still in search of nominations for a new club treasurer. Between me and Rosaelena, we have the situation under control but I am looking forward to passing the check

book baton on to a new treasurer. Please consider taking on the job. We will try to have a vote at the September meeting.

On the home front, I am enjoying a new (to me) scope dolly. I got it on eBay for a great price. I can rest my fully set up telescope on the dolly and wheel it out of the garage and be viewing the sky inside of five minutes. The other night I wheeled it out to look at Saturn. It soon clouded up and I put it away. A couple of hours later, I went out to see if I could see a predicted Iridium flare. Luckily, the clouds had cleared up and I saw the flare. I also saw that Jupiter had risen. So, five minutes later I was viewing Jupiter. Before my scope dolly days, there was no way I would have had the gumption to set up and tear down my scope twice in one night, much less for only fifteen minutes of viewing. And this was a "school" night! Keep eBay and Astromart in mind. I've gotten some great deals and you can too.

So, I think I've rambled enough. Keep our club great!

Upcoming OTAA Events

Here are dates for the various OTAA conventions going on in NE Ohio this summer (2008):

CAA	July 26 Letha House
MVAS	Aug 2 Mahoning Valley Cortese Observatory
BRAS	Sept 6 Strawberry Mountain

Two more public nights at Scenic Vista this year:
July 5 and Sept. 27.

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Activities Calendar

Club	,Celestial:
July 26, Star Party, Nebulae, 9:00 PM	Jupiter rising in the east at Sunset
	July 18, Full Moon
	July 29- Southern delta Aquarids Meteor Shower
	August 1– Full moon

Observatory Report

Ron Kalinoski

At our June 28th star party, only three members showed up to look at stars. Although we had stormy weather all day, the skies cleared around 9pm. Andy Marek, Cathy Loboda, and I were treated to some great views of Saturn, M13, M57, M29, M3, M5, M53, and a few double stars. The small number of attendees gave us some time to perform an alignment on the 14" telescope. Unfortunately, I did not have a level to properly set up the telescope's home position so the alignment was marginal. I realigned the telescope at our July 5th star party with satisfactory results. As you may recall, we experienced a failure of the GPX system a few months ago. As a result of all the jostling of the telescope to ascertain the problem, the telescope alignment was lost. Now, we should be set to easily find even the faintest celestial object. On July 5th, we had perfect weather for a star party. A stationary cold front moved just far enough south to let a high-pressure system dominate our skies. With 41% relative humidity, the seeing conditions at the observatory were among the best we had in some time. Sixteen people attended the star party, including 8 members. We started the star party with a presentation on the Crab Nebula. It seemed appropriate since the supernova that created the Crab Nebula exploded exactly 954 years ago on July 5th, 1054 AD. To complement this tribute, the Portage Lakes State Park Service held a fireworks display at the beach area that could be seen from the observatory. After the presentation, we cranked up the 14" telescope to view Saturn while John Shulan powered up the 45-cup coffee maker he generously donated to the club. This was first light for the coffee maker and John didn't hold anything back, making a pot of coffee that would strip the rust off a 1972 Toyota pickup. As twilight came to an end, we continued to look at the brighter celestial objects including double stars: Cor Caroli, Alcor, and Albireo. We then slewed to the globular cluster M92, as M13 was beyond the mechanical limit of the 14" telescope. At a star party a few weeks ago, Gregg Crenshaw explained how M92 is underrated, having some of its glory taken away by M13; both located in the constellation Hercules. Gregg is right; M92 is a spectacular class 3 globular cluster and more concentrated than M13 by two classification levels. M92 looked great at 88 power set in a rich star field spanning three quarters of a degree; until it disappeared from the eyepiece when a six-inch shell exploded in the eastern sky. We all took a break from stargazing to watch the fireworks. The show was impressive and ended with a grand finale that filled the eastern sky with exploding shells. After the fireworks we continued observing. Dave Jessie, John Shulan, and Lew Snodgrass

were set up on the west sidewalk. Leigh Alexander was set up on the northwest section of the observatory grounds. The exiting car lights did not really pose a problem for the 14" telescope since the building walls and closed south door blocked most of the light. However, the exodus did create some excitement for the observers set up on the observatory grounds. The excitement can best be summed up from an excerpt from Dave Jessie's e-mail:

"In retrospect, the awful lights, which were a source of great aggravation last night, have been the reason for lots of laughs this morning. Thinking of John and me walking around banging into and tripping over things because we had blankets over our heads makes me realize how accidentally hilarious we were. Lots of fun...and ultimately isn't that one of the reasons we do what we do? As an aside, we got to see TONS of celestial wonders, too! Ron, thanks for bringing NGC6229 to my attention! I feel as though I made a new friend last night. Tom, the antics of Leigh and her friend has kept Rosaelena and me laughing, too. Steve, we're going to miss you more than you can possibly realize. John, you are a great person to observe with - besides the almost constant laughter, your enthusiasm is absolutely contagious. Lew, you were far enough away from me (and effectively blocked by John) that the normal banter between us was somewhat stifled, but it's always a pleasure observing with you as well - your enthusiasm is likewise contagious. Fireworks? They were great, even though a night-vision killer. The pleasant fireworks between and among us friends was even better throughout the night. What a great group of people, that's all I can say."

All things considered, we had a great time. Special thanks to Mark Kochheiser who communicated with the Portage Lakes State Park Service to make sure everyone was aware of the two coinciding events.
Ron Kalinoski

The deadline for article submission is **the second Tuesday of the month**. 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.

Classified Ad

For Sale:

Celestron C-11 GPS & tripod (everything that came with it new). The price of \$2000.00 also includes the following:

Telrad, 50 mm finder with Losmandy mount, Hand picked Williams 2" diagonal
Kendrick Solar Filter,
TeleVue eyepieces- 20 mm Nagler New, 35 Panoptic New, 55 Plossel
2 or 3 additional eyepieces (not junk, but not TeleVue)
Kendrick anti dew setup, including
Controller, OTA dew shield, OTA heater, Telrad heater

2" heaters

1 ¼ " heater

Mylar solar cover

Power Cord

Software- Celestron and Starry Night

3 Meade leveling/vibration pads

I have several other books that will also go with the scope

I will throw in my color, bound, large star charts, and my other binder that I had Al Nagler sign

From the Telrad to the solar filter, to the Losmandy mount for the finder, this scope is ready for Stellafane!

This scope has been out only 2 times and is in mint condition.

Price for the entire package- \$2000.00

Contact: Joe Russell- 330-350-2887

Treasurer's Report: 5/1/08 - 5/31/08

Steve Rohweder, Treasurer

Total Beginning Assets	\$8115.68
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Income

Interest on balances	\$1.21
Dues	\$780.00
Magazine subscriptions paid to ACA	\$165.85
Donations	\$75.22
Total 50/50 Drawing	\$29.00

Expenses

Magazine subscriptions paid by ACA	\$165.85
Miscellaneous	\$25.00

Total Ending Assets	\$8976.11
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Editor's Corner!

This article is an updated version of an article that I wrote for the Night Sky 5 years ago. Tom

The Great Circle of Telescope Life

Or

Who needs Goto Anyhow?

I began to enjoy the night sky while a camper and staff member at a summer camp in northern Michigan in the late 60s and early 70s. Thus, I already knew my way around the sky (no "Goto" back then) when I received a Jason 60 mm refractor with 0.965" eyepieces as a Christmas present in 1977. I thought it was a finely crafted, perfect optical instrument. Accompanied by "The Telescope Book and Star Guide" by Neale Howard (a great beginner book and star atlas, now long out of print), I began a journey that continues today. My appreciation for the Jason and my "O' wows!" as I viewed the Orion Nebula, the Pleiades, Jupiter's moons and Saturn's rings faded, however, as I learned there were objects I couldn't see with this scope. I began to long for bigger and better telescopes and darker skies. In other words, I was hooked!

Two years later, the Jason was packed away as a new Meade 6" reflector on an equatorial mount with a motor drive and 1.25" eyepieces became my viewing partner. New "O' wows!" began as I saw the rings of Saturn anew and began to find more deep sky objects. Although I had wanted a clock driven equatorial mount, I quickly learned I didn't have the patience for photography. We moved to a darker sky location (at least Montrose was in 1986!) and my aperture fever kept growing. In 1991 I acquired a Coulter 10.1" dob. The Meade was donated to a local school and the Jason was unpacked and put in the basement. It looked cool on the tripod, but after all, who would want to observe through that scope when there was a 10" available?! I became a deep sky denizen, purchased a wide field eyepiece, learned to use a TelRad and collimate mirrors. I joined the Akron Astronomy club, but never attended a meeting or went to the observatory. I dropped my membership about 3 years later. When the Meade ETX 90 came out in the mid 1990s, I obtained one as a travel and backup scope. The ETX at that time had no computer or electronic controller. After all, who needs goto anyhow?

The Dobsonian served me well for a decade, but in 2001, new scope fever was biting again. I had seen most of the Messier objects and many other “faint fuzzies”. I had not, however, been able to discern the Cassini division nor the great red spot on Jupiter with the dob. I wanted something with better optics. Plus, now you could get a computerized goto scope!! No serious observer could drop in aperture, however! Maybe a Meade 10” LX200 would work. After much research, telescope store shopping during a San Diego trip (and lifting a 10” LX200 onto its tripod at Scope City), and soul searching, however, I determined that the 10” LX 200 was too big a scope/mount combination for my type of observing. In early 2002 I eventually settled on a Celestron 9.25 with a 2” diagonal and a non-goto Losmandy G8 mount. After all, who needs goto anyhow?!

In the meantime, I had been showing my young daughter, Leigh, planets and brighter deep sky objects in the dob, and brought her out at 5 AM in Nov. 2001 for the Leonid meteor storm. She was showing some interest, but one of her favorite activities was jiggling the telescope and chanting “Watch Saturn boogie!” Cute, but not helpful for observing the Cassini Division!

The new scope and mount finally arrived in the spring of 2002. Wow!!! What a combo. Optics were great; the mount was better! I sold the Coulter dob to the son of someone from work. He was thrilled with the scope and has since graduated college and is pursuing graduate work in astronomy. The Jason, of course, remained in the basement. After all, who would want that scope?

Shortly after obtaining the new scope, I decided to rejoin the ACA. My daughter and I went to our first star party in May of 2002. That was the first time I had ever been around other scopes and amateur astronomers for observing. Not only did I enjoy the experience, but my daughter also loved it. “Dad, there’s a satellite!” “Let’s find M objects!” “Let’s go into the observatory and look through the big scope!” Seeing new objects was becoming more important than watching Saturn boogie!

Back home, we were doing some work in the basement when she went over to a dusty tripod that had been chewed by dogs and said, “Dad, can I have that telescope?” There it was, the old Jason 60. “Sure, you can use it.” A few weeks later, we were in San Francisco and stopped in at Scope City. I bought a 1.25”/965” hybrid diagonal for her to use (and my wonderful wife bought me a 22 mm Panoptic for the big scope!).

That summer saw more trips to ACA events. We had the little Jason at Quail Hollow and the hot dog roast night. We kept the small scope on short legs for other kids to be able to use. They loved seeing the moon, Venus, stars and M13 through the scope. In early August, we set up both the C9.25 and the Jason at the house. I pointed out M27 to my daughter in the C9.25. She asked “Can we find M-27 in my scope?” I had not been able to see M27 in the Jason when it was new, but with 25 years of on and off observing experience and a Meade Superwide 13.8 eyepiece instead of the 12 mm Huygenians that came with that scope, I tried again. There it was! No, it wasn’t as big and bright as in the larger scope, but the thrill of finding an object for the first time in a scope was still there, even with the “beginner, department store” scope. After all, who needs goto anyhow?!

As Leigh and I called it a night and started to pack up, she gave me a hug and said “Thanks, Dad, for letting me use the telescope. I love astronomy.” Thoughts of frozen fingers or mosquito bitten legs (the hallmarks of this pastime) faded as I realized she now has an appreciation for the sky that few kids her age have, and she will never be lost under the stars. This confirmed the true meaning of this hobby, which we all understood when we started, but which we forget from time to time. It’s not the telescope, eyepiece or goto that’s important. It’s the lure of what’s out there; it’s our own desire to see, learn and know all we can about the universe and to expose those who follow us to wonders of the universe.

Leigh has now graduated to the ETX 90 and a green laser pointer. She loves pointing out objects to kids at star parties. As for me, I finally broke down a couple of years ago and acquired the Argo Navis digital setting circles which have turned my mount into a “push to” and have made finding limiting magnitude objects easier. However, for the Messier marathon last April, we left the Argo Navis at home and went with manual searching for objects, armed with only charts and a Telrad. And the Jason languishes in the garage, waiting for a new set of eyes to appreciate its qualities. After all, who needs goto anyhow?!!!

The Night Sky

Newsletter of the Astronomy Club of Akron

c/o Tom/Leigh Alexander, Editors

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Akron, OH 44321-1111

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 Steve Rohweder, Treasurer
3981 Meadow Wood Ln
Uniontown, OH 44685-7785

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

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, but I would rather have the B&W version mailed to my address via USPS.