



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

Volume 30 Number 8

August 2008

RAMBLINGS OF THE PRESIDENT

by Glenn R. Cameron

Hello fellow astronomers. As I write this, I am looking forward to sunset. This evening, August 11, 2008, is the night of the peak of the Perseid Meteor Shower and the Clear Sky Clock is forecasting, well, clear skies. I hope all of us will be able to say we saw some good meteor streaks across the normally cloud covered Northeast Ohio sky tonight.

I read an article in the August 10 Canton Repository about a man in Lake Township, Ohio, who is building a 1/10th scale model of the Saturn V rocket. The rocketeer's name is Steve Eves and he is planning an April 2009 launch of this working model rocket. As this event approaches we might want to plan a caravan to go witness the launch, in Price, Maryland. Sounds like a "blast" (off). By the way, if anyone

knows how to contact this rocket-man, maybe he would be interested in speaking at one of our club meetings.

<http://www.cantonrep.com/index.php?ID=425149&Category=9>

On August 16, the NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland is hosting a free presentation on the Hubble Space Telescope, featuring information about the upcoming service mission. You have to call in advance to make reservations and this event is only open to U.S. citizens. Hope to see you there. Speaking of the Hubble Telescope, it was in today's news that it had reached its 100 thousandth orbit! That's a lot of

frequent flier miles.

http://www.nasa.gov/centers/glenn/events/vc_august.html

Finally, I want to wish my father a speedy recovery from his recent triple-bypass surgery. We've shared our interest in telescopes and astronomy for years. Growing up in south Miami, Florida, in the '60s, we drove up to Cape Kennedy now and then to watch rocket launches. It was a great time to be a kid who loved space. It wasn't a bad time to be an adult with the same love.

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.

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Activities Calendar

Club	,Celestial:
August 23- Maintenance Day at Observatory 9:00 AM Hot Dogs and drinks available	Jupiter high in the south at Sunset August 30- New Moon
August 23- Star Party- Jason Shinn will speak on Jupiter- 8:00 PM	Sept. 15 Full (Harvest) Moon

Observatory Report

Ron Kalinoski

Our rescheduled Solar, Lunar, Hotdog Roast was held on July 12th. The weather conditions were poor with periodic showers at star party time. Regardless, the turnout was good with 29 members attending. John Phillips fired up the grill to get the event underway and roasted delicious hotdogs for the group, at times in a downpour. What a sight of dedication! Pat and Justin Phillips assisted John, while Rob Watkins distributed drinks, chips, and collected donations. After eating, we sat down to a presentation on the Sun by Tom Mino. Due to the weather conditions, we decided to set up the screen and projector inside the observatory building. Tom gave an impressive presentation. His slides included a scaled representation of our Sun compared to Arcturus and Antares. Arcturus was shown to be 30 times larger than our Sun and Antares was so large that our Sun was only a pixel compared to a full screen image of the star. Tom's slides also included high-resolution images of solar flares, prominences, and sunspots. At intermission, Jim Watson took advantage of a break in the weather to display his radio telescope to the crowd. This year, Jim added an ultraviolet receiver to his telescope to collect signals at two frequencies. Signals collected from the radio telescope were recorded on a strip chart recorder for visual inspection. Jim's radio telescope is amazingly sensitive; just a finger in front of the dish would drive the strip chart recorder off scale. After people viewed Jim's radio telescope display, we headed back to the observatory to hear a presentation on the Moon by John Crilly. John gave one of his classic campfire chats. He started his talk with an explanation of how the Moon was formed and how its synchronized orbit only allows us to see one side of its surface. John also explained how the coincidentally equal angular displacement of the Moon and Sun in the sky offers a beautiful visual display during a solar eclipse and provides an opportunity to study the laws of physics. For example, a solar eclipse allows us to measure the positional shift of starlight near the Sun enabling us to prove one of the effects of Einstein's Theory of General Relativity; namely, space around a massive object is curved and starlight passing by follows the curvature of space making the star appear to be in a different position in the sky.

On July 26th, northeast Ohio was hit with powerful thunderstorms containing hail. I measured ice chunks with dimensions up to two inches. NOAA called for clearing later in the evening and shortly after the storms the skies were cloudless. We decided to get together at the observatory for our scheduled star party. As I left home and headed for the observatory, the sky was still clear. The enhanced IR radar images looked okay. As I got closer to the observatory, the northern sky was starting to darken and when I arrived at the observatory the skies were split; clear skies to the south and threatening clouds to the north with the sound of rolling thunder. Ray Hyer was already at the observatory and re-

ported rolling thunder had been occurring for the past half hour. Star party attendees started arriving at the observatory and by 8:30pm we decided to set up for Lew Snodgrass's presentation inside the observatory building. About ten minutes into Lew's presentation we heard the gentle tapping of raindrops on the metal roof. It was a pretty sound to accompany Lew's discussion on nebulae. Soon the gentle tapping turned into the drumbeat of a thousand drums as light rain turned to a downpour. Lew didn't skip a beat and nicely incorporated the reverberating pings into his presentation. Lew displayed beautiful images of each type of nebula to his audience of about 25 attendees. He explained the basic characteristics that distinguished one type of nebula from another. After Lew's presentation the skies partially cleared and we decided to open the observatory for viewing. The results were less than marginal with clouds interfering with observations. Nevertheless, we had a good showing of public and members and all of us enjoyed Lew's presentation.

On August 2nd, Mahoning Valley Astronomical Society hosted an OTAA event at Cortese Observatory. The weather was perfect. Approximately 100 people attended the event. Star party attendees sat down to good food, drink, and dessert while discussing celestial matters with colleagues not seen since the last OTAA event. A professor from Youngstown State University gave a presentation on intragalactic stardust and extrasolar planets, featuring results from his ongoing research. We then headed for the telescopes to observe the night sky. The grounds were covered with telescopes ranging up to 25" in size. Seven members including Tom Mino, Fred Huffman, Dave Steele, Gregg Crenshaw, Dave Jessie, and Rosaelena Villasenor represented ACA. Members walked the grounds looking at views of celestial objects through a variety of telescopes. Eventually, all ACA members congregated around Fred Huffman's refractor as Fred piloted through the night sky. Fred showed us many heavenly wonders that kept us observing until after midnight.

Observatory report continued on p. 4, column 2

Classified Ad

For Sale:

To All, I've got a set of mounted Oberwerk 25x100 binoculars that are up on the selling block. Owing to their girth (10 lbs.), a simple camera tripod won't do the trick! So what I've got is the following: Oberwerk 25x100IF binoculars: <http://www.bigbinoculars.com/25100m.htm> Parallelogram Mount: <http://www.bigbinoculars.com/unibasic.htm> Surveyor's Tripod: <http://www.bigbinoculars.com/obsurv.htm> Notice the prices. Put all together, that's \$830 new, plus shipping. I'm asking \$550 for the whole thing, or, individually, \$270 for the binos, \$230 for the P-mount, and \$85 for the tripod. Counterweights come with the package. The coatings are in good shape, and these babies are mounted such that you can either stand or sit in a recliner. Go out to a dark-sky site and scan the summer Milky Way, and you'll be in heaven. From dark skies, M42 looks incredible, the Pleiades easily reveal nebulosity, and M31 actually LOOKS like a galaxy. E-mail me or call me at (330) 472-2103 if interested. I'd prefer to keep this off Astromart or Cloudy Nights for now to line up a local buyer and avoid shipping these out to complete a sale. I would prefer any interested buyer to look through them prior to buying.

...you can make a trade / trade+cash offer of a high-focal length Nagler EP valued at 82% of new, and I'll tack on the difference in shipping costs.

This is done because for the high-end Naglers, ~82% of new seems to be the going rate on Astromart.

For instance, say you want the \$550 package, and it costs me \$40 to ship. You've got a 17T4 (\$395 new) that you can barter, and it costs \$10 to ship. I'd ask for the difference between \$590 and [$\$10 + 0.82 \times \395], or \$256.

For reference, trade-in values would be:

31T5--\$525
26T5--\$492
22T4--\$394
20T5--\$369
17T4--\$324
16T5--\$271
12T4--\$299

If you're crazy enough to swap an Ethos, I'll credit \$550 for a 13E or \$500 for an 8E.

If you've got a 26T5 or a 31T5 and are willing to either drive or are within a reasonable distance that I can drive them to you, this is essentially an even trade.

As always, I encourage try-before-you-buy. The views through these things are incredible from dark skies. No shipping charge for local drive / pick-up, which is why I'm much rather prefer a local buyer vs. shipping these babies out.- Clear skies- Phil Creed

Observatory Report, cont'd

In the June newsletter, I wrote about the development of observing programs for our club members. The ACA Observatory Staff has put together a Messier Observing Program. The program is designed for members of all skill levels and intended to enhance the observing experience by honing observing skills. As participants become engaged with the program, they will gain increased familiarity with constellations and popular stars, greater ability to extract detail from each observation, and become more proficient at finding techniques such as star hopping, right angle sweeps, and the use of setting circles. I have e-mailed a program description and log form to members. If you do not have e-mail and would like to have a program description and log form, please contact an ACA Observatory Staff member. If you would like to participate in the Messier Observing Program but do not own a telescope, remember, our club has loaner telescopes for you to use as a benefit of your membership. Also, the ACA Observatory Staff is currently working on an advanced observing program. If you would like to help out with this program or any other observing program, please contact an ACA Observatory Staff member.

Treasurer's Report: 7/1/08 - 7/31/08

Glenn Cameron, Acting Treasurer

Total Beginning Assets	\$8976.11
Income	
Interest on balances	\$1.25
Dues	\$598.83
Magazine subscriptions paid to ACA	\$34.00
Donations	\$500.00
Hot Dog Roast Income	83.00
Expenses	
Magazine subscriptions paid by ACA	34.00
Miscellaneous	\$25.00
Office Supplies	\$16.95
Bank Charges	1.00
Total Ending Assets	\$10,141.24

Picture of Jupiter with the Great Red Spot, from Jason Shinn

You kind of have to lean back to see it but I did manage to capture Jupiter's great red spot . Jason



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c/o Tom/Leigh Alexander, Editors

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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 Glenn Cameron

8019 Glendevan St. NW

Massillon, OH 44646

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.