



# The Night Sky

The Newsletter of  
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

Volume 31 Number 1

January, 2009

## RAMBLINGS OF THE PRESIDENT

*by Glenn R. Cameron*

Hello my fellow star gazers. I hope we have all come out of the other side of the holidays with our health, good relationships, and lots of cosmic wonder. I was enjoying the moon for the past couple of months. I enjoyed greatly the smiley face of early December when Venus, Jupiter, and the moon grinned down at the world. Lots of fun. I also enjoyed the "Cheshire Cat" moon that I have been seeing this month. I hope all of you got to see these sights too.

My wife and I went to North Carolina for New Year's and visited family. My brother-in-law's yard has too many tall trees, but even so the darkness and the clear North Carolina skies offered up beautifully steady nights. I could see the Orion Nebula and The Pleiades with unprecedented naked eye clarity. I could see five Pleiades stars quite easily. I was tickled pink.

Check out the club web site. The 2009 schedule has been updated. A copy of the new schedule is on p. 4 of this newsletter, or you may find it at:

[http://www.acaoh.org/pdf/2009\\_Observatory\\_Schedule.pdf](http://www.acaoh.org/pdf/2009_Observatory_Schedule.pdf)

If you look at the upcoming events page, [http://www.acaoh.org/upcoming\\_events.htm](http://www.acaoh.org/upcoming_events.htm), at the entry for the January business meeting you will see a web URL that leads to an abstract biography of our January speaker, [http://www.stowastronomy.org/2009-01-23\\_Abstract\\_Bio.htm](http://www.stowastronomy.org/2009-01-23_Abstract_Bio.htm). Take a look and be sure to come out to the January 23<sup>rd</sup> business meeting.

We still have outstanding outreach requests. Please consider helping out.

Outreach requests:

Minerva Public Library would like a speaker some time in 2009 as part of an astronomy exhibit they are planning for the International Year of Astronomy.

The Akron Audubon Society would like a speaker on the subject of light pollution at one of their monthly meetings.

A 5<sup>th</sup> grade science class in Coventry would like a presentation about solar system astronomy basics.

Don't forget, 2009 is the International Year of Astronomy. Let us go out and spread the astronomical word!

**ACA Membership Meeting!!!!**  
**Friday January 23, 2009, ,Kiwanis Hall.8:00 PM**  
**Eric Wertz, Meteorologist, will present "Sever Storms"**

Eric Wertz served as Vice President of the Northeast Ohio Chapter of the American Meteorological Society from 1994 to 2004 and President from 2004 to 2006. He currently is active in outreach projects for the local AMS chapter including judging meteorology projects at State Science Day at Ohio State University and developing meteorology tests used at regional Science Olympiads at Case Western Reserve University and The University of Akron. He has run his own weather station from home since 1978 and keeps daily weather records. He reports monthly weather data from Kent, Ohio to the Ohio Weather Journal.

**DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION** "Severe Storms" encompasses thunderstorms, lightning, tornadoes, and flash floods. This presentation is designed for the weather beginner. It will examine the ingredients needed for severe storm formation; the most common time of year for severe storms in Ohio; severe weather safety tips; and a slide show on thunderstorms and tornadoes to explore their many different sizes and forms. Tornado damage photos from Ohio will also be analyzed to show the different intensities of tornadoes. Hail formation will be discussed along with how lightning forms and scenarios that lead to flash flooding. The latest Doppler Radar technology for detecting severe storms will also be examined.

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## Activities Calendar

Club	,Celestial:
	Venus in the southwest at Sunset
<b>ACA Membership Meeting!!!!</b>	
<b>Friday January 23, 2009, ,Kiwanis Hall.8:00 PM</b>	Saturn overhead at sunrise
<b>Eric Wertz, Meteorologist, will present</b>	
<b>“Severe Storms”</b>	January 11- Full moon
See speaker and program info on p. 1 of this Newsletter	Venus at greatest eastern elongation- Jan 14
January 17- Star Party, Observatory, <b>Venus</b> 6:30 PM	Last quarter moon- Jan 18
	Jupiter at conjunction with the sun; moves into the morning sky- Jan 24
	New moon- Jan 26
	Annular solar eclipse- Indian Ocean and Indonesia- Jan 26
	January 10- Full moon

# Observatory Report

Ron Kalinoski

On November 22nd, ACA held an outreach program for the Medina Cub Scouts at the observatory. About 40 cub scouts and parents came out to the star party. The skies at star party time were marginal, so Lew Snodgrass and I decided to set up for our presentation inside the observatory. The presentation was titled *Constellations and Stars*. With the number of attendees, there was standing room only in the observatory. After the presentation, we took a look outside to check the sky conditions. The skies looked pretty good so Lew and I set up the observatory for an observing session. We observed Albireo, M57, and the Double Cluster. The cub scouts and parents were impressed with the images they observed through the 14" telescope. Despite earlier concerns about the weather, it turned out to be a good star party.

Suzanne Lambert, the fifth grade science teacher at Ervine Middle School requested an ACA member come out to the school to talk to her students about astronomy. After no responses to Dave Jessie's e-mail, I decided to give it a try. The task ahead was to teach six 45 minutes classes on astronomy. I prepared a talk for the kids describing Earth's location in the solar system and Milky Way galaxy, winter constellations and naked eye celestial objects they could observe from home, star formation, and methods astronomers use to find the distances to stars. I didn't finish the presentation in any of the classes, as the kids were full of questions. Can you travel through a Black Hole? Are there planets around stars? What happened before the Big Bang? Do you believe in UFOs? Wow! As you can imagine, I had a great time. I recognized some of the students from star parties at the observatory. Other students I didn't recognize said they have been to our star parties. I invited all the kids out to the observatory for our 2009 season. I gave Mrs. Lambert our 2009 Observatory Schedule and she distributed copies to the students. Hopefully, we'll see some of the kids this summer

## 2009 ACA Observatory Budget

Door for Privy	\$200
Perimeter Boarding for Roof	
Roll-Off Structure	\$150
Hand Controller for 14"	
Telescope	\$150
Miscellaneous Maintenance (\$25/ month)	\$300
Tool Kit for Observatory	\$100
Budget Contingency	\$100

**Total 2009 Observatory  
Budget** **\$1000**

## New Submission Guidelines:

The deadline for article submission is **6th of the month**. There will be no December Newsletter, thus the next deadline is January 6th. 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, we will get it published.

## PLEASE SEND IN YOUR ARTICLES!!!!

Send your articles, items for sale, and comments to: Tom Alexander, 270 Harmony Hills  
Dr. Akron Ohio 44321 email:  
hana\_aloha@hotmail.com

## Treasurer's Report

No report was available by press time. It will be included in the next issue of the Newsletter.



# Astronomy Club of Akron

## 2009 Observatory Schedule

Portage Lakes State Park, 5031 Manchester Road, Akron, OH 44319

[www.acao.org](http://www.acao.org)

- Our star parties are free and open to the public. Please join us for stargazing and educational activities. Star parties will begin promptly.
- Events may be cancelled if the skies are cloudy. If the skies are questionable, please call for the latest information: 330-837-5848
- If you have a telescope or binoculars, please feel free to bring them with you.
- This is an outdoor activity in an unheated environment. Nighttime temperatures drop rapidly, even in the summer. Dress appropriately.
- A restroom is available for your convenience.
- Please be considerate of those who bring their own telescopes. Children should be supervised at all times. Pets should be left at home.
- Smoke and expensive optics don't mix. Please, **no smoking** in or near the observatory or on the surrounding grounds where club members have set up their telescopes. If you must smoke, walk to the down-wind side of the observing site. Be considerate of your fellow observers.

### January 17 – 6:30pm

See Venus almost 40 degrees above the horizon shining at magnitude  $-4.4$

### February 28 – 7:00pm

See stars being born in a stellar nursery: Orion Nebula

### March 21 – 8:00pm

Special Event: Messier Marathon, stay all night to observe all 110 Messier objects with ACA club members

### March 28 – 8:00pm

View globular cluster NGC 2419, an intergalactic wanderer at a distance of 304,000 light years

### April 18 – 8:30pm

See Saturn's closing ring system at just 4 degrees inclination

### April 25 – 8:30pm

View Mercury at it's 2009 best; Mercury will be 20 degrees above the horizon at sunset. Also, an ACA member will take you on a sky tour of the Spring Constellations.

### May 16 – 8:30pm

*Program: Astrophotography\**

Learn how astronomers photograph the heavens

### May 30 – 8:00pm

**Annual ACA Telescope Seminar!** Our members will describe the advantages and disadvantages of each type of telescope.

### June 13 – 9:00pm

*Program: Saturn*

Last chance to view Saturn's rings before they disappear

### June 20 – 9:00pm

*Program: Asteroids\**

View asteroid Ceres at magnitude 8.6

### June 27 – 6:00pm

**Solar & Lunar Event / Hotdog Roast!** View sunspots, solar flares, and prominences on the sun and craters, mountains, and maria on the Moon. Enjoy a hotdog for a small fee.

*Program 1: The Sun    Program 2: The Moon*

\* listed program or make-up program

### July 11 – 9:00pm

*Program: From Starlight to the Big Bang\**

Find out how astronomers arrived at the Big Bang Theory

### July 18 – 9:00pm

*Program: Open Clusters\**

View beautiful configurations of stars

### July 25 – 9:00pm

*Program: Naked Eye and Binocular Objects\**

Many celestial objects can be observed without a telescope. Find out which ones.

### August 8 – 8:30pm

*Program: Sky Atlases\**

We'll show you how to follow a map to the stars!

### August 15 – 8:30pm

*Program: Historic Astronomers\**

Learn about the astronomers who set the foundation for our understanding of the Universe today

### September 12 – 7:30pm

*Program: Jupiter*

Listen to the sounds of Jupiter during this presentation

### September 19 – 8:00pm

Observe the Blinking Nebula. Also: Sky Tour of the Summer Constellations

### October 10 – 7:30pm

View our sister galaxy Andromeda

### October 17 – 7:30pm

A blue snowball in space? Yes, come out tonight to view the Blue Snowball Planetary.

### November 7 – 6:30pm

It's a great time to view Herschel's Double Cluster

### November 14 – 6:30pm

Jupiter is now well placed for evening sky viewing

### December 12 – 6:30pm

Come see the beautiful open cluster NGC7789

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

Fred Fry  
Mike Duncan  
Linnea Gunvalsen  
Mark & Theresa Miller  
James Van Pelt  
Ken Blaine  
Issabella Rasicci  
Ronald Aungst

We are thrilled to have you with us and look forward to seeing you at ALL club functions!

## **Editor's Corner**

### Keeping an Observing Log

What's that nebula? Have I seen it before? That globular looks familiar, but I'm not sure if I have looked at globulars in that part of the sky before. I know I've seen that galaxy before, but I think I saw a lot more detail when I had the scope out in the desert. Or am I just engaging in selective memory.

Most of us have had moments like those described above during our observing sessions. One way around that is to keep an observing log. This could be as detailed or as simple as you would like. A simple log might list just the objects you have seen. I believe that my experience logging Messier objects made it easier for Leigh and I to see many objects during the Messier marathon last spring, even without using any go to or push to system. A log can also make for fun reading on those cloudy nights. For example, here is one entry from my log during my first year of observing-

"Full moon in Leo. Clear, spring night, temp, in the mid 50s. I am unable to find any of the springtime galaxies. Does Messier actually exist? Is a 6 inch scope not big enough to see deep sky objects? Why do I put myself through this?"

I did eventually learn that nights with a full moon are not the best for searching out Deep Sky objects anywhere, let alone near the moon! Here's another, more positive entry, from a few years ago:

"Crystal clear skies. No moon, temp 40 degrees. This is a night that reminds me of why I do this. M-35 looks like diamonds in the sky. The Orion nebula fills the 22 mm eyepiece with a greenish cast. I could drive a Hummer through the Cassini division at 156X with the 15 mm".

Logs can be kept in a small notebook, or on your computer. One useful link is the ultimate Messier log, which may be downloaded (along with other software, including an eyepiece magnification calculator) at David Paul Green's free astronomy software site-  
<http://www.davidpaulgreen.com/tumol.html>. Alternatively, if you have one of the sky planetarium software programs, there may be a log already included. Record as much, or as little information as you like.

So record your observations. In the long run, you'll be glad you did!

# *The Night Sky*

*Newsletter of the Astronomy Club of Akron*

c/o Tom/Leigh Alexander, Editors

270 Harmony Hills Dr

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 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](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.