



# The Night Sky

The Newsletter of  
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

Volume 28 Number 7

July 2006

**Don't forget, the annual ACA Member Picnic is July 16!**

## Ramblings of the President

by Dave Jessie

### Annual ACA Member Picnic!!

Don't forget...this coming Sunday, July 16, 2006 at 2:00PM is our annual ACA Member Picnic! Once again, members Carl & Betti have offered to host this event at their beautiful home in Uniontown. The Club is supplying the hamburgers, hotdogs, sausage, buns and soft drinks, but we depend on the attending members to bring a dish to share with fellow revelers. What kind of dish? Garden salads, pasta salads, bean dishes, deviled-eggs, frozen grapes, chips, and deserts are all welcomed. Bring whatever you'd enjoy sharing with your friends. Bring place settings for yourselves and also a lawn chair if you'd like to sit down since I seriously doubt Carl & Betti have sufficient outdoor seating for all of us. Since this newsletter is available on our website, I'm going to refrain from putting Carl & Betti's last name and address here. Most of us remember how to get to their place – and Carl assures me that all road construction that proved problematic for the past two picnics has been completed, so it's clear sailing without detours.

If you want to go and don't know how to get there, please email me at [DJessie@neo.rr.com](mailto:DJessie@neo.rr.com) or call me at 330-688-9043 and I'll be happy to supply directions.

If skies permit, we can do solar observing with Hydrogen-alpha and white-light filtered telescopes to keep this on an astronomy theme.

Try to make this event. First of all, it's one of the benefits of membership. Secondly, it's a great way to relax with fellow amateur astronomers and discuss observations, equipment and techniques without the distraction of entertaining the public. Thirdly, what better opportunity to show the significant-other that the group you hang out with those long clear nights are nice folks! If you're a new member, there's really no better way to meet your fellow members. Come on, have a good time!



Ron Kalinoski stands by as a young zoo guest peers at a tree through a telescope. The sun had already gone below the tree line before the public started showing up.

Photo by  
Justin Phillips

## The Akron Zoo Debacle

You know my style. I tend to view our events in a very positive light. Last Saturday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, we fulfilled our part of a bargain with the Akron Zoo to put on a display of astronomy gear, computer-graphics displays, handouts, solar-viewing equipped telescopes and lots of members to entertain and educate the public at the Zoo's 'Pajama Party' which ran from 6:00PM until 9:00PM. We had such a tremendously successful *Astronomy Day* event there on May 6<sup>th</sup> this spring that I had no doubt

## OFFICERS 2006 – 2007

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| No one                               | N/A          | N/A                      |
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| Freddy Huffman                       | 330-535-8009 | atmos@netzero.com        |
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| Lou Poda                             |              |                          |

## Activities Calendar

### Club

July 16, Members-only picnic 2:00 pm  
 July 22, Open House and Star Party 9:00 pm  
 Aug. 5, Open House and Star Party 8:30 pm  
 Aug. 19, Open House and Star Party 8:30 pm

### Celestial

July 23, Perseid Meteor Shower Begins  
 July 24, New Moon  
 August 9, Full Moon  
 August 13, Perseid Meteor Shower Peaks  
 August 22, Perseid Meteor Shower Ends  
 August 23, New Moon

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: Justin Phillips 402 Crystal St. Akron Ohio 44305  
 email phillipsaca@gmail.com

whatsoever we'd have an equally successful event this time. The Club was represented well by Jason Shinn and his beautiful museum-quality displays, Paul & Linda Koberg, John, Patty & Justin Phillips, Freddy Huffman, Ron Kalinoski, Rosaelena Villaseñor and me. The building where we were assigned was gorgeous – first class. The gardens surrounding us were immaculate and the fountains were beautiful. The weather was perfect. The event was a disaster. What!?! Yes, while the Zoo had a healthy attendance, we got, at most, ten visitors to our displays. Why?! We had been placed at absolutely the farthest point from the entrance/exit of the Zoo and, while the surroundings were gorgeous, hardly anyone felt the need to venture up to us. At the *Astronomy Day* event, we were located at the very entrance of The Barnhardt Family Welcome Center – every single person that attended the Zoo that day for Akron's *Earth Day* celebration passed directly by our displays. Most everyone stopped to see what we were about. We received praise from Zoo personnel about the professionalism of our displays and the way the members presented the Club and themselves. I was asked at that time if we'd be available for their one 'nocturnal' event later in the summer. I, of course, agreed. What could possibly be better than establishing a working relationship with the Zoo and their beautiful new facilities – it seemed like the perfect venue for us to meet the public and for them to meet us. Unfortunately, I assumed too much with regards to this past event. I assumed we'd have another location as favorable

as the last event. We didn't. Ten of our members spent a great deal of time and effort with next to zero payback. It was a genuine disappointment for all concerned. You could see the despair on the faces of our volunteers. I'd like to publicly apologize to all concerned for not making certain we'd be in as favorable a location as we were for the *Astronomy Day* event. To those that came and dedicated so much effort for so little exposure, I promise it won't happen again. We are working on a document to send to the Director of the Zoo so we won't waste our time again. I'm sorry for dropping the ball on this one. My deepest heart-felt apologies to Jason, Paul, Linda, John, Patty, Justin, Freddy, Ron and Rosaelena. Now, in keeping with my normal positive style, the next outreach event is going to be GREAT! See, always looking at the bright side ;^)



ACA Display at the Akron Zoo event

Photo by Justin Phillips

### Treasurer's Report: 6/1/06 - 6/30/06

Steve Rohweder, Treasurer

**Total Beginning Assets ..... \$7,440.13**

#### Income

Interest on balances ..... \$5.70  
 Telescope sale ..... \$1,000.00  
 Magazine Subscriptions ..... \$67.90  
 Dues ..... \$645.00

#### Expenses

Newsletter Expense ..... (\$19.32)  
 Office Supplies ..... (\$79.00)  
 Public Events ..... (\$88.32)  
 Magazine Subscriptions ..... (\$232.75)

**Total Ending Assets ..... \$9,433.91**

## DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO THE ACA!!

If you haven't renewed, **your membership has expired!** If you have been receiving a mailed paper newsletter, last month's issue was your last. It's simple to rejoin the ACA. Simply fill in the JOIN form on the back of the last page of this newsletter and send it along with your check to:

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

# ASTRONOMY CLUB OF AKRON - WHY?

It's probably worth re-examining the reasons for the Club's existence every now and then. We ask that folks join the Club, support it by paying dues, by participating in our activities, by helping out with observatory maintenance, by serving as officers and trustees, and in too many other ways to mention. It's reasonable for such folks to ask what justifies these requests.

First and foremost, our Club was formed and continues to exist primarily for the purpose of outreach. As amateur astronomers, we want to promote and share our enjoyment of the skies and to educate the public about astronomy. Most of our Club activities are directed toward this outreach. We provide speakers for public events. We go "on the road" to take telescopes to the gatherings of various organizations. We have monthly events of our own (in season) to which the public is invited. At these events both member instruments and the Club's own telescope are available for public viewing. All of these serve to help make the public aware of the opportunities provided by amateur astronomy for both learning about and enjoying the sky.

Where does the money go? Even though our primary instrument (the 14" Meade LX200GPS in the observatory) was donated to the Club by a consortium of volunteers, we still incur costs associated with insuring, updating, and maintaining the building and equipment. Mailing the Club newsletter to those insisting on receiving it in paper form is another substantial cost to the Club.

What efforts are involved? All of the labor expended to maintain the observatory, grounds, and equipment is donated by Club members. All of the member-owned telescopes set up at the Club site on public viewing nights are provided and manned by volunteers. Volunteers operate the Club equipment for the public's enjoyment. The speakers at the Club's public open houses are volunteers. The telescopes delivered to the functions of other groups for public demonstration nights are provided, transported, and operated by volunteers. As can be seen, these activities require a considerable investment of money, time, and effort but we feel that the results more than justify this investment. One such result is the attraction of new members to ensure the survival of the Club. Another is the increased public awareness, knowledge, and enjoyment of the possibilities offered by amateur astronomy.

Another purpose of the Club is to provide opportunities for those who are already members to share their knowledge and enjoyment of the sky with each other. Our business meetings and public nights at the observatory both provide that social interaction that makes the Club a fun organization to which to belong. Technical support is available for those in the process of repairing, building, choosing, or operating astronomical gear. These activities cost the Club very little in financial terms and of course the participants are, again, all volunteers. The member retention rate along with the number of long-time members show just how much the Club's members value and appreciate these social aspects of Club membership.

The Veep 7/8/06



## Secretary's Minutes from the Board Meeting held 6-25-06

By John Shulan

Present: Dave Jessie, Steve Rohweder, Mark Kochheiser, Pat Phillips, Tom Mino, Fred Huffman, Gregg Crenshaw, John Shulan.

Meeting called to order @2:00 pm.

President Dave nominated Tom Mino for Trustee term ending in 2009 and also Peggy Stabholz for term ending in 2007. Both nominations were approved unanimous by the Board.

July 8<sup>th</sup> will be a public event at the Akron Zoo from 6 to 9 pm. A number of Board members have volunteered to be at the zoo while others will be at the observatory to set up for the regularly scheduled public observing event.

As of 6/25/06, 69 members have renewed. 50 have not yet renewed. (update: as of 7/12/06, we now have 77 current active members and 44 that have not renewed)

To attract new members, the Board created an introductory rate for membership.

A new first-time member can join for a special rate of \$20.00 for the first year. This one time rate offers the newsletter by email only. If they join in February or later, the new membership will roll into the next year. Renewals are at full rate. If new member wants a printed newsletter, they have to join at the full rate.

The motion passed so as to be presented to the membership

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

Jim Donahue  
Alan McClish  
Jacob Oravec  
Tom & Sherry Welch

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

ACA picnic will be at Carl & Betti's house Sunday July 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00PM

The newsletter will have a new section for the very beginning astronomer. The Board members have volunteered to submit a number of articles for Justin to include when appropriate.

To help supplement the ongoing need for an Observatory Director and staff, the board will go thru training as to opening the observatory and basic operation of the scope.

Printing cost of the newsletters keep rising. The cost per letter is now over \$1.00 per member per month.

Good news about our location. The Park Service is being very co-operative with our needs and will work with us on any future changes of needs.

The Bylaws are under current review to bring them up to date.

Meeting adjourned 4:15 pm

Pluto, the smallest planet, ninth from the sun, is in the spotlight. No, scratch that, its *moons* are the ones in the spotlight. Yes, that's plural. If you haven't already heard, Pluto has recently been found to be harboring two previously unknown moons.

The moons, discovered in 2005 by a team of scientists using the Hubble space telescope, are small even by Pluto standards. Both are less than 165 km (102 miles) in diameter. Compare that to 2,328 km for Pluto and 1,207 km for Charon, Pluto's previously known moon.

The latest buzz about these moons is that they have been officially named by the International Astronomical Union. The smaller moon, closer to Pluto, is now known as Nix; the larger, outermost moon is named Hydra.

At the moment, Nix and Hydra are mostly a mystery to astronomers. However, in the near future, continuing efforts will attempt to pin down their orbits, sizes, compositions, etc. In the somewhat more distant future, nine years from now, the planetary probe New Horizons will fly through the Plutonian system. It will photograph Nix and Hydra, not to mention Pluto and Charon, in detail, allowing for precise determination of all the properties listed above, as well as their shapes and textures. —Justin Phillips

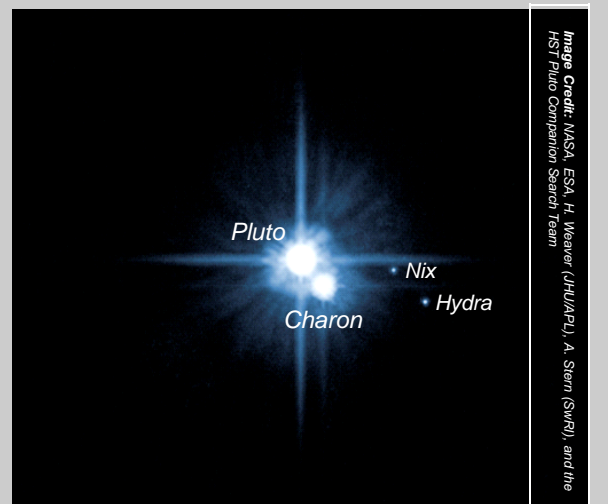


Image Credit: NASA, ESA, H. Weaver (JHU/APL), A. Stern (SwRI), and the HST Pluto Companion Search Team



Just wanted to drop a congratulatory note to Jupiter. Jupiter had a baby. In other words, the red spot spawned another one. (see attached photo taken 5-27 in Akron) -John Shulan

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The article to the left is a reprint. It was mutilated in last month's issue by a file conversion error (no one's fault), resulting in partially unreadable text and a completely unviewable picture. I have adjusted the photograph to bring out Europa to the upper right of Jupiter, it is unmodified otherwise. The new red spot is down and slightly to the left of the Great Red Spot, just barely visible.

# The Night Sky

Newsletter of the Astronomy Club of Akron

c/o Justin Phillips, Editor  
402 Crystal St  
Akron, OH 44305-3116

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](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.