



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

Volume 27 Number 9

September 2005

Meeting Friday, September 23

Ramblings of the President - by Dave Jessie

We have a full plate! The ACA has received two outreach requests, both occurring on the same day – Saturday, September 17, 2005.

VP John Crilly took a request from the Cub Scouts for an event at Wingfoot Lake. About 100 campers between 8 and 12 years old would very much like to look through our telescopes. Please contact John for details.

Mark North was contacted by the management of the Portage Lakes State Park about an event at West Branch State Park. Please contact Mark for additional details.

Telescopes are needed (and members to run them, of course!) at both events. It's rare for us to have two events at the same time, but I'm sure we can cover them both if we put our minds to it.

This coming Saturday (Sept 10th) is the OTAA (Ohio Turnpike Astronomer's Association) Conven-

tion at Black River...a popular event for ACAers to attend. Black River is in Birmingham in Erie County, just 20 miles this side of Sandusky. They have nice dark skies there and a great many attendees with lots of hardware. As with all OTAA events, there's FOOD! Folks that attend are asked to bring a dish to share with others. All in all, a very good time! Please contact me for additional details if you'd like to attend, or visit their website at <http://apk.net/~arstar50/otaaconvention.htm> if you have Internet access.

Don't forget...our general membership meetings begin anew this month – on Friday September 23, 2005.

Where in the world did the summer go?! It truly seems like we just said farewell to our meetings back in May when we broke for our busy observing season. Speaking of observing, has anyone else noticed the amazingly few successful sessions we've had this summer? If you have, you're most definitely not alone.

On the sci.astro.amateur Internet newsgroup, fellow amateur astronomers from around the world have been discussing the horrid rarity of clear transparent skies this year. Yes, I'm aware we've had some great nights, but they've been unusually few and far between.

A few of us gathered at the ACA observatory last Saturday, Sept 3 and had a beautifully clear night. Remember, there doesn't have to be a scheduled public event for there to be members at the observatory on a clear Friday or Saturday night!

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

Robert Watkins

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

OFFICERS 2005 – 2006

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Lou Poda

Activities Calendar

Club

September 10, Black River OTAA
September 17, Outreach program at West Branch
September 17, Outreach program at Wingfoot Lake
September 23, Monthly Meeting 8 pm
September 24, Observatory Program, Mars
October 1, Hidden Hollow Star Party
October 8, Observatory Open House
October 21, Monthly Meeting 8 pm

Celestial

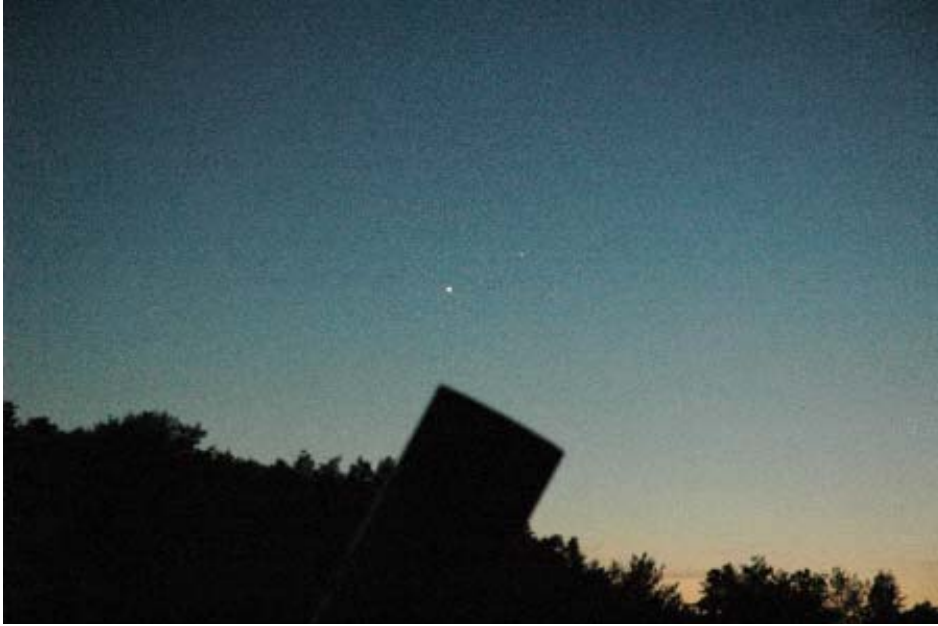
September 17, Full Moon
September 22, Autumnal Equinox
October 3, New Moon
October 8, Observatory Open House
October 17, Full Moon
October 21, Orinids Meteors
October 29, Mars at Closest

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



The conjunction of Venus and Jupiter provides a backdrop for an observing session at Fishcreek school.



Picture of Mars imaged by John Shulan with Nexstar 8i, 1000 stacked images taken with Celestron Nextimage CCD camera.

Treasurer's Notes

There has been some discussion about dues paid by new members – should they pay for a full year when they are joining after May? Should everyone's membership expire at the same time? What do the bylaws say?

According to the bylaws, new members can have a pro-rated membership fee to compensate for the May 31 expiration date of their membership. All memberships will still expire on May 31, and renewing members are expected to stay on schedule and will not get a pro-rated discount if they renew late. However, new members will be pro-rated at \$2.50 per month (\$30 divided by 12 months). If you have a friend who would like to join, you can have them contact me for the exact amount. Since our current literature does not mention the pro-rating, I will send partial refunds to any new members that pay the full \$30 in the middle of the year.

I hope this helps with the concerns about our treatment of new members' dues. Hopefully this will encourage new members to join at any time of the year.

Diane North, ACA Treasurer

| Treasurer's Report: 8/1/05 - 8/31/05 | |
|---|-------------------|
| Diane North, Treasurer | |
| Total Beginning Assets | \$9,071.78 |
| Income | |
| Dues | \$100.00 |
| Interest on balances | \$6.84 |
| Donations (Solar/Lunar Hot Dog Roast | \$124.00 |
| Expenses | |
| Magazine Subscriptions paid by ACA | \$(32.95) |
| Public Program Expense | \$(113.95) |
| Gifts | \$(42.11) |
| Observatory Improvements | \$(136.54) |
| Observatory Upkeep | \$(126.44) |
| Bank Charges | \$(1.00) |
| Total Ending Assets | \$8,849.63 |

Astronomy History in Nantucket

Hi friends,

I just came back from a vacation in Nantucket, MA. Besides doing my best to consume vast amounts of seafood, I had the most wonderful time learning the



story of Maria Mitchell, America's first renowned woman astronomer.

She was born in 1818 and her home is still in its original form and furnishings. Her father, a bank employee, was very learned and being Quaker believed all members of his family should be educated. Maria was no exception. Her father also sparked in her a keen interest in astronomy.

She became the town librarian and read every book in the library. She taught herself



Latin, advanced mathematics and learned how to do astronomical calculations. Her father was able to borrow a telescope, an approximately 4" refractor, from the Coast Guard and

Maria set it on top of the Pacific Bank Building. There she discovered a comet and became world famous.

Maria became the first women professor of Astronomy at Vassar. She also was the first women to become a member of both the Academe of Sciences and The American Philosophical Society (founded by Ben Franklin). Her home is an intriguing look into her life and her accomplishments. Her telescope is on display.

Because of Maria Mitchell, Nantucket never lost its love of Astronomy. The sky is very dark there. The town built the Loines Observatory in 1908. The twin dome observatory has a mid 1800's 6" Clark refractor. Clark was the most famous refractor builder including the Lowell Observatory. This beautiful scope has a riveted steel tube and brass controls. It has a clock drive. I was privilege



to be able to work with it.

In Nantucket during the summer, there are three star parties a week at the observatory. Vladimir is the director and he has seven students doing an internship for the summer with him. On the last time I went with my scope to the help out with the star parties, Vlad was really glad to see me. The clock drive wasn't working. Luckily my Celestron Nexstar 8i was hitting deep space objects right on the button. I probably had the best night ever with my scope hitting over fifteen deep space objects without any effort and wowing a crowd of about 20 people. Being that guests are charged \$10.00 to visit, I was more than appreciated!

If vacation plans take you to Nantucket be sure to go through the Maria Mitchell house and visit the observatory. It is a wonderful mix of history, astronomy and truly friendly people.

Sincerely,
John L. Shulan

TRIP REPORT - JACKSON, MICHIGAN 8/26/05



I managed to get away to another very small star party in August. This one was near Jackson, Michigan at a site owned by the brother of a local astronomer. The location was not so far from the nearest town as a truly dark site would be, but the horizons were great. The photo above is looking South.

This was a very informal gathering, as Sue (our hostess) wanted to start with a small group to give the notion a trial before planning anything more ambitious. The facilities were minimal; there were no food or equipment vendors and the outhouse was in a separate cleared area a couple of hundred yards from the observing field. On the other hand, Sue and her friends surprised us by treating us to excellent meals both nights and both mornings.

At first, we thought the weather was going to kill this one. It was cloudy all day Friday and when it cleared that night the transparency was

so terrible that most of us didn't even set up to observe. In the wee hours Saturday morning it began to rain hard. As the morning progressed things cleared up, though - and we were treated to some excellent transparency and seeing. The solar views were so good we began to get very optimistic about the prospects for that night.

SOLAR OBSERVING



I had brought my recently-acquired PST and a borrowed 12" Meade RCX400 with my Thousand Oaks Ha filter on it. I enjoyed some of the very best solar views I have experienced. I had never really liked the TO filter but the combination of the RCX optics and the great sky made it do a terrific job. The tiny filaments in the prominences were sharp and bright at 100X. The PST was also in good form, showing subtle surface details rarely observable with that aperture. Everyone present had a fine time enjoying the exceptional display.

Gary Gibbs didn't arrive until that evening with his Coronado dual-stacked 60mm MaxScope. I left before he was set up Sunday morning but I'm told the sky conditions continued to be good and the MaxScope gave the crew another set of great views.

NIGHTTIME ASTRONOMY

There was a nice assortment of gear on the field. Chris and Bobby both brought StellarVue 115mm triplet APO

refractors on CG5-GT mounts. ACA member Scott Horstman was there with his 17.5" ATM truss dob. He also brought his 7" Mak LX200 but circumstances prevented him from setting it up (my fault). Jim had his 6" Newt on a new LXD75 mount and Sue was there with her 8" Hardin dob. Paul and Erika brought their 10" LX200 and a complete portable imaging setup, planning to grab Mars and a favorable ISS pass, plus a new 6" Hardin dob. Gary arrived Saturday with his StellarCat-equipped 15" Obsession truss dob and his secret weapon - a Collins I3 light-amplifying eyepiece. I had the 12" RCX400, temporarily set up on the tripod intended for Scott's Mak (some dummy left the RCX tripod head in the garage). By Saturday night everyone was set up and ready to go.

The skies were as good as we had hoped. The rain had cleaned all the junk from the upper air so transparency was 5 of 5, and as a bonus the seeing was also exceptionally good. It was one of the dewiest nights I can remember, so those without heat fought that all night. Specific views I remember especially enjoying include the Double Cluster in Chris's SV APO, M82 in the I3-equipped 15" Obsession, M13 in Scott's 17.5" dob, and M17 in the RCX400. Did I mention the seeing conditions? Cruising the terminator on the Moon at 500X in the RCX was a real treat.

In the early morning hours Paul got a great image of Mars and I was able to welcome M42 back by enjoying one of the best views of the Trapezium I've ever seen. All present declared the event a resounding success.

John Crilly
jcrilly@neo.rr.com





Frontiers of Astronomy

Frontiers of Astronomy is a free lecture series that offers those with an interest in astronomy the chance to learn about some of the latest research in the field.

Presentations are held at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History in Murch Auditorium on Thursdays at 8 pm. No tickets or reservations are required. On clear evenings, the Museum's Ralph Mueller Observatory will be open afterward. Selected Thursdays, 8 pm. No tickets or reservations required. For more information, call (216) 231-4600, ext. 3362 or 3253.

sponsored by

**Department of Astronomy at Case Western Reserve University through the support of the Arthur S. Holden, Sr. Endowment
The Cleveland Museum of Natural History
The Cleveland Astronomical Society**

Einstein's Biggest Blunder: A Cosmic Mystery Story

Dr. Lawrence Krauss, Case Western Reserve University

Thursday, November 10, 2005, 8 pm

In 1916, to resolve an apparent problem with his General Theory of Relativity, Einstein added an additional term to his equations. But he discarded it within a decade, calling it his "biggest blunder." Revolutionary new observations now suggest that most energy in the Universe resides in empty space -- just what would be expected if Einstein's additional term existed! Determining the origin and nature of this energy is perhaps the biggest puzzle in physics today. Lawrence Krauss summarizes the current situation and describes possible implications for our understanding of nature, and for life, of this astounding new result. He also will sign copies of his newest book.

The Teenage Universe: Distant Quasars and the State of the Universe Soon After the Big Bang

Dr. Michael Strauss, Princeton University

Thursday, December 15, 2005, 8 pm

Our telescopes are time machines. The light from a faraway object may take many billions of years to reach us, thus we see the object as it existed in the distant past. Michael Strauss describes the discovery of the most remote quasars known. He explains how, using these objects as probes of the physical state of the Universe, evidence has emerged of a dramatic transition less than a billion years after the Big Bang, when most of the hydrogen in the Universe was heated by light from nascent galaxies and quasars.

Binary Minor Planets

Derek Richardson, University of Maryland

Thursday, March 16, 2006, 8 pm

As of mid-2005, 60 binary minor planets had been discovered in the near-Earth, main belt and Jupiter Trojan asteroid populations, as well as in the transneptunian region. Derek Richardson reviews the observations to date and presents various theories and computer simulations regarding the formation and evolution of binary minor planets. Studying the origin and evolution of these bodies offers insights into the formation of the solar system in general. Studying their physical nature aids the development of strategies to mitigate the hazard of a possible minor planet collision with Earth.

From Cleveland to the Virgo Cluster: Case's Burrell Schmidt Telescope

Paul Harding, Case Western Reserve University

Thursday, April 20, 2006, 8 pm

Since 1941, Case's Burrell Schmidt telescope, built locally by Warner and Swasey, has produced a wealth of scientific data. When it was located in or near Cleveland, it produced spectroscopic data. Now, thanks to its position on Kitt Peak in Arizona and significant upgrades, the telescope can take images of ultra-faint objects. Paul Harding talks about how Warner and Swasey's legacy enabled the Schmidt telescope to evolve into one of the world's premier instruments for ultra-deep imaging of galaxies and clusters. He illustrates its capabilities with stunning recent images of the Virgo Cluster of Galaxies.

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September 2005

October 2005

| Sun | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat |
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| | | | | 1 Moon 04:29 19:24 Sun 06:52 19:58 | 2 Moon 06:32 19:49 Sun 06:53 19:57 | 3 Moon 08:34 20:08 Sun 06:54 19:55 |
| 4 Moon 07:37 20:27 Sun 06:55 19:53 | 5 Moon 08:38 20:46 Sun 06:56 19:52 | 6 Moon 09:41 21:06 Sun 06:57 19:50 | 7 Moon 10:45 21:28 Sun 06:58 19:48 | 8 Moon 11:53 21:54 Sun 06:59 19:47 | 9 Moon 13:03 22:25 Sun 07:00 19:45 | 10 New Moon, 14:47 Moon 14:14 23:06 Sun 07:01 19:43 |
| 11 Moon 15:26 23:59 Sun 07:02 19:42 | 12 Moon 16:29 ----- Sun 07:03 19:40 | 13 Moon 17:22 01:04 Sun 07:04 19:38 | 14 Moon 18:04 02:19 Sun 07:05 19:37 | 15 Moon 18:39 03:40 Sun 07:06 19:35 | 16 Moon 19:08 05:02 Sun 07:07 19:33 | 17 Moon 19:33 06:21 Sun 07:08 19:31 |
| 18 Moon 19:58 07:39 Sun 07:09 19:30 | 19 Moon 20:20 08:55 Sun 07:10 19:28 | 20 Moon 20:48 10:09 Sun 07:11 19:26 | 21 Moon 21:15 11:24 Sun 07:12 19:25 | 22 Moon 21:49 12:35 Sun 07:14 19:23 | 23 Moon 22:30 13:44 Sun 07:15 19:21 | 24 Full Moon, 22:03 Moon 23:19 14:48 Sun 07:16 19:19 |
| 25 Moon ----- 16:39 Sun 07:17 19:18 | 26 Moon 00:14 16:23 Sun 07:18 19:16 | 27 Moon 01:15 16:59 Sun 07:19 19:14 | 28 Moon 02:18 17:28 Sun 07:20 19:13 | 29 Moon 03:22 17:52 Sun 07:21 19:11 | 30 Moon 04:26 18:13 Sun 07:22 19:09 | |
| Last Qtr, 02:42 | | | | | | |

| Sun | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat |
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| 2 Moon 06:29 18:52 Sun 07:24 19:06 | 3 Moon 07:32 19:12 Sun 07:25 19:04 | 4 Moon 08:38 19:33 Sun 07:26 19:02 | 5 Moon 09:44 19:57 Sun 07:27 19:01 | 6 Moon 10:54 20:27 Sun 07:28 18:59 | 7 Moon 12:08 21:05 Sun 07:29 18:57 | 8 Moon 13:17 21:54 Sun 07:30 18:56 |
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| 23 Moon 23:03 14:18 Sun 07:47 18:33 | 24 Moon ----- 14:57 Sun 07:48 18:31 | 25 Moon 00:05 15:29 Sun 07:49 18:30 | 26 Moon 01:09 16:55 Sun 07:50 18:28 | 27 Moon 02:12 18:17 Sun 07:51 18:27 | 28 Moon 03:15 18:37 Sun 07:53 18:26 | 29 Moon 04:18 18:57 Sun 07:54 18:24 |
| 30 Moon 04:19 18:16 Sun 08:55 17:24 | 31 Moon 05:23 18:36 Sun 08:56 17:22 | | | | | |

ACA Want Ads

ASTRO GARAGE SALE

I'm unloading a few unnecessary items:

- 1) Thousand Oaks 1.5 angstrom Hydrogen-alpha filter setup for a 12" Meade SCT or RCX - \$500
- 2) Homebrew (not by me) 12" F/5 truss dobsonian telescope. It's built much bigger and heavier than I would have done it; would probably handle a 17.5" mirror just fine. I'd consider it a rebuild project to make it smaller and lighter but it works as it is. Includes a 2" helical focuser and a shroud. Mirror coatings are a little scratched but a recoat will fix that - \$500
- 3) Tasco Starguide 60GT - same as Celestron Nexstar 60GT; 60mm F/11 achromat refractor with alt/az GoTo mount & tripod - includes a Celestron Nexstar 60GT handbox instead of the Tasco - \$125
- 4) Meade 12" LX200 Classic (NOT the current

LX200GPS model). This is a very nice example of Meade's 12" F/10 forkmounted SCT. It includes the latest firmware (4.34L) with full goto capabilities with a 64,000 object database. I have the original box plus the canvas carry case for the telescope. It will also include a dew heater element and a Tele Vue 2" diagonal. No tripod, though. This one has taken a lot of nice astrophotos - \$2150

John Crilly
jcrilly@neo.rr.com

Send your Want Ads (items to buy, sell or trade) to:

Ray Hyer
725 Brewer St
Akron, OH. 44305

Or email to rhyer@neo.rr.com

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
(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.