



# The Night Sky

The Newsletter of  
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

Volume 29 Number 9

September 2007

## RAMBLINGS OF THE PRESIDENT

by *Dave Jessie*

Time for ACA meetings again! Where the heck did summer go? Didn't I just ask that question a year ago? It seems like we just started our three month summer break and now it's over. We really shouldn't complain, though...we had many wonderful nights under the stars and a lot of eyepiece time looking at all those summer-time favorites - a lot more opportunities than last year. Really, the peak observing opportunities are just now happening. Sagittarius is still at a reasonable altitude in the southern sky and, with sunset arriving about a minute and a half earlier each night, it will still be observable for a while longer. Thinking of all those beautiful Messier objects in the 'steam' of the teapot makes me think of the Messier Marathon we attempted twice this spring without success. Hey, next early spring will be here before you know it - but for now, let concentrate on the present. Our first meeting following the three-month long summer break will be at the Portage Lakes Kiwanis Civic Center at 725 Portage Lakes Dr. Akron, OH 44319 on Friday, Sept 28, 2007 at 8:00PM. Remember back when we didn't have this great facility? Remember trying to find a place and winding up in less-than-ideal venues? All that's in the past and I'm sure you'll want to help us \*keep\* it that way...and you can. How? Read the next section and get some beautiful roses for that special someone!

Kiwanis Rose Remembrance Day: The Portage Lakes Kiwanis allows our club to meet in their Civic Center at absolutely zero expense to us. When the arrangements were made, the only stipulation for our continued use of this wonderful facility was that we support their effort to sell roses, the proceeds of which go to charitable causes. The sale of these roses begins on Sept, 17, 2007 and will remain underway when our next meeting occurs. We will be asking the membership to purchase roses at our meeting on Friday, Sept 28th 2007. The Kiwanis will be leaving us cards to fill out to purchase these roses - which will be delivered anywhere in Summit County on Saturday, October 6, 2007. The charge for a dozen roses remains at \$15.00...and that includes delivery! Not a bad deal, now, is it!? Please try to find it in

your hearts to support the Kiwanis - and keep them happy that they allow us to use their facility (at no charge).

If you want to purchase a dozen (or more!) roses, please bring either CASH or a CHECK made out to the 'Astronomy Club of Akron'. Our illustrious and multi-talented treasurer, Steve Rohweder, will accept the payments and, in turn, make out a check payable to the Kiwanis Center to cover the total expense of the roses purchased. This method assures the ACA will get credit for the roses purchased. Remember, please...if you want to have these roses delivered to that special someone, be sure to bring their complete address(es), including ZIP code, with you to the meeting so the order cards can be filled in by you.

Our Vice President, John Crilly, or our Treasurer, Steve Rohweder, will deliver the cards and payment to the Kiwanis Center during the week following our meeting.

The Lunar Eclipse: Very early Tuesday morning Aug 28th, the sky cooperated and a beautiful lunar eclipse was there for the taking. It was one of the prettiest ones I've ever seen...deep red and hanging over the western sky more sphere-like than can ever be seen normally. It's fascinating to know the red color comes from the combined sunrises and sunsets around the entire earth during the eclipse. Another amazing thing was looking at the Orion nebula and the Pleiades in total comfort while wearing summer clothes - almost surrealistic since that view is normally in the bitter cold of January. It was grand and I hope you got to see it.

Astronomy Day, September Style: We've been invited to participate in another 'Astronomy Day' event at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History! This one is taking place on Saturday Sept 15, 2007 between the hours of 10:00AM and 4:00PM. We need to get there by 9:20AM or so to set up displays and be ready to go when they open the doors at 10:00AM. The ACA participated in this event in April this year and it's a privilege to be in-

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**General Membership Meeting Sept. 28! Remember to Come!**

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vited back. We'll be inside with our displays (thank you, Jason!) - and outside with solar scopes, if the weather cooperates. The people that come to the museum are anxious to learn about amateur astronomy - and who better to tell them about it than us! You don't have to commit to the entire six hours...if you can only be there for a while, that's fine. We'll have the event covered if we

get a few more volunteers. Come in the front door of the museum and tell them you're with the ACA. There won't be any charge. As an extra added bonus, we get to see the film by Timothy Ferris "Seeing in the Dark" several days before its premier on PBS stations nationwide on Wednesday Sept 19, 2007. Don't miss this movie. What I've seen about it and what I know of Mr. Ferris, indicates this is a must-see for us amateur astronomers.

# OBSERVATORY REPORT

*Ron Kalinoski*

Although cloud cover made viewing impossible at our August 18th star party, we still got together for a presentation on Jupiter by Jason Shinn. Jason's presentation contained images from Voyager and Galileo missions as well as his personal radio telescope observations of the planet. Jason presented graphical displays of radio signals he received from Jupiter and data he transformed into audio signals, allowing the audience to listen to a set of long and short duration sounds emitted from Jupiter.

A high pressure system moved into the region over the Labor Day weekend and provided excellent conditions for our September 1st star party. Mark Kochheiser started the star party with a presentation on planetary nebulae. Mark explained what causes a star to evolve into a planetary nebula and provided many detailed images of planetary nebulae at different stages of evolution. After Mark's presentation, we started our search for planetary nebulae. M27, possibly the finest planetary nebula in the northern hemisphere, was one of the first celestial objects we viewed. Also known as the Dumbbell Nebula due to its two lobe structure, M27 is large, bright, and set in a rich field of stars within the Milky Way. Another planetary nebula we viewed was NGC 7009, the Saturn Nebula. The Saturn Nebula was first viewed by William Herschel and he is responsible for coining the term planetary nebula due to their disk-like structure resembling a planet. Through the telescope, the Saturn Nebula is a small, bright, blue-green disk sitting in an open field with only a few dim stars. The Blue Flash Nebula offered a bit of a challenge to an observer at the 14" telescope. This nebula looked like a round cloud situated at the bottom of a group of stars forming a backwards question mark. Slew-ing to the northeast, the 14" telescope found the Blue Snowball Planetary. This celestial object was observed as a very bright blue ball placed in a sparse field of stars and was a hit with the children at the star party. We also viewed the Cat's Eye Nebula. This planetary was seen as a bright blue-green disk with a central star. As Mark Kochheiser reported during his presentation, the central star is probably a binary as evidenced by the complex structure of the nebula. Planetary nebulae were not the only celestial objects we observed. The 14" telescope also slewed to the Wild Duck Cluster, Swan Nebula, and globular clusters, M13, M15, and NGC 6229.

the list of objects described above and then Uranus, it is easy to see why Herschel called planetary nebulae as he did. At 109X, Uranus was seen as a small blue disk in a sparsely populated field of stars. Jason wanted to take pictures of Uranus with his video camera, so Anirudh Walvekar and I set up the 14" telescope to accommodate that wish. After taking a few images, the Moon rose high enough above the trees to be the next target. Anirudh and I set up the telescope with the observatory's super barlow lense (3X Vernonscope) and proceeded to scan the Moon for interesting sites. Jason took some images with the super barlow, but later we decided to image the moon without it. One interesting site near the terminator was a large crater (possibly Arzachel) that was completely in shadow while the rim and surroundings were illuminated. Hopefully the image can be successfully processed so Jason can share it with us.

On September 4th, some members got together to perform roof repairs to the observatory building. Making up the maintenance crew was John Phillips, Fred Huffman, Dave Steele, and Andy Marek. All nails holding the steel roof to the sheathing were removed and 2" screws with rubber gaskets were installed. This work, conceived by Fred Huffman, is the first step to waterproofing the roof. The next step will be to seal the roof with a roof sealant. After the roof work was completed, we setup for an observing session. Fred was using his new 127 mm Astro Zap refractor. With a 635 mm focal length, the telescope provides pinpoint star images and a super wide field of view. Dave Steele cranked up his massive 13" Dobsonian and we also fired up the observatory 14" telescope. Under clear skies with no Moon, we had a good night of observing.

After the observatory cleared out around midnight, Jason Shinn wanted to look at the planet Uranus. After viewing

<b>Treasurer's Report: 8/1/07 - 8/31/07</b>	
Steve Rohweder, Treasurer	
Total Beginning Assets	\$8,842.08
Income	
Interest on balances	\$2.00
Dues	\$180.00
Total Ending Assets	\$9,024.08

# Astronomy and the Internet

John Crilly

Those of us who live in Ohio and pursue the hobby of amateur astronomy quickly learn that weather can prevent the activity most of us consider our primary interest – observing. Fortunately there are alternate activities available to maintain our interest.

Historically there have been some fine magazines published for us. Two old-time publications yet remain (Sky and Telescope and Astronomy Magazine). A recent addition is Astronomy Technology Today. Any number of smaller circulation publications directed toward special interests within astronomy exist as well.

These days we have a large range of other astronomy venues available to us via the internet. Some are social gathering places, others constitute an online marketplace, and still others offer technical support and educational information. A few try to be all of these at once. I'm going to describe some of the ones I consider most interesting and/or useful. A quick Google search will reveal that hundreds (if not thousands) of other astro sites exist so please don't consider this to be an exhaustive list.

The first to be mentioned is our Club website! It can be found at [www.acaoh.org](http://www.acaoh.org) and offers lots of information about the Club and upcoming (and past) activities. Astrophotography by Club members can be seen there, as well as archival issues of the Club newsletter. Another online Club resource is our Yahoo Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/astronomyclubofakron>. What appears there is posted by the membership itself. It's thus more social in nature than the Club website. Observing reports, invitations to impromptu observing sessions at the Club site, and general astronomy conversations can be found there. There's also a rogue's gallery of member photos, along with equipment photos and astro images captured and posted by members. The contents are fluid, since members can post new comments or photos there every day.

A fairly old and very active astronomy website can be found at [www.astromart.com](http://www.astromart.com). Its primary function is as an online astronomy equipment marketplace and in this role it is the largest and safest place to transact business on the 'net. As a confirmed gearhead and frequent equipment swapper I hang out there a LOT. Some equipment reviews and articles may be found there, as well as discussion forums, but the activity levels are relatively low and I rarely visit those areas.

Another well-established astro website is [www.cloudynights.com](http://www.cloudynights.com). This was originally established as a venue for astronomy equipment reviews. It's still the best site on the internet for this, but the discussion forums (added in 2003) have grown so dramatically that they have become the primary function of the site. With over 15,000 members worldwide and over 1,500,000 posts to read, the activity there is tremendous. It's not unusual to find well over 500 members logged on at a

given time. I spend even more time on CN than on Astromart (at least it doesn't cost me anything to hang out on CN). There is a swap and shop area on CN, as well as a Classifieds section, but they are insignificant compared to what Astromart offers. Each is great for its primary focus area but neither site can be everything to everybody.

There's a Yahoo Group (such as our Club's Group) for just about everything. A search at <http://groups.yahoo.com> may well turn one up for any type of equipment or observing in which you are interested. Take a look around; you may find a whole new gang with interests similar to yours.

For astronomy videos the primary site is [www.astroshorts.com](http://www.astroshorts.com). This website hosts and streams video content provided by the membership, which consists primarily of amateur astronomers. You can find tutorials, programs of general astro-related information, and videos of astrophotographs here.

Another streaming video website is [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). This is a general interest website with a huge membership and a gigantic library of videos. For these reasons, the astronomy-related videos tend to get lost in the shuffle but with a little digging you'll find tutorials from our own Jason Shinn and other contributors, as well as other videos of interest to amateur astronomers.

The Scientific Frontline Organization website, [www.sflorg.com](http://www.sflorg.com), covers astronomy as well as the other sciences, and includes a rapidly growing gallery of both amateur and professional astrophotography.

A new site of local interest provides information about the Wonders of the Night Sky programs offered in association with the Stow Parks and Recreation Department. This site, <http://home.neo.rr.com/davejessie>, is maintained by our own David Jessie.

A little time invested in visiting some or all of these sites could well discover new ways for you to enjoy your interest in amateur astronomy. They have certainly added a new dimension to my enjoyment of the hobby.

Oh – by the way – here's another website I failed to mention: [www.urbanobservatory.com](http://www.urbanobservatory.com).

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

Andy and Chris Davis  
Bill & Elizabeth Fesler  
Anirudh Walvekar

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



Credit: NASA, H. Ford (JHU), G. Illingworth (UCSC/LO), M. Clampin (STScI), G. Hartig (STScI), the ACS Science Team, and ESA

Above: Hubble Space Telescope Advanced Camera for Surveys image of the Swan Nebula (M17)

## (Non-ACA) Astronomy Events in September/October:

**Currently Showing at the Hoover-Price Planetarium:** *Eclipse!*—July 14th thru September 16th—Saturdays at 1pm, Sundays at 2pm  
[http://www.mckinleymuseum.org/hover\\_price\\_planetarium](http://www.mckinleymuseum.org/hover_price_planetarium)

**Coming Soon to the Hoover-Price Planetarium:** *Radio Eyes*—September 22nd thru November 4th—Saturdays at 1pm, Sundays at 2pm  
[http://www.mckinleymuseum.org/hover\\_price\\_planetarium](http://www.mckinleymuseum.org/hover_price_planetarium)

**NASA Glenn Third Saturday Series Event:** *Space Memorabilia Show*. Join us as NASA Glenn and collectSPACE.com host the 3rd annual space memorabilia show, highlighting space artifacts from the beginning of the space age to the present. September 15, 2007 at NASA Glenn Research Center  
<http://www.nasa.gov/centers/glenn/home/index.html>

**OTAA Event:** BRAS (Black River Astronomical Society) - Saturday Sept 15, 2007

**Hidden Hollow 2007:** Oct 12-14, 2007  
<http://www.wro.org/hiddenhollow07.html>

## Sad News...

Sadly, we've lost another member, Emerick Hranilovich died on Friday, August 17, 2007 at Akron City Hospital. When I started coming to the Club in 1992 I'd see Emerick setting up his 8" Celestron SCT and he'd always have a kind word for me. I found out later that he was one of a select few of our honorary members and had worked hard on the building of our observatory in the Portage Lakes State Park. According to Club records, Emerick joined the ACA on February 1, 1977 which made him a thirty-year member. Several years ago, when failing health prevented him from attending any more observing sessions, he generously donated his 8" SCT to the Club. At one of our holiday dinners, Emerick brought two brand new 90mm refractors he had purchased at Orion Telescopes and donated those as well. Many of our members who have borrowed these 'loaner scopes' have unknowingly benefited from Emerick's seemingly boundless generosity. He will be missed. - Dave Jessie

Editor's note: I cannot reprint Emerick's obituary here due to copyright issues, but it is available on legacy.com at this URL: <http://www.legacy.com/Ohio/Obituaries.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonId=92865730>  
 I'm not sure how long this address will remain available, but it is up as of September 12, 2007.

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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.