



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron

www.acaoh.org

Volume 31 Number 11

November 2009

Meeting Friday, November 20

Ramblings of the President

by Glenn R. Cameron

Hello fellow stargazers. As I write this, it is many days past the day that NASA crashed the LCROSS probe and its rocket stage into the moon. And doggonit, we didn't get any fiery results! But even so, NASA still got some good data. Hopefully spectra will show the water ice that is expected.

I'm trying out a new cell phone. It's a Droid and it uses the Google Android operating system. I discovered a free application for the phone called Google Sky Map. It's very cool. The phone has built in GPS positioning and an accelerometer. With the software, you can see a sky map with stars and constellations. When you hold the phone even with the eastern horizon, you see the eastern horizon on the sky map. When you raise the phone up 45 degrees, you see the sky map for 45 degrees above the eastern horizon. When you turn to the south, the sky map shows the southern stars and constellations. I just love the 21st century!

Be sure and come to the November 20th ACA business meeting where our guest speaker will be an honest-to-goodness rocket scientist! He is formerly from the NASA Glenn Research Center but now he is with Aerospace Engineering Associates. I hope we have a great turnout before our holiday recess. Please come and support your club!

This Month's Meeting

Speaker's Biography

Joe Nieberding has more than four decades of management and technical experience leading and participating in NASA independent review teams and evaluating NASA advanced space mission planning.

During his 35 years at NASA Lewis Research Center (now NASA Glenn), he directed numerous studies to help select transportation, propulsion, power, and communications systems for advanced NASA mission applications. His Advanced Space Analysis Office led all of Lewis's exploration advanced concept studies for returning to the moon and traveling to MARS.

In addition, he was a launch team member at Kennedy Space Center on more than 65 Atlas/Centaur and Titan/Centaur launches. Joe retired from NASA in 2000, and has continued consulting for them, as well as for other federal agencies. Joe is a recognized expert in launch vehicles and advanced transportation architecture planning for space missions. Joe is co-founder and President of Aerospace Engineering Associates (AEA).

Space Mission Mishaps- What Can We Learn?

Join us to hear Joe Nieberding's talk "Space Mission Mishaps - What Can We Learn?":

What went wrong? How did it happen? Could it happen again? How can we avoid repeating the mistakes of the past?

No one knows like the people who were there, and have the scars to prove it. The majority of space mishaps can be traced to human error, not to rocket science. Examining and understanding the root causes of actual space mission failures is critical to helping today's engineers of any highly complex systems identify lessons learned, and translate these lessons into real strategies for eliminating root causes. Implementing specific strategies and project principles is the best means of prevention. Recognizing why the lessons of the past are not learned is also a critical step in solving the problem.

"Space System Mishaps-What Can We Learn?" is a discussion excerpted from a two day NASA class on the same subject, aimed at further strengthening system quality standards by understanding why they broke down in the past and what to do about it.

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Activities Calendar

Club

November 14 - Open House at Portage Lakes Observatory featuring Jupiter, 6:30 pm

November 20 - Monthly Meeting with featured speaker Joe Nieberding, Kiwanis Hall on Portage Lakes Drive, 8:00 pm

Celestial

November 14 - Saturn and a 20% waning moon together 2 hours before sunrise

November 16 - New Moon

November 17 & 18 - Leonids Meteor Shower, should be good this year with no moon in the sky!

The deadline for article submission is **the 6th of each 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. As long as it is legible, I will slave over the keyboard and get it published. Attach photos in .jpg format.

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR ARTICLES!!!!

Send your articles, items for sale, and comments to:

Jason Shinn, 1579C Treetop Trail, Akron OH 44313 email truemartian@aol.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR CHANGE

Due to a very demanding work schedule Tom and Leigh Alexander will be replaced by Jason Shinn as the club Newsletter Editor. We want to thank Tom and Leigh for their work and we hope that they will someday again seek officer roles with the club. They filled the position of newsletter editor at a time when no one else would take the job. In that way they kept our club functional. They will continue to be supportive members of the ACA. We hope that come next May when officer elections will be held that we won't have such a dearth of willing candidates for the positions as we had during the last elections. Our club needs more volunteers and commitment. Keep our club great!

The ACA would like to extend a warm welcome to new members:

Anthony and Steven Scarpitti

We are thrilled to have you with us and look forward to seeing you at all Club functions!

Treasurer's Report From Lew Snodgrass

Checking Opening Balance, 10/1/2009 = \$ 3,042.40

Savings Opening Balance, 10/1/09 = \$ 5,922.80

Income

Dues	\$85.00
Savings interest	\$0.50
Other	\$26.07

Total income	\$111.57
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Expenses

Website	\$45.00
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Total Expense	\$45.00
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Checking Closing Balance, 10/31	\$3,105.15
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Savings closing balance. 10/31	\$5,923.30
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Total 10/31	\$9,028.45
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ACA 2010 Observatory Budget

Submitted by Ron Kalinoski, Observatory Director

Door for Privy	\$150
Locks for Privy Door and new keys for members	\$ 75
Dinner for Maintenance Workers & Star Party Presenters	\$375
Miscellaneous Maintenance (\$25/month)	\$300
Public Events Schedule Printing	\$ 75
Focuser for 14" telescope	\$750

Total 2010 Observatory Budget	\$1725
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Description for Budget Items

Door for Privy : The privy door is corroding. The door is difficult to open due to warping of the door and frame.

Locks for Privy Door: The deadbolt is inoperable; only the standard door lock is used.

Public Event Schedule Printing : This item covers the cost of printing our public events schedule for 2010.

Dinner for Maintenance Workers & Star Party Presenters: Maintenance workers and star party presenters will be honored at a dinner for the extra effort they put forth for the club.

Miscellaneous Maintenance : This entry covers miscellaneous maintenance costs of \$25/month to handle small invoice items such as light bulbs, fasteners, logbooks, keys, electrical supplies, etc.

Focuser for 14" Telescope : Currently we have a software stop set in the 14" telescope computer to limit the travel of the telescope so the focuser does not collide with the fork base. We are sacrificing a 25-degree area of the sky centered on the zenith to avoid interference. This prevents us from viewing the best part of the sky. The new focuser will allow us viewing of the entire sky.

Club Photographers busy at the Observatory



"The E.T. Cluster" - NGC457 or C13 in the constellation Cassiopeia. By Jason Shinn and Ron K, Astronomy Club of Akron 14" Schmitt-Cass, prime focus, Canon Digital Rebel XT, ISO1600 - UT20091021 0100:00-0200:00

"The Double Cluster" - Part of the double cluster in the constellation Perseus. By Jason Shinn and Ron K, Astronomy Club of Akron 14" Schmitt-Cass, prime focus, Canon Digital Rebel XT, 30sec, ISO1600. - UT20091021 0100:00-0200:00



"Globular Star Cluster M15" - By Jason Shinn and Ron K, Astronomy Club of Akron 14" Schmitt-Cass, prime focus, Canon Digital Rebel XT, 30sec, ISO1600. - UT20091021 0100:00-0200:00

Observatory Report

On October 20th, ACA held a star party for the Lakemore Cub Scouts. After a presentation on astronomy basics, Ed Howe, Lew Snodgrass, and Jason Shinn showed the scouts the wonders of the night sky.

With five telescopes set up on the observatory grounds, the small group of scouts and parents had no-line access to each telescope. Jason and Ed tried an innovative approach at this star party. With a short lesson on pointing a telescope, they let the scouts attempt to find celestial targets.

The scouts had some success locating stars, but more success at just having fun. We also gave the scouts a sky tour of the autumn constellations and when we announced ET (NGC457) was in the eyepiece of the 14" telescope, they all hurried to the telescope to see him.

By attending the star party, the scouts fulfill part of the requirements to obtain their astronomy belt loop.

On November 6th, ACA entertained the Cub Scouts of Pack 3411 from Medina. This was a larger group of scouts numbering about fifty. We started our program with a slideshow presentation on astronomy.

Ed Howe and Jason Shinn transformed the slides into reality for the scouts by revealing close-up views of the night sky through their telescopes. A high-pressure system moving into the area assisted their effort by providing

clear skies with satisfactory seeing conditions. ET made his appearance later in the evening at the eyepiece of the 14" telescope to amaze the kids and their parents.

The clear skies continued to hold out for our public star party the next evening. Nighttime temperatures registered in the mid-50s bringing out many members and public to the star party. Our featured celestial object was Herschel's Double Cluster.

We setup a Celestron C5 in the observatory with a 1.7 degree field of view capturing the two clusters with astonishing clarity. Both clusters have a strong concentration of stars shining at magnitudes 5.3 & 6.1, making them naked-eye objects under excellent seeing conditions. Jupiter, globular cluster M15, and the Andro-

meda galaxy were also on our observing list. Later in the evening, Pleiades was well placed in the sky and fully displayed in the eyepiece of the C5.

John Shulan's coffee pot was brewing all night providing members and public with hot beverages throughout the observing session. This was a fantastic weekend for star parties.

Ed Howe has been working on our brick pad for the past two months and has completed the effort we started last year. Many members have participated in this project along the way and I want to thank all of you for your help. Your dedication has not only brought this project to a conclusion, but made this astronomy club one of the best in Ohio.



Kepler performs a final inspection before releasing the brick pad to the Astronomy Club of Akron

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Newsletter of the Astronomy Club of Akron

c/o Jason Shinn, Editor
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For Club information, please visit our website: www.acaoh.org. **Astronomy Club of Akron** annual memberships renew in the month of May.

To join the ACA, **or to renew your membership**, please fill out the form below, place in an envelope and mail to:

Lew Snodgrass, Treasurer, Astronomy Club of Akron
1865 Stabler Rd
Akron, OH 44313-6124

Yes! I want to become a member of the Astronomy Club of Akron

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

Please be sure to enclose payment for the membership level desired.

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 sent by email to , but I would rather have a B&W version mailed to my address via USPS.