



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron
www.acaoh.org

Volume 37 Number 6

June 2015

SUMMER BREAK! NO MEETING AT KIWANIS THIS MONTH!

Meteorite Hunting Trip Report

By Marissa Fanady

Day 1: We boarded our plane at about 6:40am and we were fortunate to get to board first, I got the window seat that I wanted and I could look out perfectly. We took off at 7:20am and it was a great amazing ride! Cleveland looked beautiful even though it was mostly cloudy, the sun peaking through only a little and the lake was the same color as the sky, I couldn't tell where the water ended and the sky began. A few minutes later we were above the clouds. They were all wavy and it looked like one big comforter that you could just land on and it'd catch you. An hour or so later we finally passed the front and all the clouds beneath us and I got my first view of the land from 37,000 feet up, it was stunning! The trees formed around rivers, it looked like roots under trees or the structure of the universe branching out away from the rivers. The landscape really did look like a topographic map with brown, tan, and green squares and rectangles everywhere. The houses looked like sparkles on the earth. Hours later we were finally seeing a change in the land from farm land to desert. Some spots were tan and some were red. We flew over a canyon but I'm not sure if it was the grand canyon but nonetheless it was beautiful, I could see the river inside the canyon. A little later we flew over the tallest mountains that I've ever seen, they were completely snow covered. An hour or so later we started making our decent, once we passed the cloud cover Vegas was in site and it was huge!!! I could see the stratosphere standing tall and all the hotels and casinos. The pilot landed the plane so beautifully and smooth. We made our way through the ridiculously huge airport trying to find the baggage claim, we had to get on an Amtrak to get to the baggage claim area. Once we got there I saw a young man waving at me, I had no idea who this was and thought for a moment that someone I knew from Ohio came too and I couldn't remember them. He walked over and to my surprise it was Rogan!!!! I was in shock, I had no idea he would come. I had asked a long time ago if he could be there but he couldn't give me a straight answer and lead me to believe that he couldn't go. I was so happy that he actually came! From there we got our rental van and we drove through las Vegas Blvd to check out the Vegas scene. I'll only be here once so I had to see the city. We stopped at New York New York for an amazing breakfast followed by the hard rock cafe and some gambling. I couldn't believe that they actually had Vegas showgirls out on the sidewalks. After that we headed to Pahrump where our hotel was to change for dinner, we had reservations to the Top of The World restaurant in the stratosphere hotel and casino.



Myself, Rogan Hennie, and my two staff Debbie (left) and Autumn (right) on the last day catching the Vegas sign.

(con't page 4)

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May Treasurer's Report

By Glenn Cameron

5/1/2015 Through 5/31/2015

Checking Beginning Balance	\$2,652.63
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Income

Magazine Subscriptions	85.95
Dues	16.05

Total Income	\$102.00
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Expenses

Magazine Subscriptions	-152.90
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Total Expenses	-\$152.90
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Income Less Expenses	-\$50.90
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Checking Ending Balance	\$2,601.73
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Savings Beginning Balance	\$2,580.20
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Earned Interest	0.13
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Savings Ending Balance	\$2,580.33
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Petty Cash Beginning Balance	\$50.00
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	0.00
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Petty Cash Ending Balance	\$50.00
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Petty Cash	50.00
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Savings	2,580.33
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Checking	2,601.73
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Grand Total	\$5,232.06
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Article by Glenn Cameron

ACA Treasurer.

SWAP & SHOP



FOR SALE:

22mm Orion Epic ED-2 ED Eyepiece
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Email: riverfry@gmail.com

FOR SALE:



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- Excellent condition.

Asking: \$180 (cash)
Contact: Fred Fry
Email: riverfry@gmail.com

FOR SALE:



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Phone: 330-867-4800
Ask for Lew.
Email: chrply@aol.com

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Meteorite Hunting Trip Report Con't



Michael Mulgrew, our hunting guide, and myself posing after my first meteorite find.



My very first meteorite find.

of a meteorite jumping onto our magnet canes. Within minutes one of my aides found a meteorite and within a half hour Rogan Hennie found one, I rushed over to see his find and check the surrounding area and I found my first meteorite near his find, a small fragment weighting about 0.6-0.8 grams!!! The valley got very windy which Mike said was normal and actually it was tame compared to what it usually is like in the valley. Hours went by and Mike and Rogan made more finds, about an hour or so before we ended the hunt someone else found another meteorite and again not far from their find I found my second meteorite! The tiny rock weighted about 0.1-0.2 grams. With the wind it got cold very fast so we decided to end the successful first hunt and Rogan, Mike and myself shared a drink on the dry lake bed in the twilight under the crescent moon and Venus. Mike also set off some fireworks to celebrate the historic moment and then we headed back to the hotel where we grabbed dinner and then headed away from Vegas to see a proper night sky. I saw more stars and meteors than I've ever seen as well as the Milkyway clearly visible, a perfect end to a perfect day.

During the drive back through the mountains we saw a rain cloud and a beautiful rainbow embedded inside. The view was stunning, the restaurant was amazing and the food was incredible! There were people bungee jumping off the side of the building. Our waiter was so good that when I asked for plastic silverware and he said that they had none he actually went to another place in the building to get me some. The service was amazing. We finished a bottle of rosea baringer wine it was very good. Once it got completely dark the lights in the distance were shimmering like stars in the sky. We sat enjoying the view watching the moon and Venus set in the distance.

Day 2: Michael Mulgrew was coming in today for our first hunt in Stewart Valley and to show off his metal detector and meteorites. The bubble chair did arrive in Las Vegas but they wouldn't deliver it because it was the holiday weekend to them so Rogan had to go get it, my staff Autumn went with him. While they were gone Mike arrived and we left to get lunch and supplies for the hunts. When we returned we went straight to looking at maps and meteorites. He showed me where we should start looking and we planed the days to come. Then he busted out his meteorites and we geeked out. I looked at some of his Stewart Valley finds and one was a puzzle piece meteorite where he could actually piece it back together! Not long after he started showing me his meteorites Rogan and Autumn were back and the three of us were geeking out and got pumped to find our own. It was so fun to finally share the love of meteorites with others who love them as much as myself. After that we loaded everything up and headed to Stewart Valley for the first hunt, they had to take my chair apart a little so that it would fit in the back of Mike's truck. Thankfully Mike is an engineer and between the two of them they were able to load up my wheelchair. I'm so glad Rogan came because without him the trip would not have been possible it takes two men to help with everything and he made the trip extremely smooth and perfect! The chosen site was only about 20-25 minutes away and each time we went we had to cross into California for about 200 feet so I can say that I was in Nevada and California. We arrived at the hunt site at about 4:30 and after unloading my chair it was about 5:00 and my very first hunt began! The landscape was incredible, there were mountains all around us and I could see every detail in them that shaped them. The valley was very peaceful, not a sound was heard unless we heard the sweet sound

Day 3: The next day we woke up early, got some breakfast at a Denny's and loaded up for a very long day of hunting ahead of us. The weather was beautiful again with clouds around the mountains and sunny over Stewart Valley, the wind was perfect keeping us cool while hunting. Across the lake bed I noticed that I was observing my first mirage, it was so intense that the mountains in the distance completely disappeared! My aides decided to stay with the truck while the three of us hunted, Mike and Rogan took turns walking beside me having great conversations and forming deep friendships. My fellow hunters found more meteorites but I was not so successful which that didn't bother me because I got to experience a successful day and a bust like every meteorite hunter experiences. Lunch was late around 4:00 and we had to charge my chair while eating so that I could continue



Rogan and myself walking across the massive dry lake bed to our next hunting location hunting along the way.

hunting. Even though I came with a full battery the terrain really made my wheelchair work hard, I was told that it's technically not built for the outdoors but she put up a good fight. Spending time with other hunters was more than enough as well as priceless to me being able to completely be myself and let go of all my fears and insecurities. Throughout my life I always felt like I don't belong...that my burden should be my own and nobody else's problem, I avoid asking for help as much as possible because I don't want to hurt and burden others. But when I'm with the meteorite community and the scientific community in general my problems and fears melt away, I completely forget about my disease and don't see the dark that lies ahead. I've only received acceptance from everyone, not one person involved in science saw my wheelchair....they only saw me and they help me bring out my best. There were a handful of moments where I felt insecure, a bit afraid of what these gentlemen would really think of me and how they'd react to the amount of help I require. Being the first meteorite hunters that I'd be hunting with I wanted to make a good impression and not look that weak. But they welcomed me with open arms and showed that they were ready to help with anything that they could. Rogan assured me that I'm with friends, I have nothing to fear. We started hunting on one side of the lake bed and walked across to the other side to end the hunt, myself and Rogan had a wonderful talk and the scenery was amazing. The sunsets were beautiful every evening with the mountains glowing yellow, orange, gold, and red. We ended the day with fireworks again and headed back for dinner which was always hilarious! We cracked so many jokes but I'm not telling, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas remember!



Back at the restaurant at our hotel after a long day of meteorite hunting and yes we got photo bombed in the background by the creepy cook!

Day 4: We didn't wake up quite as early as the day before and the plan was to hit a different hunting site called Stump Spring a dense collection area and then back to Stewart Valley. After eating our Denny's breakfast we loaded up my chair for the last day of hunting, I was feeling lucky and determined to find one or more meteorites. Stump Spring was not too far from our hotel maybe 20-25 minutes away. Making our way to the location I observed numerous dust devils which I had never seen before. One even went right across the dirt road we were on and Mike tried to catch up with it but the dust vortex was too quick. There were also some rain clouds coming off of the mountains and I was worried that it might rain on us, if that would've happened then my chair would've surely gotten stuck. Luckily they all dissipated when they moved over the desert and the smell of the rain was intoxicating. The ground had rocks everywhere!

Hunting could never become boring at Stump Spring but it's also slow going having to check countless rocks hoping that you'll hear the sweet sound of one jumping onto your cane. We talked about the Meteorite Men a bit and commented on how Steve Arnold's magnet rake would've been perfect for this area and I could drag it around and hunt at the same time! I saw much more wildlife at this location from bugs to butterflies to lizards, one lizard even hid under my wheelchair. Mike and myself spent the most time walking around together here while Rogan, the geologist, was nerding out over all the rocks. He actually found quite a few that were very interesting and later he let me choose some to take home. After a few hours I decided that we needed to get back to Stewart Valley because the odds are better and it wouldn't stop calling my name so we packed up and left. By the time we arrived and unpacked everything it was about 6:00 so we went straight away to looking for meteorites. The ground was perfect for my wheelchair but I still had to watch out for soft spots so that I wouldn't sink and get stuck. Gridding an area is actually very easy for me because my chair left tire tracks so I knew where I already looked. Rogan made the only find of the day on that last day, I look over and see my tire tracks just feet away from his find!!! I was so mad but now I can say I had the complete experience of hunting with other hunters where you missed one and someone else found one right where you were. The sunset gave us a beautiful show with lighting up the mountains and the sky, Rogan couldn't stop taking amazing pictures. We started heading towards a new area but at a certain point my chair kept sinking in sand so we had to turn back and by that time it was time to end the hunt...I looked around at the scenery, the mountains, the clouds, the lake bed and said my final goodbye to Stewart Valley and thanked it for my precious meteorites as well as making the weather perfect for me to hunt safely and successfully. My hunting days are all over and I cherished every moment of the experience, I finally understand how hunters feel when they find a meteorite and they say/think "there's gotta be more I gotta find just one more!" Hunting is truly addicting. I think Stewart Valley was sad to see me go because a storm rolled in up in the mountains, it was stunning to see all the lightning strikes. We headed back for our last dinner together as Mike was leaving right after our meal. He brought his metal detector with him to show me how they work, he was forming ideas on how I could use one but I'm still doubtful that I can because my wheelchair is metal and I'm betting that it will set off the detector too much. We sat at the table checking out all of our finds and taking photos, Mike brought his scale cubes for the photos but the lighting in the restaurant was poor for the rocks. It was a bitter sweet moment for me because while it was so fun being with fellow meteorite lovers and checking out our haul it was also sad because this might be the only and last time that I spend with friends and hunt for meteorites. Back at our rooms it was time to say goodbye to Michael Mulgrew...I tried not to but I teared up while we were embraced in a hug goodbye.



The beautiful scenery at Stump Springs; a completely different hunting site with rocks everywhere.



On the last day of meteorite hunting mother nature decided to put on a stunning show and light up the mountains as if to say goodbye.

I was so very thankful that he was my guide and took me to his best locations for finding meteorites, most never do that because as we all know these rocks are very valuable and nobody wants their spot to be hunted out. I'm so happy that I've made a new lifelong friend because the truth is I don't have that many friends besides my astronomy club, people usually don't want to be around me. Whether it's fear, sadness, misunderstanding or pain most avoid me, but not Mike and Rogan...they ignored my condition. I truly hope that I get to see Mike again someday and hope for nothing but the best in his life.



I just couldn't get over how amazing the mountains were!

the airport because as we were leaving his girlfriend was arriving, they had plans for a vacation as well and go visit family in Texas I believe. The time had come to part ways....We had one last hug and I thanked him again for everything he has done for me, he changed my life forever. Rogan didn't have to do this, most wouldn't due to how much work this required but he did it anyway. I am eternally grateful for him and everything he did as well as Mike and every single person who helped with this trip. Once he walked away I cried my eyes out, I'm not ashamed to admit that because they were happy and sad tears...I don't know if I'll ever see him and Mike again in my lifetime. I can only hope that someday I will. We made it through security and our plane was almost delayed by 45 minutes but luckily it wasn't. While waiting for the plane my Twitter account for the trip went nuts, I look down and it was Geoff Notkin! I was fortunate enough to have met him once back in 2012 at NEAF and we've talked a little here and there ever since. He was spreading the news of my successful historic hunt and we got to talking a little saying his congrats to me and how he wished that he could've been there with us. I mentioned how I'm gonna try to get to the Tucson gem and mineral show next year and he said that if I go he'll arrange private tours for me, well my jaw dropped to the floor at that point! No promises but I'm sure as heck gonna try! As you can imagine that made my day better but it was still a sad moment. The memories I've made will be with me forever and always bring a smile to my face in dark times. The plane ride home was amazing like the first flight but this time I was heading into the dark, I was so excited to see city lights from 37,000 feet. Before I could see any lights we were flying over clouds and I thought ok boring nothing to see yet but then I saw a flash. Staring out the window I thought to myself "there's no way that I'm lucky enough to see a storm cloud from above!" But sure enough I was!!!! Oh my God it was incredible, I was geeking out so bad while my aides were about to crap their pants!!! People worry too much and easily forget how amazing that is to see storms from above. Soon after the storm clouds we finally came to a clearing and I couldn't believe my eyes, there were small cities and lights dotted everywhere! The ground actually looked like the night sky, it took my breath away. Back home the weather was supposed to be bad and storm but lucky for us it was clear and nice out for a nice smooth landing. Even the staff and pilots asked me if I was successful in my hunt and they congratulated me for my success and a great trip! We arrived home at about 2:00 in the morning, I didn't even notice how tired I was because I was still sky high over the trip and everything. This was an unbelievable experience, Mike and Rogan were more amazing than I ever thought they'd be and I'm very thankful and lucky to call them friends. I really cannot thank you all enough for this, you guys are all amazing and angels in my book. YOU ROCK!!!!

*Article By ACA Member,
Marissa Fanady*

June Astronomical Events

6/1/15 8:00pm Saturn $1^{\circ}.9$ S. of Moon
6/2/15 4:00pm FULL MOON
6/6/15 6:00pm Venus greatest elong. E. (45°)
6/6/15 10:00pm Ceres stationary
6/9/15 3:00am Neptune 3° S. of Moon
6/9/15 4:00pm LAST QUARTER
6/10/15 5:00am Moon at perigee
6/11/15 8:00pm Mercury stationary
6/11/15 8:00pm Uranus $0^{\circ}.5$ N. of Moon Occn.
6/12/15 1:00am Pallas at opposition
6/12/15 8:00pm Neptune stationary
6/14/15 4:00pm Mars in conjunction with Sun
6/15/15 2:00am Mercury $0^{\circ}.04$ N. of Moon Occn.
6/15/15 12:00pm Aldebaran $1^{\circ}.0$ S. of Moon Occn.
6/16/15 2:00pm NEW MOON
6/20/15 11:00am Venus 6° N. of Moon
6/21/15 12:00am Jupiter 5° N. of Moon
6/21/15 5:00pm Solstice
6/23/15 5:00pm Moon at apogee
6/24/15 8:00am Mercury 2° N. of Aldebaran
6/24/15 11:00am FIRST QUARTER
6/24/15 5:00pm Mercury greatest elong. W. (22°)
6/29/15 1:00am Saturn 2° S. of Moon

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The Night Sky

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