

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

June 2010

LOOKING UP

June 3, Thursday

General Meeting

7:00 p.m. - Astronomy 101

7:30 p.m. - Business Meeting

Video to follow (see pg 3)

June 6, Sunday

Park Open House

10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Harrington Beach

(Free Park Admission Day)

June 11, Friday

Member\Public Night

8:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach

June 17, Thursday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Home of Joyce Jentges

June 18 & 19, Fri. & Sat.

Public Viewing

8:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach

June 19, Saturday

Sidewalk Astronomy

3:00 p.m. Solar Viewing

Bayshore Town Center

Meteorite Fall in Wisconsin *by John Helm*

On the evening of April 14th at 10:04 pm a large meteor bollide was sighted in SW Wisconsin. You may remember news coverage of the event. The bollide was seen across many parts of our state and was also seen by individuals in Illinois, Iowa, etc. It was also captured on video cams in Milwaukee, Madison and a police cruiser cam in Iowa. The footage gives you an idea what a great bollide this was. Estimates are that the meteor was three to six feet across or larger when it exploded at 13,000 to 18,000 feet from the surface. It was truly spectacular.

On Thursday morning April 15th I awoke and as usual routine checked my computer for news etc and learned of the bollide. I went to work and during the morning did a couple periodic quick checks of the internet and by lunchtime had decided to go chase the fall.

My son Ben had no school scheduled for the next day, so when he got home I had the car packed already and off we went. By researching online checking news, meteorite forums, Doppler radar and a phone contact I had determined that the area around Livingston, WI was a prime area to search. Later that day we arrived and stayed in nearby Dodgeville. It began to rain about the time of our arrival and so Friday morning began our search.

May 19 Bayshore Report *by Jeff Setzer*

On Wednesday, May 19 we had our first Bayshore sidewalk astronomy event of the year. The weather could not have been better! Not a cloud in the sky, perfect short-sleeve temperatures, and no wind to speak of.

Twelve intrepid NCSF members brought seven telescopes to give the people plenty of time to look. For three hours, there was a solid twenty to thirty people looking through the scopes at any one time, rotating steadily.

Objects viewed included Venus, Saturn, Mars and the Moon. We estimated between 200-300 people looked through our telescopes that night.



Fist size chunk of Wisconsin meteorite found by Joe, a fellow hunter. (The scale cube is 1 cm square.)

On Friday I would estimate there were not many hunters in the field and I would guess we were probably part of the first 10-20 people to get to the suspected area of the fall. We met up with another fellow I know from a meteorite forum. His name is Joe. Ben and I split off from Joe and another fellow after briefly cruising the roads checking out potential search sites. We contacted many locals and heard many accounts of them being awakened and or experiencing there houses shaking, loud booms, bright light, etc. Witness accounts varied as to direction they thought the fall went so we decided to follow the path

(Cont. on pg-4)

About halfway through the evening, MP Theirault, the Event Coordinator for Bayshore Town Center, came down to take a look through the scopes herself.

She was impressed with the crowd and thanked us once again for bringing sidewalk astronomy to Bayshore.

Thanks to everyone who turned out to help! It was a great kickoff to the Bayshore sidewalk astronomy season, and I hope to see you there at future events. If you'd like to volunteer, with a telescope or sitting at the information table, please let me know -- my contact information is in the back of this newsletter.

May Meeting Minutes

By Kevin Bert

The May business meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation was held at the Unitarian Church North in Mequon. President Joyce Jentges opened the meeting at 8:35 pm and welcomed over 32 members and guests. She commented on how busy this month will turn out to be, then asked for standard reports.

Treasurer Gene Dupree reported a balance of \$678.14 in the observatory account and \$5398.25 in the general fund.

Secretary Kevin Bert welcomed the club's newest member, Jennifer Ryan. Kevin noted that the general membership should have received a member roster in their last newsletter. Membership cards would be available after the meeting and remaining cards will be mailed next month.

Information on the regional convention of the Astronomical League, (NCRAL), was covered in the last Spectrum.

Under old business, Stephanie Marsala thanked those members that helped make the astronomy event on April 24th at the Learning Shop in Brookfield a success. Clear weather prevailed and 75 entered the drawing for prizes. Stephanie is already hearing people ask when the next event will happen.

Joyce led a discussion on projects that are being considered by using last year's Bayshore donation. Binocular parallelogram mounts are already under way. Sky Commander controls for the observatory 9.25 SCT, Coating the 8-inch Sedgwick telescope, and purchasing Galileo telescopes were noted.

Under new business, Joyce reminded Observatory Operators that they are required to participate in at least one public viewing event as leader or assistant each year. It is more important this year with the additional dates and campers at the Observatory. Leaders should also send Rick Kazmierski a paragraph on how the evening went for the newsletter material.

Charlotte Dupree informed the membership of the June 16th viewing at Horicon's Visitor Center and would welcome members with scopes to help out.

John Helm briefly talked about his search for the recent Wisconsin Meteorites and said that he was expecting to get some samples from people he knows that had found pieces. He will report at the next meeting.

Jeff Setzer gave a plug for the NCSF Google calendar site that contains both the public and members schedules. Justin Modra said that he would like to see more observing reports on the site too.

Joyce covered upcoming events for May. The PVN's on the 14th, 21 and 22nd at Harrington Beach and May 19th at Bayshore. See Jeff for a pass to park at Bayshore.

With no further new business, Joyce closed the business meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Things to See In the June Night Sky *By Don Miles*

Mercury: Mercury (mag 0.1) starts out rising just before the sun on its way around the back side. Mercury will rise by about 4am with the sun rising by about 5am. Mercury will progressively slide towards the sun, get lost in the glare after early month, then become an evening object mid July.

Venus: Still brilliant Venus (mag -4.0) also trails the sun, and sets by about 11pm. Venus begins the month in the middle of Gemini and moves easterly thru Cancer, and ends up near Regulus in the constellation Leo.

Mars: Still dimming Mars (mag. 1.3) is still highest in the sky at sunset, and will set around 1am early in the month, but by about midnight at month's end. Mars also drifts eastward, starting from just west of Regulus, and will work its way eastward to the middle of the base of Leo.

Saturn: Saturn will also be highest in the sky at sunset, sets by about 2:30am early in the month and by about mid-

night at month's end. Saturn will remain relatively stationary (at the head of Virgo) for June, and so will the tilt of the rings.

Neptune: Neptune (mag 7.9) rises about 1am, and by 11pm towards month's end. Unlike the inner planets which always seem to be moving, Neptune will remain in Aquarius for the next 10 years.

Jupiter, & Uranus: Both are pulling away from the sun, and will continue to be morning objects early in the summer, but will continue to rise earlier and earlier until by early fall when they will rise as the sun sets. Jupiter is at (mag -2.3), and Uranus is at (mag 5.9).

Moon:

June 4th: Last Quarter

June 12th: New Moon

June 19th: First Quarter

June 26th: Full Moon

Special Events:



There are two meteor showers to watch for this month...the Lyrids on the morning of the 16th, and the Bootids on the

morning of the 27th. The Lyrid meteor showers "peak" at a whopping predicted rate of 3/hr, and the Bootids peak at a much more enjoyable 50/hr. The moon won't bother you for the Lyrids (as the moon will have already set as they peak). As for the Bootids...the full moon will wash out all but the brightest meteors. So, as meteor shower watching goes, this is not the best month.

Note

Members who were unable to pick-up their membership cards at the May meeting will find them attached inside this newsletter.

June General Meeting

101 Class *With Kevin Bert*

For June, the 101 class will be led by Kevin Bert and is entitled;

Planetary Configurations

What do conjunctions, oppositions and elongations have to do with the planets? Kevin will show the various alignments of the planets in relation to the Sun and Earth and have some audience participation to drive home points.

"Virgo"

Featured Constellation of the month.



Main Program

Video

"Journey to Palomar"

George Ellery Hale, the father of astrophysics, helped design and build some of the field's most important telescopes and observatories. JOURNEY TO PALOMAR chronicles his 20-year battle to build the remarkable Palomar Observatory in Southern California, one of his most profound contributions to the advancement of mankind's ability to investigate the universe.

Sign hung in a restaurant on the Moon.

"Great food, but no atmosphere!"

May Events

Friday, May 14

This member/public night was lead by Jeff Setzer and attended by seven members and four guests. Skies were cloudy early, but those who persevered were rewarded with clearing skies after 10:00pm. The observatory finally closed around 1:00am.

Wednesday, May 19



See article, Page one. *Photo by Terry Litts*

Friday, May 21

Dan and Kevin Bert were leaders for this event. They reported heavy fog and no visitors attending. The moon was visible off and on so they did a little cleaning and organizing.

Saturday, May 22

Ernie Mastroianni was leader for this event and reported being enveloped in fog but was still able to see the moon. There were eight people in attendance.

Jim and Gwen Plunkett Observatory



Observatory Director:
Dan Bert: 262-375-2239

Observatory Notes

May 5th - Camping started for first come campers.

May 14th - Camping with reservations began

Oct. 31st - The park will close camping for the season.

Astronomy Tidbit

Neutron Stars are so dense, a soup can full of neutron star material would have more mass than the Moon.

CURRENT CLACK

New Members

NCSF Welcomes New Club Members

Bill Large

Bozena Large

Dave Wierzba

Gail Wierzba

Leaders for Public Viewing

June 6

Park Open House

Gene DuPree

June 11

Member/Public Night

Leaders Needed

June 18 & 19

Public Viewing

Leaders Needed

June 19

Sidewalk Astronomy

Jeff Setzer

Star Parties

Wisconsin Observers Weekend

July 8 -10

Hartman Creek State Park, WB

www.new-star.org

Northwoods Starfest

August 13 - 15

www.cvastro.org

Prairie Skies

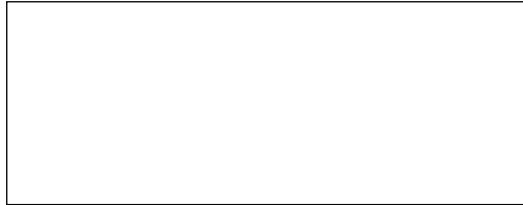
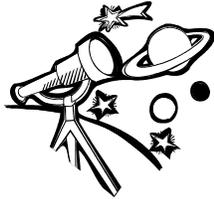
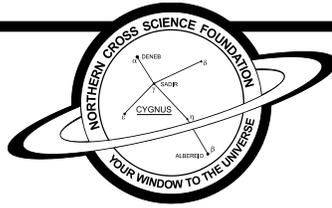
September 30 - October 3

Kankakee, IL

www.prairieskies.org

Monthly Meeting Location
Unitarian Church North
13800 N. Port Wash. Rd.
Mequon, WI 53097

SPECTRUM
5327 Cascade Drive
West Bend, WI 53095



2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President—Joyce Jentges
102 N. Montgomery St. Apt #1
Port Washington, WI 53074
262-483-4270
joycejentges@hotmail.com

Vice President - Jeff Setzer
1418 Trillium CT
West Bend, WI 53095
262-338-8614
astrosetz@hotmail.com

Secretary - Kevin Bert
2292 Ridgewood Road
Grafton, WI 53024
262-375-2239
kevin.bert@hotmail.com

Treasurer - Gene DuPree
6219 Jay St.
Myra, WI 53095
262-675-0941
grdupree@charter.net

Rick Kazmierski
262-305-1895

Don Miles
262-675-2796

Al Steinberg
262-644-8089

Newsletter Editor & Publisher

Rick & Mickey Kazmierski
262-305-1895 / rickkaz@charter.net

(Continued from Pg 1)

of a streak that was left on Doppler radar.

It took awhile to find a farmer that was not out and about but we did, and after lunch we searched a pasture outside of Livingston after getting permission to look. Everybody we talked to was very friendly. Another fellow I know, Jim made it to the area and joined Ben and I hunting the pasture. We didn't have any luck and Ben needed to be home by Saturday for a commitment; so after putting on many miles, and searching a couple pastures we headed home. I learned the next day that my friend Jim found a small meteorite on Saturday afternoon.

I returned by myself the following week taking a couple days vacation from work. Many hunters had arrived by then including pro hunters from all across the US and Canada. I searched very hard for a couple days on my own with no results but had a great time and the weather was terrific. Again every person I talked too was friendly. I gave out small meteorite slices I had brought along from home and gave them to the farmers who had kindly let me search their land. They really liked that, and there were some happy farm kids.

My friend Joe did find a large fist sized chunk of the meteorite about a week after the fall. I obtained a nice slice of the meteorite and happy to buy it from him. It is nice Joe found some, he has been unemployed for over two years and the money he got from sales was very welcome. Except for a small piece he kept, he sold all of his meteorite almost immediately. I also have obtained a little more material from another source privately. Publicly what little has been offered has sold for \$100-200.00 and more per gram which is even a bit high for a fresh witnessed US fall. Not much is being offered for sale and recovered amounts are not high. Most who have found meteorites from the fall are keeping them. It will be tough for collectors to obtain one for their collections. I feel fortunate to have gotten one and have had the chance to hunt it in the field. I plan to bring my prized specimen to the next meeting for you all to see.

SPECTRUM

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The NCSF supports the International Dark sky association.



Send inquiries to:
SPECTRUM
5327 Cascade Drive
West Bend, WI 53095

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<http://www.ncsf.info>



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