

SPECTRUM

Northern Cross Science Foundation Newsletter

September 2010

LOOKING UP

September 2, Thursday

General Meeting

7:00 p.m. - Astronomy 101

7:30 p.m. - Main Program

Business Meeting to follow

September 4, Saturday

Public Viewing

8:00 p.m.

Ice Age Center

September 10, Friday

Members Public Night

7:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach

September 11, Saturday

Cedarburg Bog

7:30 p.m.

UWM Field Station

September 15, Wednesday

Sidewalk Astronomy

7:00 p.m.

Bayshore Town Center

September 16, Thursday

Board Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Home of Joyce Jentges

September 17 & 18, Fri & Sat

Public Viewing

7:00 p.m.

Harrington Beach

September 18, Saturday

Community Campfire

6:00.- 9:00 p.m.

Pike Lake

The Presidents Corner...with Joyce Jentges

As we approach the later part of our observing season, I thought I would just update some of you on things that have been happening in our club.

The board of directors has been busy behind the scenes making decisions about several projects our club will begin soon or has been working on. Probably the biggest project is getting the secondary mirror made for the cassegrain secondary. I announced at the August meeting that the company that made the primary mirror for the Panarusky has turned over the specs to us to have the mirror made by a different company. So the next step is to figure out which other vendors can make a mirror of this type and solicit them for quotes for the work. Another project that is in the works is the parallelogram mounts to be used on the observing pads at the observatory. Kevin Bert is spearheading this project. Once the mounts to be used at the observatory are done, we are hoping that there will be enough interest in the project to have people participate in a class to make their own personal mount.

I am also in discussions with Ty Westbrook who works at Barlow Planetarium which is part of the UW-Fox Valley campus in Menasha. I am trying to arrange a field trip for Northern Cross members to go to a planetarium show up there. Those of you who have been to WOW in recent years may remember seeing Ty there.

Public viewing nights at the observatory are going well. It seems to be mostly campers, but occasionally we get outside people who come to visit. I would like to see more people set up with telescopes in the parking lot, as we certainly have plenty of observers in this club who would be up to that challenge. It's always nice for people who are contemplating buying a telescope to be able to look through a variety of scopes. I need to remind those of you who are leaders at the observatory as well to sign up to lead at least 1 night at the observatory for a public viewing.

There are sure some exciting projects coming up, so I hope that you will join us for some of this fun. See you out under the stars!

Keep Looking Up...Editor

Jack Horkheimer, known as the "Star Gazer" to his television audience, died on August 20th at age 72 of a respiratory ailment.

"Horkheimer had been a fixture at the Miami Planetarium for more than 45 years. He'll be remembered most for his exuberant and often zany television persona, who helped us all appreciate the breath and depth of eyeball-only Astronomy." *Sky & Telescope online*

Colorful to the end, Jack offers this amusing, self penned epitaph in his online bio:

"Keep looking up was my life's admonition, I can do little else in my present position."

Wisconsin Meteorite Named

by John Helm

The Wisconsin Meteorite has been officially named, "Mifflin".

Total mass recovered was 3.5 kg. The largest piece was found by my friend Joe and weighed 332 grams.

The full report is available at the official site:

<http://tin.er.usgs.gov/meteor/metbull.php?code=52090>



CoolClips.com

August Meeting Minutes

By Kevin Bert

The August business meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation was held at the Unitarian Church North in Mequon. President Joyce Jentges opened the meeting at 8:30 pm and welcomed over 17 members and guests and then asked for standard reports. Treasurer Gene Dupree was absent and could not give a report. Secretary Kevin Bert had no new membership information and had found no new details about the national convention of the Astronomical League (ALCON).

Stellar Production by Hal



Under old business, Joyce said that a field trip to the Barlow planetarium in Menasha was tentatively set for October 30th. This was generated in June from the interest that was shown by the membership in having a field trip.

Under new business, Joyce reported on the passing of Co-founder Carl Edquist. A financial gift was given to the Cedarburg cultural center in his name.

Joyce said that she had contacted James Mulherin at OMI to talk about the Cassegrain Secondary mirror that we have been waiting for over 4 years now. The typical response to progress requests over that time was that the project would be coming up next only to have it mysteriously drop down the list. James, once again, has other commitments and no time to complete the project any time soon.

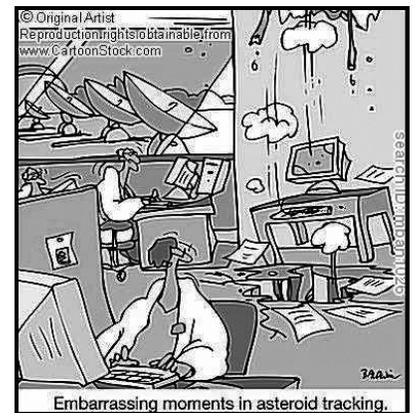
Joyce respectfully asked him that we would like to have it by the end of the year or we might have to look at other places to complete it.

James later elected to send us the specifications for the project and permanently

dropped it from his lengthy schedule. The club has not forwarded him any money so there is nothing for him to return. The next step is to look for another optician that can do the job.

Joyce Jentges went over upcoming events for August. The Small Scope Star Party is on the 6th. Public Viewing Nights (PVN's), are held on the 13th and 14th at Harrington Beach, and sidewalk astronomy on the 18th is at Bayshore, (See Jeff for a pass to park at Bayshore).

With no further new business, Joyce closed the business meeting at 8:55



Things to See In the September Night Sky By Don Miles

Mercury: It starts the month between us and the sun, but will start to pull away in the next few weeks. It will then be a morning object (mag -1.1) right ahead the sun, and continues pulling away until the 19th, when it again reaches its max separation from the sun. After the 19th, Mercury will start to slide back towards the sun again on its way around the back side after which it will become an evening object.

Mars & Venus: Both are close thru the month with Mars (mag 1.5) above Venus (mag 4.6) by about 6.5 degrees. They're both in the constellation Virgo, and will move eastward together into Libra. They're best seen as the sun goes below the horizon.

Saturn: Also is in (and will stay in) the constellation Virgo, but moves much slower. Look at Saturn (mag 1.0) early in the month, as it will slide towards the sun, and be un-viewable for a little bit as we are on the opposite side of the sun from Saturn. By mid-October, Saturn

will be a morning object, and will climb higher and higher into the sky making viewing even better.

Neptune: Kind of a loner this month, Neptune (mag 7.8) is still in Capricorn, and will remain there for a while. Best viewed about 10pm early in the month, and by 11'ish by months end as that's when it is highest in the sky.

Jupiter & Uranus: The pair are evening objects and will stay fairly stationary. They're both in the lower right fish of the constellation Pisces. They rise about 10pm, with Uranus (mag 5.7) about 2 degrees to the right of much brighter Jupiter (mag -2.9). By months end, Uranus will be about 1.5 degrees above Jupiter.

Pluto: If you haven't attempted a Pluto sighting, you will have to act fast or wait until next summer as objects in the southern sky are dropping further into the horizon. Pluto (mag 14.0) is always difficult, but not impossible. It is above the top of the teapot in general terms, and

about 3 degrees to the east of M23. Your best view will be about 8:30 in the evening.

Moon:

September 3rd: Last Quarter
September 7th: New Moon
September 15th: First Quarter
September 22nd: Full Moon

Special Events:

There is only one meteor shower to watch for this month...the Alpha-Aurigids. They will "peak" the morning of the 1st, but peak is a relative term. The predicted peak rates are about 10/hour. The best time to see the spectacle is about 2am.



September General Meeting

101 Class *with Kevin Bert*

The September 101 class by is entitled:

“Eye Piece Basics”

Beginners to Astronomy are often confused about what eyepieces to purchase and how to best choose an eyepiece for a particular observation. Kevin Bert will be discussing eyepiece design and performance, a must see program for anyone wanting a better understanding of telescope performance.

Constellation of the Month

“Ophiuchus”

Main Program *by Justin Modra*

“Getting Started with the Astronomical League Outreach & Double Star Clubs”

Public viewing nights and sidewalk astron-

omy has been a strong tradition at the NCSF. We understand that outreach to the public is a great way to introduce people to astronomy and science in general. Many NCSF members had their first look through a telescope at a sidewalk astronomy or public viewing night. By submitting a logbook of your participation in these events, the Astronomical League Outreach Club formally recognizes your efforts. The presentation will discuss all aspects of preparing a logbook for league submittal. The second part of the talk will review the Double Star Club. Observing Double Stars is a core component in an amateur astronomy's repertoire. They are fun to observe, dark sky conditions aren't required and one learns the constellations and about atmospheric seeing. The presentation will discuss how to make observations of double stars for the purpose of sending them to the league.

August Events

Saturday, July 31

Kevin Bert reported it was a bit of a struggle to get some views of the sun between the clouds at this years “Sunday On Saturday Event” but there were a number of successful attempts. The Coronado showed excellent details on the sun. Eighteen members and family members included, attended the event. Only a few scopes were set up due to the questionable weather, and as it turned out a few drops of rain fell during dinner. The lack of clearing and excess of mosquitoes made for a short evening. I would like to thank all those that attended and those that brought food. It made for an enjoyable afternoon getting together and talking with astronomy friends.

Saturday, August 7

Kevin Bert reported eight members set up equipment in the northern area of the upper parking lot early in the evening under partly cloudy skies for this year's “Small Scope Party”. A dozen or so campers were getting some views as the skies became clearer. Venus, Mars and Saturn were sinking fast in the west as darkness slowly rolled in making deep sky objects visible. Thirteen telescopes were in attendance moving from object to object displaying a surprising amount of detail. A variety of astronomy topics were discussed throughout the eve-

ning with telescopes and equipment being most prominent. A nice breeze kept dew away but was not strong enough to keep the mosquitoes in check. A variety of goodies to eat made an appearance at 11:00 as Jupiter rose higher above the eastern horizon. Most attendees were packed up by midnight. Thanks to all that attended to make the second SSSP a success.

Friday, August 13

Robert Powell reported overcast skies and light rain during this event. Two guests visited until 8p.m. Observatory closed at 9:30. (continued on pg 4)

Jim and Gwen Plunkett Observatory



Observatory Director:
Dan Bert: 262-375-2239

CURRENT CLACK

Leaders for Public Viewing

September 4

Ice Age Center

Gene and Charlotte DuPree

September 10

Members\Public Night

Leaders Needed

September 11

Cedarburg Bog

Gene and Charlotte DuPree

September 15

Sidewalk Astronomy

Jeff Setzer

September 17 & 18

Public Viewing

Leaders Needed

September 18

Community Campfire

Gene and Charlotte DuPree

Star Parties

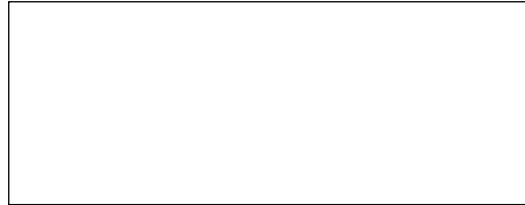
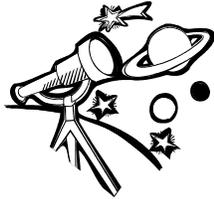
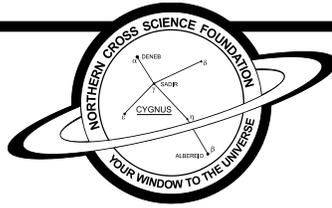
Prairie Skies

September 30 - October 3
Kankakee, IL
www.prairieskies.org

For Sale

Canon Digital Rebel 300D
Camera body and accessories
Modified for astrophotography
\$250
Rick Kazmierski 262 305-1895

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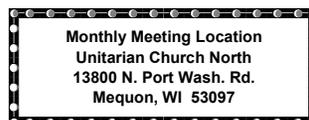
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Saturday, August 14th

Joyce Jentges reported she and Bob Radke hosted 35 guests at the observatory for a clear night under the stars. Following difficulties in the use of the Sky Commander on the Panarusky Telescope, a telrad was used to locate the Moon, Venus M13, M4, and a couple of objects in Sagittarius. Al Steinberg had the only telescope outside. The Observatory was closed at 11:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 18

Observers at this Bayshore Sidewalk Astronomy Event reported conditions were partly cloudy and temperatures were in the 70s. Kevin and Dan Bert, Don Miles, Justin Modra, Tony Marek, Paul Gruner, Dave and Amela Windorski set up telescopes in the rotunda. Cristina Huyke and Carol Nelson (Charlotte Dupree's Mom) worked the information desk. Approximately 150-200 people looked through scopes and talked with NSCF members. Objects viewed included the following: Venus, Moon, Arcturus, Vega and Alberio. The public viewing was closed at 10:00pm.



Our club has a "Discussion Group on Google"
See our website: <http://www.ncsf.info/> for details.

SPECTRUM

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