

SIDEREAL TIMES

The Official Publication of the
Amateur Astronomers Association of Princeton

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From the Director

AAAP Regular Meeting Oct 12 (8:00 PM). The AAAP regular meeting Oct 12 will feature Mr. George Bunk, senior staff engineer with Lockheed Martin and a veteran space flight project engineer. In the late 80's and the 90's, he was with MacDonnell Douglas/ Boeing at Kennedy Space Center where he worked on the Space Shuttle program. For more information see Program Chair Michele Novatsky's article in this issue.

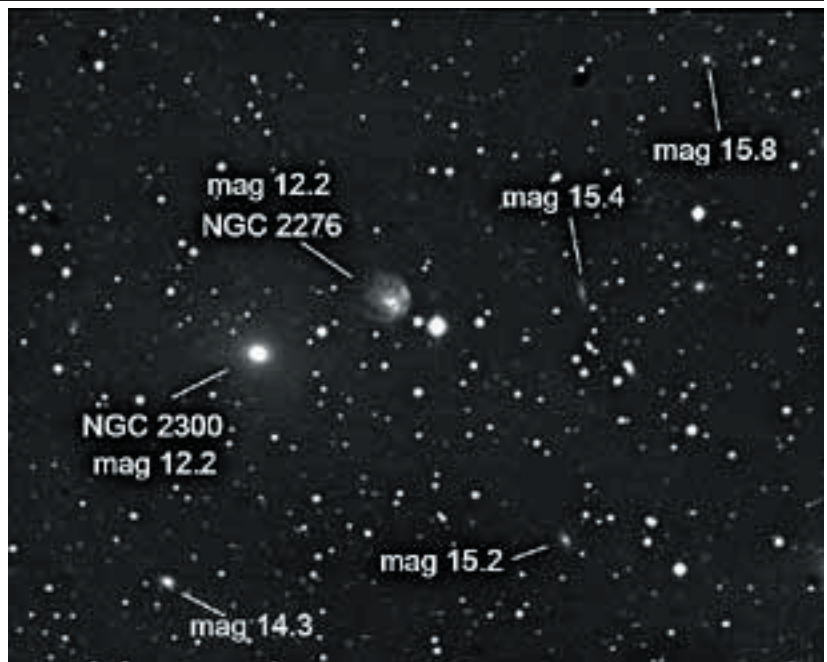
Annual Dues Deadline October 2004
All members should renew -- \$40

Local Astronomy Events Cool clear weather has arrived, and October promises to be an active month for observing and the AAAP Observatory. Each Friday night this month will be a featured public observing night at Washington Crossing. Bill Murray will also be bringing people out from the State Planetarium those nights as part of our annual cooperative. And don't forget the lunar eclipse on Oct 28.

We will hold our **annual AAAP fall Picnic** at WC Park on Sat Oct 23 at 3:30-dark, at the Pavilion at the Interpretive Center (just beyond the observatory in the Park). This event is aimed at all members, new or experienced, and families/significant others are welcome. The grilling and feast will be followed by a star watch the observatory nearby as dark sets in (Sunset 6:07 PM). Members are urged to bring telescopes if so motivated.

Thanks to the efforts of John Miller, Brian Van Liew, and Gene Ramsey, the Paramount is back up and running and a new computer has been installed at the Observatory. There will be a work party on Oct 30, with plans for improving water drainage and installing guttering on the observatory roof. Please let Gene or Brian know if you can help.

CCD Imaging with Small Telescopes Along with several members of the club, I've been experimenting further with CCD imaging. Recently I used my SBIG ST-10XME in a test to see how deep into space I could reach with a small aperture telescope



(5 inch Tak refractor). The photo below was aimed at a pair of interesting 12th magnitude galaxies, NGC2276 and NGC2300, found in the northern sky in Ursa Minor only about 4 degrees from Polaris.

Examining this image, I noticed several additional faint galaxies in the field. By using The Sky planetarium software (same program as used at the Observatory) I was able to identify several of these as IC or UGC galaxies (they are too dim to be listed in the NGC catalogue!) with magnitudes 14.3 to 15.8, as annotated on the image above. This shows that, despite light pollution and a very bright moon that night, galaxies to nearly mag 16 were observed with a 5 inch telescope in central New Jersey! I encourage others to see how deep you can go with a small (or for that matter big) telescope!

Remember the AAAP Fall Picnic
Oct 23 (3:30 to dark) at
Washington Crossing Park
Observing to follow

Simpson Observatory (609) 737-2575

Dark Skies! -- Rex

Minutes of the
Board of Trustees Meeting
September 9th, 2004

Director Rex Parker called the meeting to order at 7:38 PM in the Engineering Quadrangle, Princeton University. A quorum of board members was present. Present, representing the Board of Trustees, were Director Rex Parker, Assistant Director, John Miller Program Chair, Michelle Novatski, and Secretary Mark Jaworsky. Absent was Treasurer Ron Mittelstaedt. Present, representing the other standing committees, were StarQuest Chairman Don Monticello, WC Observatory Co-chair Gene Ramsey, WC Observatory Co-chair and Public Outreach Manager Brian Van Liew, *Sidereal Times* Editor Vic Belanger, Membership Chair Saul Moroz, Membership Committee Member Jane Lanahan and Librarian Larry Kane.

Director Rex Parker opened the meeting by explaining that the main purpose this evening was to further define the AAAP vision and asked those present for ideas and observations on what they felt was right and/or wrong with the club and how it could be improved.

Vic Belanger thought membership is waning for some reason and would like to see efforts to grow membership back towards 150. Current membership stands at 126. Vic also suggested that having meeting announcement fliers posted by locally employed members at their companies might spark interest.

Don Monticello said he would like to see more young people involved with the club. Larry Kane suggested having a Family membership category in the dues structure. Vic suggested a Student Membership category. Gene Ramsey suggested making the club picnic for members and family a permanent regular event. Brian Van Liew suggested having a mechanism to get the word out for upcoming meetings and special events. Mark Jaworsky stated he posts the speaker notices on various BBSs, Listserves and eGroups such as the S*T*A*R BBS, Project Astro Nova listserve and Yahoo NJAstronomers (UACNJ) eGroup.

Rex then suggested that the Publicity Committee needs enhancement. John Miller states that he is handling some publicity announcements and has a database of local newspapers and science department heads at local school districts and colleges for email broadcasts of press releases.

Rex suggested revamping the membership brochure. Larry said he is rewriting it and Rex suggested asking for a volunteer with Graphic Arts experience to design the layout.

Mark suggested designing a "new member" packet with club information so that new members are aware of the activities and know whom to contact. Jane stated that she would man a new member table at the meetings.

John said that he would give Michelle Novatski his club member email database so that pre-meeting dinner notices could be distributed.

Michelle stated that for the spring she is trying to get a variety of speakers and has contacted someone working on the space elevator and David Spergel for extra-solar planets. Mark suggested getting Joe Taylor. Michelle said that with her commute she couldn't guarantee getting to the dinner at exactly 6:00 PM. Mark said that he could fill in on the dinners he attends.

Don asked that the AAAP budget be published so that everyone could see club income and outlays and be better able to gauge fundraising needs. Don reported that attendance at StarQuest, which is the club's primary fundraising mechanism, is waning and that the caterer wants to charge \$50 per person for meals next year. Saul Moroz suggested that we do not use SQ as a fundraiser but only target registration expenses to breakeven so that more members/guests are encouraged to attend. Don said this is why he would like to see the budget so that the effect of not having this fundraiser can be determined to see if alternate mechanisms need development.

Rex reported that the Treasury Balance was \$8599.00 and that a new computer for Washington Crossing was purchased.

Rex also stated that he is drafting a letter to the public relations person at the Merrill Lynch Campus in Hopewell so that the light pollution from their athletic field lights can be mitigated. He said he would circulate this letter for signature at the Sept. 14th meeting.

Gene and Michelle volunteered to coordinate the organization of the fall club picnic. A date of Oct. 23rd was set with a rain date of Nov. 6th. Volunteers to help with grilling and to bring some salads and deserts will be solicited.

Brian reported that the new computer was installed at the observatory. He also reported that the Paramount ME was no longer communicating to the computer and suspected that this was due to a lightning strike at the observatory. The Paramount's motherboard was sent to Steve Bisque for evaluation/repair. Brian also reported that the telephone was out and that Verizon was being contacted to arrange repair.

Gene is organizing a fall work party to install gutters at the observatory and potentially a drainage pipe under the observatory driveway. He will recommend dates at the Sept. 14th meeting. Gene also stated that he is working to get the refractor tailpiece able to accept 2" diagonals.

Brian reported that a Scout Group would be at the soccer fields at Washington Crossing State Park on Sept 18th for a Star Party. He also reported that a Public outreach event would take place on Oct. 2nd at the Plainsboro Preserve and that the Preserve is bringing a group of 50 people to the observatory on Oct. 22nd.

Brian also reported that Larry Kane has been frocked and has earned his key. Congratulations Larry!

Vic reported that the October deadline for *Sidereal Times* is Oct. 1st. He asked every officer to contribute an article. Vic also commended member Bryan Hubbard for the job he is doing at circulation of *Sidereal Times*.

Larry said he would ask for donations of library material at the next meeting.

John reported that he is thinking of designing a specific contact form for the website and also reported that the site received over 2000 hits in July from over 30 countries. John also reported that the BBS was removed due to posting content issues and will not be brought back.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Markian S. Jaworsky, Secretary

Minutes of the
AAAP General Membership Meeting
September 14th, 2004

Director Rex Parker called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM. 92 club members, guests and general public were in attendance, 25 of who stayed for the club activities/business meeting. Rex's club highlights were: 1) mention of the Washington Crossing observatory and its public outreach programs, availability to club members if a keyholder is present and introduction of Gene Ramsey an Brian Van Liew observatory co-chairs; 2) a brief mention that new keyholder training will take place this fall and to contact Brian for details, also acknowledgement that member Larry Kane completed the program and has been frocked as a keyholder; 3) announcement of the AAAP fall club picnic is to occur at 4:00 PM on Oct 23rd at the pavilion at the Interpretive Center in Washington Crossing State Park, RSVP to member Michelle Novatski at philanium020202@yahoo.com; 4) mention that the club has a library and introduction of Larry Kane as the Librarian; 5) asked for a volunteer graphic artist to help with putting together an updated brochure; 6) announced that a letter requesting light pollution abatement for the athletic fields at the Merrill Lynch Hopewell campus has been drafted, read relevant sections and circulated the letter for signature by interested club members; 7) also requested that the members provide Program Chair Michele Novatski with ideas for speakers for future programs

Program Chair Michele Novatski introduced the evening's keynote speaker, Dr. Edward Witten of the Institute of Advanced Study. Dr. Witten then gave his presentation on Current Cosmology and Superstring theory. Some of the topics covered by Dr. Witten included the theoretical basis of Einstein's Cosmological Constant as recently confirmed as the accelerating expansion from recent Type Ia supernovae measurements, the effect of this constant on the fate of the universe, the "strange" vacuum we live in, basics of string theory and the concept of the multiverse, The talk was very well received by the attendees.

After a brief break the business meeting resumed at 9:55 PM

Officer Reports:

Assistant Director John Miller reported that the website's main page has the picture of the Genesis capsule crashed in the Utah desert.

Secretary Mark Jaworsky reported that the minutes of the Sept. 9th Board Meeting and this meeting would appear in the next *Sidereal Times*.

Treasurer Ron Mittlestaedt reported that the treasury balance is at \$XXXXX. Ron also reported that dues are due next month and that these should be sent to Membership Committee Member Jane Lanahan. Ron also stated that the dues structure does not include a subscription to *Sky & Telescope*, but said that *S&T* has a membership list and that they should be contacted directly for a club discount. As discussed at the Board Meeting, Rex requested that Ron publish the club budget in the next issue of *Sidereal Times* to see if StarQuest can be separated from fundraising activities.

Program Chair Michele Novatski announced that a speaker has been found for the January meeting and will be Michael Lane, Chief Strategic Officer of Liftport Corporation and will be speaking on the Space Elevator. Michelle also announced that the next meeting in October will feature George Bunk of Lockheed

Martin and he will be speaking on "Working on the ISS"

Committee Reports:

Sidereal Times Editor Vic Belanger said the deadline for the October issue of *Sidereal Times* would be October 1st.

Washington Crossing Co-chair Brian Van Liew reported that the Paramount ME motherboard was sent to Steve Bisque for repair and preliminary diagnostics have shown that the communication port was not working. Brian also reported that Verizon has been contacted to repair the phone but coordination is needed to allow access to the observatory. Washington Crossing Co-chair Gene Ramsey reported that the observatory fall work party was scheduled for Saturday Oct. 30th and that the main goal is to install gutters on the observatory. Gene asked for authorization to spend up to \$100 for materials. This expenditure is within the discretionary budget.

Public Outreach Chair Brian Van Liew reported that the State Planetarium Program nights were scheduled for Oct. 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th and these are reflected in the duty schedule. Brian also reported that the Plainsboro Preserve would be bringing a group of 50 to the observatory on Oct. 22nd. Brian also reported that he is organizing keyholder-training sessions and he is to be contacted for participation. Vic announced that he is teaching his annual Introduction to Astronomy Course at the Interpretive and that he will be bringing his class to the observatory this Friday Sept. 17th and also on Oct. 1st, 8th and 15th. Member Ken Kramer said he is presenting a display on NASAs robotic missions to Mars, Saturn and Beyond at the Lawrence Public Library on November 13th between 11:30 and 3:00 PM. He said members with scopes would be appreciated. Ken also volunteered to show his display as a 10-minute talk on Nov. 9th. Member John Church announced that the Old Bridge Public Library is seeking a speaker for their adult forum series in December or January to speak on an astronomical topic. They will give a \$150 honorarium. Contact John at j.church@mindspring.com if interested.

Librarian Larry Kane reported that the library has had its first customer and that he is seeking donations of unwanted astronomical books to the library. A tax donation letter will be provided

New member Ludie(?) reported that the surrounding area has a large home school community and that this may be an area for public outreach. Rex asked that he develop this into a specific proposal to be submitted to the club.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Markian S. Jaworsky, Secretary

Deadline for submissions
to the November Issue of
Sidereal Times
will be
October 29, 2004

Observations

George Walker and I headed to the Black Forest Star Party on Friday September 10 at Cherry Springs State Game Grounds near the area of Coudersport, PA in Potter County. This is the fourth year of the event held by the Central Pennsylvania Astronomers. Turned out to be around a five hour drive and some 250 miles with the last 50 miles going up and down and around mountains.

During hurricane Francis the area received five inches of rain so the observing field was quite soggy. With RVs and trucks rolling the water oozed out of the ground, but the sun came out and the ground was drying up with rather humid conditions. A friend had planned to meet us there who had recently retired from the Federal Aviation Administration. He had recently acquired a Celestron go-to 80mm and was looking for some help with setting up and finding objects.

As George and I were setting up the tent, canopy cover, scopes, etc, we found we were getting boxed in. On one side was a mud hole that the Park Rangers roped off so we were on a sort of dead end. Attendees would drive down the lane and just stop by us and unload and set up camp to the point where we couldn't get the truck out if we wanted. We figured we could last for three days without a shower. There are no showers at Cherry Springs so a drive of about twenty minutes is required to another camp with the facilities.

There were loud speakers set up at strategic through out the observing field to make timely announcement through out the day. Some announcements were odor warnings stating to close the lid on the seats in the port-a-potties. I had visions of being on the old MASH program where announcements were relayed through loud speakers in the field hospital.

We sort of panic when we arrived at the field and the poles that had the electrical boxes attached were removed. It took us a bit of drive around the field to find that the electric cables were buried underground and the outlets were in boxes about three feet above the ground and usually hidden between two parked vehicles. There were about 250 attendees already present when we arrived, though registration didn't open until noon and we arrived at 12:30pm. The final count was 458 not including members of the Central Pa club and vendors.

The Friday evening started out clear, but I put my dew heaters on full blast. Earlier in the day a vendor was selling a item called Sightsaver. I used to have to piece if ruby-lith film taped to my Macintosh G3 Powerbook computer laptop. The tape would lose it's adhesive qualities after several removals. When I tried to remove the tape from the rubylith it would take the red material with it. Rubber bands were out of the question because the screen is recessed. The Sightsaver has a red piece of Plexiglas in a frame. A channel at the top fit over the screen with foam on the sides for a snug fit. A problem with the rubylith is when it would just slightly lift off the screen the sharpness of the image would be lost. I would have to reach over to the computer and push the rubylith against screen. This never happens with the Sightsaver, the screen is always sharp. It's one of those inventions where you say, "oh why didn't I think of that."

The Milky Way was the brightest I've seen since my trip out West, most likely the best in the Northeast. Many objects were naked eye. M-31 in the Andromeda Galaxy was very pronounced. We

took turns trying to see M-13 the globular cluster in Hercules constellation. It was there but it seemed to go in and out. North American, Lagoon were also observed. I could not see The Vail Nebula nor can I say I ever seen it naked eye, even out West. I am sure that at this location that the Horsehead Nebula could be observed with a H-Beta filter.

We observed until 1:30 AM which is when the transparency deteriorated. The stars could be seen, but when looking through the scope, they looked as if the scope was out of collimation. I just couldn't focus the stars to pin points.

One problem of going to such a large star party is that some other observers stay up all night, even though they are not observing, make it hard to sleep with their loud conversations. Then another group who went to bed early for some reason is up a 5 am rustling around pots and pans to cook breakfast. This was really the only draw back.

We saw so many of the amateur astronomer we have met through the years. We even talked with our past AAAP Archivist, Herb Johnson. He shaved off his beard when he hit 50 and is still dealing with old computers. Other members attending from AAAP were Lisa Yeh and Val Korszniak.

Saturday night was a bit better in the beginning, but around the same time as on Friday the transparency washed out the stars, then thick clouds moved in. Talked with neighboring observers then turned in. Was able to sleep much better that night, the air wasn't as cold or humid.

George and I were planning to stay through Sunday night, but the weather forecast wasn't favorable so we packed up Sunday morning after our camping equipment dried out. The ride home was uneventful except the amount of gas used in George's truck was cut in half by not pulling his mobile home. We thought we would try sleeping in the old tent like we used to do. With 450 attendees at this event we thought there wouldn't be room for the mobile home. The luxury of the trailer is nice, but not worth pulling through the winding roads of Potter county for the two day event.

We will have to weigh the pros and cons to see if we will attend this event next year. The park is open year round for observing though it gets rather cold and snowy. The spring galaxies would be a welcome sight in dark skies.

Ron

From the Treasurer

The treasury balance is \$XXXX. There are 128 paid members.

Note: Sky and Tel now has our membership roster and will check to see if you are a current member before granting the club discount. From now on you will contact Sky and Tel direct to renew your subscription. We do not have the same arrangement with Astronomy magazine.

Jane Lanahan will be collecting dues and will publish the address to where it can be sent. And of course the dues are now \$40 per year.

Ron Mittelstaedt

Honey, I Discovered a Comet

or

How I Spent my Summer Vacation

By Mark Jaworsky

This year my family and I were able to once again spend the first week in August at a friend's cabin on the shores of Lime Lake in Michigan. Lime Lake is a small lake located in the northwest corner of Michigan's lower peninsula, northwest of Traverse City about halfway between Traverse City and the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The area is very rural, bucolic and far from any large cities. Traverse City is the nearest larger population center with a population of 14532 and is about 12 – 15 miles away behind a few ridges of hills.

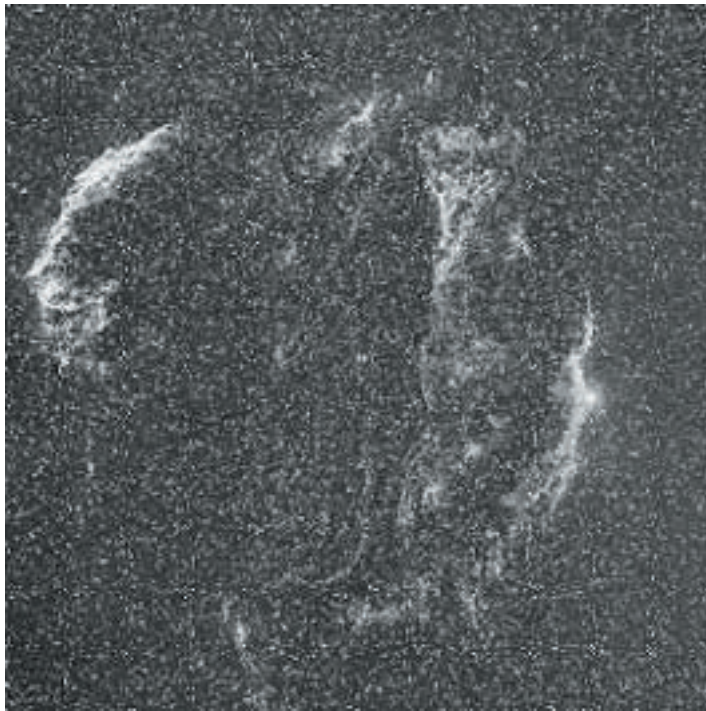
The early part of the week was near the full moon so I spent time catching up on sleep, sight seeing, hiking, swimming and kayaking. Towards the latter part of the week the Moon cooperated and I was able to do some naked-eye and binocular observing on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings. Unfortunately I couldn't bring my scopes (my wife just wouldn't let me – no matter how hard I begged and pleaded – tie my kids, my dog and our luggage to the roof to accommodate the scopes) so I just had a pair of 10 x 50s binoculars and my eyes to tool around with. That may have been a blessing since if I had a scope I might have tunneled in on the scope's very narrow field of view and just ignored the rest of the sky away in my search for dim stuff. As it was, it was nice to refamiliarize myself the entirety of each of the constellations including the dim stars, which is rare at best if not impossible to see from New Jersey.

From my previous descriptions and in case you have not guessed it yet, it is really DARK there. Better skies than I've seen almost anywhere except maybe Utah. To give you an idea of what the skies were like, when I observed on Wednesday evening, I could not see any obvious light domes, even from the direction of Traverse City. The Milky Way was blindingly bright from horizon to horizon - it exhibited beautiful structure from Cygnus through Scorpius and Sagittarius's "teapot" was "boiling" away like mad. With my naked eyes I was able to see both the Double Cluster and M31 (the Andromeda Galaxy), which were near the horizon but were quite bright and very easy to spot. M8 (the Lagoon) was a naked eye glow as was M13 in Hercules. But what really capped this evening off was that I was able to see the North America Nebula with naked eyes and it was also a wonder in binoculars - this was the first time I have ever seen it – and yes it does resemble its nickname. However, to debunk every RCC member's observing, fishermen-like "claims", the Veil nebula wasn't quite naked eye – but it was very easy to see in binoculars and absolutely no filters were needed. What was great about the binocular view versus a telescope was that I saw both portions, NGC 6960 and NGC 6992, in the same field of view. It sort of resembled this picture above.

On Thursday evening, my family and I went to the Leelanau

School's Lampheir Observatory on the shore of Lake Michigan for a public observing night with the school's 14" telescope. While we were waiting our turn to go into the dome, I was tooling around Boötes with binoculars and easily found the globular cluster M3. I asked my wife Cindy if she wanted to try, and then coaching her to try to find it she said she did. She described it as a fuzz ball with two brighter stars below it. I told her that it was a fuzz ball, but there were no brighter stars below it but only a brighter star above it. Cindy kept insisting about the two stars so I took the binoculars and after finding M3 confirmed I was right – a single brighter star above. Cindy, looking again, insisted she was right – two brighter stars below it and none above. Taking the binoculars back again and once again "proving" I was right – a single brighter star above M3 and absolutely none below – I was returning to Arcturus when I noticed a fairly bright fuzz ball almost looking like a larger and brighter globular cluster than M3 about 1/2 way between and a bit south of a direct line between M3 and Arcturus. And yes there were two brighter stars making a diagonal below it with no brighter star above – this is what Cindy was seeing and yes of course she was right. Interesting, as I couldn't recall any bright deep sky objects in that vicinity, M53 should have been and was further south. I was perplexed by this but couldn't do anything more as we were called for our turn in the dome.

The observatory's dome houses an old but very serviceable orange-tube Celestron C-14. We observed M13, Mizar, Alberio, M57, and an attempt for Comet C2001 Q4 (NEAT) in Ursa Major. When the dome's slit opening was pointed out over Lake Michigan, I noticed a small glow over the southwestern horizon that I hadn't noticed



outside. Since Milwaukee was roughly in that direction, I assumed this was the city's light dome and I figured this would be a great demonstration on the effects of light pollution. About this time Norm the observatory's director points out this glow and asks the group what it was. I figured this was a great chance to do a the light pollution

demonstration so I piped up, "It's Milwaukee's light dome."

"No," said Norm, "Milwaukee is much too far away to show up so that glow is an aurora".

As we watched it, it became brighter, greener and eventually resembled a split green "flame". A picture of this aurora taken from across Lake Michigan in Wisconsin appears below.

(Honey, continued on page 6)

(Honey, continued from page 5)

The next night (Friday) was our last in Michigan and we celebrated it with a bonfire and cookout. After dinner, and after observing another auroral display over the northern horizon over



Lime Lake, I broke out the binoculars and spent time exploring the Milky Way from Cygnus through Aquila and then moving into Scutum found the beautiful open cluster M11 or the “Wild Duck” cluster (more on this later). After M11, I moved onto Ophiuchus and found the globulars M10 and M12, which formed a nice pair in the binoculars’ field of view.

Seeing this pair reminded me of my observations of M3 the previous evening and the strange “fuzz ball”. I then turned the binoculars to Boötes and found M3 – with the single brighter star above it and none below. Then returning to Arcturus I found the fuzz ball – with the two brighter stars – 1/2 way between and a bit south of a direct line between M3 and Arcturus. Although on this night, it looked a bit different than on the previous night and it took me a little while to figure it out. There were the two brighter stars, but instead of being below the fuzz ball, they formed a nice right triangle with the fuzz ball. Its position was further south than the previous night so it obviously moved.

Well, a moving fuzz ball must mean it was a comet right? – as visions of IAUC telegrams announcing Comet Jaworsky danced in my head. Once again I did a quick survey of what it could be – no deep sky objects that I knew of between M3 and Arcturus, the globular M53 was further south than this. Also, I didn’t remember any other comets in that vicinity. I discounted the two comets that were in the same general region, C/2001 Q4 NEAT was in Ursa Major and C/2003 K4 LINEAR was much further north at the top of Boötes a few weeks previous when I observed it last from New Jersey.

After retuning home I confirmed via Sky Atlas 2000.0 that no deep sky object was located between Arcturus and M3 – M3 was charted with a star directly to the north of it. So far, so good. I then checked my planetarium program Cartes du Ciel, which also confirmed that there were no deep sky objects of any kind in known catalogs between M3 and Arcturus. Even better. Then I uploaded the latest comet elements from the Harvard’s Center for Astrophysics’ website and the turned on Cartes du Ciel’s comet display and ran it back for the nights of August 5th and 6th. It showed that the fuzz ball was indeed C/2003 K4 LINEAR. On the evening of August 5th it was located above two stars, HD119584

and 2 Boötes, and on August 6th it formed a nice right triangle with those same two stars.

So >POOF!< went my dreams of a “celebrity” moment and my astronomical equivalent of Andy Warhol’s 15 minutes. I was overseas in the UK during the previous week on business and I totally lost track of where K4 LINEAR could be.

One of the things this experience does point out is that you need to check absolutely everything. The central clearinghouse for observational discoveries – the Central Bureau of Astronomical Telegrams – has very strict standards for discovery submissions. They highly recommend that you check for everything other than what you think it is. The following quote is taken from their website. “Those reporting discoveries of new objects need to give full information regarding proper sources (atlases, catalogues, etc.) that have been checked, in order to bolster their evidence.” Remember that a ‘false’ discovery can have repercussions throughout the professional and amateur community as many resources will be used for follow up observations and astrometry so if it is a wild-goose chase all that effort will truly be wasted.

If I had reported Cindy’s and my “discovery”, I could have seen the response from CBAT now:

“Dear Mr. Jaworsky,

Thank you for your submission of the discovery notification of Comet C/2004 P2 (Jaworsky) and its positions over the course of August 6th and 7th (UT). From your reported positions, our preliminary orbit calculation finds that the calculated orbit almost precisely matches that of a previously reported comet - C/2003 K4 (LINEAR). Also the positions you submitted with your notification match observational positions submitted by other astronomers for C/2003 K4 (LINEAR). Therefore, we are reasonably certain that the object that you reported is not a new comet but an observation of C/2003 K4 (LINEAR). Therefore, we suggest, that prior to submitting future discoveries, that you check the positions all known comets so that you don’t waste your time and ours.

Sincerely,

Brian G. Marsden

Central Bureau for Astronomical Telegrams
INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION, Mailstop 18
Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory
CBAT@CFA.HARVARD.EDU (science)

The thought of having discovered a new comet, unlikely as it was, was a lot of fun while it lasted. I still think P2 (Jaworsky) is a much better name than K4 (LINEAR). Well how about LINEAR-Jaworsky then? What do you mean the actual discovery occurred on May 28th, 2003 by the Lincoln Laboratories Near-Earth Asteroid Research survey team and was announced in IAUC circular no. 8139 posted on May 30th 2003? Details, details...Hey, while I was looking in Aquila/Scutum, I “discovered” this agglomeration of stars. Sort of reminded me of a flight of migrating geese. Since New Jersey is like a second home to the Canada Goose population and fall migration is upon us, I called this the “Wild Goose Cluster”. What’s that you say, this was already catalogued by Charles Messier as his 11th object and given the moniker “Wild Duck Custer” by Admiral Smyth? Plagerers all...

Clear skies and keep looking up...you never know what you can find.

Mark

From the Program Chair

October's speaker, Mr. George A. Bunk, Jr. will provide a technical talk entitled From the Ground Up -- Working on the Space Shuttle and Space Stations Programs: A Space Workers Perspective. The evening's presentation will provide an engineer's viewpoint of the Spacelab and Space Station missions. Mr. Bunk will also address the primary objectives of these projects, the engineering challenges, and provide the audience with a unique opportunity to learn first-hand what it's like to work with such distinguished leaders in space, as astronauts John Young (Gemini and Apollo missions), and John Glenn (Discovery mission investigating the relationship between space flight and aging). I've had an advance opportunity to review the presentation and strongly encourage all to attend and hear this engaging insider's perspective.

Just a quick reminder: all members are cordially invited to attend the pre-meeting dinner at the Annex restaurant in Princeton. The restaurant would welcome a head count a day in advance to plan for the necessary seating, so please try to let me know by October 10, if at all possible, as to whether you will be attending.

Mr. Bunk is currently a Senior Staff Engineer at Lockheed Martin, and a former Senior Engineer at McDonnell Douglas (now Boeing) Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Hope to see you all on October 12!

Program Chair, Michele Novatski

Letters to the Editor

Library Program Please see the attached flyer prepared by the Lawrence Library for my upcoming presentation on "Mars, Saturn and Beyond" on Nov 13. Thank you for allowing me to represent the AAAP and for any help that the club members can provide. And as requested, I will be giving a brief overview of the activities at the Nov club meeting.

Anyone interested in assisting by bringing telescopes, or laptops please let me know. Your help will be welcome too. Anyone with models, displays, posters, ideas, etc to add to the program, or for further information, please contact me via email at

Thank you

Everyone and their families are invited to attend my presentation entitled "Mars, Saturn and Beyond" to be held at the Lawrence Public Library on Saturday, November 13 from 11:30 AM to 3 PM. The program is geared to children and kids of all ages. Activities will include displays about the current Mars Rover and Cassini Saturn missions, Mars rover models, Outdoor Telescope Viewing courtesy of the AAAP, Drawing Martian Monsters and Space Artwork, Learning about the Hubble Space Telescope and the search for Life beyond Earth, and video/slide presentations.

Please call the Lawrence Library to register at 609-989-6920.

Ken Kremer

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