

The Objective View

June 2003

Newsletter of the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society

Dan Laszlo, President and Newsletter Editor
djlaszlo@aol.com office 970 498 9226

Max Moe, Vice President
TheMoes@fsvmail.net

Kimon Berlin, Secretary
kimon@deepskymarines.org 970 267 9908

Nate Perkins, Treasurer
nathan_perkins@agilent.com

David Chamness, AL Correspondent
dec@ftc.agilent.com 970 482 1794

Tom Teters, Web Site Editor
tomt@starmon.com 970 482 5702

Next Meeting: June 5 7:30 PM

Satellites of Summer, by Dan Laszlo

Planet viewing if weather permits

NCAS Business at 7 PM

Meeting directions Discovery Science Center
703 East Prospect Rd, Fort Collins
<http://www.dcsm.org/index.html>

In Fort Collins, from the intersection of College Ave and Prospect Rd, head East about 1/2 mile. See the Discovery Center sign to the South. Enter the West Wing at the NE corner. From I-25, take Exit 268, West to Lemay Ave, continue West 1/2 mile, see Discovery Center on the left.

NCAS Meetings
July 10 Dr Steve Little Stellar Evolution
August 7 TBA
Sept 4 Dr Roger Culver Mars Mania

NCAS Star Party Dates

June 20, 21, 27, 28

Cactus Flats site is on undeveloped parcel of prairie about 6 miles West of Briggsdale. Take Colo Hwy 14 East from I-25 (Exit 269). Go 19 miles East to Ault. Continue 18 miles East of Ault. At County Rd 65 (Milepost 170), turn North, go one mile.

Site is through the wire gate on the right, no road, close gate and set up. Beware of the cactus. Our standard nights are the weekend of the New Moon, sometimes a weekend before and after. The site is now officially wheelchair accessible, but there are no facilities so bring essentials. Call **Tom Teters**, starmon@jymis.com, with questions about star party status or dates, 482-5702 or 482-0807.

Rocky Mountain National Park Starwatching 2003

Contact Dan Laszlo, djlaszlo@aol.com, if you wish to volunteer with your telescope for programs in the park this summer. Dates are: June 6, June 20, July 18, July 25, August 1, August 22. A weather cancellation message can be consulted at 472-3990 after 5 PM.

Longmont Astronomical Society 1st Quarter Moon Public Viewing Nights, Flanders Park
June 6

Other Events

Little Thompson Observatory Star Night, Berthoud

June 20 Star Night 7 – 10 pm
<http://www.starkids.org>

Cheyenne Astronomical Society
June 20 Cheyenne Botanical Garden 8 PM
<http://home.attbi.com/~curranm/>

Open House, Chamberlain Observatory, dusk to 10 PM
June 7, July 12, Aug 9, Sep 6 303 871 5172
<http://www.du.edu/~rstencil/Chamberlin/>

Longmont Astronomical Society
June 19, Longmont Christian School, 550 Coffman St
<http://laps.fsl.noaa.gov/cgi/las.cgi>

May 1 Program

Tonight's Sky, by Corey Radman

Starlab is an inflatable, portable planetarium that seats approximately 25 people. Starlab instructors provide an introduction to planets, dominant stars, constellations, moon positions in the current sky, and the myths and legends accompany them. Using the Starlab projector and a variety of projection cylinders, visitors see the constellation drawings from H.A. Rey and then follow that introduction with a view of the stars.

NCAS Business, May 1

President Dan Laszlo called the meeting to order. Vice President Max Moe announced upcoming NCAS programs and polled members for volunteers for May 10 Astronomy Day events. Corey Radman offered to seek space in Discovery Science Center for an NCAS display. Nate Perkins, Treasurer, gave his report and circulated a member list with dues status. Dan Laszlo invited members to join the public starwatch on May 9, and lunar eclipse viewing on May 15.

Tom Teters' Photo is Earth Science Picture of the Day

Hi Tom,
Thanks for submitting that beautiful photo of the young Moon. We'll post it as our Earth Science Picture of the Day in the next week or so.
<http://epod.usra.edu/>

Sincerely, Jim Foster

My 15 mins of fame. They are going to publish that setting Crescent Moon pic I took at the Leonid Meteor Storm in 2001. Yahoo!! ha ha <http://starmon.com/newmoon.html>

Tom T.

Sterling Star Party Notes

Arrived there on Wednesday afternoon. Brian Kimball was already there. Lots of rain. Then it quit. Got my popup camper setup, then it started again. Oh ... and the wind...It blew. Wed evening, sometime around 9 PM, about 45 minutes of large sucker holes drifted overhead from the north. Bagged 5 binocular Messiers. Brian was trying to polar align his scope. Then the sky closed up for the rest of the night...then it rained some more and more wind. One observation...the streams were not filling up with water as one might think from all the rain we got...the ground soaked it all up...

Thursday turned out to be cloudy. Went to WalMart to try to get Brian's camper batteries charged up. Turned out they appear to be bad. He only could run his central heat for part of the night before the batteries ran out. :(Thurs afternoon showed broken clouds and blue sky. Great...then came sunset and total overcast. We waited for sucker holes like the night before and saw one huge one drifting in from the NW. We waited, then when it was overhead, we went to work with binocs. I didn't bag any Messiers and Brian got 3 or 4. Then total overcast.

Friday started out cloudy. Brian and I were the only two people there. By Friday night, 3 more families had shown up. Friday at sunset was high thin clouds but by the end of twilight, the sky was OK to view through. Brian observed till 5 AM, getting great views of Mars. No dust storm...could see surface features and a polar ice cap. I cashed it in at 4 AM.

Saturday was much like Friday at sunset. The quote of the star party was from Andrew Plank, at about 4 PM, there were only 3 telescopes at the star party. Gary had not shown up. Andrew said "with only 3 telescope we are in BIG trouble". Ranger Bob was worried also. Finally, Gary showed up with his 30 and it appeared he was leading a convoy. About a dozen more people followed him in, literally, and we were set for the crowds. It was prom night in Sterling, so the crowds were less than last year. But everyone was treated to many views through about 8 telescopes. THEN, again like last year, as soon as the crowd left, the clouds rolled in.

3 families were from Boulder, and were some of Andrew's kids he teaches. There were about 20 people in line at Gary's scope one time I noticed and counted. Maybe about 50-70 people attended the star party that were not campers.

All in all, it was a nice time in Sterling. Ranger Bob, upon seeing Gary arrive, said "The A Team has arrived".

There is a 2nd pump that can be heard now. In addition to the African Queen, which is across the lake to the west, there is a pump that is in the SE. It has a definite pump rhythm, 33 "chugs" then a HUGE backfire. How do I know this...well,

when the clouds are about, your mind drifts and just starts counting these things. Brian first counted them though, one night while he was trying to fall asleep. Some people count sheep, Brian counts chugs. There were 8 LAS members present, so we did good.

Michael H

Hello stargazers. We were blessed with clear skies once again even against all odds. I was watching the weather all week and it sure looked bad. I prayed for the red sea of clouds to part for us, kinda like in the old days with Moses, and by god it did, we even got great seeing to go along with the clear sky. Jupiter early in evening, before dark even, was so spectacular, Jupiter moon eclipse and shadow of moon on Jupiter surface then red spot later made for some of the best views of night. Saturn was also very good with tiny little moons showing up real good, with easy division in rings seen.

Galaxies R us with the big scopes, like NGC 4565 which runs out of the 20 Nagler eyepiece, also M104, dark lane so good in 30, Virgo clusters, and of course M51 all time favorite spiral for spring time viewing. M 13, M92, M3, M15 Globulars, M57, M27 so many of the regulars, hard to do them all.

I just want to say THANKS, to all the hardy brave souls who traveled so far, in hopes of just a chance to get some great old fashion dark sky viewing in. I know who the real dark sky marines are, those who actually take the chance, and they are often rewarded with the best views. see you in the dark, GG
--- Gary G

Foxpark Snowed In, Pawnee Notes

Ahhhhhh.... Got some photons. :)

We usually do the Foxpark area the first time each year in late May or early June (depending on lunar phase), but I was eager to see the condition of the snowpack at Foxpark this time of year. It looks like the extra lunation is a requirement. :)

The chain was hanging at about 45 degrees going up toward Laramie (as usual) and it's still March there. The road at Woods Landing has the hardtop stripped off for a couple hundred yards and some heavy equipment sitting around - looks like they are building a new bridge and improving the intersection a bit. The Aspens are just starting to show a little green just west of there.

I got a little snow shower going up the hill to Foxpark (it's still February there) and there were a few blue sucker holes, but very little access to clear ground due to remaining snow drifts. Areas that receive a lot of sun are clear with a faint hint of grass greening. Areas in the shade typically have 2 to 4 feet of snow remaining.

The main dirt road from the highway is maintained and clear up to the gate at Foxpark, but the town is still in hibernation. The road is NOT maintained beyond where you usually hang a left at the gate. I ventured on past the left turn a bit just as far as 2WD would take me without a hassle (so I could get out in 4WD without a hassle) which turned out to be about 100 feet beyond the driveway into the forest service administration compound on the south side of the road. At that point I decided to turn around while there was still room to. The road had a couple of spots where dirt/mud was exposed but the majority

was still drifted over with from 8 inches to 2 or 3 feet (depending on sun exposure) of that "used-to-be-snow-pack-but-is-softening-kind-of-crunchy-stuff" that you climb up on a bit then crunch down into. Will have to give it another lunar go-round...

I headed from there to Cactus Flats north where the wind was a little on the rambunctious side, then headed on over to Crow Valley where I was surprised to find the place PACKED with tents and campfires. I took a loop around the area and found Gary G. setting up his monster. We were shortly joined by Bill P. and another seeker of photons, but the crowds and noise and lights and smoke spooked us back out onto the flats North, where we got set up and observing around 10:30 or so. The wind died down pretty well and we got an hour or so of fair views, but the clouds moved in and we had to dodge into sucker holes until about 2:00 when it socked in pretty bad.

Snoozy time.

I put together a little webpage with some pictures of the Foxpark road and the condition of Cactus Flats this weekend if anyone is curious.

<http://home.att.net/~jsstars/SPPics/030503.html>

See ya next new moon.

Jim S.

Jim S, Bill P and new guy Terry F, and myself, GG, showed up at Crow valley campground. The sky was indeed opening up some from the afternoon clouds we had, just as I had hoped for.

Jim's report said it all with too many campers and campfires we basically had to go to darker place, so back to Cactus Flats North. I loaded back up the 30 scope and drove out to our site for remainder of the night.

I had this very odd chance meeting of famous meteorite guy traveling to Colorado to do talk for Colorado Springs astronomy club. I do believe in cosmic connections, I some how in the middle of Pawnee, crow valley campground met, a guy named Larry who saw my scope and came over to have a look. He was the guy who studied the Jack and Sharon Walker meteorite in Denver last year when I also meet them , the Walkers, with Karen M at Denver museum on astronomy day in October. He even had a very large stony one with him along with several smaller ones he was showing me. What are the odds of some one traveling across the state to happen to be camping in unlikely spot of Crow valley, Briggsdale, then meet me and have such a connection to astronomy, the world is shrinking for such a chance like this. I thought I was in the middle of nowhere with no people, hence no lights,Wow!! what a night after all. The other cosmic thing I learned, war vet Terry,who had lost both legs, yet had the spirit to get up and drive to Pawnee to view with us. He is an inspiration to me, to see such a attitude of letting nothing stop him from having fun. We could all learn a few things from him. I hope to introduce him to club members this coming month at meeting, trying to keep it cosmic Tom T, bye, Gary

Scope for Sale

Coulter 10 inch Dobsonian. Like new. Includes Kellner eyepiece, eyepiece rack, red-dot aiming device, aperture stop, dustcap. \$600. Call Gene, 970-568-0545.

Scope for Sale. 10" f8 home assembled Newtonian. Excellent precision mirror by Galaxy Optics, made about 1985, optimal size high precision quartz secondary. Scope is optimized for planetary imaging, gives truly excellent images. Sonotube, Novak mirror cell and spider. Homemade focuser 1.25". Finder is half of a binocular; wooden mount a bit clunky, but it works. 12 and 24mm University Konig eyepieces included. **\$400 complete**, Steve Smith (970) 663-1513 (Loveland).

Clear Sky Clocks for Colorado

http://cleardarksky.com/csk/prov/Colorado_clocks.shtml

From Jim S: Best Moon Site I've Seen:

<http://www.moon-phases.com/>

Best Looks

Moon	by Saturn 6/1, by Jupiter 6/4 by Mars 6/19, by Venus 6/27
Mercury	Low in E, by Venus first 3 weeks
Venus	low in ENE predawn
Mars	In S predawn
Jupiter	High in West in evening twilight
Saturn	Low in W at sunset, first few days
Uranus	In Aquarius predawn By Mars 6/20-6/21
Neptune	In Capricornus predawn

From Brad Jarvis:

MarsNews.com will present weekly broadcasts of our hour-long program "Radio Free Mars" starting Tuesday, March 18th. The program will feature a weekly space newscast, information on past, present, and future missions to Mars, and phone interviews with newsmakers and space experts. The program will be hosted by James Burk, Editor-in-chief of MarsNews.com, an expert on the Red Planet and the past President of the Mars Society's Seattle chapter.

The broadcasts will be aired on ZeroPointRadio.com, an Internet radio network and will also be available for listening & download at the following address:

<http://www.marsnews.com/radio/>

From: Dan Laszlo
2001 S Shields St Building H
Fort Collins CO 80526

TO:

Date	Mag	Starts			Max. Altitude			Ends		
		Time	Alt	Az	Time	Alt	Az	Time	Alt	Az
03 Jun	1.2	21:55:57	10	NW	21:58:42	26	NNE	22:00:46	14	ENE
03 Jun	1.8	23:31:56	10	WNW	23:33:07	20	WNW	23:33:07	20	WNW
04 Jun	1.8	20:59:15	10	NNW	21:01:32	18	NNE	21:03:48	10	ENE
04 Jun	-0.7	22:34:53	10	NW	22:38:03	86	N	22:38:11	82	E
05 Jun	0.3	21:38:00	10	NW	21:41:04	42	NNE	21:43:16	16	E
05 Jun	1.9	23:14:35	10	W	23:15:37	16	W	23:15:37	16	W
06 Jun	-0.0	22:17:08	10	WNW	22:20:12	45	SW	22:20:43	40	S
07 Jun	-0.5	21:20:02	10	NW	21:23:08	78	N	21:25:52	14	ESE
08 Jun	1.2	21:59:33	10	W	22:02:08	22	SW	22:03:22	18	SSW
09 Jun	-0.0	21:02:06	10	WNW	21:05:12	50	SW	21:08:17	10	SE
10 Jun	2.2	21:42:43	10	WSW	21:43:51	11	SW	21:45:00	10	SSW
01 Jul	1.3	04:46:32	10	S	04:49:03	22	SE	04:51:35	10	E
03 Jul	0.1	04:27:27	16	SSW	04:29:40	43	SE	04:32:42	10	ENE

A Few Iridium Flares for Lemay and Trilby, Fort Collins

Date	LocalTime	Mag	Alt.	Azimuth	Distance to flare center	Mag at flare center
04 Jun	03:44:03	-5	31°	116° (ESE)	12.6 km (E)	-7
05 Jun	22:52:17	-7	24°	254° (WSW)	6.2 km (E)	-7
07 Jun	04:45:36	-5	12°	76° (ENE)	21.4 km (W)	-5
08 Jun	03:28:46	-7	34°	124° (SE)	2.0 km (W)	-7
08 Jun	22:43:17	-5	21°	260° (W)	24.0 km (W)	-7
10 Jun	04:45:07	-6	18°	84° (E)	15.2 km (W)	-6
13 Jun	03:07:27	-8	36°	134° (SE)	2.2 km (E)	-8
14 Jun	22:25:56	-6	16°	273° (W)	8.3 km (E)	-6
15 Jun	04:32:35	-5	24°	95° (E)	19.8 km (W)	-6
16 Jun	22:23:18	-6	14°	278° (W)	14.0 km (E)	-6
18 Jun	02:46:19	-8	39°	145° (SE)	4.1 km (W)	-8
18 Jun	23:27:39	-7	31°	237° (WSW)	4.7 km (W)	-7
19 Jun	04:17:05	-7	27°	102° (ESE)	7.6 km (E)	-7
21 Jun	21:01:16	-6	22°	341° (NNW)	3.5 km (E)	-6
22 Jun	23:12:37	-5	28°	245° (WSW)	15.2 km (W)	-7
23 Jun	04:01:43	-7	31°	110° (ESE)	0.4 km (W)	-7