

The Objective View

Newsletter of the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society

January 2008

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add ncastro.org to complete email address

Cheyenne Astronomical Society Jan 17 7 pm

Cheyenne Botanic Garden

<http://home.bresnan.net/~curranm/>

Chamberlin Observatory Open House, dusk to 10 pm

Dec 15, Jan 12, Feb 16, Mar 15, Apr 12, May 10 303 871 5172

<http://www.du.edu/~rstencil/Chamberlin/>

Longmont Astronomical Society Jan 19 Members banquet

http://www.longmontastro.org/banquet/Banquet_Letter.pdf

<http://longmontastro.org/>

Next Meeting: January 10 7:30 pm

Cosmic Collisions: Galaxy Mergers and Formations, by Tom Fay

Club Business at 7:15 pm; Officer Election

Discovery Science Center

703 E Prospect Ave, Fort Collins

<http://www.ncastro.org/Sites/DiscoveryCtr.htm>

NCAS Programs

Feb 7 Auger Observatory, Extreme Cosmic Rays P Bauleo

Mar 6 New Horizons/Pluto Fran Bagenal

Discovery Sci Ctr Starwatch, 703 E Prospect, Ft Collins

Jan 12 5:15 pm

Feb 20 6:30 pm Total Lunar Eclipse

March 14 7:30 pm

Dark Sky Observing Opportunities, Roland's Astro Corral

Jan 4, 11. Look for online confirmation that site is accessible.

Other Events

Little Thompson Observatory Star Night:

Jan 18 7:00 pm Aurora and Comets in 3D, Bryan White in

Berthoud HS Auditorium <http://www.starkids.org>

CSU Madison Macdonald Observatory Public Nights

On East Drive, north of Pitkin Street

Tuesdays 8 pm if clear, when class is in session

December 6 Program

The Observing Clubs of the Astronomical League

By Michael Hotka

Michael's lifelong passion for astronomy started in 1960 with the Space Race. He recalls standing out at night watching the ECHO satellite and others pass over. He joined the ranks of kids with Tasco refractors in 1964. He advanced to a Coulter 12 inch in 1971 and has made several thousand observations with it. He recalls excitement about Mars in 1975. He's been an active observer over 30 years. He has *completed* 22 of the Astronomical League Observing Clubs. He maintains two of the web pages of ALOC. Each club is a list of observing targets. Observers are asked to record the date and time, instrument, conditions, and sketch or describe the view. A database is useful, he likes Deepsky by Steven Tuma. It allows sorting. See: <http://astrotips.com/>

Mike makes a paper list. He recommends a hard copy to avoid crashes. He likes Star Charts by Dean Williams, or Cartes du Ciel. He prints a chart to 7th magnitude. He can use a finder scope to star hop to the object. He made a decent 32mm eyepiece for \$20. An O III filter helps with many of the nebulae. An Astrosystems secondary heater keeps dew at bay. He likes to sketch for a permanent record, especially for planets and the Moon. A Starlite is handy to illuminate the sketch. It helps him to see more. He uses a form modified from the RASC format. It has a circle for the eyepiece field, and lines for date, time, transparency, seeing, location, urban/rural. For globular clusters, his favorite, he puts a Sawyer classification to give a sense of density. He recommends a goal, and he aims for at least one night a month. He posts his progress on his personal website: <http://skinny.jeans.tripod.com/astronomy/>

He works from West to East through the night, but is prepared to alter the sequence to compensate for clouds. He doesn't trust individual computers, so archives on the website. He is working on the Planetary Nebula club, the Gold Comet Club, an Open Cluster Club, and the Arp Galaxy Cluster Club. The programs have led him to over 500 objects he would not have seen. Although he starhops to his objects, he knows not everyone can. He encourages observers to apply any advantage their gear allows, including digital setting circles and goto mounts. It is simply recorded in the notes as such. Most of the AL clubs can be done with an 8 inch scope. For Galaxy Clusters and Trios, a 12 inch is better. It should show

objects to about magnitude 13 to 14. Mike reviewed our regional observing sites. He has used Foxpark, Cactus Flats, Crow Valley Campground. He likes the amenities available to DAS members at their site: a warming hut with microwave and pads with AC. His gear packs in a weathertight Tupperware box. He stows observing list notebook, star atlas, flashlight and batteries, pens and pencils. Mike hopes the observing clubs contribute to the fun of observing, not to mention the tasteful pins they award. For a list of clubs and supporting software see:

<http://www.astrleague.org/Observing.html>

Mike Hotka works in software programmer for spacecraft at Ball Aerospace. He is studying space systems management and operations.

December 6 NCAS Business

President Nate Perkins called the meeting to order. The calendar of observing events was announced. The Treasurer's Report was given by Bob Michael, club funds stand at \$461.99. Our Winter speakers were announced. Nominees for 2008 officers were Nate Perkins, President, Greg Halac, Vice-President, Bob Michael, Treasurer, and Dave Chamness, Secretary. Nominations are open until the January 10 meeting.

Three Day Geminids 2007 Report

Generally poor conditions here, with light snow and extreme low temps (-20°C) causing ice buildup on the camera dome. Still, I got some 65 Geminids out of 111 meteors total the last three nights. There was also a very bright Geminid fireball this morning at 6:12 over the Dillon area. Images and videos are here: <http://www.cloudbait.com/science/geminid2007.html>

Chris

Chris L Peterson
Cloudbait Observatory
<http://www.cloudbait.com>

From Tom Teters: Structure of the Universe

Ever wonder what our universe looks like?
Kind of like the synapses and connections in a human brain.
<http://www.colorado.edu/news/releases/2007/478.html>

T.C.
TjT
tomt@starmon.com

Solar Cycle 24 Begins

From Spaceweather.com: Solar physicists have been [waiting](#) for the appearance of a reversed-polarity sunspot to signal the start of the next solar cycle. The wait is over. A magnetically reversed, high-latitude sunspot emerged today: [image](#). If you have a [solar telescope](#), take a look at this important new active region. It marks the beginning of Solar Cycle 24 and the sun's slow ascent back to Solar Maximum

Best Looks

Quadrantid meteors Jan 3-4

Moon By Antares and Venus 1/5
by Pleiades 1/17-18, by Mars 1/19
by Regulus 1/23-24, by Saturn 1/24
Mercury low in WSW at dusk last 3 weeks of month
Venus by Antares start of month, dawn
Mars high late evening
Jupiter Next to Venus end of month at dawn
Saturn In East predawn
Uranus in SW at dusk

Magnitude 11 Asteroid 2005 WJ56 flyby closest Jan 10 2008. Ephemeris and elements:

<http://www.cfa.harvard.edu/iau/Ephemerides/Unusual/K05W56J.html>

Comet Holmes and Comet Tuttle in Evening Sky

For maps see:

<http://www.cometchasing.skyhound.com/index.html>

From: Daniel Laszlo
2001 S Shields St Bldg H
Fr Collins CO 80526

TO:

Confirm passes after STS launch

| Date | Mag | Starts | | | Max. altitude | | | Ends | | |
|------------------------|------|----------|------|-----|---------------|------|-----|----------|------|-----|
| | | Time | Alt. | Az. | Time | Alt. | Az. | Time | Alt. | Az. |
| 12 Jan | 0.2 | 06:44:02 | 10 | NNW | 06:45:24 | 13 | NNE | 06:46:46 | 10 | NE |
| 13 Jan | -0.4 | 07:03:32 | 10 | NNW | 07:05:46 | 21 | NNE | 07:08:00 | 10 | ENE |
| 14 Jan | 0.3 | 05:50:10 | 12 | N | 05:50:28 | 12 | NNE | 05:51:40 | 10 | NE |
| 15 Jan | -0.3 | 06:09:19 | 14 | NNW | 06:10:44 | 19 | NNE | 06:12:51 | 10 | ENE |
| 16 Jan | -1.4 | 06:28:27 | 13 | NW | 06:30:47 | 40 | NNE | 06:33:27 | 10 | ESE |
| 17 Jan | 0.4 | 05:16:22 | 15 | NE | 05:16:22 | 15 | NE | 05:17:27 | 10 | ENE |
| 17 Jan | -2.3 | 06:47:47 | 10 | WNW | 06:50:35 | 64 | SW | 06:53:22 | 10 | SE |
| 18 Jan | -1.1 | 05:35:29 | 34 | NE | 05:35:29 | 34 | NE | 05:38:01 | 10 | E |
| 19 Jan | -2.5 | 05:54:37 | 55 | WNW | 05:55:07 | 78 | SW | 05:57:54 | 10 | SE |
| 20 Jan | -0.9 | 06:13:46 | 20 | WSW | 06:14:34 | 23 | SW | 06:16:53 | 10 | S |
| 21 Jan | 0.8 | 05:01:46 | 14 | SE | 05:01:46 | 14 | SE | 05:02:12 | 10 | SE |
| 22 Jan | 0.6 | 05:20:59 | 12 | SSE | 05:20:59 | 12 | SSE | 05:21:13 | 10 | SSE |
| 28 Jan | -0.5 | 18:49:48 | 10 | SSW | 18:51:10 | 21 | S | 18:51:10 | 21 | S |
| 29 Jan | -0.6 | 19:08:23 | 10 | SW | 19:09:58 | 30 | WSW | 19:09:58 | 30 | WSW |
| 30 Jan | -0.9 | 17:53:08 | 10 | SSW | 17:55:26 | 24 | SE | 17:57:28 | 12 | E |
| 30 Jan | 0.6 | 19:27:41 | 10 | W | 19:28:37 | 17 | W | 19:28:37 | 17 | W |
| 31 Jan | -2.5 | 18:11:24 | 10 | SW | 18:14:11 | 79 | SE | 18:15:58 | 20 | ENE |

<http://www.heavens-above.com/main.aspx?lat=40.4997&lng=-105.05736&loc=Fort+Collins+CO+USA&alt=0&tz=MST>