

# Harford County Astronomical Society

Bel Air, Maryland  
www.harfordastro.org



*Volume 32 Issue 8*

*August 2006*

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**Public Star Party (Open House), Saturday, Sept 2, 2006 at dusk**  
**General Meeting: Saturday, Sept 9, 2006 7:30pm (19:30)**

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### **Club Calendar for 2006:**

#### **Meeting Night**

October 7, 2006  
November 4, 2006  
December 2, 2006

#### **Open House/Public Star Party**

October 28, 2006  
November 25, 2006  
December 30, 2006

Meeting time is 19:30 (7:30pm) unless noted otherwise.

*Please check the website for possible schedule updates and changes:*

<http://www.harfordastro.org>

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### ***In This Issue:***

**Minutes of August HCAS Meeting**

**Treasurer's Report - August**

**Open Houses**

**Recent Observations by Club Members**

**HCAS Outreach Schedule**

**New Members**

**Telescope Hobby Web Sites**

## Minutes of August HCAS Meeting

Jim Garrett opened the meeting at 7:30pm. It was a short one, as members wanted to take advantage of the excellent seeing to visit the Broad Creek site.

The minutes of the July meeting were approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Tim Kamel reported that there is now \$6,077.02 in the savings account. (See full report below.)

**Observatory Operations:** Nothing to report this month on the dome motorization project, which has not progressed due to Mark Kregel's work commitments.

**Outreach Program:** Tom Rusek will be holding presentations at the Fallston and Abingdon Libraries. HCAS currently has a display at the Fallston Library. Tom mentioned that almost 60 people attended last month's lecture at the Bel Air library.

**Miscellaneous:** There are now four keys to the gate at the Broad Creek site. Their use is currently restricted to specific members.

Membership renewals have been low, despite the significant discount for *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* magazines.

**New Business:** The club's insurance policy has lapsed. This makes the club's officers liable for any accidents occurring off the college campus. Tim Kamel is working on renewing the policy.

The question of whether to allow non-members to attend the Broad Creek sessions was discussed. It was decided to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

There were several attendees at the meeting who wanted to become members. They accompanied us to Broad Creek.

A Telescope Buyer's Workshop was proposed for November.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

...Roy

### Treasurer's Report – August

As of 8/1/06, balance in the checking account is \$6077.02. The savings account has been closed out with about \$26.40.

We now have 48 paid members. There are still 13 members that have not renewed. I am sending out the third, and final notice, to 12 of those. The last one has e-mailed to tell me that they are not renewing their family plan.

I have processed the magazine subscriptions and these went out Monday, 7/17/06. If anyone would like to subscribe to Sky and Telescope or Astronomy magazines at the Society prices \$32.95 for S&T and 34.00 for Astronomy, let me know at [hkamel32@comcast.net](mailto:hkamel32@comcast.net).

On 7/26, I was in touch with our old insurance company and am pursuing getting our policy reinstated. They told me they would mail me a new application within 24 hours. I expected to get it on 7/31. As of 8/4, I have not received it. I will call them again on Monday 8/7.

Does any one know why we do not have an open house scheduled between 9/2/06 and 10/28/06? That is 8 weeks! Is it possible to do one 9/30?

...Tim

## **Open House – August 5**

On 8/5, we had our August Open House. Weather was for better than average transparency and average seeing. The sun was to set at 8:13. I arrived shortly after 8:00 PM and the activity was already underway.

We again had good participation by society members with about 12 members there with scopes ranging in size from 70 mm to 12.5 inches. A new member, Mike Talbard, was there with his brand new 10" SCT. Types of scopes in use also included refractors up to 5" in diameter and reflectors up to 12.5", Dobsonian and equatorial.

We again had about 50-60 guests – families with children, couples and individuals. A photographer from the Baltimore Examiner, who was to be there for an article, was a no show.

We had scopes ranging in size from a 70 mm GOTO to a 14" Dobsonian mount. We also had on had a 4" and a 6" refractor. I brought along the 6" F/10.4 and had some pretty good views of the moon and Jupiter.

As usual, we targeted several objects. The Moon was well past first quarter and drew several "wows" in my ETX 70 and the 6" F/10.4 Society 'scope that I have been borrowing. Jupiter was also a winner though somewhat low on the horizon and not offering the best views. This is likely the last open-house view of Jupiter for this apparition. Several DSO's were also on hand including Alberio, M 57 (Ring Nebula) and M 31 (Andromeda Galaxy).

The open house session continued till about 11:30 or so. Three members then moved onto the observatory grounds, where it was darker, to do some further observing. I packed it in at about 12:30 or so.

...Tim

A very bright street light – the nearest one, in fact - caused many of the visitors to be squinting at the eyepiece as they observed deep space objects. A suggestion was made to ask the college if we could shut off the light during future Open House sessions. There would still be plenty of light for visitors to find their way.

...Roy

## Recent Observations by Club Members

### August 12th and 13th at Broad Creek:

About ten members visited the Broad Creek observing site after Saturday's meeting.

The seeing conditions were excellent. The Milky Way could be seen extending from Cassiopeia in the north, through Cygnus and Lyra at the zenith, and down to the southern horizon through Sagittarius. In fact, the Sagittarius region was the most popular site of the night. Three members brought telescopes which provided excellent views of the entire string of galaxies and nebulae in the vicinity of the "teapot", including : M11 (Wild Duck Cluster), M8(Lagoon Nebula) and M17 (Swan Nebula). At the zenith were the Ring Nebula (M57) and the Hercules cluster (M13). The rising moon eventually forced us to pack our telescopes.

The following evening, a smaller group returned to the site, but with less favorable seeing conditions. An unusually bright light in the south squelched efforts to explore the Sagittarius region, but the Milky Way at the zenith provided some brilliant sites. The Andromeda galaxy and the Double Cluster were likewise visible, due to the later rising of the moon.



**M11, The Wild Duck Cluster.**

Photo by Jeremy Kirkendall

August 13, 2006

Canon Digital Rebel on an ED80 Refractor, 44 30 second subs, ISO 400.

## **Astronomical Society of the Pacific to Meet in Baltimore**

In support of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific's (ASP) mission to increase the understanding and appreciation of astronomy, this national conference will focus on building and supporting a vibrant and connected community of individuals and groups engaged in educational and public outreach (EPO) in the disciplines of astronomy, astrobiology, space, and earth science.

For more information, visit the society's Web site at:

<http://www.astrosociety.org/events/meeting.html>

Or contact:

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## **HCAS Outreach Programs**

### **Fallston Library**

Monday, Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>, Indoor program / outdoor possible

### **Abingdon Library**

Monday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, Indoor program and outdoor program

### **Girl Scouts at Open House**

Saturday, Oct. 28th for outdoor observing and at the observatory at 7pm for talk.

*For further information, please contact Tom Rusek at [rusek54@yahoo.com](mailto:rusek54@yahoo.com)*

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## **New Members In August**

Please welcome our newest member:  
Conrad Buelow of Abingdon

## Telescope Hobby Web Sites

Here are some interesting sites for telescope hobbyists:

### Cloudy Nights

<http://www.cloudynights.com/>

Dozens of telescope and equipment reviews submitted by a variety of members. Very helpful for shoppers. Also has an extensive forum.

### Telescope Junkies

<http://www.telescopejunkies.com/>

Forum for discussions about telescope optics, including cameras, mounts and even observing chairs.

### R. F. Royce Precision Optics

<http://www.rfroyce.com/index.htm>

Robert Royce manufactures quality mirrors and other optics. His site contains technical articles on cleaning, collimating, testing and other phases of telescope-making.

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### Harford County Astronomical Society,

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*For the year 2006, any items for publication in any issue are due to the editor by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.*

Please send all contributions (electronic format is strongly encouraged) to:

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HCAS Newsletter

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### And be sure to visit our Web Site:

<http://www.harfordastro.org>

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