



### Star B-Q at the Observatory

Late afternoon on Saturday the 28 of September, members gathered at the observatory to enjoy some food and fellowship. Enjoying great weather, we cooked weenies and downed potato salad (Barb Geigle's is excellent, by the way). About twenty-five members and friends were there to share our interests in the sky and anticipate the good viewing that the weather promised.



As skies darkened, members set up their equipment and we enjoyed what turned out to be an excellent evening of viewing! Bill Geertsen had his refractor tuned to some unusual objects, including a dark red carbon star that glowed like an ember deep inside a campfire. Lucy and Phil were star hopping around, shooting various deep space objects and double stars. I'd just received one of those "green laser" pointers that Bruce Wrinkle talked about at the last general meeting...excellent. We all took turns pointing out constellations, and object locations...to the general

agreement that the club could certainly use several of these great devices to help in our public sessions.


One neat trick Phil used to help Lucy locate the "Blue Snowball" was to remove the eyepiece from his dob and shine the laser...like a StarTrek phaser, the beam jumped through the optics and out into space directly to the nebula. By "riding the beam" Lucy quickly found the snowball and we all enjoyed the view! The Blue



Snowball is a planetary in the west of, nearly 4,000 light years from the solar system. Though it is very faint from earth (its apparent magnitude is +9.2), the Blue Snowball in fact is a vast cloud of expanding gas more than two light years across.



Larry Hubble helped us find several interesting sights including the "Blinking Planetary"...Barb Geigle quickly slewed her Nexstar 8 on target and we confirmed the curious fashion of this object to blink "on and off" when you shifted your eye slightly. A great time...not to be missed if you can help it next year!

November							2002
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
					1	2 *Star Party* dusk, Broad Creek and Observatory	
3	4 <b>New Moon</b> Discussion Nite at Observatory, 7:30pm	5	6	7	8	9 <b>*Open House*</b> <b>7:30pm</b>	
10	11 <b>First Qtr Moon</b> Discussion Nite at Observatory, 7:30pm	12	13	14	15	16 *Star Party* dusk, Stepping Stone and Observatory	
17	18 Discussion Nite at Observatory, 7:30pm	19	20 <b>Full Moon</b>	21	22	23 <b>General Meeting</b> <b>Joppa Hall, J70,</b>	
24	25 Discussion Nite at Observatory, 7:30pm	26	27 <b>Last Qtr Moon</b>	28	29	30 *Star Party* dusk, Stepping Stone and Observatory	

## Harford Co. Astronomical Society demonstration at Swan Fest



The skies were not promising on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October when Grace Wyatt, Carol and I set up our table and scopes at the Swan Festival. Held at the beautiful location of Swan Farm in Harford County, just south of Havre de Grace, we certainly were not able to do the solar observing we had hoped for the attending public. Despite threatening rain, the event was surprisingly well attended and as the afternoon matured, even the temperature moved into the “very comfortable” level. Ben Knight and Dina Faber helped to represent our club at the booth. We had lots of excellent material to pass out, thanks to NASA and Space Telescope...just the kind of photos that spark young minds and enthuse older interests as well.



I discussed equipment and club activities with many folks that were genuinely pursuing an effort to “get into” astronomy as a hobby. In fact, one man and sought help in learning how club “business cards” with contact reference and can expect some inquiries for new memberships and for our help at events.

Millie came by and helped to spell us, as Although not a member, Kathy time to maintain a presence at our of the event. All in all, a good the club...thanks to Grace Wyatt for



had purchased a scope to use it. We delivered information for in the immediate future several educational

did Kathy Roush. generously donated her exhibit for the duration opportunity to market setting this up!

## Observer's Report. Mt. Davis, Somerset Co., Pennsylvania by Phil Schmitz, Part 2

Star View II took place on September 6 - 7, 2002 at Mt. Davis, Somerset County, PA, about 3,000 foot elevation. The temperature was comfortable (for me anyway) all night and there was no dew.

The first object through the 16" was NGC 6441, a small 9th magnitude globular next to Antares (Unless noted, all observations were with a 12mm 2" eyepiece). Other objects that followed included the spiral galaxy in Canes Venatici, M51. The spiral arms were visible, but not as well as it was during Star View I. Everyone easily saw the three lobes of the were also excellent. M22 was a blaze field. M31 did not quite engulf M32, NGC 7662, the "Blue Snowball" was galaxy, showed immense detail, Ring Nebula, M57, was impressive to in with nebulosity. M13 did not nebula (M27) filled most of the

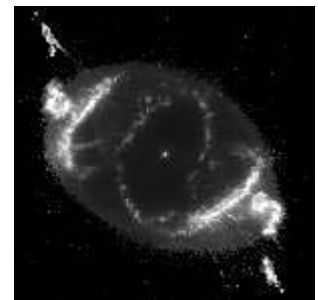


Trifid Nebula (M20). M8 and M17 of light, spilling all over the eyepiece but was still an incredible sight. definitely blue. M33, the Triangulum including several HII regions. The everyone; the center was again filled disappoint either. The dumbbell eyepiece

field. A faint, planetary in Aquila, NGC 6781, around 11.4 magnitude and some 100" in diameter was seen. My impression of this object was that the center was slightly dimmer than the edge, giving it a "Ring" effect, however, no one else saw this effect. NGC 6543, the "Cat Eye" planetary nebula was magnificent! The central star was easily visible within the nebula as was some detail of the nebula. NGC 247, in Cetus, some 20 arc minutes long was a faint ghost of a galaxy and well worth the hunt for it. Another planetary, NGC



246 in Cetus, a very large nebula, around 8th magnitude, appeared as a faint bubble with field stars in front of it! The Veil Nebula in Cygnus was easily visible. M42 in Orion overflowed the field view, while only four stars of the Trapezium were visible, the nebulosity showed fine details. M1, the supernova remnant in Taurus showed some distinctive shape (during Star View I Saturn was very close to M1 and was, in my opinion, dimmer because of its closeness to Saturn). NGC 7331,



of

the brightest galaxy in Pegasus, was easily seen along with three of its companion galaxies, one of which is 15.2 magnitude. Near NGC 7331 is Stephan's Quintet, a grouping of at least five galaxies (one is actually a

foreground object) was also seen around 3:27 AM. For those that stayed up, it was a real treat (also used the 7mm Nagler on this group). Around 4:45 we went after the Fornax galaxy cluster (about 70 million light years away - the dinosaurs were still roaming the Earth when this light left this galaxy cluster). We saw between eight to ten galaxy members, a truly impressive sight. Many other objects were seen as well.

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***REMEMBER: The general meeting for November is Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30pm. Everyone bring some “toy” that you can show and tell to maybe help others develop their Christmas “Wish List”. We also have lots of business to attend to...like the new public open house site and member training for the now functional observatory!!!!***

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