



General Meeting Saturday, August 28, 2004

Vice President Joe Manning opened the meeting at 7:30

Minutes accepted.

Treasurer's report: \$2948.37

Regular Agenda:

1. Public Star Party: It was a very unpromising evening, never the less, several members were ready for the few folks that ventured out. Mark K. as usual entranced the group with his sense of wonder of the sky. Jeremy K. demonstrated some views of the moon and a few other objects we could shoot through the one hole in the clouds.

2. Observatory Operations: Anyone that has visited the observatory in the last few weeks will see the GREAT IMPROVEMENT that we realized by the felling of the large trees that had obstructed our observing horizon. A big THANKS to Sal Rodano, George Thomson and others for keeping this issue on the college's "front burner". We understand that the college has additional improvements in mind such as paving the driveway and a sidewalk from the high school parking lot to the observatory!!! We may be in for big things yet!

Old Business:

1. Warren Hoover Estate. Leo Heppner has inspected all of the equipment and is available for consultation regarding condition. Please contact Leo at: 410-939-2975 or EMAIL: starman633@web.tv

Bids for the equipment should be sent directly to:

Ms. Brenda Newby
3001 Blue House Road
Street, MD 21154
EMAIL" kebrel@aol.com
Phone: 410-803-1681

2. Swan Harbor Fall Event: Still scheduled for 10 October from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m....this Sunday afternoon event has been well attended in past years. We generally set up a few scopes filtered for solar observing...there is no cost to the club for this event. Doris Thomas is our lead on this event. Please contact Doris and plan to enjoy this fall event. Doris' phone is: 410-557-9625 EMAIL: xarrows@att.net

New Business:

1. Answering Machine for Observatory: Members approved the acquisition of an answering machine for the observatory phone. It should be able to be programmed remotely and will serve as the public's information line for our open houses and other events. Jim Garrett has a suitable machine and as soon as we get the observatory phone line re-connected, we'll install that machine. Thanks Jim for the donation!

DOOR PRIZE: Jim Garrett won an official StellaFane Hat
Joe Manning won an Audubon Society Field Guide to
the Night Sky won the door prize!!!

Program:

STELLA FANE, 2004

Joe Manning gave an excellent slide program of his trip to this year's StellaFane competition in Vermont. He had photos of some amazing telescopes...several designs were leaving most of us scratching our heads. Leo Heppner...you left too early! We needed you there to help us make sense of some of those scopes! ☺

Joe was hoping to compete in the optics contests this year...you'll remember he placed in the craftsmanship rankings last year. Unfortunately, the weather didn't help again, and this year's conditions forced them to forgo the optics competition again. Joe vows that next year he'll show up with both his current scope and a new 20 inch mirror...now if the sky would only cooperate!!

It's Star Party Season!!!!

Mid Atlantic Star Party, Oct 12-18. MASP is about 10 miles South of Robbins, NC. This is about halfway between the star party "Stellafane" in Springfield, VT and the "Winter Star Party" in the Florida Keys; between Dillon, SC and Winston Salem, NC; as well as between Washington, DC and Atlanta, GA.



<http://www.masp.org/>

Delmarva Stargazers No Frills IX, 15-19 Sep. Tuckahoe State Park, MD. The registration fee includes camping fee for the observing area. ALL NIGHT STARGAZER COFFEE, as always, will be free and usually corn-on-the-cob and watermelon as well. Sodas and hot dogs will be available at minimal cost. Campers will be permitted to park and set up by their scopes, but there are no hookups or electricity in the observation area. Since everyone liked the location of Star Gaze X (the Equestrian Center), this year's No-Frills will be moved to the **Equestrian Center** and **Not** at the Youth Camping Area (See map on back of registration form). All attendees are encouraged to register in advance for this event. Your entrance-parking permit will be sent to you on receipt of payment and your badges will be given to you when you arrive.



<http://www.delmarvastargazers.org/archive/nofrills2004/index.html>

Blackwater Falls Astronomy Weekend Sept 17th - 19th, 2004. Held in West Virginia, KVAS co-sponsors the Blackwater Falls Astronomy Weekend with Backwater Falls State Park each fall. A Friday night star party kicks off the weekend and is followed by classes and round table discussions on such topics as Astronomy Myths, Astrophotography, Radio Astronomy, Telescope Basics, etc. A Keynote Speaker kicks off the Saturday night activities with drawings for door prizes to follow. A "Star Party" is always planned where, weather permitting, telescopes of all sizes and types, factory and home made, are set up for public viewing. [http://www.kvas.org/astronomy weekend 2004.htm](http://www.kvas.org/astronomy%20weekend%202004.htm)

Stella Della XVIII Oct 15th - 17th, 2004.

Della Valley offers you a chance to gather astronomers and families under some of the pleasant dark skies in Eastern Pennsylvania, at Camp Onas in Ottsville, <http://bmaa.freeyellow.com/Sdv.html>



Stella
with
most
PA.

September

- 4th, 11th - Star Party (members only) at Broad Creek
- 18th - Public Open House, tech school Parking Lot 7:30PM
- 25th - General Meeting, 7:30 at the Observatory

October

- 2nd, 9th, 16th - Star Party (members only) at Broad Creek
- 10th - SWAN HARBOR FARM FALL EVENT, Swan Harbor Farm, 11:00AM-4:00PM.
- 23rd - Public Open House, tech school Parking Lot 7:30PM
- 30th - General Meeting, 7:30 at the Observatory

New Binoculars "First Light"

Phil Schmitz reports: Last night, August 22, I finally got to use my new 25/40x100 Oberwerk binoculars.

I observed from my brother's house in Baldwin, Baltimore County, Md. Skies are moderately light polluted, although the Milky Way could be seen naked eye last night (even with the Moon). I observed until around 10:30 PM. Here is what I saw.



The first quarter (almost) Moon was large with the 25X and huge with the 40X. Many lunar features were identifiable. The craters along the terminator were sharper than I imagined they would be.

Jupiter was extremely low on the western horizon right at a cloud layer. It was large in the bins, although there was no detail and no satellites visible. Jupiter was also orange in color.

Albireo in Cygnus was a brilliant gold and blue pair of stars easily

resolved. Mizar was two white jewels shimmering in the night sky along with Alcor.

I moved into Sagittarius and found 10 Messier objects. M22, a globular cluster, was a large soft glow, looked like a cotton ball, no stars resolved. M28, another globular, very bright, and much smaller than M22 was easily seen. M8, the Lagoon Nebula was obvious, M20 the Trifid was less obvious, but still seen. Open clusters M21, M18, M24 and M25 were very visible. M17, the Swan Nebula, showed some nice detail. I could easily see the body of the Swan but the neck and head were not visible (probably due to the Moon). M23, another open cluster was faint but visible (saw about two dozen stars in it). Also saw NGC6530 an open cluster.

M16, an open cluster and diffuse nebula object was surprising easy to see, the nebulosity was unmistakable even with the first quarter Moon. I don't usually see the nebulosity in my 16", but there it was.

Checked out Cor Caroli in Canes Venatici and both white stars were easily seen. The double cluster in Perseus was outstanding with both the 25X and 40X (could have look at this one all night!). M11, an open cluster in Scutum actually looked like a comet, a nucleus and a fan tail to boot. I actually thought it was a comet when I first saw it! Then realized it was M11. M13, a globular cluster in Hercules was very bright and very large, I could not resolve any stars, however, my brother, who has the better eyes could see some stars across the face. In a darker sky site, I believe I will see stars across the face of M13.

The galaxies M31, M32 and M110 were all seen. M31 was a large oval shaped object with small M32 off to the lower right. M110 was barely seen at all to the upper right of M31, the faintest M object I saw tonight.

Decided to see if Almach would split in the binos, did not expect it would. Looked at it with the 25X and could not see the companion. Switched to the 40X and there was Almach's small blue companion, extremely close to the gold colored primary. The color contrast was incredible! Went for Polaris next, needed the 40X to separate the 9th magnitude companion, but it was there.

Took about a minute to locate M81 and M82, both displayed their shapes well, the oval of M81 and the cigar shaped M82 (much fainter than M81) in the same field. Moved on to M15, a brilliant globular cluster in Pegasus which showed well in the binos. Easily saw M103, an open cluster in Cassiopeia.

Saw 20 Messier objects total this evening. Also saw the Russian Okean Rocket Body fly across the sky, it was as brilliant as the Space Station and moved just as fast. When I tracked it in my binos it had a round shape (unlike the ISS which is hotdog shape). The only objects I was unable to find were M2, a globular in Aquarius and Brocchi's cluster, an open star cluster.

Was unable to search for M57, the Ring Nebula, M27, the Dumbbell Nebula and M92, a globular cluster in Hercules due to the fact that I can't look near the zenith. I need to purchase an adapter to attach to the tripod to offset the binos for this. Next year's purchase, I hope.

All in all, I would say I was very impressed with my new binos (the Moon was in the sky for all of the observations). Can't wait to get them to a really dark sky site (if only the weather would cooperate).!

Broad Creek, Yes It's Still There!

Larry and Fran Armstrong, Carol and I headed up to Broad Creek last Saturday, more to get out than to hope for good skies. After all, we ARE in Maryland!! The evening teased a bit with a large clearing to the northwest as we set up.

In that stillness that accompanies the last fade of sunlight from the western horizon, a time when bats and the other night creatures assert, "Our time is here!" we sat and visited about the sky, life, and even some politics!

In fact, it DID clear for a spell, long enough for us to visit some old friends like the double cluster (Per) and the Owl asterism (Cas). My favorite objects, the globular clusters, were in the "right places"... M13 of course looking like a drop of sparkling powdered sugar in my Starmaster. Larry locked on to the Dumbbell Nebula and we tried several filters to see which brought out the better detail.



We didn't have the main necessity for prolonged observation...namely COOKIES! Guess we were just too hurried in our preparation to get out there given that the opportunities have been all too few this summer. We're glad to report that Larry was right in there setting up and locating objects...you can see him in the Captain's Chair in the photo.

For Carol and I, it was the kind of evening that keeps us in the hobby. Not primer viewing, although we always hope for that. Rather, it was good fellowship with friends that share

the wonder of an evening under the canopy of sparkling dots we find so intriguing! Good Skies!

OBSERVING SCHEDULE FOR FALL ASTRONOMY CLASS

Please come to the observatory on the scheduled evenings to help us fulfill our obligation to the college and to support our fellow member Dr. George Thomson!

September

Sept. 20, 2003 (1st quarter moon)
Sept. 27 (Full Moon - session held only if preceding session cancelled)

October

Oct. 4 (moonless)
Oct. 11 (moonless)
Oct. 18 (first quarter)
Oct. 25 (Full moon - no session)

November

Nov. 1 (last quarter)
Nov. 8 (moonless)
Nov. 15 (moonless)
Nov. 20 (4 a.m. session at the observatory)
Nov. 21 (4 a.m. to be held only if preceding morning's session is cancelled)
Nov. 22 (1st quarter)
Nov. 29 (Full Moon - no session)

December

Dec. 6 (moonless)
Dec. 13 SEMESTER ENDS - EXAMS - NO SESSION

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