



THE STAR DIAGONAL

THE JOURNAL OF THE OGDEN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

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OAS Minutes, 11 Mar 04

The President's Message

We have a good start on this year's observing season; the Golden Spike star party turned out to be successful with a great turnout. Friday night we played peek-a-boo with the clouds until about 10:00 and then thanks to Dave Dunn's stew and Craig Brown's motorhome, we had a late dinner and called it a night. Saturday night was much better, I didn't see anyone doing a serious Messier Marathon but clear skies and a relatively warm night made for a great night of viewing. We had a great transit of Io and Ganymede on Jupiter. Our next chance to get together as a group will be at the Dead Horse Point State Park, May 14, 15. This should be a great trip.

Our April meeting will be a talk from John Armstrong. If you remember, John spoke to us in December about the search for other planets and the Mars missions. John is a physics research professor at Weber State and has spent a lot of time at JPL working on the Mars mission. This month he will be giving us an update on the Spirit and Opportunity mission. Thanks to Cliff Peterson for setting this up.

We have a public star party scheduled for April 24th. We will move the location to the Clinton City Park adjacent to West Clinton Elementary School 2759 West 1800 North in Clinton. Directions and setup location will be announced soon. Thanks to Mike Klein for setting this up. We will continue trying new locations for the public star parties and hopefully soon, we can come up with a good location to have them permanently.

Thanks,
Lee Priest, President
Ogden Astronomical Society

OAS President Lee Priest opened the meeting at 7:30.

Stacy Palen was able to get in a couple of quick T-shirt sales for her student's fund raising.

Les Bitton offered some really fine blocks of fiber reinforced teflon for free, first come, first served.

Announcements/Discussion

The first star party of the year will be the Golden Spike Messier Marathon. (See Lee's report in *The President's Message* and Dave's below.)

The Dead Horse Point star party is scheduled for 14, 15 May. The group site is reserved, several have reserved individual sites, and the Park reserves several sites on a first come, first served basis.

The Grand Canyon star party will be held 12 - 19 June on both the north and south rim. There are usually four campsites reserved for astronomers. Check with the Pierces for details.

The OAS has been accepted to the NASA's Night Sky Network and has received the activity kits.

Dr. Stacy Palen discussed the fund raising effort to upgrade the Ott Planetarium projector. Mr Ott, who had long been a vocal supporter of the planetarium, passed away about a month ago and left a bequest of \$100,000 and \$10,000 a year. This brings the planetarium to within about \$55,000 of being able to buy the projector. Dr. Palen has also applied for four grants and has Senator Hatch's support for them. One OAS member asked about personal donations and Stacy put out a box of donation envelopes.

Doug Say asked about the OAS event calendar that had been done in the past. It will be printed up, combined with the OAS "charter" page, and offered as a handout at public events.

Lee then opened the meeting's program, Show and Tell.

Jim Seargeant demonstrated combining several images into a Moon mosaic using RegiStar.

Dale Hooper showed a short clip illustrating relativistic travel.

Dave and Lee discussed the mirror grinding machine they bought about a year ago. The largest size mirror it will handle is about 16".

Dave Dunn showed how he copies messier Object finder charts and puts them into protector sleeves. He will have a checkoff sheet of the objects for the star party.

Lee discussed the contents of NASA's Night Sky Network activity kits.

Gary Liptrot discussed his work on Bartelizing (motorizing) a Dobsonian and offered hints to anyone thinking of such a project.

Wayne Sumner described the fun he's having with his astronomy class. He also asked if McNeil's nebula is visible to visual observers. (No one knew, but see <http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/ap040219.html>.)

DeLoy Pierce announced the photography equipment swap meet to be held on 20 March. This led to a discussion of another telescope equipment swap meet, but no firm plans yet.

Lee closed the meeting shortly after 9:00 PM.

Golden Spike

The Messier Marathon at Golden Spike turned out nice. We had a great turnout. It was the best weather I have seen for our March party. Friday night, we had a few hours of partly cloudy before it became totally cloudy. We did get to do some fun observing. On Saturday night, the sky was real clear (Doug and Dale took the clouds home with them). It looked like Lee

got a good start on the Marathon. I was too tired to stay out all night so I stayed out until 1 or 2 am and then went home. Saturn and Jupiter looked real nice. We had a double transit of the moons on Jupiter. Ganymede and Io both went across the planet. Callisto went behind Jupiter while the other two were going across in front. I spent about an hour trying to see the Horsehead using Ron's H-Beta filter. I could see the nebula but couldn't make out the Horsehead.

Dave Dunn

Upcoming Events

8 Apr 04, 7:30 PM OAS meeting, Ott Planetarium, WSU

24 Apr 04 Public Star Party, Clinton City Park adjacent to West Clinton Elementary School 2759 West 1800 North in Clinton

Every Wed night, weather permitting - Ott Planetarium Star Party

The calendar section of the OAS Yahoo group is now complete for the year. We will keep it updated as changes occur. A calendar is also available on the OAS web site and will be posted to the files section of the OAS Yahoo group.

FREE!

To a good home. Wooden tripod suitable for permanent mounting. Very sturdy, fast dampening, quite stable, but I've replaced it with a steel pier. Free delivery to local area. (Not including wedge, power strip.)

Jim Seargeant

