



# THE STAR DIAGONAL

THE JOURNAL OF THE OGDEN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

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## The President's Message

Hi All:

This month I would like to have a discussion on the mirror and telescope that Dale is working on getting the club then if we have time we can watch the infamous video that I keep threatening to show.

Hopefully some of us will be sporting sunburns at this meeting from our trip to St. George or at least bags under our eyes from staying up all night. On a final note our club has won a quarterly prize from the Night Sky Network I am inserting an excerpt from their web page the address is [www.nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/](http://www.nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/)

For the Quarterly drawings, we assembled a compilation of books, maps, posters and a lunar globe to give to the winning clubs. These items were donated by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific and Sky Publishing Corporation. The winning clubs are:

— **Northeast Kansas Amateur Astronomers' League Inc.**

— **San Antonio Astronomical Association** of Texas

— **Ogden Astronomical Society** of Utah

— **Astronomical Society of Harrisburg, PA., Inc.**

— **Stonebelt Stargazers** of Orleans, Indiana

I figure that we can place these items in our library up at the Ott Planetarium except for the lunar globe I think it should travel with one of the outreach kits to be used in presentations to schools and for our lunar parties that we have scheduled this year.

Clear Skies

Craig Browne

## OAS Minutes, Jan 2005

The meeting of the Ogden Astronomical Society was held on Jan 13. President Craig Browne called the meeting to order. It was announced that location for the star party scheduled for Feb. 4-5 has changed. Valley of Fire has too much light pollution from Las Vegas. The star party will be held at Fort Pearce, near St George. Maps with driving directions were available. Dale Hooper has become aware of a 24" f/2 mirror that has been in storage for many years. Before he approaches his management about donating it to OAS, he wanted to verify that OAS would want to use the mirror. The members present voted to have Dale proceed to see if his SDL would like to donate the mirror to OAS. We would take on the project of building a telescope around it. Bob Tillotson announced that a northern Utah astronomy swap meet will be held on 1/18 at the Zion Lutheran Church at 1070 Foothill Dr. in SLC from 7 to 9 pm.

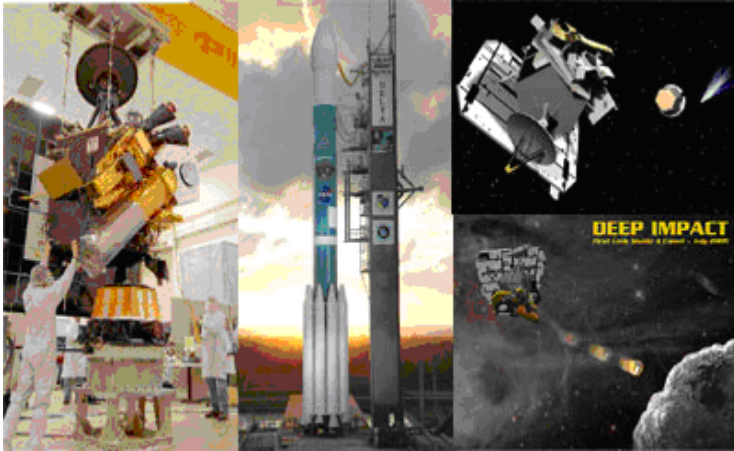
Craig turned the rest of the meeting over to John Armstrong. He presented several movie clips about space exploration and the search for life. The first one was titled the Origins of Life. It was a full dome 3D movie. The second one was produced by Ron Proctor, a student at WSU. Then he ran through a year in review of the Mars Rovers. He followed this with slides and discussion on what they have found on Mars and what they hope to find in future missions. He then took a request to show us a couple of the planetarium shows.

- David Dunn

## Northern Utah Astronomy Swap Meet

was a great success. I counted at least 8 OAS members present. There was a lot of neat stuff for sale. It was a fun event.

## Deep Impact has an Impact on the Night Sky Network



One of the benefits of being a Night Sky Network club is the exciting linkage to active NASA missions and mission scientists. January's teleconference with Dr. Lucy McFadden co-investigator for the Deep Impact mission shared the excitement with the Network a week after the Mission launched. In response, more than 100 participants from Night Sky Network clubs listened in and asked excellent questions about the mission, the science of comets and the role for amateurs to participate.

"Terrific program last night! I was already planning on participating in the amateur observing, but I will definitely participate now," said Barb Geigle of the Berks County Amateur Astronomical Society of Wyomissing, PA. "My club is planning a public program at a local library in March for about 100 people, and I now plan to add a section about this mission, along with the "Our Universe" talk I am giving."

If you didn't get a chance to participate, the teleconference slides, transcript, and a downloadable audio file (MP3) replay of the presentation and question and answer session that followed are available in the *toolkit download* area under *tele-conference* section or <http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/docs/DeepImpact.mp3>.

There are many reasons amateurs are excited about this mission. For one thing the timing of the missions rendezvous and impact with comet Tempel-1 (9) near the July 4th holiday will make it a public attention getter making it an obvious excuse for holding a public outreach event.

The Deep Impact Mission has garnered press coverage from Planetary Report to Esquire Magazine and will be the subject of an article in the June 2005 National Geographic as well as a July Discovery Channel Documentary. Another point that makes the mission

standout for amateurs is the potentially significant scientific role amateurs can play in the mission.

"We really need amateur observations of the comet in the months prior to impact to determine comet behavior and activity levels," said Dr. McFadden. "It doesn't require high-tech equipment to be of scientific value to the mission. Amateurs with keen eyes and good observational skills can provide extremely valuable data. For example, if 90 of 100 amateurs observing the comet on a given night report that the comet has brightened that could be a statistically significant scientific observation that would be factored into the scientific analysis.

With the mission being so short it probably garners more interest and there's a real opportunity for amateurs to contribute: two distinguishing characteristics from other missions, said Robert Burgess, Solar System ambassador and Night Sky Network volunteer with the Astronomical Society of Northern New England.

To get involved in the mission's program for amateurs, McFadden encourages amateurs to visit the missions amateur website at <http://deepimpact.umd.edu/amateur/>. If you would like to be involved supporting the science of the mission, you should consider participating in the Deep Impact [Small Telescope Science Program at http://deepimpact.umd.edu/stsp/](http://deepimpact.umd.edu/stsp/).

Clubs are also encouraged to contact Elizabeth Warner ([warnerem@astro.umd.edu](mailto:warnerem@astro.umd.edu)) or Stephanie McLaughlin ([stefmcl@astro.umd.edu](mailto:stefmcl@astro.umd.edu)) directly. Both are available to speak at club events (at least until their calendars are booked).

To all the Deep Impact team and Night Sky Network clubs who help them with outreach we extend a big thanks.

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