



# THE STAR DIAGONAL

THE JOURNAL OF THE OGDEN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

## OAS Executive Committee

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### *The President's Message*

I want to thank everyone for their support at the Nature Center star party. I thought it went well although we didn't have a very big turnout. John Armstrong gave a great talk on astrobiology with a Power Point show. This Friday, November 7th, we have the second annual telescope workshop. Cliff Peterson will do a presentation similar to last year's; we also need a few telescopes to set up and show.

November 13 is the monthly meeting. The meeting topic will be the video of the University of Utah, Frontiers of Space program presented by Gary Horowitz, University of California, Santa Barbara, on October 8th, entitled "Strange Views of Space and Time: From Einstein to String Theory". This should be similar to the Nova program - The Elegant Universe.

Lee Priest  
President  
Ogden Astronomical Society

### **OAS Minutes, 9 October 03**

President Lee Priest opened the meeting shortly after 7:30 (delayed while Jim tried to set up the projector).

Announcements/discussion included .....

Lee announced a star party at Valley View school in Roy on 17 Oct. (subsequently cancelled) and the last public star party at the Ogden Nature Center on 25 Oct.

The Secretary made OAS membership listings available for pickup.

Doug Say announced availability of the Year in Space calendar and provided a financial report of about \$2050 in the OAS coffers. (Doug still has about 10 of the calendars left for \$10 ea.)

The Dead Horse Point star party is 14, 15 May 04 and the group site is reserved.

The "Introduction To Telescopes" seminar will be held in November. (See *The President's Message*.) Deloy suggested that Orion might provide a box of catalogues, if asked.

Dr Palen suggested that it would be good to have handouts at star parties and other events. Bob Tillotson offered to send a "This is the OAS" file. (See "Handout", below.)

The Nature Center star party was discussed - Doug will put up signs and Lee will try to ensure the telescope field is separate from the public parking area.

Bob T. suggested that Halloween would be a good night to set up telescopes for the kids, with a first quarter moon. Looking through a telescope could be their "trick" for a "treat". (The weather didn't cooperate, though.)

There's a lunar eclipse 8 November; should we set up a public event? The moon will be eclipsed when it rises and the mountains will force decent viewing to the West. Perhaps Harmon's or Doug Say's would be suitable. (Subsequent discussions in the OAS Newsgroup included Trapper's Loop.)

Dale Hopper described Dr. Harrison Schmidt's (the only scientist to land on the moon) talks at USU. (See Dale's report below.)

Lee described his (frustrated) attempts to get into the "Strange Views of Space and Time: From Einstein to String Theory" by Dr. Horowitz at the U of U - he did order the video.

Lee then introduced the program for the night, a Show and Tell.

Lee passed around pictures of his 16" Dob and described his Sky Commander pointing computer.

Jeff Chadick showed off his homemade binocular mount with magnetized counterweights.

Lee Brown showed his method of using a V-block to set up a laser collimate, his camera bracket, and a book on astrophotography he's putting into the OAS library.

Your humble servant, the OAS secretary, then gave a demonstration of how to get into Yahoo and use the features of the OAS newsgroup there.

### **Upcoming Events & 2003 Star Party Schedule**

Nov 7	Introduction to Telescopes, Ott Planetarium, WSU
Nov 13	OAS meeting, Ott Planetarium, WSU
Dec 11	OAS meeting, Ott Planetarium, WSU

### **Star Party Reports**

Ogden Nature Center - The Oct 25<sup>th</sup> star party turned out pretty well. The tall grass in the telescope field was a hinderance at first, but was soon tramped down. We were treated to a beautiful sunset, complete with flights of ducks winging overhead (tracked avidly by Karen and Deloy Pierce's binoculars). There didn't seem to be any visitors until Dr John Armstrong began his very interesting talk on the science behind the investigations into life in the solar system. When he started, there were less than 10 non-OAS listeners, but by the time he finished, there were more than 20. By the time we got back to the telescopes, the field was filled with students earnestly trying to view different objects and record them on their observing sheets, complete with sketches and astronomers' initials. Some teacher must have really given them a heck of an assignment! There were some clouds, but I did get some good views of Mars, Alberio, M15, M32 (with M31 and M110 - not bad considering all the lights around!), and the Double Cluster in Perseus. I took a look at M32 through BOB and was reminded that there ain't no substitute for square inches. Hmm, maybe I do need a bigger 'scope. Aperture fever strikes again! I wonder how much an 18" NGT weighs? The Pleiades were visible low to the east for a while, but then the haze closed in and I packed it up.

Jim Seargeant

### **Dues are Due!**

(If you've paid, please ignore the following.)

The \$12 dues for your 2004 OAS membership should be paid by the end of December, 2003. Please contact Doug Say at a meeting, phone him at 731-7324, or contact any of the others in the OAS executive committee to arrange payment. If we haven't heard from you by the end of December, we'll have to assume you've dropped out. Of course, prodigal returns are welcome any time!

## **Report on Dr Harrison Schmitt Talks**

Hi All,

Dr. Schmitt gave two excellent talks yesterday. At SDL he spoke about the origin of the moon and how he disagrees with the current prevailing theories. He favors capture over the massive collision theory - due to the orange rocks found by Apollo 17 (his mission) and some green rocks (Apollo 15). Basically, he felt the composition of these rocks - when isotope abundances are considered - aren't consistent with the collision theory. He also spoke about some thoughts concerning the future of manned space travel. At USU he focused more on his mission to the moon showing some video clips of him and Gene Cernan on the moon. He answered a lot of very thoughtful questions from students who weren't even born when he landed on the moon.

There were several other OASers there and I think they also enjoyed the talk at USU - and they may wish to fill in some more details. Afterward, I made a point of thanking my manager that was responsible for getting Dr. Schmitt here. I only half jokingly asked if there was any chance of getting Buzz Aldrin. He replied that he was actually in the process of trying to get Neil Armstrong because some of his friends that are astronauts say that Aldrin is rather arrogant and only willing to speak to large gatherings. So, if I hear any word about this becoming reality - I'll be sure to pass it along.

Clear skies,  
Dale  
(From the OAS newsgroup)

### **Good Stuff From The Utah-Astronomy Mailing Lists**

(For astronomical pronunciations -)

"Try this link -

Astro Note 7: Astronomical Pronunciation Guide - I. I think you will find it helpful.

Debbie"

(The full URL is -  
<http://www.astroleague.org/al/astrnote/astnot07.html>)

### **OAS Handout**

The following is adapted (minor updates) from a file provided by Bob Tillotson - it's a handout that the OAS has used in the past. We could put this on the front of a page, the OAS event calendar on the back, and pass them out with the sky charts at star parties and other events. Comments, suggestions?

# The Ogden Astronomical Society



## What is Ogden Astronomical Society (OAS)?

Are you curious about your Universe? Do you want to explore the heavens? Have you ever been a star gazer? Established since 1970, the members of the Ogden Astronomical Society extend an invitation to you to join our local astronomy club.

The age group of our membership typically ranges from 12 to 70; we come from all walks of life- students, businessmen, educators, engineers, retirees, etc. As amateur astronomers, we count meteors, view planets, comets, stars and other deep space objects and share the wonders of the universe with others.

The club owns an eighteen inch Dobsonian telescope that is available to members who have been checked out on its use. BOB ("Big Ogden Bucket") is a special telescope in several respects, not the least of which is that one of its original builders was John Dobson who is world famous for inventing the "Dobsonian mount." The club recently acquired a SolarMax40 telescope suitable for viewing activity on the sun, also available to qualified members.

**Meetings** are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Ott Planetarium at Weber State University and are open to the public. (The planetarium is the circular building up on the northeast corner, near the stadium.) Meetings feature guest lecturers, films and slides, practical demonstrations of equipment and techniques, and updates on member's accomplishments.

**Membership** dues are \$12.00 a year. Members receive *THE STAR DIAGONAL*, the O.A.S. monthly newsletter. Members are also entitled to discounts on major Astronomy Magazines.

**Special Activities** include field trips to local planetariums and observatories, star parties (observing sessions) both in town and at selected sites, and informal discussions, usually at a member's home. You need not have your own telescope to participate.

**Contact** any of the executive committee listed to the right for further information on the Ogden Astronomical Society.

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