



Astronomy Club of Tulsa

OBSERVER

September 2004

<http://www.AstroTulsa.com>

ACT, Inc. has been meeting continuously since 1937 and was incorporated in 1986. It is a nonprofit; tax deductible organization dedicated to promoting, to the public, the art of viewing and the scientific aspect of astronomy.

What

The Astronomy Club of Tulsa Meeting

When

10 September at 7:30 PM

Where

Room M1 inside Keplinger Hall, the Science & Engineering Building at TU. Enter the parking lot on the East Side of Keplinger Hall from Harvard and 5th Street. This will take you directly toward the staircase to enter the building.

Room M1 is the first room on the left.

President's Message

Craig Davis

Summer is now sliding out the back door and at the same time we are welcoming the fall season at the front door. Summer has been both unusual and good. But hopefully fall will be just as mild and lovely as what we've been allowed the past four months. All will most definitely welcome plenty of clear nights and mild temps.

Our upcoming guest speaker for our September meeting is Tom McDonough, long term club member, with a wealth of information as to the rebuilding and restoring of older, if not classic, telescopes. This alone will be very interesting as well as enlightening to all of us. How many members in our club honestly know how to restore, if even repair, a telescope? Let alone to what extent it may involve. Not that many I'm sure - me included on certain aspects of it all. We've all become very complacent to simply replacing what we assume to be worn out with something new. Sound familiar? With Tom's presentation I feel that we all will learn of ways to return an older telescope to its original, if not better, condition. And with that to enjoy many more years of observing pleasure.

I'd very much like to remind everyone of the club's upcoming public lunar eclipse observing session - October 27th at Hunter Park. Hunter Park is located on 91st St. between Sheridan and Yale. It's very easy to find. With the lunar eclipse coming it will be a grand opportunity to share with the local community what one small portion of amateur astronomy has to offer. Not only that but to provide solid information to so many that may very well enjoy this area as a hobby in years to come. As the public observing sessions we have had before - Mars Watch & Planet Watch - we will be working in conjunction with Oxley Nature Center, Mohawk Park. Overall, it should be a lot of fun and everyone will enjoy the lunar eclipse. If by chance the weather falls apart for that evening we'll let everyone know. Stand by; we'll have a good time.

On August the 11th a group of us convoyed up north to the Mullendore Ranch, north of Pawhuska and on the northern side of Tall Grass Preserve, for the Perseid Meteor Shower. Out of that group only two of us had been there before. For so many it was an introduction to an exceptionally good dark sky zone that isn't more than two hours away. Dark sky from horizon to horizon. That night was marvelous from both the amount of the Milky Way that was visible but also the number of fast and bright meteors that were counted. There were also so many deep space objects (M's and otherwise) that were easily "naked eye". The Trifid and Lagoon, the Whirlpool, Andromeda, the double cluster, on and on and on. It was amazing how many difficult ones could be seen so easily with nothing more than a pair of binoculars. While using my 15x70 binoculars each object that I would come across, of just about any nature, stood out very distinct and bright with a very black background. And when a bright meteor would streak across the sky, well, there's the icing on the cake for sure.

At the ranch there is an old hangar and runway that isn't used all that much any more. With that available to use it was very easy and open to park, unload, set up, and still have tons of room between all of us on both the ramp and the runway. Of course, as always, there were some of those pesky UFT's, Unidentified Flying Thingies, which would buzz around your head now and then but overall, no problem at all. Break out a little OFF and that's that.

A true and sincere "Thank You" is directed to the Caldrons for allowing us to use their ranch for observing the meteor shower. The Caldrons have been there for thirteen years now and are some of the friendliest people you could ever meet. James Caldron is in charge of managing the ranch, all the cattle, (plenty of them for sure), and the 36,000 acres that comprise it. This ranch is a segment of three ranches up in that area even though it is the smallest of the three. The largest is 120,000 acres while the other is 65,000 acres. So combined for total acreage, well, it's simply BIG! Different opinions of the level of dark sky that is there say that it may not be quite the same as Okie/Tex but even so it's much closer to Tulsa and just a hair off from basically the same dark sky level.

And being off just a hair isn't bad at all. When it comes right down to it I honestly don't believe anyone would be disappointed in what dark skies the ranch has to offer. As a matter of fact, it has been suggested to see if perhaps we could hold an annual club star party up there. Yes, its a couple hours away, but the rewards for that drive out-weigh the distance. I'll toss that idea out to everyone at our next meeting, September 10th, and see what all of you think. Can't ever tell what may happen.

With the lunar eclipse not all that far away, our public observing session is something to keep in mind. It will again be a lot of fun for everyone. Even though it falls on a mid week day, Wednesday, we do believe there will be quite a crowd to attend and capture a closer and more detailed look at not only the eclipse but several of the other wonderments that are planted above us. It's something to really look forward to.

Clear Skies to all,

Craig D. Davis

Night Sky Network

By Neta Apple

Our application for membership to the Night Sky Network has been sent and acknowledged. I have received an e-mail indicating that we can expect to hear from them by the end of September regarding our membership status.

For those who may not yet have heard, the Night Sky Network is a national outreach program designed to provide interested astronomy clubs with materials that can be used at events such as public star parties, talks or lectures we may give to civic and youth groups, or for workshops for club members. This program is a joint effort of the Astronomical League of the Pacific and JPL. To remain on the list a club is required to do at least five outreach activities per year. Some examples of qualifying activities include star parties (public and private), talks given to youth groups, schools, churches or other groups where any of the information or activities from one of the packets is used. At this time we are compiling a list of club members who are interested in participating in these activities. Workshops will be held for those who wish to participate in the program to introduce them to each new set of materials and its use. Some sample activities were done at the last club star party and those participating enjoyed them very much. If you have not yet contacted me and are interested please do so (rnapple-ct@chouteautel.com). This looks like it will be a fun and rewarding way to not only learn more ourselves but to also share astronomy with the community.

David's Astro Corner

By David Stine

Summary of the latest astronomical events:

This years Perseid Meteor Shower turned out to be one of the best I have viewed in several years. Many of us viewed the shower from a new dark site northwest of Pawhuska and were treated to an outstanding shower and dark skies. For the entire world, a total of 16,536 Perseids were reported by 1567 observers including myself, 165. A short-lived peak of activity was observed at 20h 56m UT on August 11, which was very close to Esko Lyytinen's prediction. Enhanced Perseid activity was also observed during the entire nights of August 11/12 and 12/13. This was also predicted by Lyytinen. The next meteor shower coming up will be in November for the famous Leonid Shower. Don't expect a whole lot from the Leonids this year, but any Leonid is worth seeing. More as we get closer to November.

A new comet was recently discovered by Don Machholz that may become naked eye for Northern hemisphere viewers after Christmas. This was Don's 10th comet and he discovered it with a 6-inch Dynascope. This will be one to watch when it becomes visible in Tulsa in the next few months. More on this comet as it develops. Just out is a new ephemerides for Comet/2004Q2 at http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/iau/Ephemerides/Comets/2004Q2_1.html. From this the comet should become naked eye around December 3 and reach peak brightness at 4th Mg. around January 5th and remain naked eye through the end of February 2005. This will be a great way to start out the year with a naked eye comet gracing our skies.

The Astronomy Club of Tulsa and Oxley Nature Center will be holding a viewing session for the Public on Wed. night Oct. 27th at Hunter Park. This is the night of a total Lunar Eclipse. We will need all the help we can get for this event. So don't forget to mark your calendar and sign up to help out.

A unique opportunity for everyone will occur on Saturday night September 11th and the morning of the 12th. The asteroid Palisana will be occulting a 7th Mg. double star just north of the Andromeda galaxy. The OKC Astronomy club members are planning to observe this event and have asked members of the Tulsa Astronomy Club to observe and record their findings also. For more information on this event and other asteroid occultation's go to <http://www.asteroidoccultations.com>. This will be a golden opportunity for us all to get involved in recording valuable scientific data on the size and shape of this asteroid states Jeff Thibodeau, President of the OKC club.

That's it from my corner this month, keep your eyes skyward.

ASTRONOMY EVENTS

Sep1 - Nov18

Tentatively scheduled dates below are bracketed with question marks. The number of persons expected is in parenthesis.

EVENTS AT RMCC OBSERVATORY:

SEP

- 16 Union School Young Astronauts (20)
- 17 Fri 07:00 Club Star Party
- 18 Sat 07:00 Back Up for 09/17

OCT

- 15 Fri 06:15 Club Star Party
- 16 Sat 06:15 Back Up for 10/15
- 21 Thu 06:00 Kellyville CS and BS Troop 237 (30)

NOV

- 12 Fri 07:00 Club Star Party
- 18 Sat 07:00 Back Up for 11/18

EVENTS AWAY FROM OBSERVATORY

SEP

- 10 Fri 07:30 Regular Club Meeting at TU
- ? 18 Sat 07:00 Girl Scouts at Box Ranch near Pretty Water Lake ?

OCT

- 08 Fri 07:30 Regular Club Meeting at TU
- 09 Sat 04:00 Gilcrease Museum Campout at Gilcrease (Check with Craig Davis)
- 27 Wed 08:00 Oxley/ACT Lunar Eclipse Watch at Hunter Park on 91st St (1000)
- 29 Fri 07:00 Tulsa Air and Space Museum at Tulsa International Airport (100) (Check with Neta Apple)

NOV

- 05 Fri ??:?? Annual Dinner Meeting at ??

Gerry Andries
 Observatory Group Director
 Astronomy Club of Tulsa



Astroland Tidbits

By John Land

Its that time of year for many of you to renew your memberships and magazine subscriptions. To spend up your renewals use the online forms at <http://www.astrotulsa.com/Club/join.asp> Please send any inquiries about your membership or other club matters to membership@astrotulsa.com

2005 Astronomy Calendars - We will be ordering the 2005 Deep Space Mysteries Wall Calendars from Astronomy magazine soon. As club members you can get yours for \$ 8.00 each a 33% discount over the cover price. To reserve your order call or email John Land or place an order at a club meeting.

Welcome to our new members: Kim and Nancy Hauger and John Barry

Welcome **NETA APPLE** our club's new **Night Sky Network coordinator**!

Night Sky Network is a nationwide coalition of amateur astronomy clubs bringing the science, technology and inspiration of NASA's missions to the general public. Our club members can share our time and telescopes to provide the public with unique astronomy experiences at science museums, observatories, classrooms, and under the real night sky. If you would like to participate in the NSN program contact Neta Apple at rnapple@chouteautel.com <http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/about.cfm>

The Okie-Tex Star Party in the Oklahoma Panhandle will be held Oct 10th to Oct 17th, 2004 You'll enjoy some of the darkest sky in America. <http://www.okie-tex.com/>

Astronomy magazine online. Tucked away on a side panel on page 5 of the Sept 2004 issue of Astronomy magazine is an opportunity for subscribers or even Newsstand readers to gain access to unlimited access to extra features of their website. Log onto Astronomy.com and then click on Gain Access Now This may be a promotional attraction but its worth exploring some of the added perks such as access to the SLOOP robotic telescopes on the Canary Islands.

ON LINE Club Memberships and Renewals: Club memberships are \$25 per year for adults and \$15 per year for students. We now have an automated on line registration form on the website for new AND renewal memberships plus magazine subscriptions. You simply type in your information and hit send to submit the information. <http://www.astrotulsa.com/Club/join.asp> You can then print a copy of the form and mail in your check. Astronomy Club of Tulsa - 25209 E 62nd St - Broken Arrow, OK 74014

Magazine Subscriptions: If your magazines are coming up for renewal, try to

save the mailing label or renewal form you get in the mail. Do NOT mail renewals back to the magazine! To get the club discount you must go through the club group rate. Astronomy is \$29 for 1 year or \$55 for 2 years. www.astronomy.com. Sky & Telescope is \$33 / yr www.skyandtelescope.com Sky and Telescope also offers a 10% discount on their products. NIGHT SKY is \$18 / yr A exciting new bi-monthly magazine for beginning or casual astronomers. <http://nightskymag.com/> The club has coupons for a free issue

Address Corrections- Email changes - Questions: You may forward questions to the club call our message line at 918-688-MARS (6277) by email membership@astrotulsa.com

Please leave a clear message with your name, phone number, your question - along with address or email Please make email subject lines that address your question. The spam filters may DELETE emails without clear identification!



Astronomy Club of Tulsa membership (\$25/year) includes membership in the Astronomical League and subscription to ACT's "Observer" and AL's "Reflector". "Astronomy" (\$29/year) and "Sky and Telescope" (\$33/year) are also available through the club. For more information contact John Land at 918.357.1759. Permission is hereby granted to reprint from this publication provided credit is given to the original author and the Astronomy Club of Tulsa Observer is identified as the source.

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