



Panhandle Astronomy Club

"Amateur Astronomy & Education"



THE SCOPE

Volume 3 Issue 2

February 2008

MEET & GREET

to be held

February 12

7:00 pm

Gering Public Library

Join us each month as we explore this fascinating hobby we call astronomy!

Meet your fellow amateur astronomers, share your experiences, get advice and discuss opportunities to get together and view some of the wonders nature has to offer each month.

FEBRUARY PRESENTATION

Jon Smith will be providing a presentation on CCD imaging during this months meet and greet.

CLUB OFFICERS

President

Bruce Mues
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bmues@charter.net

Vice President

Chris Olsen
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colsen_65@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Jon Smith
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windwalker11@earthlink.net

Secretary

Virginia Mues
641-1201

astromues@yahoo.com

PR Coordinator

Johnny Escamilla
672-7720

nintendoisnumberone@yahoo.com

NIGHT SKY NETWORK TELECONFERENCE

February 5th, 2008

Here is a great opportunity to get the public informed and involved with the fight against light pollution. Join us for a timely telecon with one of the biggest advocates for dark skies, Connie Walker of the GLOBE at Night project and the National Optical Astronomy Observatory (NOAO). She will talk with us about how to participate in this worldwide citizen science project and what your club can do to increase awareness about light pollution. You can help out with this global citizen science project with your unaided eye... or... **Five lucky winners will also receive a Sky-Quality Meter at the end of the teleconference!** (available to NSN clubs who did not already win one)

A PowerPoint to download or view online will be available by February 1st on the Night Sky Network Website. <http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club/index.cfm>

All current paid members should have been invited to the Night Sky Network and should have received an email about this teleconference. If you do not have an email account or have not received an email and would like to be a part of this teleconference, please contact Virginia Mues at 641-1201 (if no answer leave a message) and she will give you the information for getting connected to this teleconference.

Recent Awards

NASA Night Sky Network Award has been given to Bruce and Virginia Mues for sharing the wonders of the night sky and the inspiration of NASA missions with students, families, and our community.

As members of the Panhandle Astronomy Club you can earn a variety of awards and observing awards through the Astronomical League. For more information on the awards log on to: www.astroleague.org/observing.html

When you have reached the requisite number of objects, your observing logs need to be turned in to Bruce Mues and you will receive a certificate and pin to proclaim to all that you have reached your goal.

2008 Directory

The 2008 Directory is being distributed with this newsletter. All current paid members are listed. A copy of the current by-laws is being sent as well. If you have any questions about the directory or by-laws please contact any of the club officers.

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Western Nebraska Home Educators Network
Astronomy Class
February 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2008
Gering Baptist Church
10:00 to 11:00 am

Virginia Mues is teaching an astronomy class to homeschooled students in the area. This month they will be covering the moon, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. If anyone has materials or would like to assist with a class please let Virginia know. Guests are welcome.

Astronomy Class Observation Night
February 15, 2008
Gering Oregon Trail Park
Big Picnic Shelter, North of Geil School
6:00 to 7:30 pm

Any PAC member is welcome to come out and participate or assist students in finding items within the constellations they've been assigned.

CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

Club Observation Night
 (Weather Permitting)
February 8th, 2008
Gering Oregon Trail Park
Big Picnic Shelter, North of Geil School
6:00 to 7:30 pm

We are in need of a host for this event, everything is arranged, just need someone in charge as the Mues' will be out of town that weekend. If you can host this event please let Bruce know at 308-641-5874 ASAP.

Have questions about your scope, still learning the night sky, or working on an observing challenge? Come to the Club Observation Night and seek the help you need from your fellow amateur astronomers. Bring your binoculars, scopes, accessories, and lawn chair, if you have them. All club members are welcome with or without a telescope. Remember to bring extra clothing to change into as the nights are darn right cold this time of year. Red flashlights are encouraged for this event. If you don't have one ask one of the club officers how you can make your white light red.

This event will be held, unless the weather does not allow it. General rule of thumb, if it is 75%-100% overcast, raining or snowing, in other words, you can not see any stars, do not come. If there are high, thin clouds, but stars are visible plan on attending.

PUBLIC STAR PARTIES

Panhandle Astronomy Club
PUBLIC STAR PARTY
 (Weather Permitting)
February 1, 2008
Gering Oregon Trail Park
Big Picnic Shelter, North of Geil School
Members arrive 5:30 pm
starts at 6:00 pm and runs until 7:30 pm

Here's an opportunity to invite your friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc. out to enjoy the night sky with club members. Walk through the constellations during a constellation tour and look through telescopes and binoculars at deep sky objects, planets and more! Don't forget to remind your guests to bundle up, winter nights are cold, cold, cold!

This event will be held, unless the weather does not allow it. General rule of thumb, if it is 75%-100% overcast, raining or snowing, in other words, you can not see any stars, do not come. If there are high, thin clouds, but stars are visible plan on attending.

NEW Night Sky Network TOOLKIT

Through the efforts of our members, we have earned another Night Sky Network Toolkit. The newest toolkit, **Our Galaxy, Our Universe**, covers our solar system, our galaxy and our universe and the relationships among them. Activities from this toolkit will be presented at the March Meet and Greet event. Other toolkits our club has earned include: Shadows & Silhouettes, Black Hole Survival, PlanetQuest and Exploring the Solar System. All toolkits are available to club members for community outreach projects by contacting Bruce Mues at 308-641-5874.

ALConExpo
July 18-19
Marriott Hotel
DesMoines, Iowa
www.alconexpo.com

The 2008 Astronomical League Convention will soon be here. There will be vendors, lectures and workshops both days on astronomy related topics. Tours of Madison County and Mansions are also available and the Ashton Observatory in Mingo will be open for participants. There will be a business meeting scheduled and an awards banquet. More information will be available at February's Meet and Greet or by contacting Bruce Mues. Cost varies.

WESTERN NEBRASKA STAR GAZE III

May 29, 30, 31 & June 1, 2008

Camp Clarke Raiders Black Powder Range

Planning for the Western Nebraska Star Gaze III has begun and information will soon arrive at your door step. We hope all our members will be able to attend this years event. We are needing volunteers to assist during the Star Gaze, if you are available to help contact Bruce Mues at 308-641-5874. The 2008 Schedule is below, as you can see we've added an extra day to this years event to encourage astronomers from out of the area to attend. We've left plenty of free time for sight seeing or for taking in Bridgeport's Camp Clarke Days festivities, also held the same weekend. If you are planning to stay in a Bridgeport motel book it early. Camping is permitted on the Camp Clarke Raiders Black Powder Range.

2008 SCHEDULE

Thursday, May 29

5-7 pm **Registration**
 7 pm **Ice Cream Social**
 8:19 pm *Sunset*
 Dusk **Observing** on observation field

Friday, May 30

5:21 am *Sunrise*
 5:30 am **Astronomer's Breakfast**
 5-7 pm **Registration**
 5-7 pm **Swap Meet**
 5:30 pm Burger Bash (extra \$7.50)
 7-8:30 pm **Beginner's Workshop**
 8:20 pm *Sunset*
 8:30 **Constellation Tour**
 Dusk **Observing** on observation field

Saturday, May 31

5:20 am *Sunrise*
 5:30 am **Astronomer's Breakfast**
 10:30 am Camp Clarke Days Parade
 5-7 pm **Registration**
 5-7 pm **Swap Meet**
 5:30 pm Star B Q (extra \$7.50)
 7-8:30 pm **Children's Program**
 8:20 *Sunset*
 8:30 **Public Constellation Tour**
 Dusk **Observing** on observation field

Sunday, June 1

5:20 am *Sunrise*
 5:30 pm **Astronomer's Breakfast**
 9 am **Astro Photography Contest Ends**
 9 am **Observing challenges Due**
 10 am **Awards Ceremony**
 1 pm Camp Clarke Raiders Black Powder Club Rifle Blanket Shoot



2006 Star Gaze I



2007 Star Gaze II

Panhandle Astronomy Club ANNUAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting: The January 2008 Annual Board Meeting was held on January 8th, 2008 at the Gering Public Library. The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm by president, Bruce Mues. Members present were Bruce Mues, Jon Smith, Amanda Mues, Virginia Mues & Johnny Escamilla.

Minutes: A motion to accept the November minutes was made by Jon Smith and seconded by Amanda Mues.

Treasurer's Report: The annual financial report was given by Jon Smith. It was reported that we have a balance of 1384.63. The motion to accept the annual financial report was made by Amanda Mues and seconded by Virginia Mues.

Election of Officers: Johnny Escamilla was elected as the PR Coordinator for 2008. All other positions remain the same, they are: President: Bruce Mues, Vice President: Chris Olsen, Treasurer: Jon Smith, and Secretary: Virginia Mues.

Outreach: Bruce Mues shared an email from the Scotts Bluff Monument about doing an Astronomy Program this summer. Bruce will get more details and schedule a date. Virginia Mues reported the Astronomy Class and Observations for the Western Nebraska Home Educators Network Astronomy Class will begin January 28 and run through March. They are held on Mondays at the Gering Baptist Church from 10-11 am.

Awards: None reported for December

Observing: The 2008 Club Calendar was distributed with the January 2008 Newsletter. Tentative dates were all listed. Anyone interested in hosting an event should contact the current board members. The Western Nebraska Star Gaze III will be held May 29 thru June 1, 2008.

Old Business: Magazine Subscriptions Discounts were discussed. We need at least 5 members who are interested in participating in the program before we can proceed. If you are getting Astronomy or Sky & Telescope and would like to save some money on your subscription please contact Jon Smith, Treasurer.

New Business: It was decided to change our meetings to meet and greet opportunities in hopes of inviting more club members to attend. There will be a scheduled presentation and a brief meeting, but more time will be available for conversation and discussion of astronomy related topics. The Western Nebraska Star Gaze 2008 tentative agenda was distributed. The WNSG will be co-chaired this year by Bruce Mues and Johnny Escamilla. The club photograph was tabled for now.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm

The Panhandle Astronomy Club
is a member of the following organizations:



BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Members receive the SCOPE, our monthly newsletter.
- Participation in monthly club observation nights and annual star parties.
- Each member is automatically a member of the Astronomical League, the only nation-wide organization for amateur astronomers.
- Free subscription to the Astronomical League's quarterly publication "The Reflector".
- 10% discount on astronomy books when purchased through the Astronomical League.
- Participation in both regional and national conventions through the Astronomical League.
- Membership in the Night Sky Network.

February 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30 <i>Last Quarter Moon</i>	31	1 Host: Bruce Mues Public Star Party 6-7:30 pm Gering Oregon Trail Park Picnic Shelter	2
3	4 WNHEN Astronomy Class 10-11 am Gering Baptist Church	5 GLOBE at Night Teleconference 7:00 pm	6	7 <i>New Moon</i>	8 <i>Need a host</i> Club Observation Night 6-7:30 pm Gering Oregon Trail Park Picnic Shelter	9
10	11 WNHEN Astronomy Class 10-11 am Gering Baptist Church	12 Meet & Greet 7:00 pm Gering Public Library	13	14 <i>First Quarter Moon</i>	15 Host: Virginia M. WNHEN Astronomy Class Observation Night 6 to 7:30 pm Gering O.T. Park	16
17	18 WNHEN Astronomy Class 10-11 am Gering Baptist Church	19	20	21 <i>Full Moon</i>	22	23
24	25 WNHEN Astronomy Class 10-11 am Gering Baptist Church	26	27	28	29 <i>Last Quarter Moon</i>	1

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P.O. Box 987
Panhandle Astronomy Club
The Scope

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PANHANDLE ASTRONOMY CLUB

The Panhandle Astronomy Club was founded in the Fall of 2005. Anyone with an interest in astronomy is welcome. Members are not required to own any equipment or have prior knowledge of astronomy. For more information on the Panhandle Astronomy Club log on to any of the following:

PAC Email: info@panhandleastronomyclub.com

PAC Website: www.panhandleastronomyclub.com

PAC Photo's: panhandleastronomyclub.myphotoalbum.com/albums.php

PAC Yahoo Group: tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/PanhandleAstronomyClub

2008 Western Nebraska Star Gaze: tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/Western_Nebraska_Star_Gaze/

The Scope

Virginia Mues, Newsletter Editor

The Scope is an official monthly publication of the Panhandle Astronomy Club.

Submissions to *The Scope* are due by the Fourth Tuesday of the month. Guest columns are welcome.

Subscriptions for *The Scope* are \$20.00 per year for Individual Membership, \$15.00 per year for Student Membership and \$30.00 per year for Family Membership. *The Scope* is printed year round, January 1 through December 31.

Contact the Panhandle Astronomy Club c/o Virginia Mues, Newsletter Editor at P.O. Box 987, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363-0987; 308-641-1201.

The views and opinions expressed in *The Scope* do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of any of the members of the Panhandle Astronomy Club. All mistakes are included for your entertainment!

The information printed and distributed by the Panhandle Astronomy Club is not intended as legal advice and should not take the place of legal counsel from a qualified, informed attorney.