



Panhandle Astronomy Club

"Amateur Astronomy & Education"



THE SCOPE

Volume 3 Issue 4

May 2008

MEET & GREET

to be held

May 13

7:00 pm

Gering Runza

We will be discussing the upcoming Western Nebraska Star Gaze and finalizing all the plans for this event.

We are in need of volunteers to assist with this event. If you are interested in helping during the event or have ideas plan on attending this meeting.

MAY PRESENTATION

None

Telescope Clinic
May 2nd, 2008
7:00 pm
Jon Smith's House

This is an opportunity for club members to bring their telescopes in for advice on how to use or repair them.

Contact Jon at 308-635-0969 for directions or more information on this event.



CLUB TELESCOPE RAFFLE

The club is raffling off a Meade ETX-125PE 5" go-to Astro-Tube Premier Edition Maksutov—with UHTC optics, tripod, AutoStar Computer, and AutoStar Software Suite.

The tickets are \$1.00 each. Available from any club officer. The drawing will be held on June 1, 2008, 11:00 am at the Western Nebraska Star Gaze III; Camp Clarke Raiders Range in Bridgeport, Nebraska. Need not be present to win.

ASTRONOMY DAY

May 10

10 to 2

Monument Mall

One day each spring, astronomy clubs, planetariums and other groups band together to show the public how much fun astronomy can be. The Panhandle Astronomy Club will be celebrating Astronomy Day through astronomy displays, telescopes set up to look at distant astronomical postcards taped to a far-off wall, and activities from the Night Sky Network Toolkits. Club volunteers are need for this event. We will also hold a star party that evening at Lake Minatare.

Weather Permitting

May 10th, 2008

7:00 pm

**Lake Minatare
Lighthouse**

FEATURING:

**An optical journey
via telescopes to:
The moon, planets,
galaxies, clusters
and nebula**



**A valid state
park entry
permit is
required on all
vehicles
entering any
Nebraska State
Park.**

**Sponsored by the
Panhandle Astronomy Club**

WESTERN NEBRASKA STAR GAZE III

May 29 - June 1

Bridgeport, Nebraska

**Night Sky Network Teleconference
"Extreme Universe"
with Dr. Lynn Cominsky
May 7, 2008
6:00 pm Pacific Time (9:00 Eastern)**

Dr. Lynn Cominsky will speak to the Night Sky Network about NASA's GLAST Mission and her ongoing research also with the Swift Gamma-ray Burst Explorer and the X-ray Multi-Mirror Newton missions. These missions are featured in Night Sky Network's new ToolKit - SUPERNOVA! This is a perfect opportunity to hear about the science behind the activities featured there and ask questions of one of NASA's top high energy scientists.

Dr. Cominsky is the Chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department at Sonoma State University (SSU), where she has been on the faculty for over twenty years. She is an author on over 60 research papers in refereed journals, and the Principal Investigator on many grants to SSU. Recently, she has served as the scientific director for the PBS NOVA television program "Monster of the Milky Way" and accompanying planetarium show "Black Holes: The Other Side of Infinity."

Get ready for the launch of GLAST and the new ToolKit by joining us for this exciting telecon! A PowerPoint to download or view online will be available by May 2nd. Check out the Night Sky Network Online. How to listen with to the Teleconference "Extreme Universe":

On Wednesday, May 7th 6:00 pm Pacific Time (9:00 pm Eastern), call the toll-free conference call line **1-800-779-8164** anytime after 5:45 pm. An operator will answer and

- You will be asked for the passcode: NIGHT SKY NETWORK
 - You might be asked for the call leader: MICHAEL GREENE
 - You will be asked to give your NAME and the CLUB you belong to, and number of people listening with you.

If you have any problems accessing the teleconference or any questions, please email us: nightskyinfo@astrosociety.org

NIGHT SKY NETWORK TOOLKIT

The Panhandle Astronomy Club has earned another NASA NSN Toolkit "Telescopes: Eyes on the Universe". Toolkits are sent to clubs who actively offer outreach activities and events to members of the community using the toolkits and log them online.

Telescopes are one of the most important instruments used to reveal the secrets of the universe. From the first reports by Galileo of the phases of Venus through the discovery of the distances to other galaxies to the evidence for planets orbiting other stars, our view of the universe and our place in it has been continually altered in our quest for understanding the phenomena observed in the night sky through our telescopes.

Amateur astronomers provide the public with the often life-altering experience of directly observing the detail of Saturn's rings, the swirling clouds surrounding star nurseries, the nebula expelled from dying stars, and the light, traveling for eons, arriving from a distant galaxy.

As our visitors observe these wonders, they also ask many questions about what they see, or what they don't see! Why does the image of the Moon look upside-down? Why doesn't it look like the photos? What power is your telescope? Can you see the flag on the Moon? Where are you looking? Why isn't it in color?

NASA uses not only optical telescopes, but also telescopes sensitive to outer wavelengths of light. What do these other kinds of light, or energy, tell us? Using colors we can see to represent energy our eyes cannot see, NASA scientists communicate through images what the other wavelengths of light from the universe tell us. What would the universe look like if our eyes could perceive infrared light? Or radio light? NASA uses telescopes that can perceive these kinds of light to reveal what our eyes cannot see.

This toolkit includes materials and activities to prepare our visitors for their observing experience and enhance their understanding at the eyepiece.

Panhandle Astronomy Club Minutes of Meeting

Meeting: The April Meeting was held on April 8, 2008 at the Gering Public Library. The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by president, Bruce Mues. Members present were Johnny Escamilla, Jon Smith, Bruce Mues, Amanda Mues, Virginia Mues, Tyler Mues, Chris Olsen, and Don Fisher.

Minutes: A motion to accept the April minutes was made by Chris Olsen and seconded by Amanda Mues.

Treasurer's Report: The financial report was given by Jon Smith. It was reported that we have a balance of 1540.57 + 20 on hand and ticket sale money that was turned in at the meeting. The motion to accept the monthly financial report was made by Amanda Mues and seconded by Virginia Mues.

Presentation: Bruce Mues gave a presentation on the Messier Marathon. Displays made by the Western Nebraska Home Educator Network Astronomy Classes were set up in the room.

Outreach: The Scottsbluff National Monument Outreach will be held on Tuesday August 5th. Astronomy Day is scheduled for May 10 from 10 to 2 at Monument Mall. Volunteers are needed to assist with this event. There is a craft show in the mall that weekend so we may get a crowd.

New Members: Please join us in welcoming Donald Fischer from Scottsbluff to the Panhandle Astronomy Club

Observing:

Club Observation Nights: The Club Observation Night scheduled for April 4th was canceled due to lack of host. The next club observation night is scheduled for May 2nd at Jon Smith's home, 7:00 pm. This will be a telescope clinic for those just learning to use their telescopes.

Public Star Parties: The April 11th Messier Marathon hosted by Bruce and Virginia Mues was cancelled due to the weather. The next Public Star Party will be held in conjunction with Astronomy Day. It will be held May 10th, 7:00 pm at Lake Minatare. Bruce and Virginia will host this event.

Western Nebraska Star Gaze III: There were a few updates given on the Star Gaze. Next months meet and greet will primarily deal with last minute preparations for this event. Volunteers are needed to assist with this event, anyone interested should plan on attending the meeting or contact Bruce Mues.

Old Business: Telescope raffle is underway.

New Business: Jon shared his picture of M42 and running man. Members assisted Don Fischer with information on his telescope.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm through a motion made by Bruce and seconded by Chris.

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.

The Panhandle Astronomy Club

is a member of the following organizations:



May 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 <i>Telescope Clinic 7:00 pm Jon's House</i>	3
4	5	6	7 <i>Night Sky Network Teleconference</i>	8	9	10 <i>Astronomy Day Monument Mall 10-2 Lake Minatare Lighthouse 7:00</i>
11	12	13 <i>Meet & Greet 7:00 pm Gering Runza</i>	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 <i>June Newsletter Deadline</i>	28	29 <i>Western Nebraska Star Gaze III Bridgeport, Nebraska</i>	30 <i>Western Nebraska Star Gaze III Bridgeport, Nebraska</i>	31 <i>Western Nebraska Star Gaze III Bridgeport, Nebraska</i>

Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363-0987
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!

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