

Panhandle Astronomy Club

"Amateur Astronomy & Education"



THE SCOPE

Volume 2 Issue 9

September 2007

GENERAL MEETING DATE

Tuesday, September 11

PAC Meeting

7:00 pm

Gering Public Library

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

Our meetings offer you the opportunity to meet other 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.

September Presentation

Unknown

SEEKING ALL CLUB MEMBERS

~ Your Input Is Needed ~

Come to the September meeting and share your thoughts on how the club might better serve your needs. What can we improve upon, add or change to make the Panhandle Astronomy Club the best it can be?

What is it you would like to see offered through the club and when would be the best time to offer it?

Come share your thoughts with us on September 11th.

If you are unable to attend but have something to share contact one of the board members before the next meeting.

PANHANDLE ASTRONOMY CLUB

MEETING MINUTES

The August meeting was held on the 10th at the Gering Public Library. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 by Bruce Mues. Seven members were present: Bruce Mues, Jon Smith, John Escamilla, Chris Olsen, Amanda Mues, Zach Mues and Virginia Mues. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Jon Smith and seconded by Zach Mues. Jon Smith, treasurer, reported that we started with a balance of 1434.63 and received a \$200 donation from Platte Valley Bank for a balance of 1634.63. Jon also reported that we have received over \$500 in gifts to be used for door prizes at the Star Gaze.

Bruce and Virginia Mues shared their experience at the 2007 Nebraska Star Party with those in attendance.

Old Business included a discussion on the upcoming Star Gaze. Virginia has advertised the event through the local media and passed the word along to other amateur astronomy clubs in Nebraska, Wyoming and Colorado. She also sent flyer's to local astronomers. Bruce and Virginia had the opportunity to promote the Star Gaze at the Nebraska Star Party. It was decided to visit the facility on Tuesday August 21 at 5:30 pm. Anyone interested in a walk through is welcome to attend. Bruce and Chris will be in charge of the Ice Cream Social Friday night. Jon will bring a generator for the ice cream making machines, if anyone has an ice cream maker please bring it. Bruce will ask the local scouts if they would be interested in serving breakfast. The Hair Gallery in Bridgeport is donating 4 dozen glazed and 4 dozen cake donuts and Mary Mues will make 4 dozen home-made cinnamon rolls for the astronomer's breakfasts. It was suggested that we sell Pop and Water at a \$1.00 per can. Jon suggested an Astronomer's Dinner to be held Saturday Night. The Dinner will be added to the schedule along with a guest speaker program. Jon will be our guest speaker this year. He will be sharing his experience building an observatory. Name tags and awards were discussed, Jon Smith will be working on these. We will make up solar observing signs for those astronomers who are solar observing to hang near their area. It was thought that this may help identify those who are solar observing and don't mind sharing a view of the sun or answering questions. These signs can be found in the registration packet along with information about the Star Gaze and literature from Astronomy and Sky & Telescope. Door prize donations have been received from OPT, Meade, Orion and Webber's Furniture.

New Business

- A new membership list was distributed to members present.
- The clubs Astronomical League Dues were discussed and paid for the upcoming year. If you are a paid member and haven't been receiving the Astronomical League's Reflector please contact our ALCOR Representative Bruce Mues.
- The Astronomical League Insurance Quote has not arrived yet. The board will purchase the insurance once the quote arrives so that we are covered for the upcoming star gaze.
- Public Star Parties will be held on August 28th and September 21st at the 42nd street soccer fields in Scottsbluff.
- Astronomy Day is scheduled for September 15th. With the Star Gaze the weekend before, it was decided to hold off on Astronomy Day. If anyone is interested in arranging something for Astronomy Day please contact Virginia Mues.
- Virginia Mues will be teaching an Astronomy Class for the Western Nebraska Home Educators Network Cooperative. This is a homeschool organization that holds classes once a week. The astronomy class will begin on September 24 and will be held on Monday's at 10 am. If anyone is interested in assisting with this class they can contact Virginia for more details.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

WESTERN NEBRASKA STAR GAZE

September 7, 8 & 9

Base of Courthouse & Jail Rock

near Bridgeport, Nebraska

\$10.00 per person ages 5 to 100

Join us for an unforgettable weekend under the stars at the second annual Western Nebraska Star Gaze.

Schedule

Activities

All events are held at the Pavilion unless otherwise stated

FRIDAY

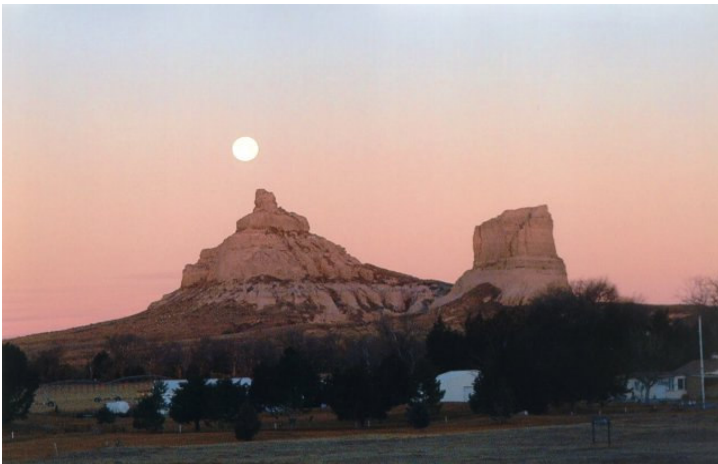
Registration 5 to 7 pm
Ice Cream Social 7 pm
Observing from dusk on - observation field

SATURDAY

Astronomer's Breakfast 8 to 10 am
Registration 8 to 10 am
Swap Meet 8 to 10 am
Children's Program 10:00 to Noon
Observatory Tour 10:00 to Noon
Free Time Noon to Dusk
Solar Observing Noon to dusk - on observing field
Astronomer's Dinner 5:00
Beginner's Workshop 6:30 to 8:30
Constellation Tour 8:30
Observing from dusk on - on observing field

SUNDAY

Astro Photography Contest submissions due 8 to 9 am
Submit Observing Challenges from 8 to 10 am
Astronomer's Breakfast 8 to 10 am
Swap Meet 8 to 10 am
Vote on Astro Photography Contest from 9 to 10 am
Awards Ceremony 10 am



Astro Photography Contest

Bring your favorite astronomy photographs to enter in the astro photography contest. This is a "people's choice" award contest.

Astronomer's Breakfast

Wake up to a complimentary astronomer's Breakfast at the pavilion on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Astronomer's Dinner

Join us for a complimentary dinner at the pavilion on Saturday evening.

Awards Ceremony

We will conclude our Star Party with an awards ceremony. Certificates will be presented for completed observing challenges and the winner of the astro photography contest will be announced.

Beginner's Workshop

Are you interested in astronomy but don't know where to start? Do you have family members who want to get better acquainted with astronomy? Have you been an amateur astronomer but have unanswered questions? Then join us Saturday morning as we learn more about this fascinating hobby we call astronomy.

Children's Program

The Children's Program for ages 5 to 12 presents astronomy concepts in a conversational, engaging style making it enchanting and memorable for your child.

Constellation Tour

Unfamiliar with the night sky? Then join us at the pavilion for a heavenly tour of our night sky.

Door Prizes

We have a number door prizes to give away this year from sponsors such as Meade, Orion, OPT, Platte Valley Bank, Webber's Furniture and more!

Ice Cream Social

Join us on Friday evening as we get things rolling with complimentary ice cream served up at the pavilion. Come and get acquainted with your fellow stargazers!

Guest Speaker

Jon Smith, owner of Webbers Furniture in Scottsbluff, recently built his own observatory and will be sharing his experience with you.

Observing Challenges

Looking for a challenge? Try one of our weekend observation challenges. When you finish your challenges be sure to turn them in so you can receive your certificate.

Swap Meets

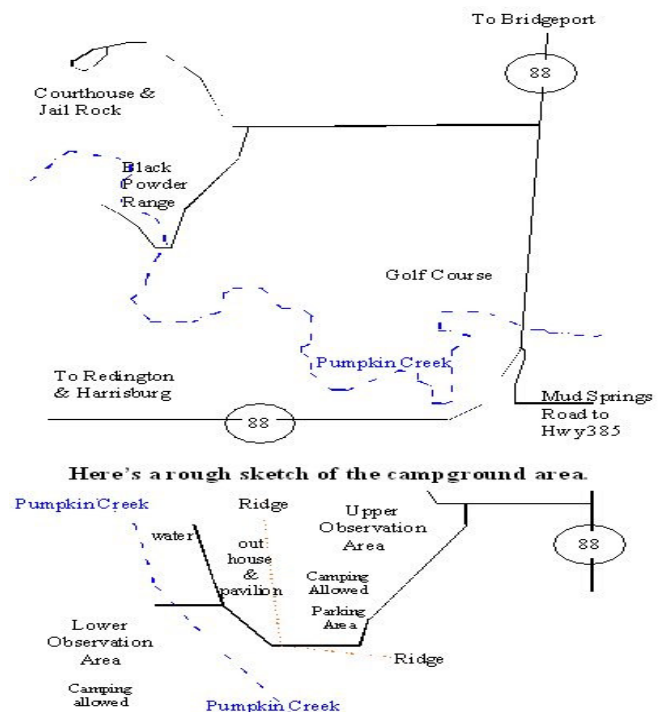
Negotiate a deal on that item you always wanted or trade your unwanted items for other items on your wish list. The swap meet will be held in the pavilion

Star Gaze Etiquette

Basically, these are the Rules of the Road on the Observing Field. Don't be offended by these things to remember. Following these rules will make your Star Gaze a pleasant experience. They are in place for two reasons: Dark Adaptation and Respect for the Observing Equipment on the Field.

1. **Drive Slowly** Enough said!
2. **White Light** White flashlights, lanterns, interior camper and vehicle lights or any other form of white light is not allowed from dusk till dawn on the observing field. All flashlights must be equipped with red filters or red bulbs. All lighting restrictions will be lifted in case of an emergency or due to threatening weather conditions.
3. **No Flash Photography** Take all the "natural" light photos you wish.
4. **Quiet Hours** Please maintain quiet and restrict noisy activities in the campground until 10 am in consideration of those who observed from dusk till dawn.
5. **Smoking and Campfires** Smoke damages telescope optics by settling on the optics and ruining the coatings. Be courteous, don't smoke around telescopes. Be sure to extinguish your cigarettes completely and dispose of the cigarette butts in the cans provided around the pavilion. Do not drop butts on the ground.
6. **Aerosol Sprays** Aerosol Sprays, including insect repellent, can permanently damage telescope optics. We encourage the use of lotions.
7. **No Food or Drink near telescopes** Sticky hands, sloshing drinks and expensive optics do not mix.
8. **No Spitting or Glass Containers** Many times astronomers must be on their hands and knees around the telescope. Nobody wants to encounter someone's spit or broken glass.
9. **Music** Play your music as loud as you want as long as you have your headphones on. If anyone else can hear it, it's too loud.
10. **Green Lasers** The responsible use of green lasers is permitted. Please be respectful of your fellow astronomers when using them.
11. **Children** are the future of amateur astronomy and we encourage parents to bring them along. Parents, please keep an eye on your children. There are literally thousands upon thousands of dollars in equipment on the observing field. Children should not touch equipment without the owners permission.
12. **Pets** must be on a leash or contained at all times, and must not be a nuisance to other observers. Cleanup after your pet is required.
13. **Have Fun!** There are friends to be made and thousands of beautiful things to see. We hope you enjoy your time at the Western Nebraska Star Gaze.

Getting There



Twelve Month Tour of The Messier Catalog **September Messier Objects**

This month we continue our tour, with eight more globular clusters, all are possible in binoculars, and two of these are the finest globulars which can be seen from northern locations.

Sagittarius is the home of many globular clusters which surround the center of the Milky Way Galaxy. Seven of these globulars appear in the Messier catalog, we will be visiting five of them this month. When you complete the search for these objects be sure to spend some time scanning this region with binoculars or a telescope and see what other sights you can discover. I guarantee you will not be disappointed.

M13

The great globular cluster in Hercules is bright enough to be seen with the naked eye. Binoculars easily show this cluster as a bright fuzzy ball. M13 is partially resolvable in small aperture telescopes and becomes a fantastic swarm of tightly packed individual stars through large scopes.

M92

Another globular cluster in Hercules, M92 is easy to find in binoculars appearing slightly dimmer and smaller than M13. As with M13 it is partially resolvable in small scopes and is a fine sight in large instruments.

M14

A small, bright globular cluster in Ophiuchus. It is a difficult binocular object, look for a small fuzzy patch of light. Through a telescope M14 is an even patch of light, the stars not resolvable except through large scopes.

M22

This is the other great globular in our tour this month. Located just above the teapot asterism in Sagittarius, M22 can be seen with no optical aid. M22 is easy to find in binoculars, and easy to resolve in telescopes, with about the same impressiveness as M13.

M28

Located near M22 in Sagittarius, this is a small bright globular. A tough binocular object, look for a small fuzzy patch. Easily seen in a telescope, but requires large apertures to resolve individual stars.

M69, M70, M54

All of these are small bright globular clusters laying along the bottom of the teapot in Sagittarius. Very similar in appearance to M28, these are all tough binocular objects requiring dark skies and possibly averted vision to see. M54 is slightly brighter and appears more star like through binoculars than the other globulars. These are all easily seen in telescopes, though not easily resolvable.

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c/o Newsletter Editor
The Scope

Panhandle Astronomy Club

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 Discussion Forum: groups.yahoo.com/group/PanhandleAstronomyClub

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 (under age 18) 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.

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