



The Prairie Astronomer

May, 2008

Volume 49, Issue #5

The Official Newsletter of the Prairie Astronomy Club

PAC Program

The program for this month will be recap of Astronomy Day (with video) and update on Mars Phoenix.

In This Issue

Focus on Observing, Astronomy Day.

Featured Photo

Please send your astrophotos to Mark Dahmke to be added to the PAC website and the newsletter.

Essay Contest Winner Anna Marie King using her new LX200 Telescope.



Saturn image courtesy NASA.

The Prairie Astronomer

NEWSLETTER

Focus on Observing Clubs--Jim Kvasnicka

Globular Cluster Club

The Globular Cluster Club requires the purchase of the Guide to the Globular Cluster Observing Club from the Astronomical League Bookstore written specifically to support this club. This observing guide explains in detail the Regular and Challenge Observing Lists. Included in these lists are 190 galactic and extra-galactic globular clusters. The cost of the observing guide is \$12.00 plus shipping.

For the Globular Cluster Club the observer is required to observe 50 globular clusters with one globular cluster from the Challenge List. Observers can use any technique to find the globular clusters including GOTO telescopes.

Globular clusters vary in size, shape and star distribution. It's recommended that the same telescope with the same eyepiece be used to observe all 50 globular clusters. This will allow the observer to have consistency when comparing the globular clusters.

The usual observational data is required for your observations. One additional observational requirement is to estimate the concentration class for each globular cluster. This is done by using the Shapley Sawyer Classification Class. Concentrations range from I – XII. Concentrations of I have a dense concentration and XII being a loose concentration of stars.

There are 150 globular clusters in our Milky Way, with 95 visible from -60° and higher. If you have completed Messier Club you have already seen 29 of them. The Globular Cluster Club is one observing club that can be done in a relatively short period of time because most of the globular clusters are found in the spring and summer constellations.

To receive your Globular Cluster Club certificate and pin you need to send your observations along with your name to me and I will verify your observations. I will send the information to the Globular Cluster Club chair. The chair will send me your certificate and pin and I will be delighted to present them to you.

If you have any questions regarding the Globular Cluster Club or need help getting started please ask me and I will be glad to assist you.

List of PAC Globular Cluster Club Awardees

Jim Kvasnicka

PAC Vice President Cassie Etmund with Astronaut Clay Anderson after his appearance at the Lied Center. He was speaking as part of the Space Law Conference sponsored by the UNL Law College.



Club Events

Western Nebraska Star Gaze for 2008
Panhandle Astronomy Club
May 29 - June 1

PAC Club Meeting
Tuesday, May 27, 2008
7:30pm @ Hyde Obsv.

Club Star Party
Friday, June 06, 2008

PAC Club Meeting
Tuesday, June 24, 2008
7:30pm @ Hyde Obsv.

Club Star Party
Friday, July 04, 2008

Nebraska Star Party: July 27th -August 1st, 2008

Next newsletter submission deadline: June 14th.

Official Club Star Party Dates for 2008:
June 6, July 3, Aug 1, Aug 29, Sept 26, Oct 31, Nov 28, Dec 26.

Alternate Dates:
June 27, July 25, Sept 5, Oct 3, Oct 24, Nov 21, Dec 19.

Club Telescopes - Checkout Policy

To check out one of the club telescopes, contact Cassie Etmund at ccggymnast1@aol.com. If you keep a scope for more than a week, please check in with Cassie once a week, to verify the location of the telescope and how long you plan to use it. The checkout time limit will be two weeks, but can be extended if no one else has requested use of a club scope.



ON THE NET

PAC:
www.prairieastronomyclub.org

PAC E-Mail:
info@prairieastronomyclub.org

NSP:
www.nebraskastarparty.org

NSP E-Mail:
info@nebraskastarparty.org

OAS
www.OmahaAstro.com

Hyde Observatory
www.hydeobservatory.info

Panhandle Astronomy Club
Panhandleastronomyclub.com

PAC-LIST: You may subscribe to the PAC listserv by sending an e-mail message to: imailsrv@prairieastronomyclub.org. In the body of the message, write "Subscribe PAC-List your-email-address@your-domain.com"

For example:
Subscribe pac-list
me@myISP.com

To post messages to the list, send to the address

pac-list@prairieastronomyclub.org

Buy club apparel through the club website. Shirts, hats, mugs, mouse pads and more.



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NEWSLETTER

Club Business

Minutes for the April 29, 2008 Prairie Astronomy Club meeting.

President Brian Sivill called the meeting to order. 13 members, two guests. One visitor, Carol Jess, is a reporter for the Lincoln Community Foundation's Annual Report. She is doing a story on Hyde Memorial Observatory, and interviewed some of the Hyde board.

Announcements: The next PAC meeting will be Tuesday May 27, at Hyde. The next PAC Star Party is scheduled for Friday May 2, 2008 at *the Farm*, we're also looking at the 9th, if weather doesn't cooperate.

National Astronomy Day will be Saturday May 10, 2008. Events, as usual are planned at Mueller Planetarium. If you have a project or demonstration you'd like to do, contact Steve Lloyd or Jack Dunn ASAP. The astronomy field class scheduled for last month has been rescheduled for Friday, May 23, 2008 at Jim Kvasnicka's residence.

The Western Nebraska Star Gaze will be held May 29 - June 1 at the Black Powder Range near Broadwater, NE. Lincoln Waterfest will be held in Holmes Park on June 14th, from 5-8 PM. Outreach coordinator Dave Churilla will provide views of the sun. The Astronomical League annual convention will be held on July 18-19 in Des Moines, IA (???)

The 15th Annual Nebraska Star Party will be July 27 - August 1. Mahoney Star Party dates for this year are: May 9, June 13, July 11, August 8, and Sept. 19. None of these conflicts with PAC star party dates!

Club business

Jack passed around some get well cards for members to sign for David Brokofsky, who is recovering from surgery. Steve Lloyd reminded everyone that he is always looking for volunteers, if you'd like to help, contact him. Brian announced that we have three entries for the telescope contest for Astronomy Day. The Officers will be looking at those and announcing the winner on Astronomy Day. Club Officers are looking for material for some information packets for new visitors to Hyde and PAC. Outreach report: Dave Churilla discussed past and upcoming events PAC will be participating in. He also mentioned some possible changes in his scheduling of classes. The Hyde Volunteer of the Year award goes to Jim Kvasnicka. Congratulations Jim!

Club Observing Chair Jim Kvasnicka reviewed the last star party and discussed the objects to observe in May. Treasurer's report: nothing to report this month. Adjourn to Jack's program on the upcoming Phoenix Lander to Mars.

Hope to see you all Astronomy Day!!!

Respectfully submitted by,

Lee Taylor

Observing: What to View in June -- Jim Kvasnicka

This is a partial list of objects visible for the upcoming month.

Planets

Mars: Begins June at 1.5 magnitude in the western sky. .

Jupiter: Rises around 11:00 at the start of June and a half hour after sunset at the end.

Saturn: In Leo less than 3° from Regulus. Magnitude 0.7.

Venus: Not visible all month.

Mercury: Enters the morning sky the final days of June.

Uranus and Neptune: In the southeast before morning twilight.

June Messier List

The Virgo cluster of galaxies. You need a good finder chart and dark skies.

M84/M86: A pair of galaxies that fit in the same FOV at low power.

M87: A round fuzzy ball with a bright core. Brighter than M84 or M86.

M89/M90: Both fit in the same low power FOV.

M91: Faint, oval hazy patch.

M88: Small oval shape with a bright core.

M58: Slightly oval shaped fuzzy patch with a brighter core.

M59/M60: Both fit in the same FOV. M60 is brighter and larger than M59.

M99: A bright round fuzzy patch.

M98: Long thin streak of light.

M100: A round hazy glow.

Last Month: M49, M51, M61, M63, M64, M85, M94, M101, M102, M104

Next Month: M3, M4, M5, M53, M68, M80, M83

NGC Objects

NGC 4438/4435: A pair of galaxies that for the “Eyes” in Markarian’s chain in Virgo.

NGC 4526: The Lost Galaxy in Virgo.

NGC 4699: Small bright galaxy in Virgo.

Double Stars

Sigma Corona Borealis: Equal pair of bright yellow stars.

16/17 Draconis: Pair of white stars.

Mu Draconis: Pair of close white stars.

Kappa Herculis: Yellow pair.

Alpha Herculis: Orange primary with a greenish colored secondary.

Delta Herculis: Bright white star with a blue-purple companion.

Rho Herculis: Close pair of white stars.

95 Herculis: Equal pair of yellow and white stars.

Alpha Librae: Wide pair of yellow and white stars.

Challenge Object

Abell 2065: Corona Borealis galaxy cluster. One of the most difficult objects for amateur telescopes; 1.5 billion light years away. Requires superb skies.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

REGULAR MEMBER -
\$30.00 per year. Includes club newsletter, and 1 vote at club meetings, plus all other standard club privileges.

FAMILY MEMBER -
\$35.00 per year. Same as regular member except gets 2 votes at club meetings.

If you renew your membership prior to your annual renewal date, you will receive a 10% discount.

Club members are also eligible for special subscription discounts on Sky & Telescope

CLUB STAR PARTIES

Club star parties are held monthly on the Friday night nearest the new moon. Since they are held on private land, they are for club members and invited guests only. If you'd like to attend a star party, please contact one of the club officers. Check the club website members-only area for directions to the site.

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NEWSLETTER

Astronomy Day



Jim Atkins, Cassie Etmund, Bob Leavitt



Jim Kvasnicka



Photos shown below are by Jack Dunn

Telescope winner: Rob Sunderman of Beatrice, Ne.



Josh Machacek





Dave Knisely



Brian Sivill

Photos shown below are by Jim Atkins



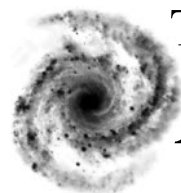
Cassie Etmund



Josh Machacek



Taylor Chonis



THE *Prairie* *Astronomy* *Club*

Amateur Astronomy --
A Hobby as Big as the Universe

The Prairie Astronomer is published monthly by the Prairie Astronomy Club, Inc. Membership expiration date is listed on the mailing label. Membership dues are: **Regular \$30/yr, Family \$35/yr.** Address all new memberships and renewals to: **The Prairie Astronomy Club, Inc., PO Box 5585, Lincoln, NE 68505-0585.** For other club information, please contact one of the club officers listed to the right. Newsletter comments and articles should be submitted to: **Mark Dahmke, PO Box 80266, Lincoln, NE 68501 or mark@dahmke.com,** no less than ten days prior to the club meeting. The Prairie Astronomy Club meets the last Tuesday of each month at Hyde Memorial Observatory in Lincoln, NE.

PRESIDENT	Brian Sivill (402) 325-0997 nanoamps@windstream.net
VICE PRESIDENT	Cassie Etmund
2nd VICE PRESIDENT (Program Chair)	Jack Dunn jdunn@spacelaser.com
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Newsletter and Website Editor:	Mark Dahmke (402) 475-3150

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

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{MM:ADDRESS1}
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{MM:RENEWALDATE}

Next PAC Meeting
May 27, 2008
7:30 PM