



THE STAR DIAGONAL

THE JOURNAL OF THE OGDEN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

OAS Executive Committee

Pres - Ron Vanderhule
(801) 726-8554
Vice Pres- Ron McCann
(801) 682-7174
Secretary- David Dunn
(801) 544-7705
Treasurer- Doug Say
(801) 731-7324

Vol. 39 Number 4

January 2011

<http://ogdenastronomy.com/>

THE PREZ SEZ

Greetings Earthlings,

Well it has been a couple of epic weeks in Cosmologyville. Most recently NASA's Kepler telescope discovered a dwarf star with six planets orbiting it. Prior to this the record was three planets orbiting one star with one or two orbiting the host star being the norm. Of the six newly discovered planets five reside within an orbit comparable to Mercury's distance from our Sun, and the sixth lies within Venus' orbital distance. To date 1235 exoplanets have been discovered with a total of 54 planets residing in the "habitable zone", where the conditions would allow for water to exist on the surface. Of those 54 only five are somewhat Earth size. Most exoplanets are rock or gas giants with densities ranging from Styrofoam to denser than iron. Some orbit their sun in four days. Because of the tremendous variation in exoplanet sizes and composition, compounded by the extreme orbital variations, current theories on planetary formation have been relegated to "wild speculation" (my summary, not NASA's). Go to NASA's website, look under Kepler mission for more info.

Also this past month an article issued thru MIT claims that some astrophysicists have quit asking how well the current model of the Universe fits the data, but given the data how likely is the current model to be correct. This approach, when run through their computers, yielded a Universe 250 times larger than the currently observable Universe. Finally room to swing a cat and a good reason to get a larger scope.

Finally, astronomers studying the latest Hubble Deep Field image found a tiny galaxy they claim dates to less than half a billion years from the Big

Bang. They further assert that to the next oldest set of galaxies, star formation had to have increased 10 fold. Well, maybe Wayne Sumner can give us some insights as to how this happened when he discusses star-formation at this month's meeting. See ya there,

The PREZ

OAS Minutes – January 2011

The Annual meeting of the Ogden Astronomical Society was held on January 13, 2011 in the Ott Planetarium at Weber State University.

Due to a snow storm, Vice President McCann called the meeting to order at 7:35pm.

Announcements

St. George Star Party Feb 3-6

The dates for the other star parties for the year were discussed.

President Vanderhule continued the business. The ALCon is in need of volunteers. They need people that can arrive early and help vendors set up. They also need some Astrophotography judges. Contact Ron V. or Dustin if you are interested.

Our presentation this month was given by Roger Fry, a retired Geologist and current SLAS President. He spoke on Planetary Geology. He compared some of the features that have been found on Mars with similar things on Earth. These things would prove that there was running water on the surface of Mars.

The meeting adjourned. Many members headed to Village Inn in South Ogden to eat and visit.

David Dunn

Star Party Schedule

Our Proposed Public Star Parties are as follows.

Apr 30	Antelope Island
May 6	Kent's Market (Astronomy Day)
May 7	Antelope Island
Jun 4	Antelope Island
Aug 20	Antelope Island
Oct 1	Antelope Island (Sept)
Oct 8	Kent's Market
Oct 22	Antelope Island

Our Private Star Parties are as follows.

Mar 3-6	Curlew
Apr 1-3	Messier Marathon (Curlew)
Jun 29- July 2	ALCon (Bryce Canyon)
Jul 27-31	Monte Cristo
Aug 24-28	Monte Cristo
Sep 23-25	Curlew

St. George Star Party

I think that those that came down to St. George this year had an enjoyable star party. We had 3 OAS members and 2 SLAS members at the party. Friday night, there were a lot of clouds. It was very windy in Hurricane (I guess that must be why they named it Hurricane). We moved the star party to a parking lot for some Petroglyphs south of the new St. George Airport. We did some sucker hole observing. This was a good site except the road was a little rough. On Saturday, I drove around down in that area and found a couple of more sites that we could use in the future. Saturday night, we observed for a few hours from the Virgin site. We had clear skies and were able to look at a bunch of things.