



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 9

July 2011

<http://ogdenastronomy.com/>

Meeting Announcement

There are no regular meetings scheduled for July or August. We look forward to seeing everyone at Monte Cristo

THE PREZ SEZ

Greetings Earthlings,

Well, Bryce was nyce. As most of you know the Astronomical League has a yearly convention in different parts of the U.S. This year they decided a dark sky observing area would be appropriate and they chose Bryce Canyon, Utah. Good choice! The Bryce Canyon area has been officially rated as having just about the best night skies for observing in the continental US. As a bonus, park managers and the rangers are proud of that designation and do their best to keep it dark, promote astronomy, and the overall enjoyment of an un-glared universe. Many of the park rangers have dobs in the 20 inch range and they host free public star parties on a weekly basis. So choosing Bryce for an astro convention was a no brainer. And so it was that 400 members of AL from all over the US converged on that spot.

Rubys' Inn, at the edge of the park, was the hub of the daytime activities. There was a conference room for speakers discussing topics from star cluster morphology to observing techniques. There was a large room for vendors also. Celestron, Stellarvue, SBIG being among the most notable. Outside of the Inn there were four large refractors equipped with the latest solar observing filters offering views to the public of the sun.

Now for the good part. Across from the Visitors Center, inside the park, is a very large parking lot

where the four nights of star parties were held. It fell mostly to SLAS to provide most of the scopes, but OAS ponyed-up with Wayne Sumner, Lee and Carol Priest, and ME, providing optics also. Not only were the AL attendees at the s.p.s' but the regular park visitors were shuttled in. The crowds ranged from 700 to 1000. The park rangers were able to manage the crowds effectively and every visitor got plenty of eyepiece time.

Bryce has plenty of international appeal also. There were people lined up at my scope speaking languages that I couldn't even guess at. Although I am sure most were Earthly in origin.

True to form, the night skies of Bryce are very good, with steadiness and transparency being exceptional the nights I was there. I did the public star parties the first two nights. There was an impromptu private star party at the Bryce Point parking lot the last two nights that afforded me the opportunity to break out the star charts and go deep ::)) Lee and Carol, Roger and Pam, from OAS were at these private ones also.

It was at the private event that I made an unfortunate observation in M-51, the Whirlpool Galaxy. You may know that there is a super nova currently underway in M-52. There are also two foreground stars of equal brightness on each side of the s-nova, and when you couple that with the detail you can see in the galaxy....well.... it looks just like Winnie the Pooh! I'm sorry, it does. This was verified by other trained observers there that night.

This is depressing. First you have "the man in the moon" then the E.T. cluster, then the coat hanger.... the night sky can't become some sort of cosmic Rosarch Test. I want the moon to look like an alien world ,like the cool moons of Titan or Io. Not some smirking idiot winking at me. When I look at a galaxy I want to see spiral arms and mottling, not the

fluff stuffed head of an imaginary bear. Astronomy is serious stuff, full of wonder and mystery, not comic book characters. So, if you happen to see the "Homer Simpson" nebula or the "Harley Davidson" cluster you just stifle it. I don't want to hear/see it.

Oh bother!

The Prez

OAS Minutes – June 2011

The meeting for the Ogden Astronomical Society was held June 9, 2011 at 7:30 PM at the Ott Planetarium. Vice President Ron McCann raised an issue with Antelope Island attendance for the star parties. For our Star party on June 4, he was the only one that showed up. The sky was clear. Most of the feedback was that it was cloudy in town and so they decided not to attend. Going forward, we are going to make sure that a notification is sent out before 6pm if the star party is cancelled. We are also going to send out an email a week or so in advance to see who is planning to attend. If nobody can attend, we don't want to advertise the star party in the paper.

We have two star party requests from Girls camps during June. Mantua will be one June 28th, more details will be sent out. We also have one on 6/21 at Camp Roy in North Fork. This one will start at 9pm. They want some telescopes and to have us help them orient themselves to the sky.

Time was turned over to Dustin to discuss details on Alcon. Alcon will be at Brice Canyon National Park June 29 through July 2, 2011. The website has registration info. It shows the presentations that are available and you can purchase your events on the site.

Ron then presented a lecture called the Mystery of Empty Space. This was an interesting lecture given at UCSD. It is available on UTube.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 and then several members met at Village Inn.

David Dunn

Star Party Schedule

Our Proposed Public Star Parties are as follows.

Aug 20	Antelope Island
Oct 1	Antelope Island (Sept)
Oct 8	Kent's Market
Oct 22	Antelope Island

Our Requested Star Parties (Schools, etc).

Our Private Star Parties are as follows.

Jul 27-31	Monte Cristo
Aug 24-28	Monte Cristo
Sep 23-25	Curlew

Nomination Committee

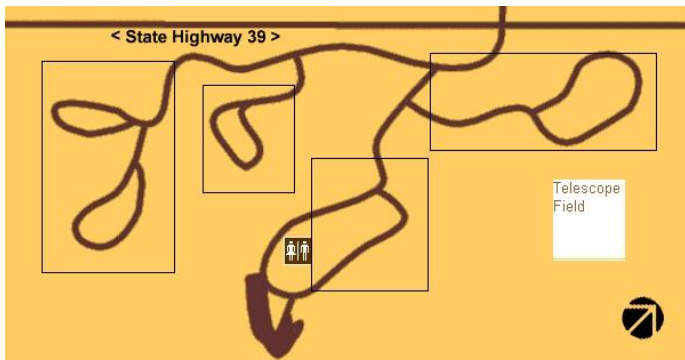
We need three volunteers for the Nomination Committee for our elections this year. If you would like to volunteer, please let Ron or I know. Each committee member will be asked to call 10 or 15 members to see if they would like to run for office or if they have someone to nominate.

Monte Cristo

Reminder, Monte Cristo is this year is July 27 – 31. I am planning to go up on Wednesday night. The formal star party is on Friday and Saturday. We have "Tea Parties" around noon and Pot Luck dinners on Friday and Saturday nights at about 6pm.

The Monte Cristo Campground is at the top of Highway 39. See the map below. We hope to see everyone there.

There is a lot of snow still up on Monte. Watch OAS_News or call one of the officers after July 24th to see if we move it to another location. I am planning to run up there next weekend to see if the campground will be usable.



Map of Monte Cristo campground. There are more restrooms than noted. You want to try to get in the small loop by the Telescope field. The other loop near the field is also close.

