



THE STAR DIAGONAL

THE JOURNAL OF THE OGDEN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

OAS Executive Committee

Pres - Ron Vanderhule
(801) 726-8554
Vice Pres- Craig Browne
(801) 388-6556
Secretary- David Dunn
(801) 544-7705
Treasurer- Doug Say
(801) 731-7324

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Meeting Announcement

This month's speaker is John Elwell, project engineer for W.I.S.E. (Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer). This satellite was launched in 2009 and has been recording an infrared survey of the entire sky with an infrared telescope. There have been many discoveries and breakthroughs due to efforts of the W.I.S.E. team. Go to the W.I.S.E. website for more information.

THE PREZ SEZ

Greetings Earthlings,

Well, the world of the cosmologically unexplainable is expanding at about the same rate as the Universe itself. One notable example surfaced this last month. As a service to OAS'ers I will give a detailed technical breakdown of this discovery.

This story broke with the title "The Star That Shouldn't Exist". It concerns a star in the galactic halo (or in Leo for those of us two dimensionally bound) with the catchy name SDSS J102915+172927. This star's makeup is 75% hydrogen and 25% helium and just a whiff of lithium and calcium for flavor. The first stars that populated the early Universe had basically the same composition with more lithium being the main difference. Those early stars were much more massive though. SDSS is .08 our Sun's mass and shouldn't exist "because the clouds of material from which it formed could never have condensed" said one astronomer.

A star's metal content is a good indicator of its age. Because SDSS is so poor in metal content they put its age at over 13 billion years. This is close to the age of the Universe. They also said that there are

several more candidate stars similar to SDSS in our galaxy.

These results give us much to ponder. If there are stars that old in our galaxy that would indicate that our galaxy is also approximately the same age as the Universe. And if our galaxy is just an average galaxy cannot we assume other galaxies, say in our Local Group, also have these impossible stars hence making them ancient? And if the galaxies close to us are the same age as the Universe wouldn't it be easier to study these for answers to galactic evolution instead of some faint red smudges in the Hubble Ultra Deep Field photo? After all it would seem the only difference between the two groups is distance. Inquiring minds want to know.

So I will put out a feeler to the WSU Astro Dept. and see if we can get a Prof. to come to a future OAS meeting and explain some of this to us. Sounds fun, huh?

The Prez

OAS Minutes – September 2011

The Annual meeting of the Ogden Astronomical Society was held on September 8, 2011 in the Ott Planetarium at Weber State University.

President Vanderhule called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Ron turned the time over to Dave Dunn to chair a review of the finances and discussion on dues. Our average number of members is 35. This gives us a budget of \$700 from dues. Expenses are as follows:
\$180 – Star Diagonal (printed and mailed version)
\$100 – Webpage hosting
\$254 – Liability Insurance
\$534 – Total

We also have incidentals like membership cards, etc.

In order to be more competitive on dues and consistent on the AL, it was proposed that we change our dues with AL to \$25 (was 27.50). The motion was approved by a vote of the members.

OAS dues - \$20

OAS dues with AL membership - \$25

Ron took back over and a discussion was held on how to get and hold more members. Previous to the last few years, the club had been hanging around in the 50 to 60 member range. Some of the ideas that were all approved are:

- Set up a table with club info at our star parties.
- Produce an info sheet with Star party dates. Have pads of these available to the members so that they can leave them on public boards in shops as well as hand them out to friends.
- Be more friendly and inclusive with new and prospective members.
- Name badges that can be read during the day or night. Uses these instead of membership cards. Cost of \$5 each was approved. Bob Tillotson just had this done for another group and will take care of it for us.
- Buy an Ad in the standard inviting people to our meetings and star parties.
- Post Star Party cancelations on our webpage.

Lee is ordering Year in Space calendars again this year. They are \$9.95. Get with Lee by the end of Octobers meeting to order them.

The presentation this month was a new show by Mike Hess. OAS helped Mike get some of the pictures for his show on the Messier objects. Jim McCormich took many of them. It was a really nice show, Mike did a great job putting it together.

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

David Dunn

Elections

Congratulations to the OAS officers for this next year.

President

Ron Vanderhule

Vice President

Craig Browne

Secretary

David Dunn

Treasurer

Doug Say

Star Party Schedule

Our Public Star Parties are as follows.

Oct 22 Antelope Island

Our Requested Star Parties (Schools, etc).

Oct 4 Cook Elementary

Nov 4 Adele C. Young Intermediate

Our Private Star Parties are as follows.

Curlew

We had a good two nights of observing at Curlew on September 23rd and 24th. The first night was clear and the seeing was good. We spent several hours out observing and went to bed around 1am. The second night was mostly clear. The seeing wasn't as good as the night before. Ron was there with his 25" so we spent a lot of time looking at galaxies and nebulae through his scope. It was really nice temperature wise and was only just approaching dew point at about 2:30am on Sunday.

Snowbasin

Pictures by LeRoy Johnson

