



Sky Watch

Issue #9-07
September

The Newsletter of the Brevard Astronomical Society

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Summary of Aug meeting:

- 1) Presentation on *Measurement Of Magnitude of Variable Stars using a CCD camera* was done by Roy Ueymatsu
- 2) Motion was made to recoat 16 inch club scope's mirror at 95% reflectivity/motion seconded and passed/ Oscar Sifeuentes to deliver said scope for repairs.
- 3) Dave Guibert made motion to use club funds to purchase a personal solar telescope for use at club outreach events/ motion was not carried and will be discussed at a future meeting.

Upcoming BAS Meetings:

19 September at the BCC Planetarium.

Moon Phases:

New: Sept 11th
Full: Sept 26th

Observations of the Lunar Eclipse at Brevard Community College Observatory August 28, 2007 (John Small)

I met with Jan and Don Ferguson at 03:00 EDT on August 28, 2007 to set up for observation of the Lunar eclipse. Don opened the observatory dome as Jan and I placed our scopes on the observatory deck. Mark Howard arrived at 04:30 EDT shortly before a camera man and reporter from Brighthouse Local News Channel 13. Gary Scott made the scene around 05:30 EDT.

For those of us observing from BCC the eclipse began at 04:51 EDT and was in totality at 05:52 EDT. Our vantage point gave us an unobstructed view of the portion of the eclipse visible from the East coast. The Moon was still visible above the horizon and eclipse about thirty minutes past totality as light from the rising sun overwhelmed our view. This was, according to Wyck Hoffler, "a truly interesting phenomenon---and, I suspect rarely seen".

The reporter for Channel 13 gave live updates every fifteen minutes and did live interviews with Mark Howard and I. The BCC observatory and BAS were mentioned numerous times and replays of the eclipse were played on Channel 13 all day.

What's in the Sky in September?

August was much better than July in terms of weather, and hopefully the same will be said for September. The Summer Triangle including Cygnus, Lyra, and Aquila are directly overhead in prime time evening viewing. Cassiopeia also rises to the north approximately in the 10pm range, so if the sky is right, you can see the flow of the Milky Way up from Sagittarius in the SW, overhead through the summer triangle, and down through Cassiopeia to the NE.

From Oscar Sifuentes:

Members, If you like looking at Globular clusters, September is that month. We will be looking for only nine clusters, all Globulars! Most of the objects will be in and around the area of the "Teapot". In the constellation Sagittarius the Archer. Three easy clusters to find are inside the lower edge of the Teapot, from left

to right they are M54, M70 and M69, you will need a dark location because they are very faint!

In the constellation Hercules, Son of Zeus, two of the best globular clusters are rather easy to find. M92 and everyone's favorite M13. Locate the September Messier objects using the Telrad finder maps number 9 and 10 use the following URL.
http://www.atmob.org/library/member/skymaps_jsmall.html

PLANETS:

Jupiter begins to head toward the SW earlier in the evening, but transits during the mid evening and sets by approx 11:45 by mid month. This is probably the best time of year time wise to observe **Neptune & Uranus**, which transit south by 11:45pm and 1:00 am respectively by mid September. Neptune is "tiny and dim" at an apparent magnitude of 7.8; whereas Uranus is a much easier target with an app mag of 5.7. I easily observed Uranus with my 9x63 binoculars. The trick is finding and confirming the observation using adjacent star patterns and a trustworthy position chart and/or software. **Mars** rises approx 12:30am by mid Sept almost due east, and can easily be found (app mag 0.11). It is located up and to the left of Zeta Taurus, and with a telescope, you will also find it is approx 1 deg up and to the left of M1, the Crab Nebula. **Mercury** reaches greatest elongation (26 deg) from the sun on the 29th, but unfortunately it is at noon.

BAS Star Parties:

John Powell's house (aka Camp Zyxlor) on Saturday **9 Sept.**

Sept 15 - BAS will be joining forces with MAS in hosting an Astronomy Day on Sept 15 at 6:00pm at FIT in Melbourne.

BAS Outreach News:

Erna Nixon Park November 17th is the next event. See the BAS website for details.



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Club Telescopes:

The 16" dob is at BCC, but about to get the mirror re-coated (as mentioned in the Aug meeting notes). Laura Herba has borrowed the 8" dob and is learning to manually find objects (*way to go Laura!*)

Notes from the BAS Secretary:

Members of the Brevard Astronomical Society and the Melbourne Astronomical Society gathered together for a star party at Camp Zyxlor (John Powell's house in St. Cloud) on **August 11 2007**. Attending for BAS were Gary Scott, Dave Guibert, Gordon Schafer, Laura Herba, John Small, Bill Manley and our host John Powell. Attending for MAS were Peter Scheuter and Rick Young.

Unlike July, August was a great month for astronomers with clear skies almost every night and this one was no exception. Seeing was good to excellent with many objects to observe and image. The best things about this event were the variety of telescopes and the types of astronomy being done. On the imaging side Gary Scott used his 12 inch Meade LX 200 SCT & SBIG camera to capture his first image ever, the Ring Nebula (M57). Peter was using a Canon 20AD camera with a 300mm fixed focus lens shooting 2-3 minute subs of various objects. Rick Young was capturing (M16) the Eagle Nebula with his Tele Vue NP 101 IS and Starlite Express SXV-M8C one shot color CCD. John Powell was imaging the Dumbbell Nebula with his Meade 10 inch LX200 SCT and SBIG camera.

In between exposures John was tutoring me on the use of my DSI CCD. This will be the last time John will be using his LX 200 to image at one of our star parties. The next time we go to Camp Zyxlor he will use his new Takahashi TSA 102 Refractor with EM 111 equatorial mount. WOW, what a machine!

We also had several scopes set up for visual astronomy. Bill Manley was busy using his 8 inch Dobsonian to cruise the Milky Way star fields and teaching Laura Herba how to use a Dob. While instructing Laura on how and where to find various celestial objects Bill located the Helix Nebula. The Helix is difficult to locate and is very dim so the use of a nebula filter is a must. Through my 10 inch Meade LX90 GPS SCT, Dave Guibert's Meade ETX 105 Maksutov and Gordon Schafer's 18 inch Obsession Dobsonian we viewed star clusters M5, M13, M7, the Swan, Ring and Dumbbell Nebulas and Jupiter at high magnification. The images produced by Gordon's Obsession are magnificent, clear, crisp and colorful. Gordon was also kind enough to again allow me to try out his fine collection of eyepieces in my LX90.

Naked eye observing, a third type of astronomy was also practiced on this fine evening. NASA was kind enough to do a flyover of the Hubble Space Telescope at 8:57pm. The HST was visible for about three minutes and produced one bright iridium flare as it moved past Jupiter. Four other satellites were also observed. The weekend of August 11-13 was the peak of the Perseid Meteor shower and from what I have read the night of the eleventh may have been the most active. From 11pm to 1:30 am we witnessed about 40 of the green and silver streaks as they crossed the sky.

It seems our star parties keep getting better and the bond between club members is getting stronger. Camp Zyxlor (the x is silent) is a superb location and John Powell is very kind to allow us to use his property. Several club members have made more than one trip to John's place this month.

Back to the Editors Desk:

Lastly; several of our members have taken up the *art* of digital astrophotography. It seems to me like it truly becomes an art in the data processing of digital data. Roy Ueymatsu and Wyck Hoffler are a couple of pro's, and John Powell is rapidly becoming one. Recently, Gary Scott and John Small ventured off into the realm of managing digital bits imaged through their telescopes and camera gear. Here are a few recent photo's from the gang....

1) M33 from John Powell 9-8-07:



2) Jupiter from John Small:

[Photo constructed from] approximately 400 shot videos taken through my 10 inch Meade LX90 at prime focus using a Philips Toucam model PVCV740K, stacked and processed in Registax.



3) Gary Scott imaged the Ring Nebula M57 at the August Star party, but I do not have the photo. It was real nice though.

Keep up the good work guys!

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