



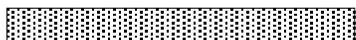
# East Valley Astronomy Club

March 2003

www.eastvalleyastronomy.org

Scottsdale, Arizona

## March 2003



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## From the Desk of the President

by

**Peter Argenziano  
2003 EVAC President**

March is here and that can only mean one thing: the Messier Marathon is approaching! This year marks the 10th annual event at Farnsworth Ranch, south of Arizona City. Complete details can be found on the Saguaro Astronomy Club's web site at: <http://www.saguaroastro.org>

This is a good time to review proper star party etiquette, especially those new to the hobby of amateur astronomy. EVAC publishes a nice document outlining the general rules for a star party here: <http://www.eastvalleyastronomy.org/EVAC/etiquette.html>  
These guidelines apply to all star parties, regardless of the sponsoring club.

No doubt most readers are familiar with the Messier objects, but in case you aren't I'll provide a little background.

Charles Messier was a French astronomer who was active in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Messier loved comets - finding them, observing them, drawing them, and reporting new ones to his astronomer colleagues. They had an informal competition going as to who could find the most comets, and who could find each new one first. Every clear night, Messier was out under the stars in his Paris observatory with his small refractors—they ranged from 2" to 3 1/2"—looking for new comets. Back then, a 3 1/2" scope was good enough for finding deep sky objects, because one didn't have to deal with light pollution. No streetlights or billboards plagued Messier. About the worst he had to deal with was the glare from candles.

Charles Messier was so famous for his love of comets that King Louis XVI called Messier his "comet ferret". Messier was hung up on comets to the exclusion of everything else. In fact, he was pretty successful at finding comets. He discovered 21 of them by his own reckoning, and even by today's stricter standards he would have been recognized as the discoverer of 14 or 15 of them, which is an incredible total.

But during his comet searches, he kept running into the same problem. There are a lot of objects in the night sky that look like comets but aren't comets. The only way Messier could tell for sure if an object was a comet was to observe it over a period of time to see if it moved against the background stars. He wasted a lot of time looking at objects he thought might be comets, only to find out later they were star clusters, nebulae, or other objects - stuff that didn't move.

To a guy who lived and breathed comets, this was intolerable, so he set out to make a list of these nasty objects so that he and other comet hunters wouldn't be fooled by them in future. The irony is that no one remembers Charles Messier for the comets he discovered. Astronomers remember him for his list of objects to be avoided. And all of us now look at those objects, which are some of the most magnificent sights in the night sky.

Messier's first list originally contained only 41 objects, but being the competitive guy that he was, he wanted to have more objects than another list that was published shortly before his own, so he padded out that original 41 with four more objects, including the Great Nebula in Orion,

*contd. on p.2*

contd. from p.1

the Beehive Cluster (or Praesepe), and the Pleiades. All of those are naked-eye objects, so the only possible reason he had for including them was to reach the round number of 45 objects.

Messier kept expanding his list over the years until it eventually reached 103 objects. One of those was a duplicate, so there were really only 102 on his final list. During the first half of the 20th century, several objects that Messier had observed and written about, but not formally added to his list, were added retroactively. The complete Messier list now contains 110 objects.

Incidentally, a lot of people wonder why Messier’s list stopped at 103 objects, ignoring many other DSOs, such as the Double Cluster in Perseus. Messier continued observing for many years after adding his last object, but the short answer is that he could no longer compete so he stopped trying. William and Caroline Herschel, among others, had begun logging DSOs in a systematic way, using much larger scopes than Messier had access to, including what amounted to 18” and larger Dobs with focal lengths of 20 feet and more.

If you’ve attended a Messier Marathon in the past, then you already know what it’s all about. If not, get ready for a night-long observing session! The goal of the marathon is simple: to find each object on the list, and view it through the main eyepiece of your telescope. While the objective may be simple, the event – like all marathons – is not easy and requires planning and preparation. The race is not run against other observers; it is a race against the Sun. You’ll probably bag M45 just after sunset, and you’ll try to get to M30 before the Sun rises. The Messier Marathon is one of the most challenging and rewarding observing

programs in amateur astronomy... and it’s a lot of fun too! The first steps in planning for the marathon, choosing a good observing site and date, have already been addressed. The Farnsworth Ranch site offers a dark sky coupled with low horizons. This year’s event is scheduled for March 29th.

Next, you’ll want to prepare a checklist of the requisite items: telescope, eyepieces, charts, red flashlight, table and chair. Ensure you have fresh batteries in your flashlight, and maybe even bring along an extra set. This probably isn’t the time to get a new set of charts – use a set that you are familiar with already. You’ll also want to think about other items, such as warm clothing (layers work best), food, beverages, aspirin, a sleeping bag, and an alarm clock. Some folks like to take a nap around midnight, so that’s where the sleeping bag and alarm clock come into play. Coffee, hot cocoa and water are good beverage choices. High energy snack foods, like granola bars, are good... candy and other sugar-laden items are not.

As you prepare, you’ll want to ensure your equipment is in good working order. It also helps to practice finding the tough **evening (M33, M74, M76, M77, M110)** and **morning (M2, M15, M30, M35, M73)** objects. This is time well spent.

The next step is deciding the order in which you will tackle the list. This is critical, especially for the evening and morning objects which must be located during twilight. Many lists are available on the Internet, and many books have been written on the subject. One of the most popular, and the basis for many lists, is the book *Messier Marathon Observer’s Guide* by Don Machholz. Presented below is Don’s list:

1. M77	2. M74	3. M33	4. M31	5. M32	6. M110	7. M52	8. M103	9. M76	10. M34
11. M45	12. M79	13. M42	14. M43	15. M78	16. M1	17. M35	18. M37	19. M36	20. M38
21. M41	22. M93	23. M47	24. M46	25. M50	26. M48	27. M44	28. M67	29. M95	30. M96
31. M105	32. M65	33. M66	34. M81	35. M82	36. M97	37. M108	38. M109	39. M40	40. M106
41. M94	42. M63	43. M51	44. M101	45. M102	46. M53	47. M64	48. M3	49. M98	50. M99
51. M100	52. M85	53. M84	54. M86	55. M87	56. M89	57. M90	58. M88	59. M91	60. M58
61. M59	62. M60	63. M49	64. M61	65. M104	66. M68	67. M83	68. M5	69. M13	70. M92
71. M57	72. M56	73. M29	74. M39	75. M27	76. M71	77. M107	78. M12	79. M10	80. M14
81. M9	82. M4	83. M80	84. M19	85. M62	86. M6	87. M7	88. M11	89. M26	90. M16
91. M17	92. M18	93. M24	94. M25	95. M23	96. M21	97. M20	98. M8	99. M28	100. M22
101. M69	102. M70	103. M54	104. M55	105. M75	106. M15	107. M2	108. M72	109. M73	110. M30

So why run the Messier Marathon? Participation will undoubtedly lead to a sense of personal satisfaction. The event provides an opportunity for you to enhance your observational skills by locating and identifying deep sky objects quickly. But above all, because it’s great fun!

I look forward to another great turn-out at this year’s marathon, and hope to be able to present many awards at a meeting later this year.

Keep looking up!

# Potentially Expensive Evening at Vekol

by  
Tom Polakis

I did it again. I showed up at the site with the 20-inch scope in tow only to not set it up, and look through other telescopes. If I want to control my desire for better equipment, I might do well to just set up and enjoy what I have in the future. I have never been a fan of buying astronomy gear just to say I have it. If I really see more with something, though, then it's worth it. Let's begin with Jim Gutman's Denkmeier binocular viewer.

This binoviewer appears to have risen above the competition in terms of light loss, construction, and the ability to merge images. While I still contest strongly that a 100% efficient binoviewer results in stopping down your aperture by 30%, the planetary views through these things can't be beat. Jim showed off Jupiter at magnifications over 300x that seemed even higher when using two eyes. And Jupiter showed off the two moons Io and Europa and their shadows in transit on opposite limbs. Since Jupiter was so near opposition, the shadows were only an arc second or so from the satellites. One Denkmeier binoviewer: \$1000.

Setting up next to me was Fred Deal. He was experiencing first "dark-sky" light with the prototype 14-inch Portaball. This telescope uses a large sphere as an omni-directional bearing surface. I have complained about balance problems in the past with the smaller 8-inch Portaball. They are solved with the larger model, which accepts heavy eyepieces (and binoviewers) with ease. The Zambuto mirror is, as usual for Zambuto, flawless. The telescope is a joy to use, and its fluent motions result in very efficient observing. One 14-inch Portaball: \$4600.

Kerry Weatherford showed me the Eskimo Nebula in his Starmaster Dobsonian. The view at about 300x was very good, but it could use more magnification. That's when Kerry told me it was a 3-6mm Nagler zoom eyepiece in the focuser. Without shifting in position, the image gets larger in precise 1mm steps when the ring is turned. The 3mm setting was a bit too diffuse, but the 4mm setting gave a great image. Here is a way to get the most out of your high-power observing without thinking about the changing eyepieces. One 3-6 mm Nagler: \$380.

Kerry also brought his Astro-Physics 92mm Stowaway refractor. The images from this telescope can only be described as perfect. Wide field views are stunning: contrasty, flat, and coma-free. You have to convince yourself that you're looking through less than 4 inches of aperture. I used a 7mm eyepiece and a 5x Barlow to increase the magnification to about 500x on Saturn. The scope delivered all the detail that was possible through this aperture. The best aspect, though, is the very small package. One wouldn't hesitate to carry this scope on every observing trip. Earlier in the evening, it gave the winning view of Comet NEAT. One A-P Stowaway: \$2800 if you can find one.

With all of this nice equipment showing up at the EVAC star parties, I'd better start setting up my own telescope and staying put.

Tom Polakis  
<http://www.psiacz.com/polakis/>

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## If it's clear...

by  
Fulton Wright, Jr.  
Prescott Astronomy Club  
for March 2003

Shamelessly stolen information from Sky & Telescope magazine, Astronomy magazine, and anywhere else I can find data. Remember that the Moon is 1/2 a degree or 30 arc minutes in diameter. All times are MST unless otherwise noted.

Every month there are interesting events with Jupiter's moons. Here are some of them:

- Feb 28 7:58 PM Europa goes in front of Callisto
- 8:06 PM event over
- Mar 2, 11:46 PM Io goes in front of Europa
- 11:49 PM event over
- 3, 12:45 AM Europa moves behind Jupiter
- 12:45 AM (yes, same time) Io's shadow falls on Europa
- Mar 8 ~7:00 PM Dark enough to see Callisto's shadow on Jupiter (the picture, Astronomy, Mar 03, p.68 has the wrong date.)
- 8:53 PM Callisto's shadow leaves Jupiter
- Mar 10, 2:58 AM Io's shadow falls on Europa
- 3:01 AM event over
- 3:04 AM Europa disappears behind Jupiter
- Mar 17, 8:10 PM Ganymede appears from behind Jupiter
- 8:22 PM Ganymede enters Jupiter's shadow
- Mar 24, 9:11 PM Callisto's shadow falls on Europa

- 9:15 PM event over
- 11:24 PM Io disappears behind Jupiter
- 11:44 PM Ganymede appears from behind Jupiter
- 25, 12:16 AM Callisto moves in front of Jupiter
- 12:21 AM Ganymede enters Jupiter's shadow

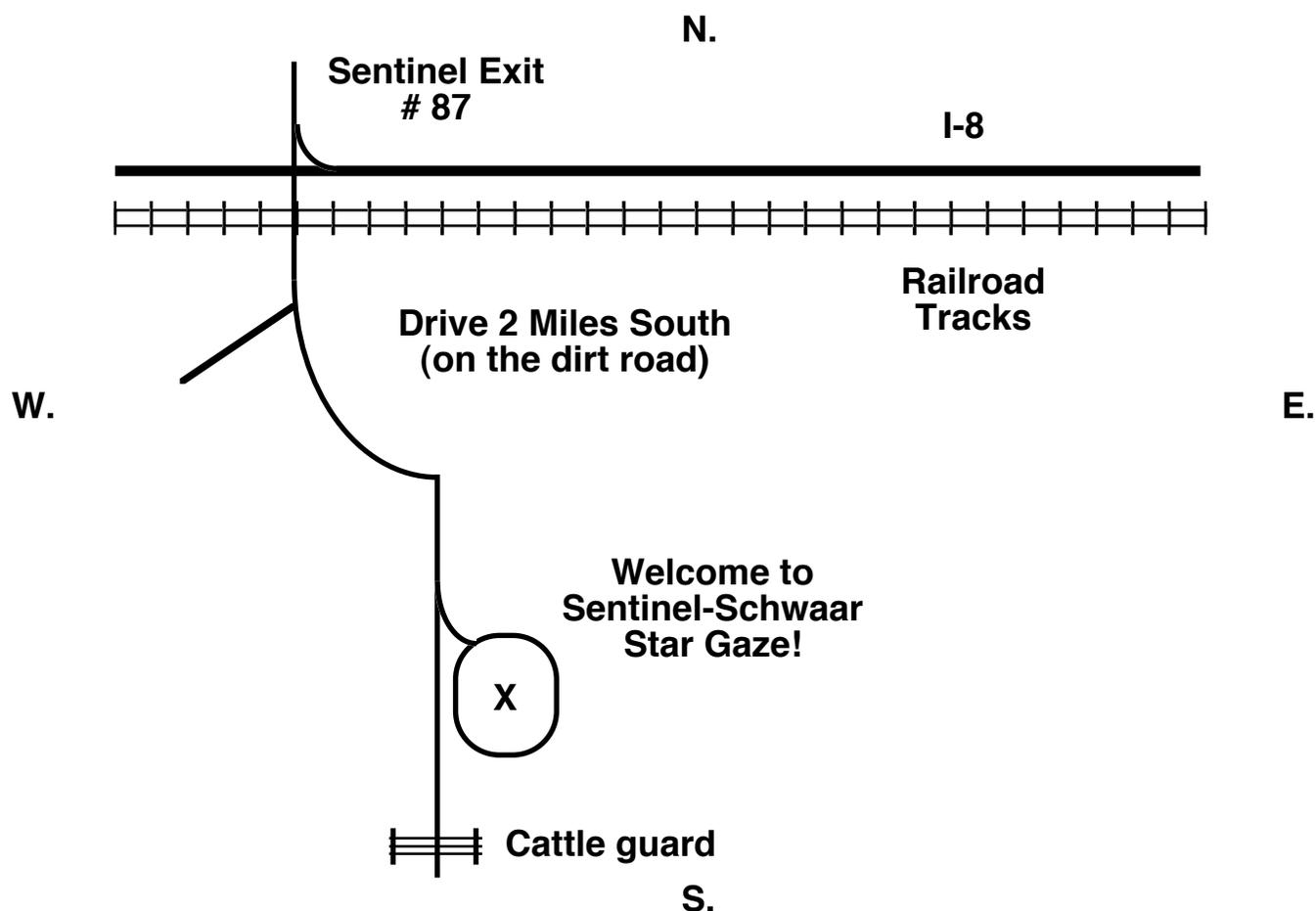
On Sunday, March 16, at 8:13 PM, you might see an asteroid occult a star. With a medium (6 inch) telescope look 55 degrees above the east horizon for star PPN 99771 (mag 10.3). The asteroid 117 Lomia might cover it for up to 15 seconds making the star seem to drop 2.5 magnitudes. This event happens just as astronomical twilight has ended so you might want to practice finding the star the night before. As with all asteroid occultations the path is uncertain so you might not see anything. See the article in Sky and Telescope, March 2003, p. 101 for details.

On Friday, March 28, about 5:30 AM you might be able to see two planets close to each other. With a medium (6 inch) or larger telescope look 7 degrees above the east-southeast horizon for Venus (easy at mag -4) and Uranus (hard at mag +6) only 3 arc minutes apart. Uranus will be below and slightly to the right of Venus. This one won't be easy, good luck.

## Sentinel-Schwaar Star Gaze Rescheduled for April 25 - 26, 2003

Here is the information for the Sentinel-Schwaar Star Gaze, Rescheduled for April 25 -26, 2003. Please show up with a list of galaxies in Virgo, Leo and Coma....then wait up late for all those Summer goodies to rise up for your enjoyment. Also, lots of planets to view on this night, if you are so inclined. If you are the member of a club other than SAC, encourage some new folks to attend. Hoping for some great viewing on a fine, clear night.

Steve Coe



The Sentinel-Schwaar Star Gaze is a chance for astronomers to meet at an Arizona dark sky site. It is sponsored by the Deep Sky Group of the Saguaro Astronomy Club in memory of Pierre Schwaar. There is no registration and no fee to attend, just show up and enjoy the night sky. In the past, folks have arrived on Friday, for two nights of observing. There are no facilities at the site, it is just a large flat area in the middle of the desert southwest. It gets both hot and cold, depending on the whim of the weather, so bring cool water and warm clothes. Please be courteous about white light, many observers and photographers are going after very dim objects.

**To get to the site, drive to Gila Bend, AZ. and get on the I-8 freeway going West toward Yuma. The Sentinel exit is #87, about 30 miles west from Gila Bend. Take the exit and go South, under the freeway and across the railroad tracks. Go straight South on the dirt road and drive 2 miles until you see a large, flat area of the desert to your left, white rocks mark the site. It is before a cattle guard. YOU ARE THERE!**

stevecoe@ngcic.org

Author: Deep Sky Observing--The Astronomical Tourist

Saguaro Astronomy Club web site:

www.saguaroastro.org

# The Backyard Astronomer

By Bill Dellinges  
(2/24/03)

## Winter Triples

I've grown quite fond of observing double stars. A special treat is observing triple or quadruple stars not just for their beauty, but their rarity. Doubles are a dime a dozen, but when you add a third or fourth star to the mix, the choices of those multiple star systems to view are exponentially reduced. I'd like to share with you three of my favorite Winter triples, Beta Monocerotis, Iota Cassiopeiae, and Omicron 2 Eridani (40 Eridani). I'll end with a 4<sup>th</sup> special guest. Unless otherwise noted, star colors are white and seeing poor (what else is new!). Each triple here was observed with a 5" F8 Astro-Physics refractor and 14" Celestron SCT.

**Beta Monocerotis**, 6h 29m, -7o 02', distance 700 LY.

A-B pair mag. 4.6, 5.0; separation 7.2" Position Angle (PA) 132o.

A-C pair mag. 4.6, 5.3; separation 9.9" PA 106o.

This is my favorite triple star, a real beauty to behold. When I think of a classic triple star, this is the guy I picture in my mind. Look for it east of Orion's Sword as the brightest star in the void of Monoceros.

5" APO: At 115x, fairly cleanly split, though the two 5<sup>th</sup> mag B-C stars, only 2.8" apart are very tight at this power. 183x provides a very clean split.

14" SCT: All three cleanly split at 177x.

**Iota Cassiopeiae**, 2h 29m, +67o 24', distance 140 LY.

A-B pair: mag. 4.6, 6.8; separation 2.8" PA 230o.

A-C pair: mag 4.6, 8.4; separation 7.3" PA 114o.

Delta and Epsilon Cass point right to it. Follow a line through these stars about a distance equal to their spacing. I find this triple more difficult to split than B Mon. The three stars are in a tighter grouping and two stars are a tad dimmer than B Mon. Good seeing is critical.

5" APO: at 78x, no problem with the A-C pair. 141x, a hint of the B star. 223x, B star seen in moments of good seeing. 183x, ABC nicely split.

14" SCT: 98x, split A-C. 177x, split ABC.

**Omicron 2 (40 Eridani)**, 4h 15m, -7o 39', distance 16 LY.

A-B pair mag. 4.6, 9.5: separation 83.4" PA 104o.

B-C pair mag. 9.5, 11.2: separation 9.2" PA -

Though a faint triple, this unique trio offers the easiest white dwarf (WD) to spy in modest backyard telescopes. Follow the arch of stars west from Rigel (Orion). As the "river" turns downward, you'll see two 4<sup>th</sup> mag stars close to one another at a 45o angle. The lower one, Omicron 2, is our guy. The primary is yellow. Directly east (83") are two faint stars (9.5, 11.2) 9.2" apart. The brighter of these two, the B component, is the WD. This was the first WD to be identified in 1910 spectroscopically. (Sirius B was seen by Alvin Clark in 1862 but its true nature wasn't understood till 1915). The C star is a red dwarf.

5" APO: 78x, easy to split, but the C star, the mag 11.2 red dwarf, is very faint. 141x, C star still dim!

14" SCT: 98x, easy. All three stars seen well.

While looking at this triple, think about the dynamics involved here. A WD and red dwarf star orbit each other at a distance of 34 Astronomical Units (A.U.) (mean sun-Earth distance, 93 million miles) in 248 years. They, in turn, orbit the primary star at a distance of 400 A.U.'s in about 7000-9000 years. Until the "Pup" emerges in a few years from Sirius' glare, enjoy this WD!

P.S. While a discussion of Winter multiple stars wouldn't be complete without mentioning the "Trapezium" in Orion, I'd like to end by drawing your attention to an often overlooked quadruple star, Sigma Orionis. This 4<sup>th</sup> mag star is just below Zeta Orionis, the eastern-most star in Orion's belt. I'll bet many gazers have seen it with the naked eye but never bothered to put their scope on it. I love this crazy star-check it out! It always reminds me of Jupiter and its moons in that a bright primary is surrounded by three fainter stars pretty much in a straight line. The 10.3 mag C star can be difficult to pick out in bad seeing because it's only 11.4" west of the 3.8 primary. My 5" refractor easily split all four stars at 78x. Purists may point out the eastern most E star is only an optical star, not a true member of the system - still, the group is a stunning sight. Anyway, the primary has a 0.2" mag 5.3 companion which backyard telescopes can't see, so it's still a quadruple!



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# On The Horizon Comming Astronomical Events and Activities

## 2003 All Arizona Messier Marathon March 29 - 30, 2003

Information has been posted on the SAC web site:

<http://www.saguaroastro.org>

If you plan on attending please read the announcement in its entirety for details.

Just as an FYI the dates and solar events are:

Saturday, March 29

4:11pm moon set

6:49pm sun set

8:08pm astronomical twilight

Sunday, March 30

4:55am astronomical twilight

5:29am moon rise

6:13am sun rise

Anyone desiring a copy of the web site announcement can have an ASCII text or PDF file sent via e-mail.

Happy Marathoning,

AJ Crayon [acrayon@mindspring.com](mailto:acrayon@mindspring.com)

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## Lowell Observatory Star Party June 5-8, 2003

Lowell Observatory will host its first-ever multi-day Star Party, where enthusiasts from around the country will gather for world-class telescope viewing and other adventures in astronomy.

Held June 5-8, 2003, the Lowell Star Party will feature some of the best that Flagstaff has to offer: a heritage rich in astronomical discovery, clear skies, and access to tourist attractions, restaurants, shopping, and more.

Lowell Star Party sponsors include some of the biggest names in astronomy, including Astronomy Magazine, Celestron, and Meade Instruments Corporation. "Star party attendees have an opportunity to interact with some of the heaviest hitters in astronomy," says Russell Tweed. "Several sponsors also will be donating products to be given away to lucky star party participants."

Evening viewing parties will be based at the Arizona Snowbowl ski resort, Highway 180 and Snowbowl Rd. "Situated at an elevation of 9,300 feet, Snowbowl is an ideal location for night sky observing," says Tweed. "The high-elevation observing area coupled with Flagstaff's reliably clear skies will make for an exciting event."

During the day, star party participants can choose from a variety of activities including tours of Meteor Crater, the U.S. Naval Observatory, the new Shoemaker Astrogeology building at the U.S. Geological Survey, and Lowell Observatory's own Anderson

Mesa research site. Attendees also may attend daytime scientific presentations in the Steele Visitor Center and the Rotunda Library at Lowell Observatory's historic campus, 1400 W. Mars Hill Rd.

Many recreational activities also are available to those wanting to explore Flagstaff and the surrounding area. Nearby attractions include the Grand Canyon, Oak Creek Canyon, the Museum of Northern Arizona, the Riordan Mansion, the Arboretum and many more.

During the star party, attendees also may participate in "Astronomy Safaris," exclusive, behind-the-scenes tours and events only for small groups. The daytime safari, called "Behind the Scenes at Lowell," gives participants access to areas of the observatory's historic campus not ordinarily available to the public.

Nighttime "Astronomy Safaris" allow participants to choose between a private viewing session on Mars Hill or research observing at Anderson Mesa. The "Private Viewing" safari includes 90 minutes of exclusive telescope viewing through the historic 24-inch Alvan Clark refractor led by an experienced member of the Lowell staff. During the "Research Observing" safari, groups will join professional astronomers as they gather images and data using one of many research telescopes on Anderson Mesa. Both nighttime safaris are risk-free; fees will be refunded if it is cloudy and observing is obstructed or telescopes are not in operation for any reason.

A number of lodging options are available. For those interested in staying at the observing site, Arizona Snowbowl has 130 camping/telescope spaces, which can be booked on a first-come, first-served basis with the online registration. Little America Hotel, La Quinta Inn and Sleep Inn are offering discounted accommodations for Lowell Star Party registrants; when making a reservation, ask for the Lowell Star Party room block.

The registration fee for the Lowell Star Party is \$60 (\$40 for Friends members) for the full 4-day event and \$30 for single-day registration (\$20 for Friends members). Star party attendees will also receive a 20 percent discount in Lowell Observatory's gift shop.

For complete event information and to register for the Lowell Star Party, visit <http://www.lowell.edu/Public> then click on "Lowell Star Party" at the top of the page.

**Note:** For general information, please contact Russell Tweed by phone at (928) 774-3358 ext. 267 or via email at [tweedr@lowell.edu](mailto:tweedr@lowell.edu). For questions or problems regarding online registration, please contact Jeff Hall by phone at (928) 774-3358 ext. 227 or via email at [jch@lowell.edu](mailto:jch@lowell.edu).

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A man with a GPS always knows where he is.

A man with 2 GPSs is never sure!

# On The Horizon (contd.) Comming Astronomical Events and Activities

## Grand Canyon Star Party 21-28 June 2003 South and North Rim

web site: <http://www.tucsonastronomy.org/gcsp.html>

Further Info:

For South Rim information, write to:

Dean Ketelsen  
1122 East Greenlee Pl.  
Tucson, AZ. 85719  
520-293-2855  
[ketelsen@as.arizona.edu](mailto:ketelsen@as.arizona.edu)

For North Rim information or registration, write to:

Deloy Pierce  
P.O. Box 674  
Farmington, UT. 84025-0647  
801-451-8215  
[grndcnynstarsnr@utah-inter.net](mailto:grndcnynstarsnr@utah-inter.net)

South Rim Lodging:

All Rim Lodging or Trailer Village (Xanterra) 303-338-6000  
This number is often very busy, FAX them at 303-338-2045 or  
online at: <http://xanterra.com/>

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## 2003 RTMC Astronomy Expo May 23, through May 25, 2003

(Memorial Day weekend)  
<http://www.rtmc-inc.org/>

The 35th Annual RTMC Astronomy Expo will be held Friday, May 23, through Sunday, May 25, 2003 (Memorial Day weekend). It will be held at the YMCA Camp Oakes, five miles southeast of Big Bear City on State Route 38 at Lake Williams Drive between mileposts 44 and 45. This location is about 50 miles northeast of Riverside in the San Bernardino mountains.

Excellent maps and directions are available at:

<http://www.rtmc-inc.org/Maps%20and%20Directons.htm>

Location

Longitude 116° 45' 15" West  
Latitude 34° 13' 50" North  
Altitude 7,600 Feet

Moonrise and Moonset (PDT)

Friday, May 23: Moonrise 2:04 AM; Moonset 1:10 PM  
Saturday, May 24: Moonrise 2:32 AM; Moonset 2:08 PM  
Sunday, May 25: Moonrise 2:58 AM; Moonset 3:04 PM  
Monday, May 26: Moonrise 3:23 AM

Theme:

The theme for 2003 is "Building Your Own Observatory."

Questions?

If you have any questions about the Riverside Telescope Makers Conference or would like to request additional registration materials, please call (909) 948-2205, or send e-mail to Robert Stephens at: [rstephens@foxandstephens.com](mailto:rstephens@foxandstephens.com)

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## Free Classified Ads (Wanted or For Sale)

Non-commercial advertisements for Astronomical equipment, books, computers, or software -- Wanted or For Sale -- will be accepted from current EVAC members, (another good reason to renew your membership, if you have not already done so).

Ads will be run on a "space available basis" and may be edited slightly to best fit the space. Ads should consist of a brief text description and must include a current member name and an evening phone number. You may include your email address if you wish. Ads will be run until canceled or until they have appeared in three issues of the newsletter (whichever occurs first). Ads will be "tagged" with the first issue in which they appear.

**For Sale: Bogen 3-way Pan Tilt Head model 3029. Wt 2.2 lbs. Can support 13.2 lbs. New 11/02. Used once. \$35. Televue 20mm 1 1/4" Plossl. New in box, never used. \$80. Bill Dellinges 480 983 6651. (March, 03)**

Ads can be emailed to: [john-cathy@cox.net](mailto:john-cathy@cox.net)  
(this address may change in the future)

or send by U.S. Mail to:

EVAC PO Box 2202

Mesa, AZ 85214

Please mark the subject line of the email or the envelope, "EVAC Newsletter Ad."



**STARIZONA**  
ADVENTURES IN ASTRONOMY & NATURE

**5201 N. Oracle Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85704  
(520) 292-5010**

# EVAC Meeting Minutes February 12, 2003 Tom Polakis, Secretary

President Peter Argenziano called the meeting to order with introductions of officers and visitors. In Rusty Tweed's absence, Peter read about the first Lowell Observatory Star Party coming in June:

[http://www.lowell.edu/Online\\_Newsletter/star\\_party.html](http://www.lowell.edu/Online_Newsletter/star_party.html)

AJ Crayon discussed the Messier Marathon, which will happen on the night of March 29. He is soliciting help from traffic patrollers who will slow incomers down in half-hour shifts email: [acrayon@mindspring.com](mailto:acrayon@mindspring.com). See the SAC site: [www.saguaroastro.org](http://www.saguaroastro.org) for more details.

Treasurer Stanley Bronstein spoke about the 71 2002 EVAC members who have not yet renewed their membership. Renew it!

Among the announcements was the relocation of the EVAC star party to Boyce Thompson Arboretum. Also, check out our constantly improving Web site at:

<http://www.eastvalleyastronomy.org> for the latest improvements, including a Planet Watch section and classified ads.

Harold Judson was presented an award for completing the EVAC 200 list. Congratulations, Harold!

Next up, three EVAC charter members were given lifetime memberships. They are **David Brown**, **Tom Harvey**, and co-founder **Dick Simmon**. Howard Israel went through the upcoming events. Note that the April 9 EVAC meeting will be held at the Arizona Science Center planetarium. On May 30, will be the Mormon Mountain Star Party, hosted by Bill Ferris in Flagstaff.

After the break, the constitutional bylaws were ratified by the club. Rick Scott followed with a presentation about the Steward Mirror Lab. The main speaker was AJ Crayon, who spoke about astronomical drawing at the eyepiece.

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## Friends Of . . . . an editorial by John Matthews

All Amateur Astronomers have (or very soon develop) a good idea of just which items of equipment deserve the funds we are willing to spend on our hobby (obsession?). If there is any doubt about this, please see, "Potentially Expensive Evening at Vekol" by Tom Polakis on page 3 of this newsletter. In addition to the telescope(s) there are always other items of hardware – computers, cameras, eyepieces, tripods, a vehicle to move it all – the list is endless. And there are non-hardware costs, gasoline for star parties, books and magazines, maybe a travel budget for things like RTMC or the Grand Canyon Star Party – even a (modest) cost for EVAC membership. And we all have our own idea of exactly what our astronomical priorities should be.

I would like to tell you about one item in my astronomy budget which I've found particularly satisfying over the last several years. My wife and I are members of the Friends of Lowell Observatory or FOL. Like many institutions which encourage private donations, there are many "levels" at which you can become a Friend. But for an amount only slightly higher than your annual EVAC membership, you receive an excellent quarterly newsletter, free admission to the Steele Visitors Center (an outstanding astronomical museum and educational resource) and free admission to participating ASTC member museum and science centers worldwide. This is a good deal! Moreover your money is going to people interested in the things which interest us and who are doing the kind of research we might like to be doing ourselves. The FOL funds make a real difference to Lowell and I value my association with this productive and historic private Observatory. I encourage you to visit: <http://www.lowell.edu/>. Perhaps you will also enjoy becoming a Friend of Lowell.  
J. M.

## Miscellaneous Announcements

**March Guest speaker  
Adam Block**

**Advanced Observing Program at Kitt Peak National  
Observatory. High Resolution Color CCD Imaging with  
Large Telescopes.**

Greetings,

I spoke with Leslie at Boyce Thompson yesterday, and she asked me to communicate to our members that the staff at the Arboretum would like us to not enter the park while it is still open. The park closes at 17:00. She indicated that a 17:30 arrival time would be optimal, as it would give park personnel time to finish their activities and leave the premises. This should be a non-issue, at least until October, as the sun is now setting around 18:30.

She also requested a schedule of nights we will be using the park, and I provided the following dates:

March 22, April 19, May 24, June 21, July 19, August 16,  
September 20, October 18, November 29, December 27

I notice that our regular local event for May (the 24th) coincides with the EVAC Friends of the Arboretum event.

Peter Argenziano  
President  
East Valley Astronomy Club, Inc.  
[www.eastvalleyastronomy.org](http://www.eastvalleyastronomy.org)

# East Valley Astronomy Club Membership Form

Please complete this form and return it to the club treasurer at the next club meeting OR mail to EVAC, P.O. Box 2202, Mesa, AZ 85214, with a check or money order made payable to EVAC.

**IMPORTANT:** ALL memberships expire on December 31, of each year.

**New Member Only - select month joining:**

- \$20.00 January – March
- \$15.00 April – June
- \$10.00 July – September
- \$25.00 October – December & Next Year

**Membership Renewals:**

- \$20.00 January – December

**Name Badges:**

- \$7.00 each Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Magazines:** if renewal, customer # \_\_\_\_\_

- (New) (Renewal)
- \$29.00 /yr Astronomy Magazine
- \$30.00 /yr Sky & Telescope

**Newsletter delivery option, check one:**

- Email (saves club printing & postage)  U.S. Mail

**Total enclosed \$**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

URL: \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Star Party Sites**

**# 1: Florence Junction Site**

**General Information:** The Florence Junction site is one of the two official sites for the East Valley Astronomy Club's Local Star Parties, typically held on the Saturday closest to Last Quarter Moon. Florence Junction offers reasonably dark skies within a short drive of most East valley locations. EVAC's Land Use Permit #26-104528 applies to this site.

**Location:** N 33° 14' 40" W 111° 20' 16"

**# 2: Boyce Thompson Arboretum Site**

**General Information:** The Boyce Thompson site is very new. As of this writing only one Star Party has taken place there as a second local site, although EVAC members have held Star Parties there at the request of the Arboretum on a twice yearly basis. The site is still being evaluated and seems to have some privacy advantages over the FJ site.

**Location:** N 33° 16' 52" W 111° 09' 35"

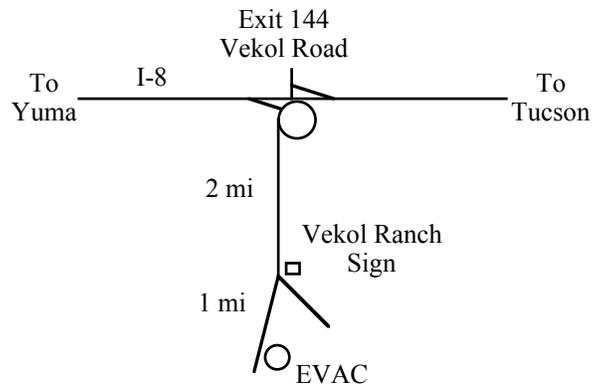
**How to get there:** Drive East on US 60 past Florence Junction for both sites. About 3.7 miles East of Florence Junction (after crossing railroad tracks) you will see a (second) flagpole on your right. Turning right (South) here and following the dirt road for 0.6 miles you will reach the FJ #1 site (marked by an old corral on your left). Continuing past the flagpole turn-off on US 60 and over Gonzales Pass will bring you to the Boyce Thompson Arboretum just before you enter the town of Superior. The Arboretum is marked with a large brown and white State Park Sign and there is a right turn lane.

**Deep Sky Star Party: Vekol Road Site**

**General Information:** The Vekol Road site is the official site for the East Valley Astronomy Club's Deep Sky Star Party, typically held on the Saturday closest to New Moon. Vekol Road offers dark skies despite prominent sky glow from Phoenix to the North. The site is within 90 minutes drive time from most East Valley locations.

**Location:** N 32° 47' 55" W 112° 15' 15"

**How to get there:** Take I-10 South and exit onto Maricopa Road. Continue through the town of Maricopa to SR 84, about 25 miles from I-10. Turn right on SR 84, after about 5 miles the road merges with I-8. Continue West and exit I-8 at Vekol Road-Exit #144. Turn left and cross the highway overpass. Before looping back onto I-8 take the small road (now paved) to the left. Go South for 2 miles. At the Vekol Ranch sign bear right and continue South for another mile until reaching a large open area on the left.



## **EVAC Officers**

### **PRESIDENT**

Peter Argenziano  
(480) 633-7479

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

Diana Jane  
(480) 833-2002

### **TREASURER**

Stanley Bronstein  
(480) 922-3845

### **SECRETARY**

Tom Polakis  
(480) 967-1658

### **PROPERTIES**

Gary Finnie  
gfinnie@kam-az.com

### **NEWSLETTER**

John Matthews  
john-cathy@cox.net

### **COORDINATOR**

Silvo Jaconelli  
(480) 926-8529

## **East Valley Astronomy Club**

EVAC Homepage: <http://www.eastvalleyastronomy.org/>

**Membership & Subscriptions:** \$20 per year, renewed in December. Reduced rates to *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* available. Contact Stanley Bronstein. PO Box 2202 Mesa AZ 85214-2202.

**Address Changes:** Contact Stanley Bronstein. PO Box 2202 Mesa AZ 85214-2202

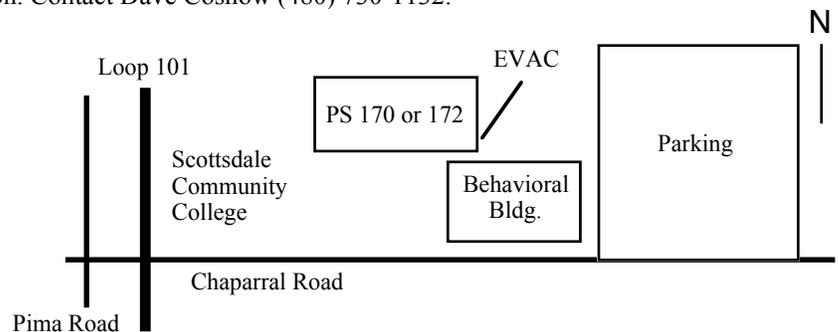
**Club Meetings:** Second Wednesday of every month at the Scottsdale Community College, 7:30 p.m. Normally Room PS 170 or PS 172 in the Physical Sciences Building. See map below.

**Newsletter:** Email John Matthews at: john-cathy@cox.net The newsletter is mailed out the week before the monthly Club meeting. An electronic version is available in Adobe PDF format in lieu of the printed copy. Please send your contributions to John Matthews at: john-cathy@cox.net Contributions may be edited.

**EVAC Library:** The library contains a good assortment of books, downloaded imagery, and helpful guides. Contact Gary Finnie at: gfinnie@kam-az.com

**Book Discounts:** Kalmbach and Sky Publishing offer a 10% discount to EVAC members on books and other items from their catalog. When ordering, notify the person on the phone that you would like the "Club Discount." When ordering by mail, there is a line to subtract the club 10%.

**EVAC Party Line:** Let other members know in advance if you plan to attend a scheduled observing session. Contact Dave Coshov (480) 730-1132.



**East Valley  
Astronomy Club**

**EVAC  
PO Box 2202  
Mesa, AZ 85214**

**Reminder: Next EVAC Meeting  
Wednesday, March 12, 2003**

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[www.eastvalleyastronomy.org](http://www.eastvalleyastronomy.org)**