

February_

Newsletter

EVAC HIGHLIGHTS

After a couple of newcomers were introduced, Don Wrigley and Dick Simmon talked about the Mountain Shadows Star Party where 300 people are expected for viewing. Bill Smith then gave us more information about the Arizona State University Teacher's Workshop. Volunteers are still needed. Sheri Cahn again asked that all renewal monies be submitted with a completed Membership Form. Bob Kelley says the 1995 Astronomical Calendars are here and will be available at the February business meeting.

Young Moon

Pierre Schwaar then told of his expedition to New Mexico to try and break the record for sighting a Young Moon. While not overcast like Phoenix, clouds also interfered with his attempt. He was able to observe the pencil thin crescent Moon for about 2 minutes through an 8[°] reflector, but fell 14 minutes short of the record. Pierre said the Moon was not visible in binoculars and recommends at least a 6[°] scope for the next opportunity on March 1st.

Hubble Space Telescope

Tom Polakis is an avid observer of artificial satellites and told how to view the Hubble over the weekend of Feb. 11-12. The Space Telescope is the 3rd brightest man-made object in the sky (Mir and the Space Shuttle being the first two) at magnitude +1.5, but with it's low orbital inclination, never passes high in the sky as seen from the U.S. Fortunately for us, Tom gave out detailed finder charts to make it much easier to spot.

LED Flashlights

Don Wrigley brought in no less than four examples of flashlights he built around LED technology for astronomical use. They will run on batteries that are "clinically dead" and can be built for under \$5.00. Don admitted that one version, his "alien glasses," might spook someone that stumbled upon his observing site!

TM Workshop

1995

Paul Dickson asked for help in organizing a Telescope Making Workshop and Robert Kerwin has agreed to take on that task. More details to follow.

Featured Presentation

Randy Iliff then spoke for about 30 minutes on a ten day expedition to northern Chile to watch the Nov. '94 total solar eclipse. This was professionally planned as an "eclipse edge" site, where totality would be shorter (only 45 seconds) but the edge phenomena such as the Diamond Ring and Bailey's Beads would be longer lasting and more pronounced. The actual observing site was about 100 miles inland from the coastal town of Iquique at an elevation of 6,500 above sea level. Randy's slides of the area were dramatic, looking more like pictures of the Martian landscape taken by the Viking landers than someplace here on Earth. Winds of 30 mph buffeted the area and high cirrus clouds also were present, but Randy and Jan still got some terrific slides with their Televue 70MM Pronto refractor. Surprisingly, no shadow bands were observed across the ground and the animal life wasn't observed to act any differently-none could be found! The most impressive sights to Randy were the Magellanic Clouds at night and what looked like a 360 degree sunset during totality. Although the edge phenomena are beautiful, Randy recommended going for maximum duration-nothing compares with totality!

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

EVAC Business Meeting, Feb. 15, 7:30 PM SCC, Physical Sci. Bldg, Room PS 172

Local Star Parties, Feb 25, Sunset 6:18 PM Florence Junction and Carefree Sites

Deep Sky Star Party, Mar. 4, Sunset 6:27 PM Vekol Road Site

FEBRUARY SPEAKER

The speaker for the February 15th EVAC meeting will be Warren Kutok, owner of Photon Instruments in Mesa. Mr. Kutok specializes in telescope repair and restoration and has undertaken many such projects for clients ranging from individuals to universities and government agencies. At the February meeting, Mr. Kutok will be discussing telescope history and restoration and will describe many of the projects in which he has been involved. In addition, several members have indicated they have equipment to sell so let's have a swap meet. Bring anything astronomical you want to sell to the meeting.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Fourteen people were present and a lot was accomplished in the two and a half hour meeting! The complete minutes will be available at the February business meeting but here are some of the highlights:

MEMBERSHIP GROUP—John Durham agreed to head this group with help from Bob Kelley. They will try to greet guests at meetings and prepare handouts for prospective members, with an even larger package for all new members.

STAR PARTY GROUP—Don Farley will spearhead this one which mainly deals with public star parties. He contemplates manning a table with Club information to greet people as they arrive, "assign" objects to observe, etc.

ACTIVITIES—Astronomy Day (May 6) Public Star Party will be organized by Don Wrigley and take place at the Scottsdale Community College. Spread the word. —Club Cookout is now scheduled for members on April 8th near Salt River Recreation. A public star party for area schools will follow. Ted Heckens is the point of contact.

MISCELLANEOUS—Business meetings are being reformatted. They will now start **promptly** at 7:30 PM and the guest speaker will follow at 8:00. Any remaining business will be concluded following the speaker. Starting in July of this year, all business meetings will be on the second Wednesday of the month, regardless of the Moon's phase. The only published date to be affected is December 6th. That meeting will now take place on December 13th.

-Caravans. Lika Romney (952-0988) proposed and agreed to serve as point of contact for Club star parties. If you are going out to one of our sites on a published date, call and tell her when and where. This way you won't get to Vekol Road only to find out you're all by yourself. She will keep track of everyone that has called her. This could also result in caravans to the remote sites. By all means update Lika if your plans change. This is really a great service for Club members who don't like being all alone in the middle of the desert. Thank you Lika! Members in good standing get significant discounts from both Sky Publishing and Kalmbach Publiship Companies. These are not limited to their month magazines but include all the products in their catalogs. A breakdown on how to get your discounts are outlined below.

SKY PUBLISHING CO.—This company offers a 10% discount on any item in their 35 page catalog to members who have their subscription to Sky&Telescope through the Club. In this way, they can verify you as a member when you ask them for the Club discount. The current discount rate for Sky&Telescope is \$20.00 per year (it's going up soon) and all subscriptions including renewals must be handle through Sheri Cahn. Checks should be payable to EVAC and include any renewal slips you have received. Sheri will update subscriptions every month but please don't wait until the last issue as a lapse will probably result. Once you have an active subscription through Sheri, you simply order directly from Sky Publishing.

KALMBACH PUBLISHING CO.—A year's subscription to Astronomy is \$18.00 and is handled the same way. Ordering their products at a discount must also be handled by the Club though. The extra trouble is offset by their much larger discounts of 25 to 55% off! The actual discount depends on the item and quantif ordered. Some examples are Uranometria at 25% on and 5 or more posters at 50% off. You don't pay shipping either! Sam Herchak will take orders at each business meeting and submit them quarterly. So bring your checkbooks and browse through their product list at the next meeting. Checks again are payable to EVAC.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

This is the last month to renew your membership. After February, former members can be re-instated at any time but that still requires the full \$20.00 yearly fee. Send in the Membership Form today if you have been putting it off.

FOR SALE

10" Newtonian, approximately f/7, Novak components. On solid, well-built equatorial mounting with concrete pier. The optics are excellent and in good condition, but the tube assembly and mounting need work. \$400, or best offer. Contact Robert Kerwin at 837-3971.

GRAND CANYON STAR PARTY by Dean Ketelsen from the Feb. SACNEWS

For four years now, the Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association (TAAA) has been going to the canyon in the June dark-of-the-moon for what has to be one of the largest public star parties.

The objective of the star party is to maintain an astronomical presence there for two weekends and the week in between. The first year, in 1991, we had seven TAAA members spread out thinly, but we had enthusiastic crowds and have grown every year. In June of 1993, we had over 25 amateurs showing the sky to thousands of canyon visitors.

The concept is simple and lots of fun. The canyon has millions of visitors yearly, though only about 10% stay overnight. The mostly international crowd is always surprised to see us there, but as is mostly the case, the unexpected pleasures are the most treasured. We have been showered with gratitude on every return.

In 1994 the viewing was dominated by Jupiter, and of course the galaxies of the spring sky highlighted by the Milky Way. We had an incredible 8 clear nights in a row—the second year in a row—a record I would like to see any other star party match. In addition the seeing is amazingly good for being so close to a mile deep trench!

The dates for 1995 are June 17-24, and if you are interested in attending and want a real bed to sleep in, you haven't a moment to lose. June is the Grand Canyon National Park's busiest time, and it is never too early to book a room. Most hotels fill up 3-4 months in advance so you need to act now. Camping is a different story, as sites are available days before your visit. Refer to the phone list below for hotels and camping. The TAAA charges no registration fee—just take care of a place to stay and let us know you are coming (you need to sign liability waivers for TAAA and the National Park Service.)

Come join us and have a great time, but be prepared to be exhausted, because with the canyon calling by day and the incredible skies by night, who has time to sleep?

• Housing: For reservations at any of the motels or lodges at the South Rim or for the Trailer Village (camping trailers or RVs) call Fred Harvey Inc. at (602) 638-2401 as soon as you make your plans! Expect long telephone waits while making your reservations. If you can tolerate a 7 mile drive, you can also try the following motels at Tusayan (all area code 602): Squire Inn 638-3515, Moqui Lodge 638-2424, Quality Inn 638-2673, Red Feather Inn 638-2414, or the 7 Mile Lodge 638-2291.

Camping: To make reservations for campsites at the regular rates (\$10.00 per night), call MISTIX at 1-800-365-2267, no more than 8 weeks ahead.

For questions concerning the Grand Canyon Star Party, please call or write to me at: 1122 E. Greenlee Place, Tucson, AZ 85719. Home phone (602) 293-2855 or E-mail to ketelsen@as.arizona.edu.

Editor note: The entrance fee to the Park is waived for participants. Dean says they also give a few of the \$10.00 campsites to participants. He will take names for this list after March 1st. You can also find peaceful camping in the Kaibab National Forest about 10 miles south of Tusayan (provided by your tax dollars). Lastly, the area code changes for all Arizona locations except Phoenix on March 19th from 602 to 520.

UPDATE YOUR STAR CHARTS

Many star charts depict Polaris as a variable star, but as of last year, this Cepheid variable star no longer pulsates! An excellent article on stellar evolution and this recent development appears in the March issue of *Astronomy*.

For those interested in optical quality of telescopes, two articles on the subject appear in the March issue of *Sky&Telescope*. Those wanting a closer look at Dick Suiter's new book on star testing telescopes as reviewed in the magazine can look through my copy at the upcoming meeting. See you then. (Editor)

ASTRONOMY NETWORK NEWS

The Astronomy Network News has ceased publication and is no longer uploaded to Compuserve or other online sevices. Issue #15 was the last one.

MARCH NEWSLETTER

Deadline is March 7th for material to be included in the next newsletter. Look for details from Don Wrigley on LED flashlights and a poem from Don Farley. Please submit your thoughts and stories to:

> Sam Herchak 145 S. Norfolk Cir Mesa, AZ 85206-1123 76627.3322@compuserve.com

The Deep Sky Notebook

Deep Sky "Doubles" in the Winter Sky

It's a given fact that two of anything are almost always more exciting than one. This is certainly true to the amateur astronomer. Without question, the Double Cluster is standard fare during fall and winter star parties and is sure to elicit a few "oohs and ahs" from even nonastronomers. Furthermore, what observer hasn't been thrilled by the sight of a close planetary conjunction or the passage of a planet close to a star? Fortunately. the winter sky offers some good examples of close pairings of deep sky objects. Although none of them approach the Double Cluster in terms of sheer magnificence, each one is fascinating in its own way.

Our first target is the open cluster M46 and its companion NGC 2438. a planetary nebula. The cluster contains about 75 - 100 stars and is about half a degree across. The stars seem to be evenly distributed across the area with no evidence of a central condensation. This cluster is an impressive sight even in small telescopes. The planetary nebula is on the northern edge of the cluster. This nebula is a rather easy target for moderate telescopes. In an eight-inch scope the view is fascinating: the nebula appears slightly oval with a darker center

and a faint star near the center. The star near the center is not the actual central star (which, at magnitude 17.5, is invisible in amateur instruments).

Our next pair of objects is farther south in Puppis, near a triangle of stars composed of φ , 11 and ξ Puppis. The cluster NGC 2467 and nebula Sharpless 2-311 are about 11/2 ° southeast of E Puppis. The cluster appears as a bright. scattered clump of about 50 stars. The cluster is approximately 15 arcminutes across. The nebula is quite prominent in moderate apertures and is generally round with a bright star offset to the north of its center. With my eight-inch reflector at about 100x with a UHC filter. I noticed several very subtle dark patches and brighter filaments to the south of the star. Along the southern edge of the nebula is a brighter area running approximately east-west.

A mere two degrees to the southwest is the next pair of objects, the cluster NGC 2453 and the planetary nebula NGC 2452. In my eight-inch telescope, this cluster appears rather faint, with about five bright stars and 15 fainter stars against a hazy background of unresolved stars. I find the cluster to be somewhat triangular and about three arc-minutes across. The nebula is just to the southwest of the cluster. It is about 20 arcseconds in diameter and has a diffuse edge. I also noticed a very faint star near the south edge of the Larger telescopes may nebula. reveal the nebula's annular well subtle structure as as brightness variations within the annulus.

Our final object lies considerably farther east, in the nondescript constellation Pyxis. NGC 2818 and NGC 2818A is vet another cluster and planetary nebula combination. Since it is at a rather southerly declination, try viewing it while it is on or near the meridian. NGC 2818 is fairly faint and is just over ten arc-minutes across. I find the cluster's 50 or so stars to be unevenly distributed, giving the cluster a blotchy appearance. The nebula is located on the southern edge of the cluster and although faint, is rather difficult to miss. The planetary appears as a round disk about 30 arc-seconds across. Overall, this pair of objects looks like a dimmer version of M46 and NGC 2438.

Name	Туре	Mag.	Dimensions	Const	SkyAtlas	U2000	R.A.	Dec
M46	open cl	6.1	27'	Pup	12	274	07h 42m	-14° 49'
NGC 2438	plan neb	11.0	66"	Pup	12	274	07h 42m	-14° 44'
NGC 2467	open cl	7.1	14'	Pup	19	320	07h 53m	-26° 23'
Sh2-311	diff neb	-	16' x 12'	Pup	19	320	07h 53m	-26° 24'
NGC 2453	open cl	8.3	5'	Pup	19	320	07h 48m	-27° 14'
NGC 2452	plan neb	12.0	19"	Pup	19	320	07h 47m	-27° 20'
NGC 2818	open cl	8.2	9'	Рух	20	364	09h 16m	-36° 37'
NGC 2818A	plan neb	11.6	38"	Рух	20	364	09h 16m	-36° 38'

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LUNAR OCCULTATION PREDICTIONS

I recently received these predictions that I sent for. For years now as a public service to amateur astronomers, Walter Morgan of the International Occultation Timing Association (IOTA) has been providing predictions for basically the cost of a SASE. The amount of postage depends on the limiting magnitude of stars you specify which then determines the number of pages of predictions. I use an Option Code Limit of "7" which will generate a list of stars occulted above 8th magnitude. This costs \$0.50 and includes detailed instructions for reading the tables. Walter requests the postage stamps not be applied to the envelope however for more efficient use by IOTA. If you are interested in your own predictions or just want to thank him for these, contact him at:

> Walter Morgan 10961 Morgan Territory Road Livermore, CA 94550-9452

HOW TO USE THESE TABLES

The geographic coordinates that these predictions were generated for are the center of Phoenix Sky Harbor Int'l Airport, a pretty central location for the Valley. Use the underlined dates to practice with the recent occultation of Spica, the upcoming one of the Messier cluster M67, and the June graze of Spica. You'll notice the list actually begins on the other side of this page. The first column is the DAY and TIME down to seconds in Universal Time. These times are accurate to within 10 seconds for the airport. Give yourself a few minute pad for other locations. Also subtract 7 hours to obtain Mountain Standard Time.

P stands for phenomena, meaning disappearance (D) or reappearance (R) of the star from behind the Moon. An additional letter indicates a double star. The code letter tells you more info about the double with the expanded instructions.

O stands for observability which is affected by the magnitude, twilight conditions, etc. The higher the number, the easier to observe the event.

MAX MAG is maximum magnitude (many stars are variables)

PCT SNLT is the percent of the Moon's disk sunlit with 100% being a Full Moon. With a lot of illumination the events become harder to observe.

MN ALT is the Moon's elevation above the horizon.

CA is cusp angle of the event. This is the angle in degrees from the nearest lunar cusp to the star. It's positive on the dark limb and negative on the bright one. The letters identify the north or south cusp.

For the casual observer, the other codes are either self explanatory or unimportant. I have the detailed information on them if you need them. Hope you enjoy watching these beautiful examples of the cosmos in motion as much as I do. (Editor)

1995 LUNAR OCCULTATIONS FROM PHOENIX

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East	Valley	Astronomy	Club
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Club March 1995

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 "4:43 and 5:32 AM Galilean moons "5:45 AM Venus-Nept conjunction	27 *6:39 AM Galilean moon *Lunar Librotion Sunset: 6:20 PM	28 "3:56 and 4:57 AM Galileon moons Sunrise: 6:55 AM	1 *2:22, 3:17, and 4:32 AM Galilean moons. RS 3:33 AM *ALL MONTH NOTES *6:22 PM Young Moon	2	3	4 ™oonset: 9:48 PM
5 *Moonset: 10:43 PM *3:39 AM Galilean moon *6:10 AM Venus occ	6 °Moonset: 11:37 PM	7 *Moonset next day *2:28, 4:58, 5:02, and 5:49 AM Galilean moons *3:00 AM Asteroid Hera	8 *Moonset: 12:29 AM *3:01, 4:16, and 5:11 AM Galilean moons. RS 4:20 AM	9 *Moonset: 1:19 AM *2:16 and 3:42 AM Galilean moons	10 *Moonset: 2:06 AM *7:15 PM PAS Mtg	11 Moonset: 2:51 AM
12 °Moonset: 3:33 AM °5:32 AM Galilean moon	13 Sunset: 6:31 PM	14 °5:04 AM Galilean moon Sunrise: 6:37 AM	15 7:30 PM EVAC Mtg *4:54 and 6:08 AM Galilean moons. RS 5:06 AM	16 *2:10, 2:20, 2:21, 2:41,4:47, and 5:34 AM Galilean moons!	17 *2:46 AM Galllean moon *7:30 PM SAC Mtg	18
19	20 °Moonrise: 10:55 PM °R Leonls peaks °7:14 PM Vernal Equinox	21 Moonrise: 11:59 PM	22 °Moonrise: next day	23 *Moonrise: 12:59 AM *2:27, 4:03, 4:27, 4:48, and 4:54 AM Galilean moons!	24 °Moonrise: 1:53 AM °2:28, 3:26, and 4:38 AM Galilean moons	25 Local S Parties Moonrise: 2:42 AM
26 *Moonrise: 3:26 AM	27 *Moonrise: 4:06 AM Sunset: 6:42 PM	28 Sunrise: 6:19 AM	29	30 *3:28, 5:00, 5:38, and 5:56 AM Galilean moons. R5 2:29 AM *3:28 AM Ganymede eclipse	31 *3:10, 4:18, and 5:20 AM Galilean moons	1 Messier Morathon

All times are LOCAL - add 7 hrs for Universal Time

Flip over for event details

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<u>Date</u>	Scart	Title	Description
3/1/95	12:00 AM	ALL MONTH NOTES	CALENDAR NOTES: Times for "Galilean moons" refer to eclipses, transits, occultations, etc of Jupiter's four largest satellites. Consult ASTRONOMY (ASTRO) and SKY&TELESCOPE (S&T) magazines, or almanacs for the exact event or just go out and watch what happens. On mornings with satellite events, applicable central meridian crossing times for the Great Red Spot (RS) are also listed. PLANETS: MERCURY reaches greatest western elongation on the 1st but is not well placed for observation from our latitude as it only reaches about 10 degrees above the SE horizon before dawn interferes. VENUS is bright and unmistakeable low in the SE before dawn and rapidly closing on the Sun. MARS still dominates the evening skies at -0.5 magnitude but shrinks in apparent size to 10 arc seconds by month's end. JUPITER rises after midnight and is well placed for observation in the AM sky. SATURN in conjunction with the Sun on the 6th and appears in the AM sky next month. URANUS and NEPTUNE are found near Venus in the AM sky. PLUTO is stationary on the 6th but starts westward motion relative to the stars (retrograde) after that. It rises just before Jupiter. OBJECTS OF INTEREST: Comet Borrelly, Zodical Light, Gegenschein, asterolds Ceres, Metis, and Vesta. See magazines for details. ASTRONOMICAL TWILIGHT TIMES: 1st: 5:38 AM and 7:43 PM. 31st: 5:00 AM and 8:09 PM.
			LUNAK LIBKATIONS: There are no tavorable Lunar librations all monthi
3/1/95	6:22 PM	6:22 PM Young Moon	Look for Young Moon right after Sunset with a telescope or binoculars. See Jan. issue of newsletter for details.
3/5/95	12:00 AM	6:10 AM Venus occ	At approximately 6:10 AM, a 9th magnitude star (SAO 163482) reappears from behind the dark llmb of Venus. (Mar. S&T)
3/7/95	12:00 AM	3:00 AM Asteroid Hera	Minor planet Hera will cross the galaxy M 95, passing just north of the galaxy's center at about 3:00 AM. A 6 inch or larger telescope will show this event. (Mar. S&T)
3/10/95	12:00 AM	7:15 PM PAS Mtg	Phoenix Astronomical Society will meet at Keith Parizek's home. Call Terri Renner at 971–3355 for directions.
3/17/95	7:30 PM	7:30 PM SAC Mtg	Saguaro Astronomy Club meeting, Grand Canyon University, Fleming Bldg, Rm 105. Camelback and 33rd Ave.
3/20/95	12:00 AM	R Leonis peaks	The long period variable star R Leonis peaks around this date at a naked eye magnitude of 4.4, up from it's minimum of about 11.31 (Mar. ASTRO)
3/20/95	7:14 PM	7:14 PM Vernal Equinox	Sun's apparent path crosses the celestial equator northward and higher in our daytime sky. Note where the Sun rises and sets for due East and West.
3/30/95	12:00 AM	3:28 AM Ganymede eclipse	The geometry is outstanding for observing the eclipse of Jupiter's satellite Ganymede this AM. It will appear to vanish in thin air while near lo at 3:28 AM and reappear from nowhere at 5:38 AM. (Mar. ASTRO)

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Enrico Alvarez

Bob Anderson

Brady & Jan Barnes

Dan Beck

Jerry Belcher

David Brown

Sheri Cahn

Walter Carruthers

Cliff DeVlieg

Paul Dickson

John & Nellie Durham

Don Farley

Bill Greiner

Tom Harvey

Ted & Brenda Heckens

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Frank Honer

Paul Honsinger

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Dana Lowery

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Gordon MacKay

Stewart & Matthew Mann

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Tony & Joyce Muller

Joe Murray

Fred Newman

Bob Norby

Steve O'Dwyer

John Osborne

Eric Peterson

Jim Peterson

Randy Peterson

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Dave Porter

Kelton Rhoads

Lika Romney

Gene Rose

Bernie Sanden

Charlie & Paul Santori

Mike Sargeant

Pierre Schwaar

Stanley R. Shorb

Dick Simmon

Bill & Becky Smith

Steve Smith

Cary & Shirley Stegman

Emerson Stiles

Bob Swanson

Tom Trollen

W. D. Westmoreland

Homer & Ginny Willard

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Don Wrigley

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Art Zarkos

Frank Zullo



EAST VALLEY ASTRONOMY CLUB Sam Herchak, Editor 145 S. Norfolk Circle Mesa, AZ 85206-1123

Valued EVAC member since 1/17/92! **Hope to see you at the next star party

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