

FOCUS

DELAWARE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Next Meeting – June 17, 2008 at 8:00 PM Astrophotography Presentations

(1) Bill Hanagan and the Astrophotography SIG (2) Wayne King
Mt. Cuba Astronomical Observatory

Vol. 53, No. 6, June, 2008

FROM THE EDITOR – Lee Kaser

This is my last edition of the Focus, and I want to express my thanks to all the Board and the membership for their support as the interim editor. Now, I ask you to welcome Joe Neuberger as the new Publications Chair of DAS and Focus Editor. He has already worked with me to make a smooth transition and I am pleased to have him take over. From now on, all news items, ads, pictures, etc., should be sent to him at jrneuberger@gmail.com. I've enjoyed working with the DAS and will continue to be a member and follow the events regularly. It was a pleasure to work on the 50th Anniversary celebration last year, and I wish the DAS another fifty years of success.

Be sure to attend the final meeting of this spring to hear several of our astrophotography experts discuss their work. Also, be sure to look at the photos by Bill McKibben and Wayne King at the end of this Focus. I hope you'll also look at the Website of Month, too.

RESULTS OF ELECTIONS

-- Sarah Baird

We had a good response from the voting membership, and the results are that the incumbent candidates in the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer were re-elected. Congratulations to

those officers for the the two years from 2008 to 2010, who are:

President: Henry Bouchelle
Vice President: John
Secretary: Lynn King
Treasurer: Robert Mentzer

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

-- Hank Bouchelle

I want to begin my message this month expressing my profound thanks to those who have worked so hard to make this year a very successful one for the Delaware Astronomical Society. The Board and others have worked very hard, and we have had some wonderful programs. I want to thank Bob Mentzer in particular for his efforts on behalf of the dinner meeting.

A special thanks, as well, to Julia Dooley for her talk about her trip to Antarctica. She left me anxious to go there myself!

DAS Board Meeting

7:00 p.m. at the Mt. Cuba Astronomical Observatory--Agenda

(More than we can accomplish in one meeting, but important items, all)

Review of April's minutes

Treasurer's Report – Bob Mentzer

Standing committee reports/requests/notes

Focus/Publications – Joe Neuberger

Library- Glenn Bentley
Education Programs- Bob Karcha
Sawin Observatory Tom Sidowski
Observing – Greg Lee
Astronomy Course for the fall
Other business
Chartered Awards Committee
Other?

ASTRONOMY COURSE FOR MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

-- Harry Shipman

Harry Shipman and Tim Brewer, a physics teacher from St. George's Vo-Tech High School, will teach an astronomy course for school teachers in August. It will focus on the 12th grade material from the State of Delaware Standards. It will include stellar life cycles, evolution of the universe, and exobiology. Students should be able to develop a lesson plan based on this material, teach this lesson, and report on the results of teaching this lesson. The class will meet for full days on August 11th and 14th, will take a field trip to NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland on August 15th, and will meet for three 3-hour follow-up sessions after school in the fall. There will be no charge for this course, which is supported by the Delaware Foundation for Science and Mathematics Education.

Teachers who are interested in taking this course should contact me (phone 302-831-2986, e-mail harrys@udel.edu) before June 16.

MCAO PUBLIC NIGHTS – Emil Volcheck

The Mt. Cuba Observatory Public Nights continue year round! In addition to learning about many aspects of the heavens, you'll have a chance to visit and view our all-digital full-dome planetarium! You can pick up a schedule when you next come to a meeting - or get the latest updated version off the website at: <http://mountcuba.org>.

STAR PARTIES AT MT. CUBA – Tom Sidowski

Star parties are usually held on the grounds of the Mt. Cuba Astronomical Observatory. You can bring your own scope or just come to observe through others. Telescopes in use may include the club's 12.5" Newtonian reflector, 17" Coulter Odyssey 2, or 6" Orion SkyQuest XT6 Dobsonian (when not on loan). Star parties are always weather permitting.

Here is our current Star Party schedule:

Friday	June 13	at dusk
Saturday	August 2	at dusk
Saturday	Sept. 20	at dusk
Friday	Oct. 17	at dusk
Friday	Nov. 7	8:00pm
Friday	Dec. 5	7:30pm

TELESCOPE NIGHT/DAY AT WOODSIDE

-- Tom Sidowski

The DAS and the Woodside Farm Creamery will sponsor a series of "Telescope Nights/Day at Woodside" on the following dates. The creamery is located at 1310 Little Baltimore Rd. in Hockessin. Check out their website at <http://woodsidefarmcreamery.com> for more info. Come on out with or without a telescope and enjoy sharing your hobby with the public.

Saturday July 12, 2008 at 2:00 - 4:00pm
SOLAR OBSERVING
(cloud date July 18th)

Saturday August 9, 2008 at 8:00 - 9:30pm
(cloud date August 16th)

Saturday September 6, 2008 at dusk to closing
(cloud date Sept. 13th)

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LOANER TELESCOPES -- Tom Sidowski

One of the best advantages of being a member of the Delaware Astronomical Society is that all members have the privilege of being trained to use and then borrow equipment owned by the club for personal use. Currently, we have two scopes available for loan: a Celestron 8" Schmidt-Cassegrain, and a 6" Orion SkyQuest XT6 Dobsonian reflector. The loan is for at least a month. If you're interested in checking out either of these scopes, contact Tom Sidowski at 239-1844.

DAS ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP -- Bill Hanagan

The DAS astrophotography special interest group (DAS AP SIG) meets on Friday nights at 7:30 P.M. every other month at Mt. Cuba regardless of weather. The SIG also meets for photo shoots scheduled on 1-2 day notice to synchronize with the weather.

The monthly meetings are informal and typically include the presentation of astrophotos taken by the members along with an extended question and answer period. Objects commonly photographed include constellations, auroras, lunar eclipses, and planetary photos, as well as a wide variety of deep-sky objects such as nebulae, galaxies, star clusters, etc. The topics discussed cover the entire gamut of astrophotography, from how to get started with a minimum of equipment, to polar aligning your telescope, all of the way to the fine points of using auto-guiders and post-processing digital images.

You can get started in astrophotography with just your current camera mounted on a tripod or a motorized telescope by taking wide field photographs of meteor showers, conjunctions, constellations, and star trails. As you move to progressively fainter and smaller subjects, you'll need better equipment. Joining the AP SIG is a great way to learn what equipment you need and what works well before you spend your money.

If you are interested in joining the AP SIG, just email your name, address, and phone number to me at hanaganw@comcast.net (using "@" and "." in place of " " and " ").

SAWIN OBSERVATORY REMINDER

-- Tom Sidowski

The DAS maintains a club observatory on the grounds of the Mt. Cuba Astronomical Observatory. The Sawin Observatory houses the club's permanently mounted 12.5" reflecting telescope and a 17.5" Coulter Odyssey 2 Dobsonian telescope. It is for the use by club members once they are trained and checked-out in a simple operating procedure. Members who are interested in becoming key holders of the Sawin Observatory should contact me at 239-1844 to arrange for training in the use of the facility

LIBRARY NEWS -- Glenn Bentley

We won't be at Mt. Cuba for this month's meeting, but I would like to take this opportunity

to invite the membership to drop by the library at the end of the June meeting to check out reading material for the upcoming summer "extended loan" season. That's right folks, borrow a book, video or audio tape and get to keep it all summer. Clear Skies and have a great summer.

DAS AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKING SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP -- Bill Hanagan

The DAS Amateur Telescope Making (ATM) Special Interest Group (SIG) meets on evenings and weekends according to the availability of the members and the particular projects that are underway. The general range of activities of the ATM SIG includes all manner of telescope making, mirror making, and the making of accessories for telescopes and observing.

Anyone interested in joining the ATM SIG should email their name, address, and phone number to me at hanaganw@comcast.net (using "@" and "." in place of " " and " "). Meeting dates are announced primarily by email, so if you are interested in telescope making, be sure to let me know!

SUMMER ASTRONOMY COURSES FOR TEACHERS -- Hank Bouchelle

The DAS has quite a few teachers among its membership, and this may be of interest to you should you be one of them. And please feel free to pass this information along to teachers of your acquaintance who may be interested in astronomy education.

The College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, offers accredited two and four credit summer residential courses for teachers in a variety of subjects, including astronomy. The College is set on the shores of Frenchman Bay and offers close access to the beauty of Acadia National Park and the many attractions of Mt. Desert Island. Room and board are available at the College.

Introduction to Astronomy (July 13-26) is a four credit course that presents astronomy concepts and content principally through a variety of activities that participants can use in their classrooms, and thus is suitable for teachers of all grade levels.

Teaching with a Portable Planetarium (July 7-August 2) is a two graduate credit course that provides instruction in setting up, taking down, and maintaining a portable planetarium, and includes the development of instructional programs.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Jean Sylvia, Associate Director of Summer Programs, at jsylvia@coa.edu or 800-597-9500.

DAS FORUM/E-MAIL SITE ON YAHOO

-- Don Shedrick

This is a restricted e-mail service for use by DAS members for DAS purposes. To use this site, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com>; search for Delaware astronomical society; and click on the link that comes up. To join, you must have a Yahoo ID and password; if you don't, you can register at this time by following Yahoo's instructions. You will then be allowed to "Join the group" upon clicking in that box. You must then register for the DAS group and add your profile by clicking on "add new profile" and completing the form. When adding or editing your profile, you will need to enter your actual name in the "Real Name" box so you can be identified as a DAS member so Don Shedrick can approve your application to join the DAS group, and everyone will know to whom they are communicating. Finally, specify your desired email address for delivery of messages. Note you may choose to not have your name and email address displayed to anyone other than DAS members who are members of the Yahoo DAS email group.

For more detailed instructions, go to the DAS web site under DAS Resource Links.

MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION NOTICES

if you receive the FOCUS by email, you will be notified by email. If you receive it in the mail and the mailing label on the envelope

containing your FOCUS is marked with Red Marker, your membership is expiring or has expired. To continue to receive the FOCUS, Sky and Telescope or Astronomy, and Reflector, send the renewal form below with your check to:

DAS, c/o Robert Mentzer
605 River Road
Wilmington, DE 19809

DAS CONTACTS

Call any of us with your concerns!

Membership: Any of the following:

President: Hank Bouchelle----- 302-429-4013
Vice President: John Case ----- 302-836-4888
Secretary: Lynn King ----- 302-764-8816
Treasurer: Bob Mentzer----- 302-764-1926
DAS/MCAO Advisor: Emil Volcheck-- 610-793-5156
Education Chair: Bob Karcha----- 302-999-9509
Messier Club: Lynn King ----- 302-764-8816
Observing: Greg Lee ----- 302-762-5358
Youth Coordinator: Sarah Baird ----- 302-561-0810
Archivist: Rene Van Caneghem ----- 410-392-3718
Board Members at-large:
ATM and AP SIGs: Bill Hanagan ----- 302-239-0949
Chairman, Observatory Committee and Monthly
Star Parties: Tom Sidowski ----- 302-239-1844
By-Laws: Henry Bouchelle ----- 302-983-7830
Light Pollution Strategist; Greg Weaver-302-239-1338
Library Chair: Glenn Bentley ----- 410-869-0706
Ad Hoc Star Parties: Sheila Vincent - 302-322-4739
Elections Comm. Chair – Sarah Baird 302-561-0810
Awards Comm. Chair – David Swartout 302-836-4618
MCAO Web Page: www.mountcuba.org
DAS Web Page: www.delastro.org



From Bill McKibben—An Astrophotograph of the Month of May

The image of M51 above was taken from my back yard in Elkton, MD on May 4, 2008. It was taken through an unmodified Canon 20D on a Celestron C8 at F6.3. The scope was mounted on a Celestron Advanced Series CG5 German Equatorial mount on a permanent pier. The image was created from 14 exposures at 90 seconds each at ISO 800. No auto-guiding was used. The 14 exposures plus 5 dark frames were stacked in Registax 3. Levels, curves, noise and sharpness adjustments were made in Photoshop CS3.

Page down for the next picture.



NGC 7635 H α (R) SII(G) OIII(B) 6x20min (1x1) S2K MX716 CGE1100 f/5

NGC 7635 PHOTOGRAPHED BY WAYNE KING

Page down for the next picture.



M57 PHOTOGRAPHED BY WAYNE KING

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

If you haven't already done so, take a look at the new World Wide Telescope web site. It goes fairly deep, and has lots of bells and whistles. You can find it at: www.worldwidetelescope.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

If you have questions, call any of the member representatives listed above. Otherwise, just check the appropriate boxes and complete the form below. Print it or cut it off and send it with your check to Bob Mentzer at his address given above. The magazine prices are group rates to DAS members. Thanks, and welcome to the DAS if you're just joining us for the first time.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL FORM

New Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior/Family Membership	\$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Junior membership (16/under)	\$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Sky and Telescope Magazine	\$33.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Astronomy Magazine	\$34.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____ Total Submitted ----- \$

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ TELEPHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____