Sky Watch

Issue #6-07
June

The Newsletter of the Brevard Astronomical Society

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Summary of May meeting:

1) Presentation on Astrophotography Processing by John Powell
2) Outreach coordination discussion by Oscar Sifuentes.
3) Discussion about a potential 2nd Astronomy Day in September.
4) Overview of BAS ByLaw changes by Bill Manley
5) Megan Boyd will no longer be acting as Secretary beginning June so if you would like to take over that position please notify Gary Scott

Upcoming BAS Meetings & Agenda:

June 20th -
Review comments to the BAS By-Laws update, and attempt a vote if 22 members are in attendance. If you are a voting member, please try and attend……

Moon Phases:

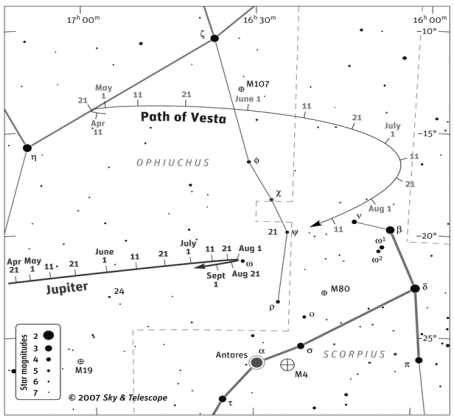
BLUE MOON in June:
Full: June 1st & June 30th
New: June 15th

What is in the Sky in June?

So what is a "Blue Moon" anyway? Well, simply put, it is when two full moons occur in a single calendar month, and it doesn't happen often.

[*Once in a Blue Moon …* is a common way of saying *not very often*, but what exactly is a *Blue Moon*? According to the popular definition, it is the second Full Moon to occur in a single calendar month. The average interval between Full Moons is about 29.5 days, while the length of an average month is roughly 30.5 days. This makes it very unlikely that any given month will contain two Full Moons, though it does sometimes happen. On average, there will be 41 months that have two Full Moons in every century, so you could say that *once in a Blue Moon* actually means *once every two-and-a-half years*].
http://www.obliquity.com/astro/bluemoon.html

On May 27, I took the opportunity to find the asteroid (or minor planet…) **Vesta** in Ophiuchus before the dreaded full BLUE moon got to close! (Ha Ha) It was noticeably bright at an apparent magnitude of 5.5 compared to adjacent Hipparcus stars at magnitudes of 7.5 to 9.0. I also could easily see it with binoculars (once I new where it was), and it can be seen as a naked-eye object if you have a decent dark sky. Vesta looked "yellowish" whereas the adjacent stars looked whiter. I was able to manually find it using star hopping and detailed star positions from *Starry Night Pro*™ software. As a bonus, I found the faint globular cluster M107 approx 1 deg up and a bit to the right (S) (another one off the Messier list!). The asteroid reached opposition on May 30th, and heads south into Scorpius in June & July. Plenty of good opportunities remain to see Vesta.



DEEP SKY: Ophiuchus is not the easiest constellation to make out because it is large and spread out, however there are a few Messier globular clusters there that can be found once you find your way. If you decide to find Vesta, you will probably use the star Han (zeta Ophiuchi) as a locating guide. From Han, you can find the globular clusters M10, M12, up and to the left (N) and M14 (approx 10 deg N, (and slightly down) of M10). There are a few other globular clusters in this general area of the sky as well. The globular M5 is up in Serpens Caput (between Boötes and Ophiuchus), and if you are hanging around Jupiter in Scorpius, check out globulars M80 & M4 close by.

So how do you pronounce the constellation "Boötes" anyway? The best I could find on the web is "Bōw-ō-taze". Those Greeks don't make it easy sometimes.

PLANETS:
Venus & Saturn remain visible in the evening to the west but will be in the atmospheric soup (low) by mid June. Venus reaches greatest elongation from the sun (45 deg) on the 9th.
Mercury reaches greatest elongation from the sun (23 deg) on the 2nd, but is about gone for evening viewers due to daylight savings time.
Jupiter begins to rise by approx 7:30pm and transits by 12:30am by Mid June. It is at opposition on the 5th, but low to the south on the ecliptic. A crescent moon occults Regulus (in Leo) on the 19th (enters 9:15 and re-emerges approx 9:50 pm EST). For the night owls, there is a double shadow transit (Io and Ganymede) on the 9th at approx 5:20 am. **Neptune**, **Uranus, and Mars,** still rise in the middle of the night during June. It will be July for any hopes of seeing Neptune or Uranus in the late evening (plus a darn good dark sky and aperture telescope…). For Mars; you have to wait until fall to see it before midnight.

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Upcoming BAS Star Parties:

Unfortunately Harmony Fl. is no longer a viable site for viewing due to streetlights installed (D. Guibert sent e-mail); and the North & South sites are occupied by mosquitoes the size of horse flies this time of year, although it has been unseasonably cool which will help a bit. John Powell extended the invitation for members to occasionally join him at his house approx 5 mi south of Harmony. Coordination with John is required. (thanks John!)

June 16th(?) - Shilo North Site

Club News:

Sky & Telescope magazine renewals can now be accomplished directly from the subscriber (you). Call them up, and tell them you are a member of BAS (club #493) or mail in your subscription card.

All three loaner scopes are at the Planetarium and available for use by club members in accordance with the BAS Loaner scope procedure.

Outreach News:

There is a new **BAS Sidewalk Solar & Star Party** outreach event scheduled for June 9th; at the Space Coast Stadium. Please contact Oscar Sifuentes if you can help! There were several outreach events in May supported by BAS members. The following is a synopsis of the events from John Small:

F. Burton Community Campout Star Party May 11

Oscar Sifuentes organized the event and I helped out as a telescope volunteer. Weather was partly to mostly cloudy with air temperature in the low 80's. I was using my 10" LX90 SCT and Oscar brought his 14" Dob. We had around 50 visitors and we picked up two new members, Tom Obinger was having a collimation problem with his 10" Zhumell Dob which Oscar corrected for him. When we had breaks in the overcast, objects observed were as follows: Saturn, M65, 66, 96, 106 along with the Leo Trio. Also double stars Cor Caroli, ITO CNC, Mizar and Alcor and several in the Bootes constellation.

Outreach Solar Party at Atlantis Elementary School - May 15

During the last 3 weeks of school second grade students in Mrs. Foster's class at Atlantis Elementary School in Port St. John were studying the solar system and sun spots. Oscar's grandson Anthony is in Mrs. Foster's class. With permission from the schools faculty and students parents Oscar brought his 8" Newtonian to the school at 12:30pm for solar viewing. Each of the 22 students was allowed to view the sun spots located near the center of the solar disc.
After the viewing session Oscar told the children to never look at the sun without adult supervision. The next day Anthony brought home drawings that each student was required to make about Oscar's demonstration. Oscar showed the drawings at the May BAS meeting.

Bunky's Restaurant Star Party - May 18

In conjunction with International Sidewalk Astronomy Night members of BAS set up telescopes for public viewing in front of Bunky's restaurant in Satellite Beach. Telescope volunteers were Bill Manley, 8" Dob, Gary Scott, 120mm refractor and John Small 10" LX90 SCT. Sky conditions were mostly cloudy and windy. The sky was only clear for about an hour and about 35 people got to see Saturn. We had 93 visitors for the night one of which was very special. Her name is Mariah Greenwell and she is 7 years old and attends Surfside Elementary School. She speaks English and Spanish and knows more about astronomy than I did when I was in my twenties. Her main goal in life is "to be an astronaut and be the first woman to set foot on Mars". She and her father spent about two hours with us. They had a problem with their telescope and Bill helped them out. This event lasted from 5pm till 11pm. BAS would like to thank Scott Tantius the owner of Bunky's for allowing us to have our event on his property.

International Sidewalk Astronomy Night at Space Coast Stadium -May19

BAS participated in International Sidewalk Astronomy Night by setting up 7 telescopes outside Space Coast Stadium. We had clear, to partly cloudy conditions for solar viewing from 4 till 7pm and clear conditions the rest of the event which ended at 11pm. The baseball fans were treated to views of the sun before the game and Saturn, Venus and the Moon afterward. The Moon and Venus were in close conjunction and many people commented they didn't know Venus had phases like the Moon. The view along the Lunar terminator was excellent with large craters visible. Saturn wowed the crowd as usual.

Telescope volunteers were Gary Scott 12" LX200 SCT, Dave Guibert ETX 125 Maksutov, Greg O'Neill 120mm refractor, Oscar Sifuentes 10" Dob, Doug Sumerlin 10" Dob, John Small 10" LX90 SCT and from Melbourne Astronomical Society we had Ron Netzley with an 80mm refractor.

BAS would like to thank Kyle Smith and his staff at Space Coast Stadium they were very accommodating and saw to our every need. Also thanks to our volunteers we put on a great show and our visitors were blown away. You could say BAS stands for BIG AT STADIUM we had 587 people look through our telescopes!
Thanks and clear skies,
John Small

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