



Sky Watch

Issue #9
October 06

The Newsletter of the Brevard Astronomical Society

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Club News:

The telescope mirror making class is off to a slow start, but progressing. The kit materials have been received (John Norczyk). The plan is to dedicate from 8pm – 9pm for the class beginning with the October meeting, so bring your glass and work table!

Next BAS Star Party:

There is no "local" scheduled star party for Sept.; however some members intend to travel to Chiefland Fl. the weekend of 22 November.

Moon Phases:

Full: Oct 6th



New: Oct 22nd



So What's in the Sky in October?

There are a few morning passes of the ISS in Oct, and several overhead passes of the HST, also in the morning.

Check: www.heavens-above.com for specific pass times and coordinates for your area.

As the summer triangle heads west in the evening, the focus of the amateur astronomer quickly turns to great Andromeda galaxy M31. It can be found up and to the left of "βAnd" (second star down from the lower left corner of the great square of Pegasus) Companion galaxies M32 and M110 are also part of the view. All three can be seen with a decent pair of Binoculars, or a low mag eyepiece.



There are many other targets near and around Andromeda. The Double Cluster (NGC 884 and NGC 869) between Perseus and Cassiopia are beautiful through a decent pair of binoculars, or a low magnified eyepiece. Also, the eclipsing binary star *Algol* in Perseus is an every 2.87 days its brightness drops by more than a magnitude and then rises again. In October you can watch this happen over a period of hours around 22:25 UT on the 19th and 19:14 UT on the 22nd.

Chiefland Report:

A few of us went to the Chiefland Astronomy Village 22-24 Sept. The sky was spectacular. Maybe not "Arizona level spectacular", but it is certainly one of the best sites accessible by car. Highly recommend it.

PLANETS:

October is another good month to observe the planet **Uranus**. On October 22nd, the night of new moon, Uranus, with a magnitude of 5.8, lies just 40 arc minutes near the 4th magnitude star Lambda Aquarii.

Neptune remains in Capricornus to the southwest but you will need a relatively dark sky and good telescope to attempt.

Mercury reaches its greatest elongation from the Sun on October 16th. Just after sunset on the 25th October you will have a chance to see Mercury and Jupiter just 4 degrees apart in the sky. A thin crescent Moon will be just to the left of both.

Saturn rises in the northeast near dawn in Leo.

Outreach News:

There is an "Eagle District Fall Family Campout Star Party" scheduled for Oct. 7th at Wickham Park.

November there are 2 events on the 11th; the Harmony Dark Sky Festival, and the Moonlight Stroll at Erna Nixon Park.

See the BAS website or contact Oscar Sifuentes to volunteer.

BCC Observatory

Visitor statistics:

(At the recommendation of Jan Ferguson, I will begin posting visitor stats for the previous month)

September 2006:

Total Observatory visitors: xxx

Avg: xxx

High: xxx

Low: xxx

Upcoming BAS Meetings &

Agenda:

October 18th –

Reminder: Chuck Greenwood has arranged for to be at the 18 October BAS meeting. They will provide fingerprinting for observatory volunteers. There is no cost to members.

Also: Volunteers are needed to act as nominating committee for the 2007 Officer elections.



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Summary of Aug 16th meeting:

(1) Proposal to modify the BAS By-Laws to modify the dues per member to the current \$25 annual.

(2) A motion was raised and accepted to raffle off the 2 donated telescopes at a raffle during Astronomy Day 2007. The money received will be re-invested for a raffle prize for the next year. Oscar will check the working status of the scopes.

(3) Discussion regarding procedure for loaner scopes (see below).

Club Telescope News:

The BAS currently has two telescopes for use by club members. Contact Gary Scott for additional information.

Jason Lehmann currently has the 16" dobsonian.

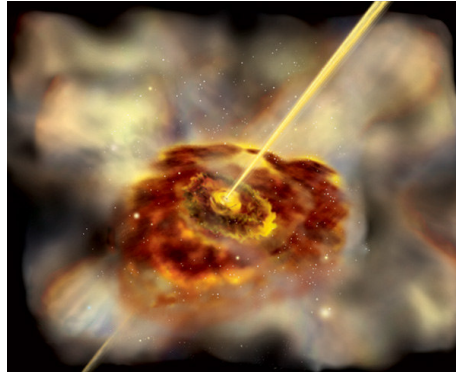
The 8" Orion is at the Planetarium. There appears to be a problem with the encoder card on the go-to.

B. Manley volunteered to draft a procedure for loaner scopes. The draft will be reviewed at the Oct mtg.

Featured Science Article:

<http://www.universetoday.com>

Survey of Near by Black Holes



According to data gathered by NASA's Swift satellite [in a project that scanned the entire sky several times over a nine-month period], there are about 200 supermassive black holes within about 400 million light-years of the Earth.

Swift's first job is to scan the skies for gamma ray bursts, but during downtime, the spacecraft hunts for objects that emit X-rays, and supermassive black holes are one of the most powerful sources of X-rays out there.

The all-sky survey contains more than 200 supermassive black holes called *Active Galactic Nuclei*, or AGN, and provides a definitive census of black hole activity in the local universe.

AGN have a mass of millions to billions of suns, which are confined within a region about the size of our solar system. The term "active" refers to the process of actively pulling in gas and whole stars and generating copious amounts of energy from a tiny galactic core in the process. Examples include quasars and Seyfert galaxies.

For Sale:

- ❖ Tele Vue 2" 55mm eyepiece, multi-coated Plossl. Like new \$168.
- ❖ Meade Nebular filter 2" broadband (series4000) Like new - \$55.
- ❖ Orion Sirius Plossl eyepiece; 1.25", 26mm Like new - \$19.
- ❖ Adapter; 2" to 1.25 for star diagonal. Good cond \$9.
- ❖ "Visual Astronomy of the Deep Sky" Roger N. Clark. 351 pgs. Very good cond - \$12.
- ❖ Will Tiron Star Atlas deluxe addition. Very good cond - \$24.

For any of the above, call 784-3140

Meade 8" Starfinder Dobsonian Telescope Meade Magellan I telescope comp system (2 included) Telrad, Various eyepieces & Barlow lens. Collimating eyepiece, Moon filter Value worth \$1500. Sell for \$500

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