



Penobscot Valley Star Gazers

An Astronomical Society of Central Maine

<http://www.gazers.org>

March 2008

Snow Day Make Up

The next meeting of the PVSG will be on Monday, March 10, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. in room 310 at John Bapst Memorial High School. If another snow storm doesn't hit, we will hear from NASA intern Jesse Nelson, who will report on his continued work of detecting Saturn's non-seasonal low-latitude stratospheric temperature oscillations:

Two summer internships at the California Institute of Technology Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) were spent reducing and analyzing data on the temperature fluctuations within Saturn's stratosphere. Based on the discovery of Jupiter's non-seasonal temperature fluctuations, the initial assumption is made that Saturn also has these non-seasonal fluctuations. The process for reducing the data will be discussed, as well as the analysis and findings, which suggest that the predicted temperature fluctuations may indeed exist.

Thanks for last month's program go to Bill for his photos and commentary about his trip to the Okie-Tex star party.

Where the Wind Comes Sweepin'

February 11, 2008



The first meeting of 2008 was a month later than usual because of the cancellation of last month's meeting by a snow-storm. With 15 members present at one time or another during the meeting, Bill started the meeting at 6:33 PM without Wade.

February 2008 Bill began by telling us of his trip to the OKIE-TEX Star Party at Camp Billy Joe at Black Mesa, Oklahoma. To find out more about the event you can visit: <http://www.okie-tex.com/>.

Bill began his trip by taking the Downeaster train out of Portland to Boston. After getting into North Station in Boston he went to South Station to continue his trip. From Boston he went to Chicago and then from there to Colorado. Bill had a computer slide show presentation showing pictures from different locations on his trip. Bill had a short layover in Chicago and went outside Union Station in Chicago to look around. Bill also had many pictures taken from inside his train of the surrounding countryside as he rode past.

In Trinidad, Colorado he picked up a rental car to drive to the Star Party site. As Bill has been in this area before when he was younger he was interested in seeing if some of the places and sites he remembered from his youth were as he remembered them. The site

in Black Mesa is a site of previous volcanic activity and Bill showed us pictures of some of the now dormant volcanos and resulting lava flows.

Camp Billy Joe is a church campground. Bill says this is a very dark viewing site, and the stars and Milky Way put out so much light at night that you do not need a red flashlight to find your way around. While at the

site, which had very good viewing the whole time Bill was there, Bill enjoyed attending the daytime talks and lectures and viewing the sky at night. Typically between 150 and 200 people attend this star party that spans two weekends.

During his talk Bill also passed around several handouts from his trip to the Star Party. Bill took with him to the star party his new 25 x 100 binoculars which he also brought to the meeting to display. He was also wearing his Okie-Tex Star Party T-shirt. On his way back he had a stopover in Washington D.C., where he had a short tour of the National Air and

On the Schedule

(Items Subject to Change)

PROGRAMS

Unknown

STAR PARTIES

March 6: Globe at Night, Challenger Center, 6:30 pm to 8 pm

March 15(rs): Telescope Clinic, Jordan Planetarium, noon to 6 pm

First date is primary, second is rain date; ? Tentative; (rs) rain or shine; (co) clear only

Space Museum. Throughout his talk, which lasted about an hour, Bill continued to show us pictures taken during his trip. Very enjoyable presentation.

Shortly after Bill began his talk, Wade arrived and after Bill finished Wade began the business part of the meeting. With no meeting in January Wade continued to work on setting up events for our club in the coming months such as the Telescope Clinic scheduled for March 15th at the University.

Bill's treasury report was accepted by the membership. As there was no meeting last month the minutes were not even mentioned from the December meeting or the fact that Ralph M. put out a newsletter for February. Jesse Nelson is scheduled to speak at our March meeting. Scott reported on the potluck dinner and Star Party which took place in February at his house. Carolyn even had pictures to pass around. According to Scott about 17 people attended. Wade reported that he had received a thank you note from Ann for the flowers the club had sent her following her operation. Dave reported he had received a letter from Timothy Kent promoting his new book *StarQuest - A Beginner's Guide to Digital Astrophotography*. The book normally sells for \$16.95 but is available now for \$12.95; you can find more information at his web site: <http://mysite.verizon.net/vzex6141/starquestastrophotographyguide/>

Wade also reported he had an email from Dick about a real Porter Garden telescope for sale. As far as we know Wade did not buy it.

Under Old Business we were reminded that the club was going to help out at the Challenger Learning Center on February 20 for the lunar eclipse. Wade was looking for members who could help out. The Jordan Observatory at the University of Maine was also going to be open that night weather permitting. We also had an email from Globe at Night about light pollution and making the public aware of the problem of light pollution. If you go to their web site at <http://www.globe.gov/globeatnight/> you can learn more and download star charts from their web site so you can determine the limits of naked eye viewing at night in your area. The period for filling out the research is from February 25 to March 8th.

Under new business the Challenger Learning Center is also looking for our help for a March 6th (Thursday night) event. Contact Wade for more details. On Saturday March 15 there is going to be a Telescope Clinic at the Maynard F. Jordan Planetarium from noon to 5 or 6 PM and a possible star party that evening weather permitting. If there is a Star Party the Observatory will also be open.

Observing reports - Dave was out observing and

Wade handed out a chart showing his observations of Comet Holmes.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Ralph

Future Speakers and meetings: To be determined - Dave will speak on 6 numbers.

E-mail Excerpts

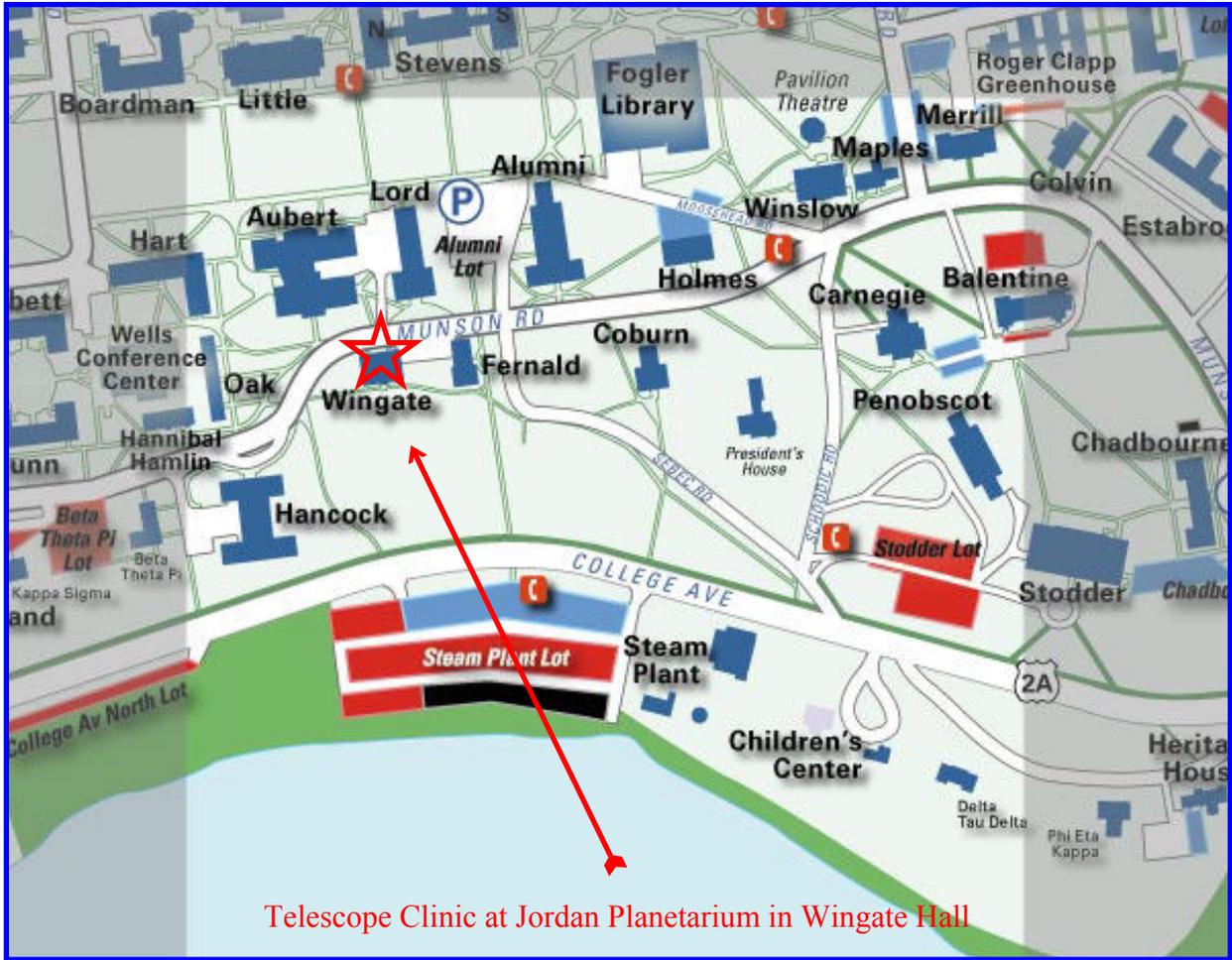
Club news sent by e-mail since the last meeting.
Simply for the record and for those for whom we have no e-mail addresses.

Insurance

Hi All, Through misfiling on my part, I discovered a letter from MMG (who ultimately provided our insurance policy) which was sent from Presque Isle 14 Sept, 2007 stating that even though we had sent in our premium, it arrived too late for MMG and they sent back our payment and canceled our policy. I contacted J T Rosborough today, and they will renew our policy as soon as I fill out the renewal form which has been sent to me today. Our policy will take effect as soon as J T Rosborough receives the completed form. Bill, I will need to see you to give you the completed form when I get it, and to give you the check from MMG for deposit. As to our upcoming events, those who attend the Challenger Learning Center please be aware of the above mentioned problem and act as you feel comfortable. I anticipate the policy to be in effect for our meeting and the telescope clinic. I apologize for my negligence. Humbly, Wade

Hi there folks, I have received some info from the astronomical league. This will be discussed at the next meeting. All interested members please attend, as your input will be greatly appreciated. I will also bring a noose so those so inclined may string me up! Thanks, Wade

Hello Wade, Attached is the insurance information that you requested. I believe it is up-to-date. Also attached is the preferred roster format that our National Office would like. Only those members joining the League need to be included on this list. Regarding the dues...A 95% or greater club participation is \$5 per member plus a \$10 club fee. As an example, if your club has 50 members and 49 wish to join the League, then the dues works out to be: $(49 \times \$5) + \$10 = \$255$. If, instead in the same club, only 40 out of the 50 members (i.e. 80% of the total club membership) wish to become League members, then the dues works out to be: $(40 \times \$7.50) + \$10 = \$310$. For the pro-rated amounts, please contact our National Office Manager, Mitch Glaze. He'll be happy to answer your questions. Clear skies, John Jardine Goss Astronomical League, Secretary



Telescope Clinic at Jordan Planetarium in Wingate Hall

