Astro Chatter
by Larry Kalinowski

Crummy weather around here has dimmed our chances of getting pictures of Comet McNaught (C/2006P1). The best view probably being on January 10. Its brightness being estimated at ~3, around eight degrees from the Sun. The comet has moved into the southern hemisphere sky very quickly and is lost to northern hemisphere observers by now. Look for some really great shots by amateurs south of the equator in the near future. Dave Curtis, of Dunedin, New Zealand, took this photo on January 18, with a Cannon EOS 1D, ISO 1,000, 4 sec. At F2.8. No doubt, this is probably the best comet seen by northern observers in the last forty years and the southern hemisphere is getting the best part of the show.

Since the next total eclipse of the Moon occurs on Saturday, March 3rd, two days before our Cranbrook meeting, I decided it might be wise to discuss that eclipse in this month’s issue. Totality begins at 5:44 PM and ends at 6:58 in the Eastern Standard Time zone. Mid eclipse is at 6:21. Lunar eclipses are easily photographed, so if the weather cooperates, a camera and tripod are all that’s needed. Telephoto or zoom lenses are recommended for more appealing shots but a standard lens will suffice. This eclipse will not be as dark as some of the past ones because the Moon will pass through the upper portion of the Umbra, where the shadow is lighter. This type of eclipse can be quite colorful because of the large range of shading from the top of the Moon to the bottom.
Dave Bailey did his usual great job talking about SETI during the last MCCC meeting. The best part of his talk was about new methods to search for ETC (Extra Terrestrial Civilizations). However, much of his methods included transmissions by us in order to make contact. As you know, all of our searching involves passively receiving signals from the stars deemed most likely to harbor intelligent life, not transmitting signals. Maybe that's why we haven't heard any ETC signals. Everyone is listening and no one is speaking.

January’s discussion group was attended by nine people. The Gathen’s Christmas tree was still up and it provided a festive atmosphere to the meeting. When the meeting started, we had an example of core memory passed around. It’s the kind of memory that early computers used in the middle of the last century. Then we discussed comet McNaught until the Poodle in the Moon came up. For some reason the group then split up into three factions, with each group talking about their own thing.

February’s discussion/computer group meeting will be on the fourth Thursday, the 22nd, at Gary Gathen’s home in Pleasant Ridge. He lives at 21 Elm Park Blvd., three blocks south of I-696 and about a half block west of Woodward Ave. Meeting will start at 8:00 PM. You can reach Gary at 248-543-3366, or me, at 586-776-9720 for any further information.

All space photos are courtesy of SPACE.COM and SPACEWEATHER.COM, unless otherwise noted.

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THE SWAPSHOP

This column is for those who are interested in buying, trading or selling items. Call 586-776-9720 (cometman@mybluelight.com) if you want to put an item for sale or trade in this section of the WASP. The ad will run for six months. The month and year, the ad will be removed, is also shown.

FOR SALE. A nice Orion SkyQuest Intelliscope. The scope is in great condition and well taken care of. Orion’s Object Locator, with holster, comes with the scope, as well as two rechargeable 9V batteries and a 10mm Sirius Plossl eyepiece. All the encoders on both axis’ are also installed. The batteries were only used about five times but they hold a good charge. The scope has a 9X50 apochromatic finder. There are two nice aluminum focus wheels installed on the two inch Crayford focuser. A cooling/warming fan has been placed on the bottom of the mirror cell to stabilize the scopes temperature. The fan runs from a standard 12 volt male adaptor. The fan has a twelve volt female adaptor. All user’s manuals are included. I'm selling this scope to aim towards a Celestron Go To scope, possibly a Celestron 5se. I need portability, ability for tracking and for astrophotography. Asking price is $575, or best offer. See the photos below. Michael Robacker at mbrobacker@hotmail.com or call 248-398-7010. (7-07).

FOR SALE. Coulter Odyssey 1 , 13.1 inch, red tube model with rack and pinion focuser, University Optics RACI finderscope and a handy wheel system for easy moving in or out of your garage. $475. Mark Gottlieb, 248-542-9426. wolfcave@mich.com. (4-07).
WAS SUB-GROUPS

Want to delve more deeply into a specific field of interest in astronomy? Joining a sub-group just may be the answer. Please contact the chairperson listed by the subgroup of interest for more information, meeting times and location. Current sub-groups are:

Discussion/Computer Group - Larry Kalinowski
Lunar/Planetary/Double Stars - Alan Rothenberg
Deep Sky Group - Phil Martin
Solar Group - Marty Kunz
Hands on Group - Riyad Matti

WAS Meetings scheduled for 2007

Cranbrook Meetings – Every 1st Monday
Feb. 5 Mar. 5 Apr. 2 May 7
June 4 July 2 Aug. 6 Sep. 3
Oct. 1 Nov. 5 Dec. 3

Macomb Meetings – Every 3rd Thursday
Feb. 15 Mar. 15 Apr. 19 May 17
June 21 July 19 Aug. 16 Sep. 20
Oct. 18 Nov. 15 Dec. 20 (Tentative Banquet Date)

Warren Astronomical Society

2007 presentations

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16-Aug Thurs
3-Sep Mon Ken Bertin TBD
20-Sep Thurs
1-Oct Mon Dale Partin TBD
18 Oct Thurs Guy Maxim TBD
5-Nov Mon
15-Nov Thurs Larry Kalinowski “Let Me Demonstrate”
3-Dec Mon Alan Rothenberg TBD
20-Dec Thurs Banquet

Please contact the 1st V.P. (program chairperson) to:

1: Schedule new presentation.
2: Alter scheduled presentations.
3: Add a subject title to your presentation.
4: Change the subject title of your presentation.

Thank you for your support,

Riyad I. Matti
W.A.S. 1st V.P. (program chairperson) 2006/2007

February, 2007 Calendar

Thursday, Feb 1 • 5:00 P.M.: Asteroid Pallas is in conjunction with the Sun
Friday, Feb 2 • 12:45 A.M.: Full Moon
Saturday, Feb 3 • 9:00 A.M.: The Moon passes 1.1° north of Regulus
Wednesday, Feb 7 • 1:00 A.M.: Mercury is in superior conjunction
7:38 A.M.: The Moon is at apogee (251,651 miles from Earth; 8:00 A.M. Venus passes 0.7° south of Uranus; Noon: Mercury is at greatest eastern elongation (18°); 11:00 P.M.: The Moon passes 1.3° south of Spica
Thursday, Feb 8 • 11:00 A.M.: Neptune is in conjunction with the Sun
Saturday, Feb 10 • 4:51 A.M.: Last Quarter Moon; 2:00 P.M.: Saturn is at opposition
Sunday, Feb 11 • 5:00 P.M.: The Moon passes 0.7° south of Antares
Monday, Feb 12 • 5:00 A.M.: The Moon passes 6° south of Jupiter
Wednesday, Feb 14 • 8:00 P.M.: The Moon passes 4° south of Mars
Saturday, Feb 17 • 11:14 A.M.: New Moon
Monday, Feb 19 • 4:36 A.M.: The Moon is at perigee (224,586 miles from Earth); Noon: The Moon passes 2° north of Venus
Saturday, Feb 24 • 2:56 A.M.: First Quarter Moon
Wednesday, Feb 28 • dusk: Moon passes 1.5° North of M44, the Beehive star cluster.
2007 Stargate Observatory Open House Schedule
Feb 24th
Mar 24th
April 21st
May 19th...NOTE this will most likely be adjusted as this is the same day as the Skies over Clarkston AND I believe National Astronomy Day
June 16th
July 7th Club Picnic starting at noon (closed to public)
July 21st Normal open house date NOTE that two events this month
Aug 11 also Perseids watch
Sept 15th
Oct 13th
Nov 10th
Dec 8th

1. Normal closing time will depend on events, weather, and other variables.
2. The observatory may be closed one hour after opening time if no members arrive within the first hour.
3. Contact me for other arrangements, such as late arrival time.
4. An alternative person will be appointed to open the observatory if I cannot attend a scheduled date or opening time.
5. Members may arrive before or stay after the scheduled open house time.
6. Dates are subject to change or cancellation depending on weather or staffing availability.
7. An e-mail will be posted no later than 2 hours before starting time incase of date change or cancellation.
8. It is best to email me up to 2 hours before the posted opening with any questions you may have. I will not be able to receive e-mail after 2 hours before open time.

Generally only strong rain or snow would prevent the open house...even if it is clouded over I plan on being there. Often the weather is cloudy but clears up as the evening progresses.

Bob Berta
W.A.S. 2nd V.P. (2007)
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Meeting Minutes
Warren Astronomical Society
Minutes of BOARD Meeting
January 8, 2007 - Cranbrook

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 pm.

Attendance:
Norman Dillard, Marty Kunz, Dale Partin, Bob Berta, Riyad Matti, Stephen Uitti, Phil Martin

The minutes of the December meetings were read and approved.

The treasurer’s report said that we had $4829.45. Approved.

Bob Berta will head a committee to look into the issues of repairing Stargate and / or exploring a new site for an observatory. Club members will be invited to participate.

It was decided to spend about $172.80 for a roll of glow in the dark tape.

There was discussion about the club buying a 40 mm Coronado for solar observing. There was also a discussion about getting a projector for the club. No action was taken.

Stephen said that he will have the opt in list finished for the next Macomb meeting or soon thereafter.

Therese Oldani is requesting help with solar observing at her school on Jan 19 or 26.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dale Partin
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Warren Astronomical Society
Minutes of club meeting
January 8, 2007 - Cranbrook

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 pm.

The officer and committee reports were given.

A sign-up sheet was passed around for those interested in attending the annual club banquet.

An “opt-in” sign-up sheet was passed around for those interested in having their personal contact information available to other club members.

Larry Phipps gave a presentation entitled, “The Antikythera Mechanism.”

Alan Rothenberg gave a presentation entitled, “The 2006 Eclipse in the Aegean Sea.”

36 people attended the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dale Partin
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Warren Astronomical Society  
Minutes of club meeting  
January 18, 2007 - Macomb

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.

The officer and committee reports were given. The treasury contains $5031.45.

There will be open houses at Stargate on January 27, February 24, and March 24.

Bill Beers said that the next Cadillac Star Party will be June 13-17.

People were invited to consider joining a committee headed by Bob Berta to look into the issues of repairing Stargate and / or exploring a new site for an observatory.

Dave Bailey gave a presentation entitled, “SETI: How, Where, When and What Frequency to Transmit and Listen On.”

31 people attended the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dale Partin

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Member’s Astrophyotos

Horse Head by Dr. Philip Martin

(Pictures of note along with background data may be submitted to the WASP editor for publication)

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From Trent Wells JPL/NASA:

Marshmallows? Cotton candy?

Comets are beautiful, mysterious objects only rarely seen in our night skies. A comet often appears as a fuzzy ball with a long, white tail—sometimes with a second blue tail visible. But what are they? What’s at the heart of a comet? That’s what the Deep Impact space mission set out to learn by crashing its “smart impactor” into the nucleus of Comet Tempel 1 on July 4, 2005. Deep Impact’s camera and many other orbiting and ground-based telescopes observed and studied the material that was blasted out of the resulting crater. Now scientists all over the world have had time to look at the data and gain a better understanding of these icy visitors from the outer solar system. Visit The Space Place at http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/deepimpact, and see what they have found out.

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Celestron’s Revolutionary Sky Scout 
Star and Planet Locator: 
Reg. $399 – Now only $379 
(With your Rider’s RED card)

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RIDER’S HOBBY SHOPS

30991 Five Mile Rd., Livonia, MI 48154 
(734) 425-9720 – Ask for John or Dan
After being launched in January 2005, Deep Impact met up with Comet Tempel 1 on July 3, 2005. Just 24 hours before this meeting, a part of the spacecraft, called the smart impactor, separated from the other part, called the flyby spacecraft. The impactor flew all by itself right smack into the path of the comet! The comet was traveling a lot faster, so BLAM! The impactor crashed into the comet . . . or rather, the comet crashed into the impactor at 36,000 kilometers per hour (or 23,000 miles per hour)! Whoever crashed into whom, the impact caused a big flash of light, threw up a lot of debris, and left a big crater! But, don't worry, the crash wasn't big enough to change the comet's orbit.

This article was provided by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
Clarkston Community Band
Vince Chrisman, Music Director & Conductor

STARS OVER CLARKSTON II
A Concert of Space Music and Star Party

With The
WARREN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
Norman Dillard, President

Saturday
May 19, 2007
7:00 PM

FREE ADMISSION
Family & Friends Fun
Bring a picnic, Lawn Chairs, Blankets, and your Telescope

Clintonwood Park
6000 Clarkston Road
Clarkston, MI 48348

Music of stars & space  Multimedia presentations  Astronomy talks
Telescope viewing – solar, planetary and deep space
Learn about telescopes or bring your telescope and learn how to use it

Independence Township Parks and Recreation
Michael Turk, Director

For more information call 248.625.8223 or email clarkstonband@hotmail.com
www.clarkstonband.org
Clarksont Community Band  
www.clarkstonband.org

Warren Astronomical Society  
www.warrenastronomicalsociety.org

FOR RELEASE
Contact: Vince Chrisman
586/344.5505
clarkstonband@hotmail.com

STARS AND MUSIC FILLS THE AIR WITH THE CLARKSTON COMMUNITY BAND AND WARREN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY CONCERT AND STAR PARTY

The Clarkston Community Band (CCB) joined by members from the Greater Windsor Concert Band, Warren Astronomical Society (WAS), and Independence Township Parks and Recreation present “Stars Over Clarkston II”. This FREE event will take place on Saturday, May 19, 2007, at 7:00 pm in Clintonwood Park, 6000 Clarkston Road, Clarkston, MI 48348.

The evening starts off with a dazzling musical concert featuring space music from the movies including “Star Wars”, “Lost in Space” and “Star Trek”. Treasures from the band’s extensive music library will bring you the big band sound with “Star Dust” and “Fly Me to the Moon.” Recently the Chandra X-ray Observatory has detected the deepest musical note ever sounded in the universe - B flat, 57 octaves below middle C - emitted by a black hole. Join the CCB tuba and low brass sections as they attempt to repeat this historic event.

After the concert the WAS will have short astronomy presentations with a Q&A period including how to use your telescope! WAS members will bring their telescopes and Southern Michigan’s largest portable 22” Dobsonian telescope for you to view through. So pack up a picnic dinner, blankets/lawn chairs, your telescope (optional) and shoot on over for the greatest musical star party ever!

Now in its 11th season, the Clarkston Community Band is one of the areas fastest growing and most respected wind bands. Its 52 volunteer musicians dedicate their time and talents to performing free concerts for the greater Clarkston area and presenting various educational and family entertaining themed concerts. The band was selected to perform internationally in 2007 for the “Spectacle of Winds” with the Greater Windsor Concert Band. CCB programs are made possible in part by Independence Township Parks and Recreation and the Clarkston Community Schools.

For more information, contact Independence Township Parks and Recreation at 248.625.8223, email clarkstonband@hotmail.com or visit www.clarkstonband.org.