The W.A.S.P. newsletter

March 2006

The Warren Astronomical Society Paper

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The WASP (Warren Astronomical Society Paper) is the official monthly publication of the Society. Each new issue of the WASP is e-mailed to each member and/or available online www.warrenastronomicalsociety.org. Requests by other Astronomy clubs to receive the WASP, and all other correspondence should be addressed to the editor, Cliff Jones, email: cliffordj@ameritech.net

Articles for inclusion in the WASP are strongly encouraged and should be submitted to the editor on or before the first of each month. Any format of submission is accepted, however the easiest forms for this editor to use are plain text files. Most popular graphics formats are acceptable. Materials can be submitted either in printed form in person or via US Mail, or preferably, electronically via direct modem connection or email to the editor.

Disclaimer: The articles presented herein represent the opinions of the authors and are not necessarily the opinions of the WAS or the editor. The WASP reserves the right to deny publication of any submission.

Astro Chatter

by Larry Kalinowski

A cosmic outburst that has yet to be explained has appeared in the constellation Taurus. The Space probe (Swift) that's designed to detect Gamma Ray Outbursts saw it on February 18 and can be seen by amateur telescopes at RA: 03:21:39.71 and Dec.:+16:52:02.6. It's quite possible that it could become a supernova in the not to distant future.

One of our fellow telescope makers passed away on Thursday, February ninth. Don Lemons, the guy who always had the perfect brush haircut, went to visit the great telescope maker in the sky. I'll always remember him as the guy who wouldn't take anything I told him about telescope mirror making for granted. Whenever he didn't quite want to accept my explanation, he told me he needed additional verification from another source. He always double checked my math and a few times he helped make my understanding of mirror making better. His curiosity about double stars and making physical measurements of position angles and separations got me to appreciate the universe even more. I hope I get to meet him again when I take my last trip. He was wonderful company for our kind with inquisitive minds. Our club needs more like him.

Occasionally, light patterns appear in the sky, caused by unfamiliar sources. The picture below is a series of light pillars but not the

pillars you and I have come to know as northern lights. They're caused by ice crystals in the atmosphere on cold days when the temperatures drop below freezing. This picture was taken in Kalamazoo, during our cold snap in mid February.

Speakers for March include a planetarium demonstration at The Cranbrook Science Center. You can bring guests but everyone must be there before the show starts because no entry will be allowed after the planetarium doors close. That's March 6, right after the meeting starts at 7:30PM. The MCCC meeting, on March 16, Bldg. B, room 209, features Dr. Gary Ross presenting astrophotography shots created by a past WAS member, Mark Cristensen, who now resides in the Chicago area. That meeting also starts at 7:30PM.

Brian Klaus provides this definition of the term Xenaphobic; The fear of getting beaten up by the Greek Warrior Princess, Xena, when she learns you don't want to name the newly discovered planet after her.

Open houses at the Stargate Observatory will be on March 18, May 6 (Astronomy Day), May 20 (spring cleanup), June 24, July 29 (picnic), August 19, September 16, October 14, November 11 and December 2. All these dates occur on a Saturday. The Cranbrook Science Center will also have a special program for the public during the Astronomy Day afternoon. Solar and planetary viewing are possible if the cloud conditions are favorable. Stargate's event occurs during the evening hours. Members are asked to help out at these events, if possible, so bring your telescopes, binoculars and sky pointers.

March's discussion/computer group meeting will be on the 23rd, (the fourth Thursday of the month) 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 him 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. Sceptre Dragon Eye 16" Color monitor. The monitor has great picture quallity and contrast ratio. Dot pich is .29 mm and the highest resulution is 1024 x 768 with over 16 million colors. Dimentions is 16" x 16" x 16" and wieghs around 30 pounds and the color is beige. Awesome monitor for astro photos. asking cost is $45. Contact Michael Robacker at MBRobacker@hotmail.com or (248)-398-7010. (6-06).

Mark Christensen, of the Fox Valley Astronomical Society, in Illinois, reports that a friend of his passed away and he has agreed to help sell the astronomical equipment in the estate. The stuff is arranged in lots.

Lot #1. Celestron C-11 Telescope with CL 700A Motorized mount/Controller and heavy duty tripod. 3 Celestron boxes, Celestron visual back 1 ¼ in., Celestron 2 inch diagonal, 26 and 25 mm Plossl eyepieces, 2-25 lb weights, heater system and sliding astronomy chair. $3200 or best offer.

Lot #2. Takahashi FSQ Quadruplet Flouride Refractor Telescope with 106mm objective and 530mm focal length lens. Includes an EXQ 1.6X extender, Celestron Box and Takahashi 1 ¼ in diagonal. $2800 or best offer.

Lot #3. Meade series 4000 eyepieces. Includes a 56mm ($140), 40mm ($140), 32mm ($100), 14mm($100) 2 in dia. eyepieces and a 6.7mm 1 1/4in Ultra Wide eyepiece ($50).

Lot #4. Canon camera and assorted astrophotography equipment and accessories. 7X50 binoculars. Approximate value $200. Contact Jim Griffin at kanecountyastro@yahoo.com, or by phone, during the day, at 630-232-8070. (5-06).

FOR SALE. Meade 10-inch LXD55 SN-10 with UHTC, Schmidt-Newtonian with Autostar.

Includes the following: Meade 26mm Super Plossl eyepiece, Scoptronics 40mm Plossl eyepiece, Scoptronics 15mm Plossl, 2X Barlow lens, 12mm standard eyepiece, Orion Stargazers 4 filter set, Orion accessory case, Orion red dot EZ finder II, Meade AC adaptor and battery pack, Meade camera adaptor and 2 inch eyepiece adaptor, new declination motor drive replaced 5-25-05. Telescope is in good condition with excellent optics. $850, pick up only. Jdbuhl@aol.com. (4-06).

FOR SALE. Celestron G-5 with motor drive, Bushnell 80mm refractor with "you-go-to" feature, Swift 114mm Newtonian, many binoculars, all at cost or below! Contact Bob Johnson at 248-541-0914. (4-06).

FOR SALE. Pool cover for in-ground pool. 20X35 ft. for 15X30 pool or smaller. Never Used. $30. 586-776-9720. Cometman @mybluelight.com. (4-06).

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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

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WAS Meetings scheduled for 2006

Cranbrook Meetings – Every 1st Monday

Jan 2	Feb 6	Mar 6	Apr 3
May 1	Jun 5	July 3	Aug 7
Sep 4	Oct 2	Nov 6	Dec 4

Macomb Meetings – Every 3rd Thursday

Jan 19	Feb 16	Mar 16	Apr 20
May 18	Jun 15	Jul 20	Aug 17
Sep 21	Oct 19	Nov 16	Dec ★

★ Banquet date to be determined.

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Presentations for 2006

Date	Day	Presenter	Subject
3/06/06	Mon	Planetarium	Demonstration
3/16/06	Thurs	Dr. Gary Ross-Astrophotos	
4/03/06	Mon	Dave Workun	TBD
4/20/06	Thurs	OPEN	
5/01/06	Mon	Bob Berta	I'm Only Human
5/18/06	Thurs	Jim Shedslowsky	TBD
6/05/06	Mon	Alan Rothenberg	Mars
6/15/06	Thurs	Riyad Matti	TBD
7/03/06	Mon	Marty Kunz	TBD
7/20/06	Thurs	Larry Phipps	TBD
8/07/06	Mon	Norm Dillard	Satellite Galaxies
8/17/06	Thurs	Steve Uitti	TBD
9/11/06	Mon	OPEN	TBD
9/21/06	Thurs	Larry Kalinowski	TBD
10/02/06	Mon	Dale Partin	TBD
10/19/06	Thurs	Dave Bailey	TBD
11/06/06	Mon	Ken Bertin	TBD
11/16/06	Thurs	Dave D'onofrio	TBD
12/04/06	Mon	OPEN	TBD
12/21/06	Thurs	Banquet	TBD

March 2006 Calendar

Monday, Mar 6 • 3:16 pm: First Quarter Moon; Mars 3° South of the Moon
Wednesday, Mar 8 • pm: Mars passes 7° North of Aldebaran
Friday, Mar 10 • pm: Saturn 4° south of the Moon; Mars 7° north of Aldebaran
Saturday, Mar 11 • Mercury at inferior conjunction
Wednesday, Mar 14 • 6:35 pm: Full Moon
Friday, Mar 17 • pm: Spica 0.3° south of the Moon
Sunday, Mar 19 • pm: Jupiter is 5° north of the Moon.
Monday, Mar 20 • 1:26 pm:Vernal Equinox
Wednesday, Mar 22 • 2:10 pm: Last Quarter Moon; 4:00 pm: The Moon passes 0.2° south of Antares
Friday, Mar 24 • Mercury is stationary
Saturday, Mar 25 • Venus reaches greatest elongation at 47°, Ceres is 0.8° south of the Moon; Venus is 6° north of the Moon; Neptune is 4° north of the Moon
Sunday, Mar 26 • Venus is 1.9° north of Neptune
Tuesday, Mar 28 • 2:00 am: Moon is at perigee (223,177 miles from earth
Wednesday, Mar 29 • 5:15 am: New Moon; Solar Eclipse (not visible in Michigan – Partial for Europe)

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2006 Stargate Observatory Open House Schedule

March 18 – Start at 3 P.M.: – General observing.

May 6 – Start at 3 P.M.: National Astronomy Day.

May 20 – Start at 6 P.M.: Spring clean-up and General observing.

June 24 – Start at 6 P.M.: General observing.

July 29 – Start at 12 P.M.: Picnic – General observing.

August 19 – Start at 6 P.M.: General observing.

September 16 – Start at 6 P.M.: General observing.

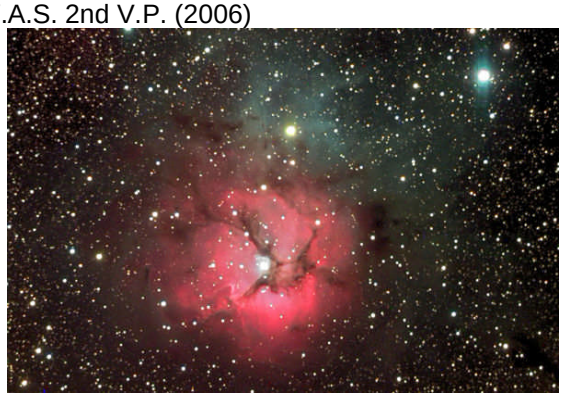
October 14 – Start at 6 P.M.: General observing.

November 11 – Start at 6 P.M.: General observing.

December 2 – Start at 6 P.M.: General observing.

Notes:
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. I will not be able to receive e-mail after 2 hours before open time. Please use my cell number in an urgent situation.

Bob Berta
W.A.S. 2nd V.P. (2006)



Trifid Nebula by Bob Berta

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Notices

Donald Lemons

Born 1-1-1938
Died 2-9-2006

Don is survived by his wife Donna, two daughters, Deborah and Denyce, 3 grandsons and one granddaughter. Don was a civilian employee of the U.S. for 32 years. He came to Michigan in 1967 and was assigned to TACOM as a Senior Safety Engineer.

He started a mirror in the 50's and was thrilled to be able to finish it and make his own telescope while in the club. He enjoyed meeting at Stargate. – Donna Lemons

(Additional info about Don can be found in Larry Kalinowski's Astro Chatter article – front page.)

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We will be updating/modernizing the WASP and would like your input. Please submit any suggestion for format and style change to the WAS officers. The present WASP format was created from our internet web page which can be found at: http://www.warrenastronomicalsociety.org.

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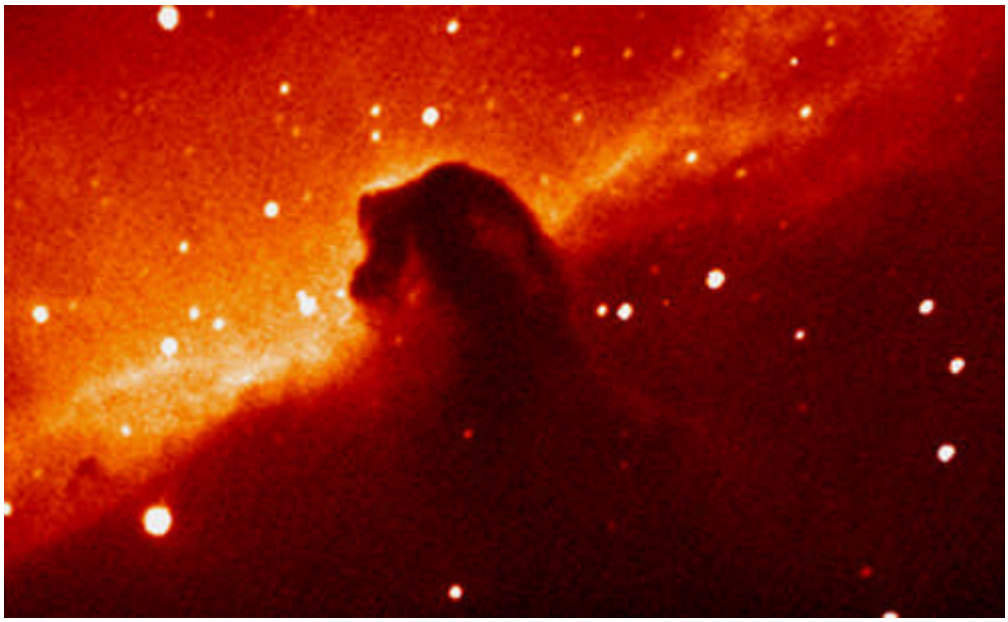
From Nancy Leon of NASA/JPL:

We now have a wonderful new kid-accessible explanation of why the sky is blue -- on our SciJinks web site at http://scijinks.gov/weather/howwhy/bluesky/

Why is the sky blue? Why does the sky sometimes turn red at sunset? Every curious child will ask these question at some point. Are you ready to give scientifically correct and simple answers? Visit SciJinks to refresh your memory. The SciJinks Web site targets young people of middle school age. It is a joint effort of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The new "Why is the sky blue?" page can be found in the How & Why menu on the SciJinks Weather Laboratory home page, scijinks.gov



Horse Head Nebula by Dr. Phil Martin