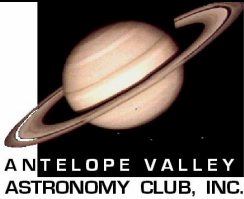

Desert Sky Observer

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NEWSLETTER OF THE ANTELOPE VALLEY ASTRONOMY CLUB, INC
P.O. BOX 4595, LANCASTER, CALIFORNIA 93539-4595

*The Antelope Valley Astronomy Club is a California non-profit Corporation
Visit the Antelope Valley Astronomy Club website At www.avac.av.org
The A.V.A.C. is a Sustaining Member of The Astronomical League*



Up-Coming Events

June 2: Last Quarter Moon

June 8: Dark Star Party, Mt. Pinos

June 10: New Moon

June 14: Monthly Club Meeting*

June 15: Star Party, Poppy Reserve

June 17: First Quarter Moon

June 21: Summer Solstice 6:24 am.

June 24: Full Moon

Anytime: *Observe.*

* Monthly meetings held at the S.A.G.E. Planetarium at the Cactus School in Palmdale on the second Friday of each month. The meeting location is at the northeast corner of Avenue R and 20th Street East. Meeting starts at 7 p.m. Please note that food and drink are not allowed in the planetarium. Monthly A.V.A.C. meetings are open to the public.

President's Report

Terry Pedroza

Congratulations to Nick Bennett for winning one of the many RTMC door prizes! Many AVAC past and present members attended this year's RTMC. I think that most would agree that this year's RTMC was one of the best in recent years. It did not seem to be as crowded as in previous years; there were more swap meet items and many first time vendors. Many of us from the AVAC came home with lighter wallets but with smiles on our faces.

The annual AVAC picnic is coming up soon. I hope that everyone is planning to attend. July 20th and 21st are the dates, Crystallaire country Club is the place. If anyone would like to donate door prize items, raffle items or help with the food and beverages, please contact Matt or me.

The YEA winners will be joining us this year and we may need tents to house them. If anyone has a spare tent that we could borrow, please contact Deb or me.

The AVAC has many requests for our involvement in the community. If you are interested in doing a talk at a school or helping with telescopes at any events, we could surely use the help. We have been talking with NASA about becoming an educational outreach and are progressing nicely. If you might be interested in becoming more involved, please let us know.

I hope to see everyone at the next AVAC meeting

Vice President's Report*Matt Leone*

I want to tell everyone to strap yourselves to your 'scopes because the summer sky is coming. This is the best time of year if you are an observer of Virgo and Leo's galaxies. They are perfect views this time of year and the Milky Way is not far behind Virgo and Leo.

At 10 pm. I am looking for a thousand galaxies and at 1 am. I am looking for the Lagoon, Eagle, Veil, Ring, Swan, and Helix nebulas, 30 globular clusters, 30-50 open clusters, a couple of hundred double stars and of course aqua planetary nebulas.

Don't forget to be at Mt. Pinos to see all of this. At our next Club Meeting on June 14, Chris Butler will talk about "Our little corner of the galaxy." This is going to be a good presentation, so don't forget to come to the meeting. I would tell you more, but it might give too much away.

So don't forget Mt. Pinos. Dress warm and bring your best eye. Get a lot of sleep so you can stay up all night and enjoy the beautiful sky, largely free from pollution. It will be great. Great! Did I say "great"? You betcha

Dir. of Community Development*Debora Pedroza*

Hello Club Members! Here is a brief summary of our community involvement for the months of April and May and a quick peek at what you can expect in the coming summer months: April was a fun-filled month with the excitement of the Poppy Festival as well as the conclusion of the Youth Exploring Astronomy Essay Contest. We had over 150 essays submitted and our judges said it was so tough to choose those finals winners. Here are the names of the six students whose talent made it to the top:

Sixth Grade:

Daniel Pincetich from Sacred Heart School
Lillian Young from Sacred Heart School

Seventh Grade:

Lara Hughes from Joe Walker Middle Sch.
Cody Irvin from Joe Walker Middle School

Eighth Grade:

Lauren Hogan from Sacred Heart School
Anjelica Cardenas from Sacred Heart Sch.

Congratulations to them all! We will have the opportunity to meet the kids and their families at the club picnic in July.

May was a busy month with three community events on our agenda. We did Space Day on Thursday, May 2nd and it was at this event that we met both NASA and Boeing representatives who are very interested in joining up with our club in the future. On May 11th, we did the Air and Space Exploratorium at the Antelope Valley Mall and on May 18th we offered telescope viewing at the Prime Desert Woodlands. We had an abundance of club volunteers at

3

Desert Sky Observer

all of these events and we want to give you all a big THANK YOU. We could not successfully fulfill these events without you.

Looking ahead, we have our club picnic in July as well as the JPL tour for our essay contest winners. On Sunday September 29th from 1-6 pm, we have the AV Youth Expo at the AV Fairgrounds and rolling into fall we will have the Fall Festival at McAdam Park in Palmdale. These are only our confirmed events and who knows what will pop up in between. That is it for now...here's to "spectacular summer" viewing!

Astronomical League Coordinator

Tom Koonce

The "Introduction to the Night Sky" class will be held again Friday evening, June 14th PROMPTLY at 6:00 pm at the SAGE Planetarium prior to the 7:00 meeting time. (Please try to show up a couple of minutes early, as the class will start and end on time.)

This class is MANDATORY for all NEW members that would like to check out one of the Club's telescopes or sets of eyepieces, and it is entirely optional for any other members. All that we ask is that you please reply to takoonce@aol.com or Tom at 661-943-8200 by Wednesday, June 12 if you are planning on attending so I can get the correct number of handouts printed up!

The complete course content can also be found online at: <http://www.astro-tom.com>, but you still have to come and take part in the class before you can check out a club telescope or eyepieces.

Please join us at the upcoming Star Parties. It's a great chance to start your Messier Observation program or other Astronomical League award!

Photos from the Air & Space Expo, May 11th at the AV Mall



The hard work of setup nearly complete.



Bob Redman prepares for the long day.



Doug Drake folds Club fliers before the sea of people hit.



Mary Andrus was one of several Club members who assisted people who stopped by our table.



As always, our telescopes were ready with views of the sun.



And when it was over, everyone was dog tired.

2002 RTMC Astronomy Expo

by *Tom Koonce*

This year was my first time to attend the incredible RTMC Astronomy Expo (RTMC = Riverside Telescope Makers Conference). Terry and Debora Pedroza, Mary Andrus and I headed up to the event at the YMCA Camp Oakes at 6:00 am on Saturday, May 25. I don't know what I was expecting, but it was like the ultimate swap meet of EVERYTHING astronomical. We hadn't been there 15 minutes before I needed to take a load of goodies back to the van! Vendors were set up along the camp's trails, selling everything from old telescope parts and pieces to brand new Televue refractors. I bought the laminated star atlas and UHC filter I've been wanting for and Terry got the Televue 5X Powermate that he's been looking for.

Debora got a beautiful Tony Hallas astrophotograph and some Saturn earrings, while Mary was on the hunt for moon filters for her binoculars. I learned the first lesson of RTMC, "I should have brought more money." You can buy ****anything**** related to astronomy at the RTMC Astro Expo.

Even though there were about 1500 people there, we ran into several other club members while we were walking around. Doug Drake had gone up the night before, so he was well rested and walked around with us. Darrel Bennett and his son Nick were there camping. Fred Ley was photo-documenting the new equipment on the telescope field and scattered along the trails. It was nice to see Dr. Mahadevan and his lovely wife when they stopped by and talked with us while we were eating lunch. By the way, the food was really good and it was inexpensively priced.

I encourage everyone to try to come up to the event next year since it will be just four days away from a new moon. As it was, this year took place during the full moon, but that didn't really matter because the sky was completely overcast. The annual star party was a bust.

Since we knew we were going to leave early, Terry and I spent a long time just walking around, talking to the amateur telescope makers about their various designs. I learned a great deal from these experts that I hope to apply to the 8" mirror and telescope that I have in work.

We ended up leaving after the numerous door prizes were announced. The grand prize for the adults was a 12" Meade LX-200 GPS. I hope the guy who won it appreciates it as much as I would have! :-) We left for home suffering from "Accessory Overload". We couldn't even THINK about any astro-gadgets... well, at least until Sunday afternoon! Hope to see you next year! Bring your astro \$\$!!

Astronomy Links on the Web

<http://www.astro-tom.com/>

(Tom Koonce's website)

<http://pages.prodigy.net/sstrott/>

(Steve Trotta's website)

<http://www.space.com/>

(The name says it all)

<http://www.projectsandhobbies.com/howtolearnastronomy.htm>

(Getting started in Astronomy...)

<http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/archivepix.html>

(Astronomy Picture of the Day)

<http://www.geo.mtu.edu/weather/aurora/>

(Aurora website)

<http://www2.astronomy.com/home.asp>

(A great magazine and resource)

<http://www.avac.av.org/>

(Hey, that's us! So go there!)

Did you know? ?

The third most prevalent chemical on the Sun (behind hydrogen and helium) is oxygen at 0.061% of solar composition.

? ? ?

After the recent discovery of more moons around Jupiter, the totals are now as follows:

Planet	# of Moons
Mercury	0
Venus	0
Earth	1
Mars	2
Jupiter	39
Saturn	30
Uranus	20
Neptune	8
Pluto	1

⌘ ⌘ For Sale ⌘ ⌘

Meade Series 4000 Super Plossl 40 mm 2" eyepiece. Super Wide Angle 67° field of view; Paid retail of \$324.70, asking \$200.00; New in original box. **Call Al Shoomliansky, 945-8900.**

See Tom Koonce's Binocular Mount at the link listed below. Note: This is not a "for sale" item, rather an easy "do-it-yourself" mount: http://www.astro-tom.com/binocular_mount.htm

Got something you want to see in the *Desert Sky Observer*? Whether it's a website, a type of story, or astronomy jokes, then send an e-mail to Brian Peterson at cybrpete@sbcglobal.net and he'll be happy to consider your request.

A.V.A.C. Membership Information

Membership in the Antelope Valley Astronomy Club is open to any individual.

The Club has three categories of membership.

- Family membership at \$30.00 per year.
- Individual membership at \$25.00 per year.
- Junior membership at \$15.00 per year.

Membership entitles you to...

- Desert Sky Observer—monthly newsletter.
- The Reflector—the quarterly publication of the Astronomical League.
- The A.V.A.C. Membership Manual.
- To borrow club telescopes, binoculars, camera, books, videos and other items.

The Desert Sky Observer is available as a separate publication to individuals at a cost of \$10.00 per year. Subscription to the Desert Sky Observer does not entitle the subscriber to membership in the Antelope Valley Astronomy Club and its associated privileges.

A.V.A.C. Board Members

President: Terry Pedroza (661) 949-6975 - res0hqoz@verizon.net

Vice-President: Matt Leone (661) 948-1521 - als@hughes.net

Secretary: Brian Peterson (661) 273-1693 - cybrpete@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer: Mary Andrus (661) 946-0372 - mfandrus@aol.com

Director of Community Development: Debora Pedroza (661) 949-6975 - res0hqoz@verizon.net

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Tom Koonce (661) 943-8200 - takoonce@aol.com

WEBMASTER of CLUB SITE

Steve Trotta (661) 269-5428 - sstrott@prodigy.net

Our Sponsors

Al's Vacuum and Sewing: 904 West Lancaster Blvd. (661) 948-1521. Stop by and say “hey” to Matthew and Suzanne.

Darkrooms Plus: 20th St. W. near Pep Boys in Lancaster. (661) 945-1444. They offer all club members a 10% discount on all purchases. Stop by and say “hey” to Dean or Hank.

King Photo: 749 W. Lancaster Blvd. (661) 948-8441. As a telescope dealer, they always support the AVAC. Stop by and say “hey” to Stokely or Paul.

QNET: 1529 E. Palmdale Blvd., Suite 200. (661) 538-2028. As an Internet provider, they are kind enough to provide us with a free website.

Vista Golf: 43517 N. 13th Street West, Lancaster. (661) 945-7003.

Thanks for your generous support!

July Calendar:

July 12: Club Meeting at Sage Planetarium;

July 13: Star Party, Saddleback Butte State Park;

July 20: Club Picnic and Star Party with YEA Essay contest winners;

July 30: YEA Essay contest winners trip to JPL;

August Calendar

August 9: Club Meeting, Sage Planetarium;

August 10: Star Party, Mt. Pinos;

August 12-14: Perseid meteor shower;

Don't forget to take one more look at the first page of the DSO for our busy June schedule. Make plans to attend at least one of the events. And remember, with your help, we can have an impact in our community for the advancement of astronomy and the sciences.