



Science is nothing, but trained and organized common sense.
Thomas Huxley

Volume 28 Number 8

nightwatch

August 2008

President's Address

For many years the best known telescope in the world was the 200-inch Hale Telescope on Mount Palomar. A couple of weeks ago I spent two nights observing the sky from a campground which was within walking distance of that historic technological achievement of the last century. Even though the skies of Mount Palomar now suffer encroaching light pollution, just knowing that a little way up the hill, in its majestic white dome, resides that famous instrument, adds something extraordinary to the observing experience.

While at Mount Palomar, I met Bob Nanz. He and a number of other volunteers put on a program called "Explore the Stars." We all had a great time looking through each other's scopes and sharing our hobby with the other campers. Bob has a 25-inch Obsession which was a real treat to get to look through. If you are in the area, you might want to join some time.

At the beginning of the month, PVAA had a star party at Mount Baldy Ranch RV Park near Cow Canyon Saddle, above Baldy Village. This was the best attended star party that we have had in some time. It was great to see so many familiar (and a few new faces) out enjoying the night sky.

In August there are two new moons. This allows us to have a second star party. And it will be a very special event! Through the efforts of club members Larry Kawano and Ken Crowder our August 30th star party will be on Mount San Jacinto at the Astrocamp facility near Idyllwild. The people at Astrocamp have very kindly offered to provide free accommodations both Friday and Saturday nights with camping on the soccer field and dorm housing. Showers and restrooms will be available. There will also be a complimentary dinner on Saturday evening. Please let Ken Crowder know if you will be attending so the people at Astrocamp will know how many to prepare for. See website for more details about Astrocamp:

<http://www.guidediscoveries.org/index.cfm?SID=5&MID=2>.

July General Meeting

After welcoming everyone and new visitors, Ron gave his first-hand-account of the White Mountain Star Party of July the 5th. Most exciting was finding, if not confirming Einstein's Cross, a gravitational lens or visual confirmation of Einstein's General Relativity, which is considered a difficult observation using amateur instruments.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Einstein_ring.jpg.

Next, Frank gave a rundown of the Jr. Blind of America's Summer Sky's Party this August 9th at 3pm above Malibu at Camp Bloomfield. He made an appeal for more scopes and anticipated approximately 200 teens. Contact Frank at fbusutil.brightsky@pvaa.us or call (909)524-5024 for more information if you can help. Frank also brought to our attention that the first Pacific Astronomy and Telescope Expo will be held on September 13-14, 2008 in Pasadena and requested help for tabling for the Bright Sky program.

<http://www.rtmcastronomyexpo.org/PATS.htm>

PVAA is selling tickets for this at \$15.00 a crack that will be \$20.00 at the door. There are only 25 tickets so queue up quickly with Ludd but beware that dues expire this August 30th.

Nominations for offices were dispensed with rather quickly. Because current members are willing to serve again a motion by Richard to nominate all was called and seconded.

After announcing that the universe is infinite and my time isn't Lee launched with his usual gusto into his night sky tour taking us from the center of the galaxy to whether it is a worm or snake that is represented in the constellation Ophiuchus.

Michael Keenan

**Pay club dues at the General Meeting
 or by mail. \$30 individual / \$40 family.**

On September 13-14 the Pacific Astronomy and Telescope Show will be held in the Pasadena Convention Center. The show will feature several guest speakers and many vendors. Discounted tickets will be available at the general meeting. This is a chance for you to save money and support PVAA at the same time. For more info on the show:

<http://www.rtmcastronomyexpo.org/PATS.htm>.

Summer is election season for PVAA. At our July 18th general meeting all of our current club officers and board members were nominated to run for their positions again. Nominations will still be open at the August 15th meeting. If you want to nominate someone be at the meeting. Of course, you can nominate anyone who is a current member. The elections will be held at our August 15th general meeting after nominations are closed. There will not be mail-in ballots this year, so please try to attend if you can.

I hope to see many of you at the general meeting and up at Idyllwild on August 30th. Happy stargazing!

Ron Hoekwater

Club Events Calendar

August 15, General Meeting Frank Murray - Binary Systems
 August 16, Girl Scout Camp - between Banning and Idyllwild
 August 29 - 31, Star Party - Idyllwild Astro Camp

September 9, Barnes & Noble, Chino Hills 7:30 – 9:30 pm
 September 12, General Meeting
 September 13-14, Pacific Astronomy & Telescope Show
 (PATS) - Pasadena Convention Center
 September 27, Star Party - Cow Canyon Saddle, Mt Baldy

October 16, School Fundraiser,
 Barnes & Noble, Chino Hills 7:30 – 9:30 pm
 October 17, General Meeting
 Steve Edberg - Space Interferometry Mission
 October 25, Solar Star Party - Village Venture, Claremont

November 5, Star Party - Ontario Library Main Branch 7–9pm
 November 14, General Meeting
 November 22, Star Party - Cottonwood Springs

December 27, Star Party - Claremont Hills Wilderness Park

February 3, Star Party - Ontario Library - Main Branch 7–9 pm

PVAA Officers and Board

Officers

PresidentRon Hoekwater.....909/391-1943
 Vice President ..Joe Hillberg.....909/949-3650
 SecretaryClaire Stover.....909/988-9747
 TreasurerLudd Trozpek.....909/624-3679
 VP FacilitiesBob Akers.....909/946-0228

July Speaker

Naturally it was only fitting that tonight’s speaker, Professor of Physics; Eldred Tubbs was introduced by none other than our treasurer, Ludd Trozpek, who was a student in his physics class at Harvey Mudd College in days past. Ludd prefaced Professor Tubbs lecture, “History of the Determination of the Speed of Light 1675-1983,” with some pictures of the professor in action. Then after Mr. Tubbs started first with a bookend definition of light and some practical use of the physical constant C we were taken completely by use of the overhead projector (no power point here) through the three broad periods of this history. All previous attempts and improvements where covered in the astronomical, terrestrial and laboratory periods starting with Romer on up to Michelson’s measurement in a vacuum of 299,792,458 meters per second.

After this history background, Tubbs then described an attempt for using a loaned TRW short pulsed Helium Neon Ruby Laser to re-measure the distance used by Michelson between Mt Wilson and Mount San Antonio for a 1964 HMC laser colloquium. The group designed a smaller scale instrument that combined a telescope and laser to pretest first and see if conditions permitted the use and warranted the use of the loaned Helium Neon Laser. The plan was to shoot across at a preplaced two inch diameter reflector on the San Antonio side. The scientific goal to see if the two points moved never did work because of unpredictable visibility conditions and time allotted for the data collecting.

The last part of this top-notch overhead lecture finished with how a ground baseline was surveyed and used to determine the Mount Wilson to Mount San Antonio summit distance. A professional journal account of this survey can be found in “[A Geodetic Measurement of Unusually High Accuracy](#),” by the chief surveyor Captain C.C. Garner.

For a lecture of such youthful exuberance by Professor Tubbs, that almost puts power point to shame, may I offer as way of thanks to the professor the following web page that has reel footage of Albert Abraham Michelson actually adjusting the multi-sided mirror? Click on the “Michelson Demonstration” box that is on the left column at:

http://www.usna.edu/LibExhibits/Michelson/Michelson_career.html.

Michael Keenan

Board

Lee Collins626/852-9442
 Ray Magdziarz909/626-8303
 Jim Bridgewater909/624-4893
 John Stover909/988-9747

Directors

NightwatchJohn Stover.....909/988-9747
 Membership ..Ludd Trozpek.....909/624-3679
 PublicityDorene Hopkins.....909/983-5584

Stay online for the return of Lee Collins and What's Up next month.

Please bring your ballot to the August 15th meeting to vote.

Official ballot of the Pomona Valley Amateur Astronomers for the term of officers 2008-2009

		YES	NO
President	Shall Ron Hoekwater be elected President of the P.V.A.A.—	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vice President	Shall Joe Hillberg be elected Vice President of the P.V.A.A.—	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secretary	Shall Claire Stover be elected Secretary of the P.V.A.A.—	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Treasurer	Shall Ludd Trozpek be elected Treasurer of the P.V.A.A.—	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
V P Facilities	Shall Bob Akers be elected V P of Facilities—	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board members at large serving a two year term			
	Shall Lee Collins be elected as a board member at large —	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Shall Ray Magdziarz be elected as a board member at large	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PVAA Subscription Renewal for September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009

- _____ \$30 - Individual Membership
- _____ \$40 - Family Membership
- _____ \$12 - Student Under age 18 Membership

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Thank you for your continued membership!