



East Valley Astronomy Club

August 2003

www.eastvalleyastronomy.org

Scottsdale, Arizona

August 2003



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From the Desk of the President

by Peter Argenziano
2003 EVAC President

The monsoon season has arrived, leaving most of us to either dodge sucker holes or catch up on 'other' tasks. Maybe you'll finally find the time to finish that book you started last summer. Or, perhaps you'll catch up on getting your observing notes organized.

However you decide to spend your summer vacation, please give some thought and consideration to the fall. Specifically, it's time to start thinking about EVAC club officers and Board members for 2004. The statute of limitations dictates that one may only hold a particular office for two consecutive years, so we will have some vacancies to fill this year.

The process for electing our new governing body occurs during the October and November general monthly meetings. Nominations are made at the October meeting and voting takes place in November. All positions begin on January 1st and run through December 31st, 2004.

The following tables summarize the current club leadership and the re-election eligibility.

Executive Officers

<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Eligible for Re-election</i>
President	Peter Argenziano	Yes
Vice President	Diana Jane	No
Treasurer	Stanley Bronstein	Yes
Secretary	Tom Polakis	No

Administrative Officers

<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Eligible for Re-election</i>
Events Coordinator	Howard Israel	Yes
Properties Director	Gary Finnie	No
Newsletter Editor	John Matthews	Yes
Web Master	Marty Pieczonka	Yes
Photographer	Jason Nelson	Yes

contd. on p.2

Board of Directors

Position	Name	Eligible for Re-election
Board Member	Jim Gutman	Yes
Board Member	Brian Rhodes	Yes
Board Member	Craig Dokken	No
Board Member	Dave Hertel	No
Board Member	Dave Coshow	Yes

Nominations for, and elections to, any office are open to any member in good standing. Officers and Board members serve a period of one year. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office. Nominations for Officer or Board positions shall be opened at the October general meeting and shall be publicized in the club newsletter and on the club web site prior to the November general meeting. Nominations will be closed with the start of elections at the November general meeting.

Any member may nominate another member-in-good-standing for office, provided prior consent of the nominee has been given. The Secretary and/or Treasurer shall validate qualification of the nominees.

Officers and Board Members shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the members present at the November general meeting. Voting will be done by secret ballot. Single nominees for office may be affirmed to the position by a majority "yes" vote taken by a show of hands. In the case of a tie, a special run-off election at the December general meeting shall determine the election.

Complete details are contained in the club's Constitution and Bylaws, available here:

<http://www.eastvalleyastronomy.org/EVAC/bylaws.html>

So, I urge you to get involved. The club is only as good as you make it!

Keep looking up!

**If it's clear...
by
Fulton Wright, Jr.
Prescott Astronomy Club
for August 2003**

Shamelessly stolen information from Sky & Telescope magazine, Astronomy magazine, and anywhere else I can find data.

When gauging distances, remember that the Moon is 1/2 a degree or 30 arc minutes in diameter. All times are Mountain Standard Time unless otherwise noted.

The sky this month is pretty much a one man show. (Girls, don't get mad at me. Remember "Women are from Venus, men are from")

The **Perseid meteor shower peaks on August 13**, but the almost full moon spoils observing it.

Mercury reaches greatest eastern elongation (visible in the evening) on **August 14**, but it is so low in the sky that finding it will be a challenge.

On August 22 two planets and two bright stars are within a 2 degree circle, but one of the stars is just too bright (the Sun at magnitude -27). That leaves us with ...

M A R S

Date	Rise	Transit
8/1	9:20 PM	2:39 AM
8/15	8:22 PM	1:37 AM
8/26	7:31 PM	12:43 AM (closest)
8/31	7:08 PM	12:18 AM

Hints on observing this opposition of Mars:

1. Try to observe near the time Mars transits the meridian, when it is highest in the sky. Even then, it won't be all that high.

2. Try to observe early in the month, before the chance of a global dust storm increases.

3. Observe on August 26 when Mars is closest to earth, just to say you saw it at its biggest (by a small margin) in thousands of years.

Well ... there is one other thing you might try to see. On Saturday, **August 23, about 4:30 AM**, you can see the **Lunar crater, Wargentín**, at its best.

With a small (3 inch) telescope look 30 degrees above the east horizon for the crescent moon. The combination of libration (slight tipping of the moon) and low sun angle make this the optimum time to view this unusual crater. It is the largest example of a crater which is completely flooded with lava inside so it looks like a round mesa. Toward the south end of the terminator look for the big (140 mile diameter) crater Schickard. Near by to the south along the terminator is the smaller (70 mile) crater Phocylides. Wargentín (50 mile) is between the two of them.

While you are in the area, you might want to take a look at **Saturn**, 4 degrees down and to the right.

The Backyard Astronomer by Bill Dellings

Mars (again!)

(This is a **REPRINT of a May 2001** article I wrote on Mars for EVAC. I thought running it again this month might be appropriate, and a fun idea. B.D.)

I must be getting old. My fourth Mars opposition is coming up. I mean the really close kind that occurs every 15-17 years, when the red planet gets as close as 35 million miles to Earth. Opposition will be on June 13 this month (2001) and closest approach 8 days later on the 21st. On that date Mars will show a disk 20.79" (arc seconds), larger than its been since September 28, 1988. Actually, when these close approaches happen, they occur in pairs, two years apart. This June's opposition is just a warm up for August 28, 2003 when Mars will grow to a disk 25.11" across, bigger than it has been since...well, let's see, in Jean Meeus' "Astronomical Tables" they show 25.10" on August 23, 1924. At 1000 A.D. I gave up looking for something bigger! The Big Red One is near perihelion, so it's displaying an unusually large size (bit bigger than Saturn, smaller than Jupiter).

Recently, I was thinking wayyyy back to my previous three encounters – with fond memories:

September 10, 1956. 13 years old. Proud owner of a Criterion 4" F11 "Dynascope" newtonian reflector. I observed Mars through an open window of our kitchen! My memory of what I saw is foggy, like those San Francisco nights. But I'm pretty sure I didn't see any canals (!). Distance: 35.16 million mi. Size: 24.76" Declination (Dec): -10 degrees.

August 10, 1971. 28 years old. The year before, I bought a Unitron 4" F15 refractor. What a monster! I must confess that again, I can't recall being all that impressed. In those days, I was not a very serious observer. I recall giving neighbors and co-workers a peek through the scope from my San Carlos, California bachelor pad-but no one passed out from the views. Distance: 34.9 million mi. Size: 24.91" Dec: -22 degrees.

September 28, 1988. 45 years old. Married. Newark, California. Moved up (?) to a Celestron 8" Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope. Hey, come on, I needed more aperture! The Unitron did great on planets but M13 was a blur. First time I put the 8" on M13, I almost fainted-resolved to the core. I digress. By this time I maintained an observer's log. My drawings of Mars at this approach are not memorable: Distance : 36.56 million mi. Size: 23.81" Dec: -2 degrees.

However! One thing about this apparition I'll never forget. At a club star party, a guy had his 4" TeleVue refractor on Mars. I took a look. Holy cow!! Mars looked absolutely stunning, I couldn't believe how big and crisp the image was in this "little" scope which is what, three feet long? He must have had just the right power (and maybe filter?) and great seeing going for him. I had a lot more respect for refractors after that night! (I recall he later upgraded to a Astro-Physics 6").

(Weird thing. My log shows nicely detailed drawings of Mars through my C8 during the March 31, 1982 opposition when the planet was 59 million miles away, with a disk size of 14.74"! How do you figure that? Maybe the Dec of -1 degree, 21' helped? They say you can begin getting acceptable views of Mars at about 10". Possibly a freak night of excellent seeing, I don't know).

OK, I'm 58 now and living in Apache Junction, AZ. I'm ready to attack Mars at my fourth close opposition. I'm armed with a C14

and Astro-Physics 5" F8. It will be interesting to compare the two scopes' performances on the mystery planet this time around.

Remember, this is the first of two close passes:

June 13, 2001, opposition. Closest approach: June 21. Distance: 41.86 million mi. Size: 20.79" Dec: -26 degrees. (would be nice if it were higher).

August 28, 2003, opposition. Closest approach: August 27. Distance: 34.6 million mi. Size: 25.11" Dec: -15 degrees, 49' (better than in 2001).

I'll be 60 years old for the latter, how long can this go on? Well, I note the next close pass will be July 27, 2020. IF I can hold on that long and still have eyes that work, I will see my fifth Mars opposition at age 77! God of War, we must stop meeting this way!

5-8-01

Grand Canyon Star Party 2003 North Rim Report Bill Dellings

First important point: my five nights there were clear. Rest, gravy. Second point: having the SP later in June than normal...holy cow, I never saw so many people up there. And kids? Yikes! Normally the place is relatively serene and civilized compared to the zoo at the south rim, but I detected a huge increase in humanity there this year; no doubt due to more families being able to get away in late June.

We had about 4 to 10 scopes set up each night as gazers passed through during the week. I had my C8 and Miyachi 20 x 100's, Jim Gutman brought his N11, Deloy and Karen Pierce had their 10" Dob and Astroscan (for solar viewing). This is the Astroscan the wind blew over last year. He was able to duct tape or glue the primary mirror back together. They forgot to bring the mount tray it sits in so they had it sitting in a pillow case stuffed with laundry which sat on a log. Quite a sight. "Jim" from L.A. was back again with his TV 4" and G8 mount. I saw an Orion 4.7" refractor there two nights. There was an 18" Dob there a couple of nights. A couple had a Televue 85 and the new Orion Starblast 4.5"(see review S&T June 03 p.46) which surprisingly the owner had a great time with even though he had a larger, more serious scope back at his car.

Everyday, 4 scopes were set up for solar viewing from 10:00: Deloy's Astroscan (white filter), an 80 mm Williams Optics refractor (white filter), a Tv 85 (Coronado 40 mm H-Alpha), and a Tv70 mm (60 mm Cor. H-Alpha). I noted the 60 mm H-Alpha filter (\$2500) gave a slightly better image than the 40 mm (\$1500), as one might expect. Both, however, can't compete with views I've seen in Daystar filters (\$4000). A few gazers, as usual, slipped away one night to set up at Cape Royal, 23 miles away and no light pollution.

The public was appreciative and enthusiastic and I think were more impressed with our laser pointers than what they saw in the scopes!

It was great to escape the Valley of the Furnace and to see and feel cool winds blowing through the pine trees.

Schedule of Events - August, September, October 2003
East Valley Astronomy Club
by Howard Israel

August	Event	Location	Notes
Fri. Aug. 8	Public Star Party	Gilbert Library	7:00 PM Setup
Sat. Aug. 9	Beginners lab	Dave Coshows' home	7:00 PM setup
Tue. Aug 12	Perseid Meteor Showers		Aug. 12 - 13 Full Moon @ 12:48 AM
Wed. Aug. 13	EVAC Meeting	SCC - PS-172	7:30 Speaker: Dr. Steve Ruff- Work at the Mars Space Flight Facility
Sat. Aug. 16	Local Star Party	Boyce Thompson Arboretum	Sunset: 7:14 PM
Sat. Aug 23	Deep Sky Star Party	Vekol Road Site	Sunset: 7:05 PM
Wed. Aug 27	Mars Closest to Earth		New Moon @ 1:26 PM
Sat. Aug. 30	Bonus Deep Sky Star Party	Vekol Road Site	Sunset: 6:57 PM Equipment Shootout TBA
September			
Wed. Sept. 10	General Meeting	SCC - PS - 172	7:30 Speaker: Dr. Fulvio Melia-The Black Hole @ Center of Universe
Fri. Sept. 12	Public Star Party	Gilbert Library	7:00 PM Setup
Sat. Sept. 13	Beginners Lab	Dave Coshows' home	7:00 PM Setup
Sat. Sept. 20	Local Star Party	Boyce Thompson Arboretum	Sunset: 6:28 PM
Sat. Sept. 27	Deep Sky Star Party	Vekol Road Site	Sunset: 6:20 PM
October			
Wed. Oct. 1	Public Mars Observing	Riparian Preserve	7:30 - 10:30 PM Public viewing of Mars sponsored by EVAC
Fri. Oct. 3	Public Mars Observing	Riparian Preserve	7:30 - 10:30 PM Public viewing of Mars sponsored by EVAC
Wed. Oct 8	General Meeting	SCC - PS 172	7:30 PM Speaker: Scott Davis, IDA
Fri. Oct. 10	Public Star Party	Gilbert Library	7:00 PM Setup
Sat. Oct. 11	Beginners Lab	Dave Coshows' home	7:00 PM Setup
Sat. Oct. 18	Local Star party	Boyce Thompson Arboretum	Sunset: 5:51 PM
Fri. Oct 24	Begin All Arizona Star Party	Arizona city	Oct. 24 - 25 Sunset: 5:45 PM

Minutes of the East Valley Astronomy Club meeting, July 10, 2003
 by Tom Polakis
 EVAC Secretary

The meeting opened with introductions of Board members and guests. After a Treasurer's report by Stanley Bronstein, upcoming events were discussed. These include a public star party for Mars viewing at the Gilbert Riparian Preserve, being arranged by Randy Peterson for October 1 and 3. After a short break, the main presentation was about asteroid occultations. Gene Lucas began by discussing occultation science and observing techniques. This was followed by Tom Polakis' description of his non-event from Tempe, and Randy Peterson's description of an event he saw from Scottsdale.

---Tom Polakis Tempe, AZ Arizona Sky Pages <http://www.psi-az.com/polakis/>

August Classified Ads.

Free Classified Ads (Wanted & For Sale)

Non-commercial advertisements for Astronomical equipment, books, computers, or software — Wanted or For Sale — will be accepted from current EVAC members.

Ads will be run on a “space available basis” and may be edited slightly to best fit the space. Ads should consist of a brief text description and must include a current member name and an evening phone number. You may include your email address if you wish. Ads will be run until canceled or until they have appeared in three issues of the newsletter (whichever occurs first). Ads will be “tagged” with the first issue in which they appear.

Ads can be emailed to: john-cathy@cox.net
(this address may change in the future)

or send by U.S. Mail to:

EVAC PO Box 2202

Mesa, AZ 85214

Please mark the subject line of the email or the envelope, “EVAC Newsletter Ad.”

For Sale (July)

Astro Physics 800 mount w/3, 9lb. counterweights and cases.

Meade ETX 125 with AutoStar, Star Pionter & JMI foam Case.

Call for price & details.

Eron Lee

(602) 740-3489

For Sale (Aug.)

JMI NGC-Max Digital Setting Circles (Modified with current Tangent Instruments Firmware)

Includes:

1. NGC-Max computer
2. 2ea 4,096 step encoders
3. Encoder cables
4. User documentation

Asking \$225.00 (OBO) Or Best Offer

Contact Jim 480.554-8789 or james.t.waters@intel.com

For Sale (Aug.)

Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain (non-GPS) 8" f10 with the following Plossl eyepieces: 4mm, 6mm, 9mm, 15mm, 20mm, 25mm, 26mm, 40mm, plus a 2x Barlow Lens. Asking price: \$1400.

Contact Robert Smith (480) 641-8197

For Sale (Aug.)

Meade LX 200 10" F 10

Field tripod

Super Wedge

Polar alignment scope

2" diagonal w/1.25 adaptor

1.25 26mm eye piece

AC&DC power supply

12 volt battery

Heated dew shield

Scopesaver easy mount

Fiber Glass storage case

Owners manual

\$ 2400.00


Joe Goss 480-830-3851 K7JRG@cox.net

Our August Meeting Room Changes

□

We've once again been preempted at SCC: seems some administrator scheduled a conference in room SC-164 for the second Wednesday of August. :-) So, we're back in PS-172 again in August. That big room is popular!

□



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Mars Shootout: 5" APO vs. 14" SCT

The Back Yard Astronomer

by
Bill Dellinges (7/12/03)

I thought it would be interesting to pit these two telescopes against one another on Mars during the current apparition. Rather than wait till late August for the largest 25" disk (when I plan a follow up test), I gave it a shot July 11th with the disk at a diameter of 18.5". The night before, at 9 p.m., I rolled the observatory roof back to allow the two scopes to cool off (the temperature inside was about 18,000 F.) A red light and radio were left on as a security ruse. Before retiring, I said a silent prayer that no one would rip me off. I crawled out of bed at 3 a.m. There was Mars, just left (east) of the meridian, right where I wanted that bad boy. The scope tubes were cold to the touch after 6 hours of cooling.

After messing around with various powers and filters, I decided the simple thing to do in this contest was to increase the power in each scope until the best image was rendered in each one – whatever power that may be – and decide which image was the most pleasant and revealed the most detail. In short: with the existing seeing, which BTW, was "poor", 4-5 on the ALPO scale and 4 on Antoniadi's scale, what telescope image would I choose as the best view of Mars this a.m.?

The Astro-Physics 5" (ED, not Fluorite) F8 was pushed to 223x, any higher power produced mush. The C14 was pushed to 230x, again, higher powers produced larger but mushier images. Red filters were employed in both scopes. As an aside, I noted the

south polar cap was no where near as prominent as my last view in June 8th. I assume it's melting as summer nears on Mars.

The Bottom Line

The C14 produced, at least to me, the better image that morning. But I need to make a few comments here. The 5" produced the sharper image. I saw just as much detail in the 5" as in the 14". However, the C14's superior light grasp (almost 8 times more light) created a brighter image which made seeing the same detail easier even though its image was somewhat "soft" compared to the 5" image. I attribute this softness to the C14's secondary obstruction of 4.5", almost the diameter of the refractor's lens! The C14's higher power of 7x was probably a nominal factor, but it may have played a small factor combined with the brightness issue: some observers feel, at equal power, a brighter image gives the appearance of being larger than the dimmer one.

I imagine readers are crying... "hey, it's not fair to match a 5" against a 14"! Maybe not, but I wanted to see just what a high end refractor could do. I felt it would blow my C8 out of the water, so I needed to go to the next larger scope in my stable which meant the C14, the next victim - and victor, as it turned out.

You know you're a Deep Sky Person When:

- 1....You consider the moon a major annoyance.
- 2....You consider Jupiter 'light pollution'.
- 3....You spend most of your time looking at or for objects you can barely see.
- 4....Your favorite objects are objects you can barely see.
- 5....You enjoy looking at faint fuzzies with the smallest possible aperture.
- 6....You enjoy looking at faint fuzzies with the largest possible aperture.
- 7....You like to choose objects that are easier to imagine than to see.
- 8....Your observing schedule demands that you search for objects in twilight.
- 9....You keep thinking that if only the stars would go away, it might really get dark.
- 10...You wonder how your favorite objects missed getting included in the New General Catalog or the Index Catalog.
- 11...You're not sure that anything in this solar system counts as astronomy any more.
- 12...You're amazed that anyone needs artificial light to read charts.
- 13...You could do a Messier Marathon from memory, if you still bothered with Messier objects.
- 14...You can read all the NGC abbreviated visual descriptions without using the key, but you have to be careful not to cheat by just remembering what things look like.
- 15...You view a major earthquake as an opportunity for a close-in dark-sky star party.
- 16...You welcome (and have even considered instigating) power cuts, but only if they occur on clear moonless nights.

Administratium, A New Element!

AMES, IA--The heaviest element known to science was recently discovered by materials researchers at IPRT/ISU. The new element, tentatively named Administratium, has no protons or electrons, and thus has an atomic weight of 0. However, it does have one neutron, 125 assistant neutrons, 75 vice neutrons, and 111 assistant vice neutrons. This gives it an atomic mass of 312. These 312 particles are held together in a nucleus by a force that involves the continuous exchange of particles called morons.

Since it has no electrons, Administratium is totally inert. However, it can be detected chemically, since it impedes every reaction it comes into contact with. According to its discoverers, a tiny amount of Administratium caused one reaction to take over four days to complete; the normal reaction time is less than one second.

Administratium has a normal half life of approximately three years, at which time it does not actually decay, but instead undergoes a reorganization in which neutrons, vice neutrons, and assistant vice neutrons exchange places. Studies have shown that the atomic mass usually increases after each reorganization.

Research at other laboratories indicates that Administratium occurs naturally in the atmosphere. It tends to concentrate at certain points, such as governmental agencies, large corporations, and universities. It is always found in the newest, best appointed and best maintained buildings.

Scientists point out that Administratium is known to be toxic at any level of concentration and can easily destroy any productive reactions where it is allowed to accumulate. Attempts are being made to determine how Administratium can be controlled to prevent irreversible damage, but results to date are not promising.

Our August Speaker:

Dr. Steve Ruff

TES/Mars Spectroscopy Research

Dr. Ruff earned his Ph.D. from ASU in 1998, culminated by his dissertation entitled "Quantitative thermal infrared emission spectroscopy applied to granitoid petrology".

Dr. Ruff is a faculty research associate, working in the ASU Thermal Infrared Mineral Spectroscopy Laboratory. His primary areas of research include the analysis of thermal emission spectra data from Mars; measurement and calibration of thermal emission spectra; and thermal emission spectroscopy of feldspar and granitoid rocks.

The Mars Thermal Emission Spectrometer research group at ASU is busy compiling a spectral library of Earth's minerals and rocks for comparison to spectra to be obtained from Mars. The spectral library will also be useful for interpreting remote sensing

data of Earth.

TES is both an instrument and a technique. The Thermal Emission Spectrometer is a scientific instrument that first flew aboard the Mars Observer spacecraft. Following the loss of that spacecraft, TES was rebuilt and launched along with five of the original seven Mars Observer instruments aboard the new Mars Global Surveyor spacecraft. The purpose of TES is to measure the thermal infrared energy (heat) emitted from Mars. This technique, called thermal emission spectroscopy, can tell us much about the geology and atmosphere of Mars. TES data will provide the first detailed look at the composition of Mars.

Proposed Development in the Vekol Valley

by
Peter Argenziano

Earlier this summer I was contacted by the owners of Brady-Vekol Ranch regarding a potential development project in the Vekol Valley. Their ranch is located four miles north of Interstate 8 on Vekol Road. The dark sky site used by EVAC, and many amateur astronomers, for the past two decades is located about three miles south of the interstate. The proposed development: a 160 acre truck stop, complete with twenty-four fuel islands, a convenience store, a truck wash facility, a truck repair facility, restaurants, and more, right there at exit #144. Before such a project could come to fruition, a change in zoning would be necessary.

The residents of Vekol Valley were looking for others who were also concerned about development in this un-incorporated portion of Maricopa County. The people who call this area home have chosen to live a rural existence, and were prepared to fight to protect their lifestyle. Knowing they would be bumping heads with 'city folk', they decided to reach out to the community at large to see who else agreed with them in opposing such development.

They found support from the astronomy community (amateurs and professionals), the Sierra Club, the International Dark Sky Association, and from others opposed to uncontrolled development.

My first reaction was to offer my support in whatever capacity would be beneficial. I thought about how much I liked observing from the Vekol Road site, and how such development would negatively affect this dark sky site located so close to home. I had visions of not being able to use the site anymore, and having to drive much further west to claim back some darkness. I was angry. After my initial, admittedly emotional, reaction subsided I realized that even a 160 acre truck stop due north of the Vekol site would not spell its demise. After all, no one observing from this site spends any time looking north anyway. Metropolis has already claimed that part of the sky.

As I began researching, I soon discovered that preserving the dark sky – as important as this is to me – was overshadowed by more important concerns. I became convinced that this type of

development was totally unwarranted for this location, and it would have more serious implications than I had initially envisioned.

I discovered that there were already ten truck stops within a thirty-five mile radius of exit #144. Was there really a need for one more? Gila Bend, with an already fragile economy, reported that their truck stop revenues are declining. They are concerned that a new truck stop would not provide incremental revenue, but would further dilute the current financial situation. The picture looked considerably bleaker for Stanfield.

I learned that most authorities concerned with uncontrolled development would compare the Vekol Valley to Maricopa or Mobile, also un-incorporated areas of the county. The lack of planning in these areas has resulted in a disproportionate use of resources in addressing the concerns of growing communities.

Concerns of safety and an increase in illegal activities also arose. It is no secret that the corridor from Mexico up through the Vekol Valley is used in the trafficking of humans and illegal contraband. The residents allege, and the authorities agree, that development at the interstate would serve to offer additional cover for these activities.

Currently there are no municipal utilities in the Vekol Valley. Residents have wells to supply their water, and rely on generators or solar technology to supply their electricity. Many are concerned that once utilities are brought to this area, an explosion of development could ensue. Housing developments would result in a dramatic increase in the levels of pollution in this area. Many of the residents have voiced their concerns regarding their water supplies. Most wells are at a depth around 700 feet, but some are as shallow as 200 feet. Since the area has no sewage facilities, the truck stop proposal included treatment ponds to process the enormous amount of wastewater that such a site would generate. Everyone without a financial stake in the development project agrees that the Valley can barely handle storm runoff waters, let alone the waste from large-scale commercial development.

Endangered ecosystems, like the grasslands found in the Valley, are disappearing at an alarming rate. Everyone agrees that

unplanned development in this area will only accelerate this tragedy.

I came to the conclusion that this type of development, at this particular location, would do much more harm than good.

On July 24, a meeting was scheduled with the County Supervisor for District 5, Mary Rose Wilcox, in downtown Phoenix. The Supervisor wanted to hear directly from those who opposed this development, so that she and her staff could gain insight prior to making their recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The Board would vote on whether to approve or decline the proposal for a zoning change.

In attendance at the meeting were eight residents of Vekol Valley; Sandra Barr of the Sierra Club; Scott Davis of the International Dark Sky Association (Tucson office); Howard Israel, representing the IDA in Phoenix and EVAC; EVAC President Peter Argenziano; County Supervisor Wilcox, and two members of her staff. The discussion was lively and very well organized. The salient points in opposition to the proposed development were well articulated.

At the conclusion of the meeting Supervisor Wilcox announced that her recommendation, as well as the recommendations of her staff and of the Planning Commission would be to deny a request for rezoning. All that remained was a vote by the Board of Supervisors on August 13, Supervisor Wilcox assured everyone that she would convey our message to the Board. She also shared with us that the Board rarely renders a decision contrary to a unanimous recommendation. I left the meeting feeling very good, like I had contributed in some small way, to the betterment of this great place we all call home.

Later that afternoon I received a call from Supervisor Wilcox with news that increased my happiness immensely. After the meeting she received a call from the party seeking the change in zoning. When she informed them of the resulting recommendation, the request for rezoning was withdrawn.

Twice in recent years development projects have arisen around exit #144, and twice they have been denied. Vekol Valley is once again safe from indiscriminate development.....for now.

Peter Argenziano

Mars Public Star Party

Looking for volunteers to provide telescopes for a "Mars Public Star Party" for any of three nights.

October 1 & 3 are Wednesday and Friday nights, and October 10 is EVAC's regular public star party night. We have several people signed up for this event, but welcome more for all three nights. Please contact me at the EVAC meeting in August or September, or email me at rgpeterson@cox.net. The following is the article I am submitting to the newspaper:

View the planet Mars through real telescopes! Mars is closer to the Earth now than it has been for thousands of years, or than it will be again in our lifetime.

The East Valley Astronomy Club will provide member's telescopes at the Riparian Preserve for 3 nights, weather permitting, from 7:30 pm till 10 pm on October 1, 3, and 10th to view Mars and other astronomical objects. Heading east from the intersection of Greenfield and Guadalupe Roads, turn south into the third driveway on your right. The Riparian Preserve is located immediately east of the Gilbert Library. This is a FREE event.

Delighted at finding a Tasco 60mm refractor tube, Professor McGuffey got a little carried away building a mount.



STARIZONA
ADVENTURES IN ASTRONOMY & NATURE

5201 N. Oracle Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85704
(520) 292-5010

East Valley Astronomy Club Membership Form

Please complete this form and return it to the club treasurer at the next club meeting OR mail to EVAC, P.O. Box 2202, Mesa, AZ 85214, with a check or money order made payable to EVAC.

IMPORTANT: ALL memberships expire on December 31, of each year.

New Member Only - select month joining:

- \$20.00 January – March
- \$15.00 April – June
- \$10.00 July – September
- \$25.00 October – December & Next Year

Membership Renewals:

- \$20.00 January – December

Name Badges:

- \$7.00 each Name: _____

Magazines: if renewal, customer # _____

(New) (Renewal)

- \$29.00 /yr Astronomy Magazine
- \$33.00 /yr Sky & Telescope

Newsletter delivery option, check one:

- Email (saves club printing & postage) U.S. Mail

Total enclosed \$

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone # (____) _____

Email: _____

URL: _____

Local Star Party Sites

1: Florence Junction Site

General Information: The Florence Junction site is one of the two official sites for the East Valley Astronomy Club's Local Star Parties, typically held on the Saturday closest to Last Quarter Moon. Florence Junction offers reasonably dark skies within a short drive of most East valley locations. EVAC's Land Use Permit #26-104528 applies to this site.

Location: N 33° 14' 40" W 111° 20' 16"

2: Boyce Thompson Arboretum Site

General Information: The Boyce Thompson site is still considered the new local site. Only a few Star Party have taken place there as a second local site, although EVAC members have held Star Parties there at the request of the Arboretum on a twice yearly basis. The site has some privacy advantages over the FJ site.

Location: N 33° 16' 52" W 111° 09' 35"

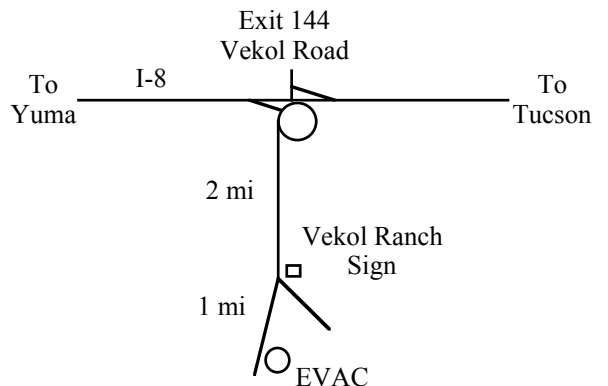
How to get there: Drive East on US 60 past Florence Junction for both sites. About 3.7 miles East of Florence Junction (after crossing railroad tracks) you will see a (second) flagpole on your right. Turning right (South) here and following the dirt road for 0.6 miles you will reach the FJ #1 site (marked by an old corral on your left). Continuing past the flagpole turn-off on US 60 and over Gonzales Pass will bring you to the Boyce Thompson Arboretum just before you enter the town of Superior. The Arboretum is marked with a large brown and white State Park Sign and there is a right turn lane.

Deep Sky Star Party: Vekol Road Site

General Information: The Vekol Road site is the official site for the East Valley Astronomy Club's Deep Sky Star Party, typically held on the Saturday closest to New Moon. Vekol Road offers dark skies despite prominent sky glow from Phoenix to the North. The site is within 90 minutes drive time from most East Valley locations.

Location: N 32° 47' 55" W 112° 15' 15"

How to get there: Take I-10 South and exit onto Maricopa Road. Continue through the town of Maricopa to SR 84, about 25 miles from I-10. Turn right on SR 84, after about 5 miles the road merges with I-8. Continue West and exit I-8 at Vekol Road-Exit #144. Turn left and cross the highway overpass. Before looping back onto I-8 take the small road (now paved) to the left. Go South for 2 miles. At the Vekol Ranch sign bear right and continue South for another mile until reaching a large open area on the left.



EVAC Officers

PRESIDENT

Peter Argenziano
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VICE PRESIDENT

Diana Jane
(480) 833-2002

TREASURER

Stanley Bronstein
(480) 922-3845

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PROPERTIES

Gary Finnie
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NEWSLETTER

John Matthews
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COORDINATOR

Silvo Jaconelli
(480) 926-8529

East Valley Astronomy Club

EVAC Homepage: <http://www.eastvalleyastronomy.org/>

Membership & Subscriptions: \$20 per year, renewed in December. Reduced rates to *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* available. Contact Stanley Bronstein. PO Box 2202 Mesa AZ 85214-2202.

Address Changes: Contact Stanley Bronstein. PO Box 2202 Mesa AZ 85214-2202

Club Meetings: Second Wednesday of every month at the Scottsdale Community College, 7:30 p.m. Meet in **either** Room PS 172 (Physical Science Bldg.) or SC 164 (Student Center Bldg.). See maps and meeting schedule on page 10. of this newsletter. **•• SAVE PAGE 10 ••**

Newsletter: Email John Matthews at: john-cathy@cox.net The newsletter is mailed out the week before the monthly Club meeting. An electronic version is available in Adobe PDF format in lieu of the printed copy. Please send your contributions to John Matthews at: john-cathy@cox.net Contributions may be edited.

EVAC Library: The library contains a good assortment of books, downloaded imagery, and helpful guides. Contact Gary Finnie a: gfinnie@kam-az.com

Book Discounts: Kalmbach and Sky Publishing offer a 10% discount to EVAC members on books and other items from their catalog. When ordering, notify the person on the phone that you would like the "Club Discount." When ordering by mail, there is a line to subtract the club 10%.

EVAC Star Party Line: Let other members know in advance if you plan to attend a scheduled observing session. Contact Events Coordinator Howard Israel at (480) 893 7523).



**East Valley
Astronomy Club**

Reminder: August EVAC Meeting Wednesday, August 13, 2003

Location: Room PS - 172

Physical Science, (SCC) @ 7:30PM

September EVAC Meeting Wednesday, September 10, 2003

Location: Room PS - 172

Physical Science, (SCC) @ 7:30PM

**EVAC
PO Box 2202
Mesa, AZ 85214**

**EVAC Homepage:
www.eastvalleyastronomy.org**