East Valley Astronomy Club

June 2003 www.eastvalleyastronomy.org Scottsdale, Arizona

June 2003

Contents

From the Desk of the President
by
Peter Argenziano
2003 EVAC President

The mercury is rising, signaling the start of another summer in the Valley of the Sun. It won't be long before we are in triple digits on a daily basis. We all know that the power of suggestion can a potent force, so here's a little trick that may help you deal with our summer heat. Instead of thinking about each day from the perspective of our Fahrenheit scale, with its zero well below the freezing point of water; think instead in terms of the standard temperature scale of science (and most of the world): Celsius. The Celsius scale uses zero as the freezing point of water. So, when the weather report calls for a high of 100 degrees F, you don't even break a sweat… after all, it's only 38 degrees C. When the thermometer reads 110 F, it's only 43 C; at 120 F it's not quite 50 degrees Celsius. Feeling cooler already? Use the following formula to quickly convert Fahrenheit to Celsius:

(Fahrenheit temperature – 32) ÷ 0.556 = Celsius temperature

and conversely, Fahrenheit temperature = (9C ÷ 5) + 32

With our increasing temperatures comes the monsoon season. This is the time of year when amateur astronomers occupy their normal observational time with other activities. May I suggest that this is a great time to fully explore the EVAC website? Our webmaster, Marty Pieczonka, has been doing a fantastic job of maintaining the site and constantly adding new content.

Many of our new members indicate they discovered EVAC by way of our Internet presence. Quite a few long-standing members say they don't visit the website very often. This article will briefly outline what one may find while surfing online while the monsoon obscures the night sky.

Our website can be found at http://www.eastvalleyastronomy.org/EVAC/
Upon arrival, the main page presents a high-level overview of the site divided into two categories: All About EVAC and Inside EVAC. Also on the main page are a 60 day rolling calendar of events (automatically updated at each visit) and a form for subscribing to the EVAC list-server.

The 60 day rolling calendar employs hyperlinked entries and is organized as follows:

- Beginner's Labs – a very popular monthly club event
- Meetings – a quick reminder of all club meetings in the next 60 days
- Public Events – contains events that engage the public. Some are EVAC events that are open to the public, some are private events for which EVAC is providing astronomical resources, and some are public events that other organizations are hosting.
- Special Events – special tours, conferences, workshops, and seminars. Some are public, some are private.
- Star Parties – all observational opportunities are listed here, with the exception of public events. Our monthly Local and Deep Sky star parties are listed, as well as other star parties which may be of interest to our members.

Using the EVAC list-server form, one may subscribe (or unsubscribe) from this list at any time. The list is not moderated and is open to anyone who visits the website. It is a great email communication tool that I urge you to utilize.

The All About EVAC section is organized into the following categories:

- Who We Are – provides an introduction to the club

contd. on p.2

contd. from p.1

- Meetings – everything you ever wanted to know about club meetings, including links to the annual meeting schedule, maps, and the Calendar of Events can be found here
- General Announcements – an area for communicating from the Officers and Board of Directors to the membership
- Legislation Affecting Astronomy – provides visitors with current information regarding pending local legislation having an effect on astronomy
- Star Parties – complete information on club star parties, including maps and a link to the star party etiquette document
- Calendar of Events – this link takes you to the official EVAC calendar
- 2003 Monthly Meeting Schedule – annual meeting schedule
- Join Us! – official EVAC membership form, which can be completed online, printed, and mailed to the address provided.
- Contact Us! – contact list and another link to the list-server subscription
- Observing Programs – information regarding the club's 11 official observing programs, details for participation, object lists, and a link to the EVAC Page of Fame

The Inside EVAC section is organized into the following categories:

- Newsletter Archive – the online repository for club newsletters, currently dating back to June 1999. A project just begun will add issues back to November 1996. All newsletters are available in Adobe's portable document format (PDF), for which the Reader application is freely available.
- Equipment Reviews – reviews on telescopes, accessories, books, and software written by members. Includes a link to review writer's guidelines to assist you with writing a review.
- Member Web Pages – links to websites of our members
- Email Directory – email addresses of all Officers and Board Members. Also a list of all club members, some with hypertext email links, and a tool to edit your information.
- Astronomy Links – an impressive collection of astronomical links covering weather, Arizona astronomy, and more
- Club Photo Gallery – the official club photo album
- Virtual Beginner's Lab – listing of frequently asked questions (FAQ), including an overview by author Phil Harrington
- Planet Watch - updated monthly especially for all you planet watchers, including a link to the Mars Watch
- EVAC Classifieds – looking to buy or sell astro gear… look here
- AZ Clear Sky Clocks – a collection of Clear Sky Clocks covering most, if not all, of the state's observing sites

I encourage you to visit the website often, as something is always in the works. Got an idea? Let either the webmaster or myself know about it.

Please remember that our June meeting will be held in our old meeting room, PS-172, on June 11th at 7:30 PM.

What a great time to be an amateur astronomer, online, in Arizona!

Keep looking up!

If it's clear...
by
Fulton Wright, Jr.
Prescott Astronomy Club
for June 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.

This month you have your last chance for a while to see some events with Jupiter's moons. Here are a few you can observe:

June 7 8:55 PM Ganymede's shadow falls on Io till 9:07 PM (partial eclipse, so Io dims somewhat)
June 14 7:54 PM Ganymede's shadow falls on Europa till 8:01 PM (almost total eclipse but only 10 minutes after sunset)
8:50 PM Ganymede kisses Io till 8:57 PM
June 18 8:37 PM Io's shadow on Jupiter till 10:55 PM (Jupiter sets at 10:47 PM)
June 24 9:01 PM Io kisses Callisto till 9:12 PM
June 29 6:07 PM Ganymede's shadow on Jupiter till 9:40 PM (sunset 7:47 PM)
On Tuesday, June 3, about 8:30 PM you can see the Moon lined up with Pollux and Castor. With your unaided eye look 30 degrees above the west horizon for the trio.
On the night of Wednesday, June 18, you can see the Moon, Mars, and Uranus near each other. They all rise in the east just before midnight and are visible till dawn. The gibbous Moon will be easy to spot. Mars at mag -1 and a couple of degrees above the Moon won't be hard either.
You will need a chart to identify mag 6 Uranus 3 degrees to the left of and 1 degree above Mars.

On Saturday, June 21, at 4:45 AM you can see Mercury and Venus near each other. With your unaided eye or binoculars look 5 degrees above the east-northeast horizon for mag -4 Venus and, half a degree below it, mag -1 Mercury.

"VIEWED FROM THE DISTANCE OF THE MOON, THE ASTONISHING THING ABOUT THE EARTH, CATCHING THE BREATH, IS THAT IT IS ALIVE. The photographs show the dry, pounded surface of the moon in the foreground, dead as an old bone. Aloft, floating free beneath the moist gleaming membrane of bright blue sky, is the rising earth, the only exuberant thing in this part of the cosmos. If you could look long enough, you would see the swirling of the great drifts of white cloud, covering and uncovering the half-hidden masses of land. If you had been looking for a very long, geologic time, you could have seen the continents themselves in motion, drifting apart on their crustal plates, held afloat by the fire beneath. It has the organized, self-contained look of a live creature, full of information, marvelously skilled in handling the sun."

—Lewis Thomas
in The Lives of a Cell

CANON I.S. BINOCULARS PART 2
by
Silvio Jaconelli

The article below completes the first article that appeared in last month's Newsletter. It details some of the first observing experiences with a pair of Canon 15x50 Image Stabilized Binoculars.

First light was just at midnight just as I got home from work. I grabbed the Canons and 10 seconds later I was looking at Jupiter - they did NOT reveal any surface markings, but the moons were just so obvious and were pin points, and there was a lot of dark space between them; I could very easily make out moons just a little less than half a Jupiter diameter away from the limb. And right next to Jupiter was the Beehive – the star images were again pinpoints, and the cluster filled up more than half the FOV through the binoculars. I was able to fit both the planet and the cluster in the same FOV. I was very impressed! Saturn showed some extension, but the true nature of the ring system totally eluded me. Next it was off to Vesta – and again the field stars were pin points and the multiple stars that were in the FOV were very easily resolved; and Vesta itself was effortless. This was fun! Next up was the Sombrereo Galaxy – it was just so easy to find the 'triangle within a triangle' on the star hop to the Sombrero, 3 of the 6 stars being resolved, as was 3 of the 6 stars of the 'shark' asterism; and while the Sombrero was not readily visible I did see a faint smudge at the location of the galaxy. I saw similar smudges where M81 & M82 should have been – and again the star hop to this pair was just so easy despite the 4.5 degree FOV. After about 15 minutes I put the binoculars down and went to bed – the 'disassembly time' was a few seconds! Now that's 'grab & go'!

I suddenly noticed that the plane had not moved from its original position. Guess what – that 'plane' was actually Mercury.

The next evening - April 1st - I took them to work as I wanted to look for Mercury. I went out into the parking lot at dusk, walked around until I gained a good view of the western horizon, and immediately trained my gaze just above the horizon. With the naked eye I saw nothing. I then searched the horizon with the Canons but again I saw nothing except a plane's lights blazing in the distance. But there was no sign of Mercury. After a few minutes I was beginning to get frustrated, then I suddenly noticed that the plane had not moved from its original position. Guess what – that 'plane' was actually Mercury. Naked eye, it was almost invisible but it looked so bright through the Canons! On the way back into the building, I took a quick peak at Orion; the views looked like I was staring at a page from Sky Atlas 2000 – the stars were just so vivid and clear. I must add though that the view of the Orion Nebula was disappointing – the views through the Fujinon 7x50s were better, I thought. Maybe it's the 7 degree FOV that gives the Fujinons the edge over the Canons on this particular object; I can still remember Al Nagler's statement that the most pleasing views are at the LOWEST magnification that still reveals the detail that you wish to see – I recall that it had something to do with framing your object against the background star fields.

The next morning was crystal clear so I decided to try the Canons on the Sun (caveat: never observe the Sun without proper filtration). I simply looked at the Sun through the mylar mask that I use for my telescope. I was able to see the penumbra of several spots, plage, limb darkening, and a hint of granulation – very sharp views. And using 2 eyes rather than one eye definitely gives the illusion of magnification higher than is being actually used. On a subsequent occasion, I saw no detail on the solar disk with the stabilization disengaged; but once I activated the stabilization, a pore - a tiny sun spot – jumped into view. The 'shakes' had hidden the pore from view. That night, I took a quick peek at a 12 day old Moon. The Moon was very sharp, but I was spoiled – I was disappointed at not being able to see Rupes Recta (the Straight Wall)! But Clavius revealed its inner crater chain, Messiers A & B were resolved, Gassendi's 'Diamond Ring' was just visible, and the 'Snakes Head' next to Aristarchus could almost be resolved, using some imagination. The views of both the Sun and the Moon were not too different from my 6" Dob operating at 25x. By the way, the light grasp of the Canons is the equivalent of a 70mm telescope.

Let's talk about double stars. At 15x, the Canons should be able to split doubles as close as 20". So one evening I spent about 5 minutes testing several double stars. First up was Iota Cancri (magnitudes 4 & 7, separation 30"). As expected, this was a real easy split, with plenty of dark space between the components. So I decided to go for something much closer – ADS 8505 in Virgo (magnitudes 6 & 6, separation 20"), closer to the theoretical resolving capability of 15x magnification; again, this was split without any difficulty – impressive. The only gripe that I had at this point was that the primary stars for each of the two targets tested so far exhibited some flaring, something that I have found common to all bright stars observed. I am not sure if this is an artifact of the image stabilizers, or the result of the fast optics (f/5 to f/6), or maybe just aberrations in my own eyes – if anyone has an opinion, please let me know. Anyway, back to the testing. The next subject was the toughest - Cor Caroli which, despite the 19" separation, consisted of very unequal magnitudes of 3 & 6. Double star enthusiasts know that resolving widely disparate magnitudes is much tougher than doubles of similar magnitudes. Well, once again the Canons made short work of Cor Caroli – yes, there was the flaring from the primary, but the faint companion was again obvious. This unit certainly passed the double star challenge! On a subsequent evening, I pushed them further than their capabilities – I could not split Rigel (magnitudes 0 & 7, separation 10"), nor could I split 31 Orionis (magnitudes 5 &10, separation 13"). However, I was seeing some elongation in the Trapezium (components D & C, magnitudes 5 & 6, separation 13") so I would guess that the resolving capability would be around 15" for stars within 3 magnitudes of each other. This guess was made more credible on a later night when I was able to resolve Beta Scorpii 50% of the time, magnitudes 2.6 and 4.9, separation 13.6"; also that night v Scorpii (magnitudes 4.0 & 6.3) was absolutely effortless at a 41" separation – the black space between the components was massive.

In conclusion, these binoculars offer an incredibly convenient way to do some first class observing of objects that do not require high magnifications. The images are incredibly sharp, subject to the vagaries of the image stabilization system. I am most satisfied.

Schedule of Events - June, July, August 2003
East Valley Astronomy Club
by
Howard Israel

Date	Event	Location	Notes
June 5 - 8	Lowell Observatory Star Party	Lowell Observatory, Flagstaff AZ	http://kraken.lowell.edu/lsp
Friday, June 6	Papago Park Star Gaze	Papago Park, Phoenix	6:30 PM setup
Wed. June 11	EVAC Meeting	SCC - Turquoise Room PS#172	7:30 Speaker TBA
Fri. June 13	Gilbert Public Star Party	Gilbert Public Library	7:30 setup
Sat. June 14	Beginners lab	Dave Coshows' home	7:30 setup
Sat. June 21	Local Star Party	Boyce Thompson Arboretum	Sunset: 7:41 PM
June 21 - 28	Grand Canyon Star Party	Grand Canyon NP North/South Rim	http://www.tucsonastronomy.org.gcsp.html
Sat. June 28	Deep Sky Star Party	Vekol Road Site	Sunset: 7:42 PM
		FUTURE EVENTS July, 2003	
Wed. July 9	EVAC Meeting	SCC - Turquoise Room SC#164	7:30 Speaker TBA
Fri. July 11	Gilbert Public Star Party	Gilbert Public Library	7:00 Setup
Sat. July 12	Beginners Lab	Dave Coshows' home	7:00 Setup
Sat. July 19	Local Star Party	Boyce Thompson Arboretum	Sunset: 7:37 PM
Sat. July 26	Deep Sky Star Party	Vekol Road Site	Sunset: 7:33 PM
		FUTURE EVENTS August, 2003	
Sat. Aug. 9	Beginners lab	Dave Coshows' home	7:30 setup
Wed. Aug. 13	EVAC Meeting	SCC - Turquoise Room SC#164	7:30 Speaker TBA
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
Sat. Aug. 30	Bonus Deep Sky Star Party	Vekol Road Site	Sunset: 6:57 PM Equipment Shootout

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, (another good reason to renew your membership, if you have not already done so).

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."

The Backyard Astronomer

By Bill Dellinges

Get Ready For Mars!

"Mars, by virtue of its color alone, must have seized the attention of stargazers from time immemorial, catapulting them into inescapable fantasies."
From Mars by S.J. O'Meara

This summer you will see an unusually bright red "star" in the night sky. It will actually be the planet Mars, making an exceptionally close visit to Earth on August 27th. On that date, Mars will be "only" 34,646,418 miles away in the direction of the constellation Aquarius.

Though we come close to Mars about every two years when we pass it due to our faster orbital velocity, these rendezvous place the two planets at about 60 million miles apart. Since Mars is only half the size of Earth, the planet is not impressive in telescopes at that distance, nor does it dazzle the unaided eye visually.

Because the orbits of these two planets are elliptical, or egg shaped, some close approaches are better than others. In fact, about every 15th year they can get as close as 35 million miles. Not only is this the 15th year but this August finds Mars auspiciously at its perihelion point in its orbit (closest to the Sun). These two facts combine to make this approach the closest one in about 60,000 years. So amateur astronomers like myself are getting very excited and dusting off our telescopes. This will be my fourth apparition of Mars, having viewed the 1956, 1971, and 1988 visits.

What might the casual observer expect to see? In June (distance: 60 million miles), look for Mars before sunrise low in the south-southeast. It will already be the brightest thing in the sky at a magnitude -1 (excluding the Sun and Moon of course!). July (distance: 47 million miles) finds Mars rising in the southeast about 11 p.m. It climbs to a height of about 40 degrees above the southern horizon later in the night (~ 2-3 a.m.). Again, it will be brighter than any star, noticeably red, and not twinkling – you can't miss it.

August: Now things get interesting! Mars' distance from Earth decreases from 39 to 34 million miles and its brightness increases from -2.3 to -2.9. Only the planet Venus shines brighter than this (-4.5).

Moving backwards? Planets appear to move through the constellations in an eastern direction. The ancients long ago recognized this and aptly named these celestial objects planets, Greek for "wanderers". But when we - on the inside track - pass an outer planet, a funny thing happens. For about two months, the planet appears to move backwards! That is, it will seem to move through the constellations not eastward but westward. This phenomenon is called retrograde motion. Watch this intriguing dance during August and September. Direct, or eastern movement resumes in October.

Here are some tips for you backyard astronomers with telescopes. A caveat: Mars is always a challenging object to observe. Even at its closest approaches, the size of its disk in arc seconds (25.13") is only half the size of Jupiter's (~ 45") as seen in a telescope. The problem, of course, is that a 4000 mile diameter planet, even at 34 million miles, exhibits a very small disk. Another problem is that viewed from the U.S. this summer, Mars never gets higher in the sky than about 40 degrees. Thus we'll be viewing it through more atmosphere than we'd like, so image sharpness may not be as good as if it were seen higher in the sky.

My best advice is to use a telescope of modest size, around 4 – 8 inches of aperture as smaller telescopes are more forgiving of a turbulent atmosphere. Refracting telescopes are generally better suited than reflectors for observing the planets. Let your telescope cool off outside for at least one hour (the longer, the better) before observing so it can reach the ambient temperature of the night air which renders better images. Do not observe objects over the hot roof of a house! Use color filters to reduce glare and increase detail of the planet. I find almost any color filter will make a planet look better than if no filter is used. Planetary observation is an art. Success comes to that observer who waits for moments of good seeing (steady air) to spot detail like seasonal shadings and polar ice caps on Mars. So spend minutes, not seconds at the eyepiece, perhaps seated if possible, waiting for those magical moments when the planet suddenly stops bubbling and presents a crisp image.

By the way, the next return of Mars will be October 30, 2005 at a distance of 43 million miles. In 15 years, July 31, 2018 we get another close pass at 35.8 million miles. The next time Mars comes as close as this summer? August 24, 2208. And CLOSER than this summer? August 28, 2287.

Enjoy your view of the mysterious red planet these coming months. You've waited 15 years and earned it!

On The Horizon
Comming Astronomical Events and Activities

LAST CHANCE NOTICE!!
Lowell Observatory Star Party
June 5-8, 2003

Lowell Observatory will host its first-ever multi-day Star Party, where enthusiasts from around the country will gather for world-class telescope viewing and other adventures in astronomy.

Held June 5-8, 2003, the Lowell Star Party will feature some of the best that Flagstaff has to offer: a heritage rich in astronomical discovery, clear skies, and access to tourist attractions, restaurants, shopping, and more.

Lowell Star Party sponsors include some of the biggest names in astronomy, including Astronomy Magazine, Celestron, and Meade Instruments Corporation. "Star party attendees have an opportunity to interact with some of the heaviest hitters in astronomy," says Russell Tweed. "Several sponsors also will be donating products to be given away to lucky star party participants."

Evening viewing parties will be based at the Arizona Snowbowl ski resort, Highway 180 and Snowbowl Rd. "Situated at an elevation of 9,300 feet, Snowbowl is an ideal location for night sky observing," says Tweed. "The high-elevation observing area coupled with Flagstaff's reliably clear skies will make for an exciting event."

During the day, star party participants can choose from a variety of activities including tours of Meteor Crater, the U.S. Naval Observatory, the new Shoemaker Astrogeology building at the U.S. Geological Survey, and Lowell Observatory's own Anderson Mesa research site. Attendees also may attend daytime scientific presentations in the Steele Visitor Center and the Rotunda Library at Lowell Observatory's historic campus, 1400 W. Mars Hill Rd.

Many recreational activities also are available to those wanting to explore Flagstaff and the surrounding area. Nearby attractions include the Grand Canyon, Oak Creek Canyon, the Museum of Northern Arizona, the Riordan Mansion, the Arboretum and many more.

During the star party, attendees also may participate in "Astronomy Safaris," exclusive, behind-the-scenes tours and events only for small groups. The daytime safari, called "Behind the Scenes at Lowell," gives participants access to areas of the observatory's historic campus not ordinarily available to the public.

Nighttime "Astronomy Safaris" allow participants to choose between a private viewing session on Mars Hill or research observing at Anderson Mesa. The "Private Viewing" safari includes 90 minutes of exclusive telescope viewing through the historic 24-inch Alvan Clark refractor led by an experienced member of the Lowell staff. During the "Research Observing" safari, groups will join professional astronomers as they gather images and data using one of many research telescopes on Anderson Mesa. Both nighttime safaris are risk-free; fees will be refunded if it is cloudy and observing is obstructed or telescopes are not in operation for any reason.

A number of lodging options are available. For those interested in staying at the observing site, Arizona Snowbowl has 130 camping/telescope spaces, which can be booked on a first-come, first-served basis with the online registration. Little America Hotel, La Quinta Inn and Sleep Inn are offering discounted accommodations for Lowell Star Party registrants; when making a reservation, ask for the Lowell Star Party room block.

The registration fee for the Lowell Star Party is $60 ($40 for Friends members) for the full 4-day event and $30 for single-day registration ($20 for Friends members). Star party attendees will also receive a 20 percent discount in Lowell Observatory's gift shop.

For complete event information and to register for the Lowell Star Party, visit http://www.lowell.edu/Public then click on "Lowell Star Party" at the top of the page.

Note: For general information, please contact Russell Tweed by phone at (928) 774-3358 ext. 267 or via email at: tweedr@lowell.edu. For questions or problems regarding online registration, please contact Jeff Hall by phone at (928) 774-3358 ext. 227 or via email at jch@lowell.edu.

Grand Canyon Star Party
21-28 June 2003
South and North Rim

web site: http://www.tucsonastronomy.org/gcsp.html

Further Info:

For South Rim information, write to:
Dean Ketelsen
1122 East Greenlee Pl.
Tucson, AZ. 85719
520-293-2855
ketelsen@as.arizona.edu

For North Rim information or registration, write to:
Deloy Pierce
P.O. Box 674
Farmington, UT. 84025-0647
801-451-8215
grndcnynstarsnr@utah-inter.net

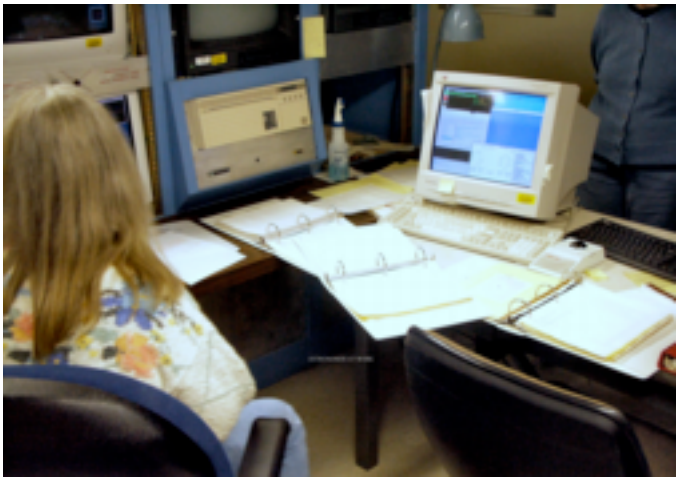
South Rim Lodging:
All Rim Lodging or Trailer Village (Xanterra) 303-338-6000
This number is often very busy, FAX them at 303-338-2045 or online at: http://xanterra.com/

The Merry, Merry Month of May
by Howard Israel
Photographs by
Craig Dokken

The month of May, 2003 surely must go down in the history of EVAC as the busiest month ever for astronomical activities.

The month began on Saturday, May 3 with our Deep Sky Star Party at the Vekol Rd. site. On Friday, May 9, EVAC volunteers participated in a Star Gaze for Boulder Creek Elementary Schools' annual Fathers Club Camp-out. We received rave notices from the kids and adults for a great night of planet and stargazing. At the same time, several EVAC members helped at the monthly Gilbert Library Public Star Party.

On Saturday, May 10, several EVAC members and families toured the US Naval Observatory in Flagstaff. Thanks to our tour guide, Alice Monet, this was one of the best observatory tours we've ever taken. Alice, (shown in the photograph below) is a working astronomer at the observatory and discussed in great detail her work and how she used the telescopes and equipment in support of several exciting projects she is working on.



Alice Monet in Telescope Control Room at U.S.N.O.

One of the large Telescopes at U.S.N.O

Our monthly meeting on Wednesday, May 14 took place in the Turquoise Room at Scottsdale Community College. While the new facility is a great venue for our meetings, we may have a problem with lighting. Chris Shur gave another of his great presentations, describing in great detail the construction of his new observatory, accompanied by outstanding slides using his Schmidt Camera.

The Desert Botanical Gardens Lunar Eclipse observing session on Thursday, May 15 was well attended by EVAC members. Over 200 DBG members enjoyed looking through several volunteer scopes at the total lunar eclipse. According to Cheryl Anderson, Membership Chairman, EVACs presence was the high point of the evening for her membership.

Saturday, May 17 was Kids Astronomy Day at the Arizona Science Center. Thanks to all EVAC members who helped out at our club table. A special thanks to those dedicated volunteers who withstood the hot sun all day long showing views of the sun through their telescopes.

Saturday, May 24 our Local Star Party took place at Boyce Thompson Arboretum. What a great event this turned out to be in conjunction with The Friends of Boyce Thompson Arboretum. Over 60 EVAC members and families participated in a delicious barbecue before dark, courtesy of BTA. About 30 telescopes were set up for observing by over 350 BTA members.

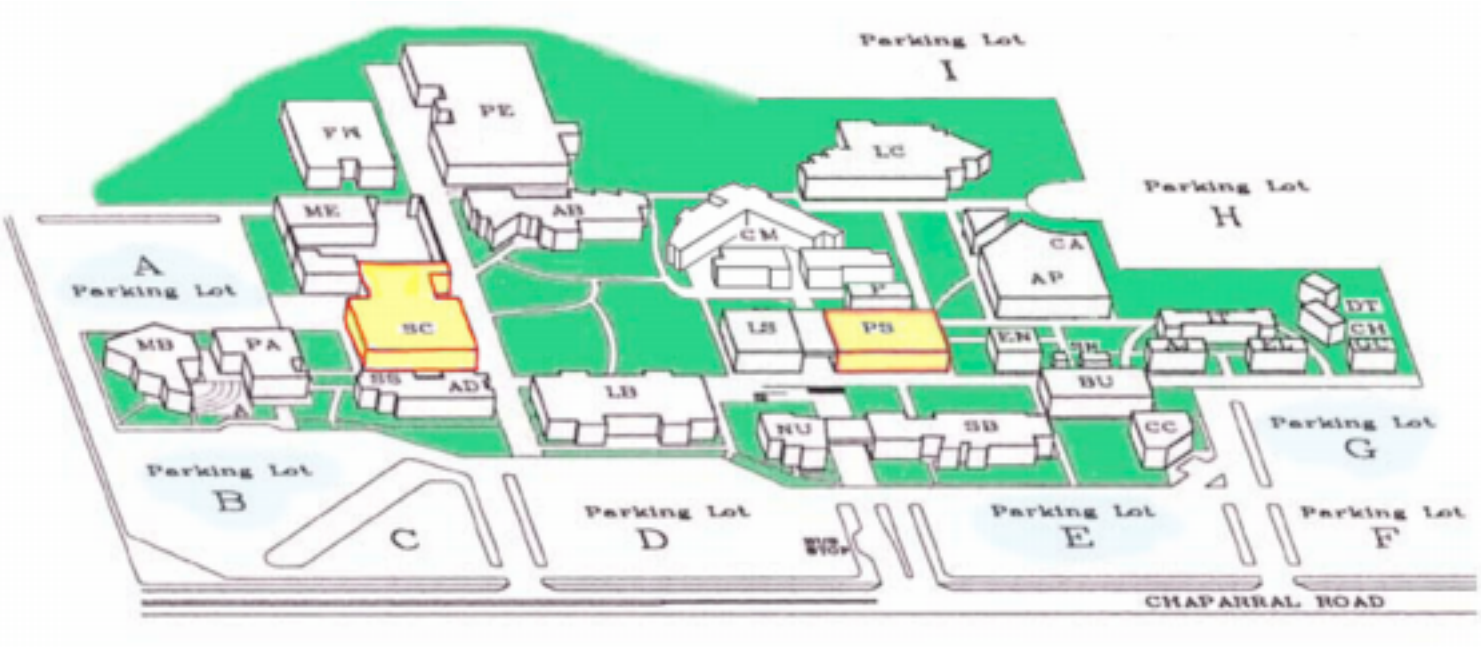
Finally, on Saturday, May 31 a bonus Deep Sky Star Party at the Vekol site took place. The threat of clouds kept participation low, however the Eye Piece Shootout proved to be overwhelmingly successful. Lots of members participated, had a great time, and learned a few surprising things about eyepieces. Results of the shootout will be published shortly.

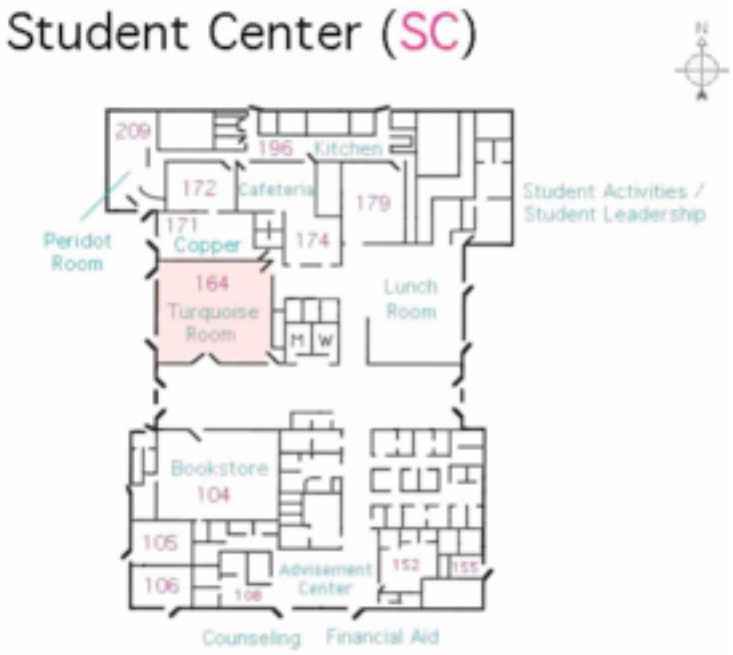
With the hot summer months upon us, club activities will diminish. However, we are working on several ideas beginning this fall that should keep our membership hopping for the rest of the year. Have a healthy, happy and safe summer.

East side view of the U.S.N.O.

EVAC tour members at U.S.N.O. with Alace Monet at far right

Scottsdale Community College Campus Map





Because of the growing size of our club we have been given the opportunity to frequently use a larger room at Scottsdale Community College.

Here is the EVAC Monthly General Meeting Schedule for 2003 with the room assignment for each meeting. (SAVE THIS NOTICE!)

May 14th - Turquoise Room
Room #164 in the Student Center (SC - 164)

June 11th - Room PS - 172

July 9th - Turquoise Room
Room #164 in the Student Center (SC - 164)

August 13th - Turquoise Room
Room #164 in the Student Center (SC - 164)

September 10th - Turquoise Room
Room #164 in the Student Center (SC - 164)

October 8th - Room PS - 172

November 12th - Turquoise Room
Room #164 in the Student Center (SC - 164)

December 10th - Turquoise Room
Room #164 in the Student Center (SC - 164)

Monthly meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month, beginning at 7:30 PM

The Turquoise Room (SC #164)
is located in the Student Center (SC Building). Parking lots A and B are the most conveniently located for when our meetings are held here.

Our old meeting room (PS #172)
is located in the PS Building. Parking lots E and G are the most convenient when meetings are held here.

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
( ) ( ) $30.00 /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"

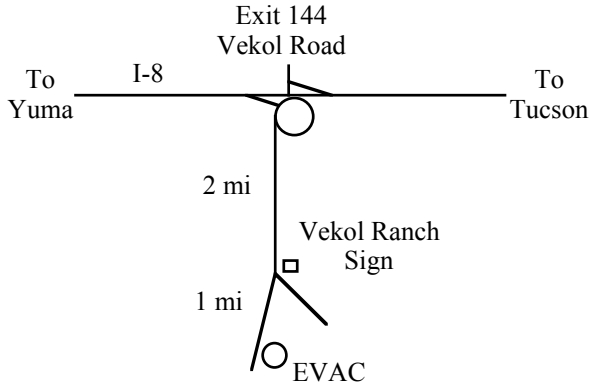
How to get there: Drive East on US 60 past Florence Junction for both sites. About 3.7 miles East of Florence Junction (after crossing railroad tracks) you will see a (second) flagpole on your right. Turning right (South) here and following the dirt road for 0.6 miles you will reach the FJ #1 site (marked 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
(480) 633-7479

VICE PRESIDENT
Diana Jane
(480) 833-2002

TREASURER
Stanley Bronstein
(480) 922-3845

SECRETARY
Tom Polakis
(480) 967-1658

PROPERTIES
Gary Finnie
gfinnie@kam-az.com

NEWSLETTER
John Matthews
john-cathy@cox.net

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

EVAC
PO Box 2202
Mesa, AZ 85214

EVAC Homepage:
www.eastvalleyastronomy.org

Reminder: June EVAC Meeting
Wednesday, June 11, 2003
Location: Room PS – 172
Physical Science, (SCC) @ 7:30PM

July EVAC Meeting
Wednesday, July 9, 2003
Location: Room SC – 164
Student Center, (SCC) @ 7:30PM