



The Faint Fuzzy

© WKAA 2008

The Official Newsletter of the West Kentucky Amateur Astronomers

July 2008

From the Editors:

We are glad to see so many club members helping out at Summer Nights and other "sidewalk astronomy" events. Thanks to all who have helped--or have signed up for future events.

The Twin Lakes Star Party will be here before we know it (Sept 27-Oct 4), so look for updates in the next two issues of *The Faint Fuzzy*!

—Bob & Melissa

UPCOMING MEETING:

Next meeting: July 5. The meeting starts at 7:00pm, with Summer Nights observing afterwards if it is clear. Visitors are welcome (as always).

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: June 7th

Twenty people attended the meeting including a familiar face and two new ones. Long time club member Jay McNeil has recently moved back to the area. (Welcome back, Jay!) Our two newest club members are Randy French, from Charleston, MO, and Jason Martin, from Clarksville, TN.

Club President Dale Baltimore called the meeting to order and turned the floor over to planetarium assistant Sonya Wood-Mahler. Sonya expressed her appreciation to club members for their help on Astronomy Day by giving out certificates to everyone who helped. She also gave out NASA pictures and (our personal favorite) Smokey the Bear bookmarks!

Dale added his thanks to both the club and to Sonya for the collective effort in making Astronomy Day a success.

David Paessler reported the treasury is in good shape and there were no ALCOR awards pending. For the benefit of the new members, David explained a little about about the [Astronomical League Observing Clubs](#).

Longtime club member Jim Hall will be moving to Fargo, ND, where his wife Lisa has been transferred. Jim got his start in astronomy here. We will miss Jim and his excellent "Introduction to Astronomy" programs he's presented at the last two Astronomy Day events.

Carol Baltimore shared the new club brochure she created in time for Astronomy Day and asked for input. Nice job, Carol!

Dale said he had talked to Don Partain about whether street lights would be put on the newly widened highway 68/80 through the park. This is apparently a state DOT decision. Vyron Mitchell suggested calling Keith Todd (DOT Paducah) to find out.

[Update from Vyron, 7/2/08: "I have received word today from Keith Todd, Kentucky Department of Transportation, that there will be NO lighting installed along the new construction route in LBL. This includes the interchange now under construction at Hwy.

68/80 and The Trace (just north of our viewing site). He informed me that 'LBL management' had made the request that no lights be installed. Good news!"]

Summer Nights

Summer Nights continue to go well. Program Coordinator Harold Meyers asked that If you have not signed up for one or more, please contact him at hambone10100[[@](mailto:hambone10100@yahoo.com)]yahoo.com. (See below for Summer Nights and other Public Outreach reports.)

Clear Night for Observing!

The skies were clear again and club members set up scopes for Summer Nights viewing after the meeting. Sixteen people attended and were treated to views of Saturn, the ISS with docked Shuttle flyover, an Iridium flare, and various deep sky objects.

OBSERVING REPORTS

SUMMER NIGHTS PROGRAM CONTINUES!

So far the weather has cooperated for most of the Saturday nights, and club members report good viewing and enthusiastic public response.

June 14 Harold Meyers reported: "The members who came were John Holland, Vyron Mitchell, and me. I don't have the official head count for last night but we had around 15 people. We also had 5 people who showed up late for the planetarium show and came back to the observatory. The Moon was out and bright so even though it was clear it wasn't a great night. We also had a problem with dew. My scope was wet before it got dark. In between drying off the eyepieces, finders, and secondaries we were able to view the Moon, Saturn, Ring Nebula, M13, Dumbbell, and Alberio. One woman and her son stayed to ask questions and look through the scopes until around 11:00pm. I expect to see them back."

June 21 Dale Baltimore reported: "We had a great turn out thanks to Harold's call for help earlier in the week. We had 10 club members show up. It was like a meeting night. Alan Dudenhofer worked the dome scope and Bob Vickers used one of the loaner scopes. Vyron Mitchell had his 10" Dob, I had my 10" Dob, Stan Sprei had his Questar. Art brought his binoculars and a Celestron SkyScout which can be used to identify objects. Skies were not great but we had a lot of fun and had a good crowd asking a lot of questions. Most (at least ones that came by my scope) had not looked through a scope before and loved seeing the rings of Saturn, some double stars, M13 and a few planetary nebulae. There was a lot of moisture in the air so the nebulae didn't show up well. I did not even try any galaxies. Sonya said we had a crowd of 40 that came out to the scopes to view. I believe this was the biggest crowd yet. There were scattered high clouds in the north early in the night and

"My greatest discovery has been the universe (which I discovered when I was quite young). I walked out of the house one night and ...BANG!... there it was in all its glory. I couldn't believe my eyes! What never ceases to amaze me is the number of people who go through life never making this discovery."

--Philip M. Bagnall

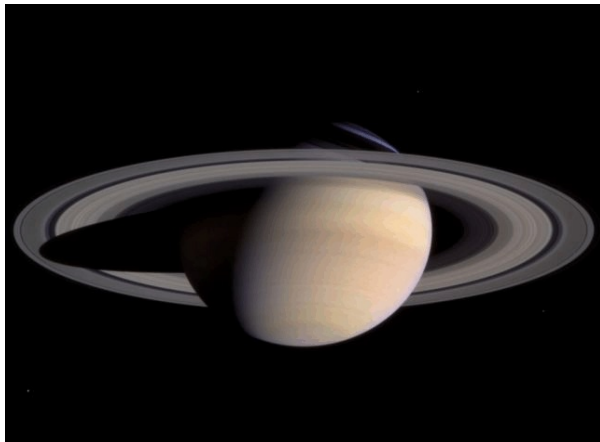
thicker clouds rolled in so we all left between 10:30 and 11:00 pm. We had a lot of fun visiting with each other, talking to the public, and viewing with the public."

June 28 Harold reported: "We had three members show up Saturday night: David Paessler, John Holland, and me. John ran the dome scope while David and I set up our scopes. It was clear enough to view but the transparency wasn't that great. We had around 30 people show up. Clouds started coming in around 10:30 so we packed up and left. All in all it was a good night, and we had fun anyway."

Note: Please sign up to help out with as many of the remaining Summer Nights programs as you can this year.

OTHER PUBLIC OUTREACH

Camp Hazelwood Girl Scouts Program (June 17): For the second year, club members Alan Dudenhofer, Harold Meyers, and Bob and Melissa Vickers presented an astronomy program to the Girl Scouts and their counselors at Camp Hazelwood, near Paris, TN. After Bob's short slide show tour of the night sky, he, Alan, and Harold set up their scopes and entertained the 60 girls, ages 6-16, with views of Saturn, double stars, M13, the Ring Nebula, an occasional satellite, and finally, the nearly full moon. The girls really enjoyed the program and had lots of questions.



NASA Cassini image of Saturn

Library Astronomy Event at Memorial Park, Paris, TN (June 27): Connie McSwain, Director of the Paris Library, arranged for a public astronomy viewing on the soccer fields at the town park. Club representatives Alan Dudenhofer, Harold Meyers, Charles Funk, and Bob and Melissa Vickers set up their scopes for a good crowd of about 50 people of all ages. Connie was thrilled at the turnout and expressed her appreciation to the club members for their help.

The Faint Fuzzy Needs You!

This is YOUR newsletter, and we'd like your contributions. Send us observing reports, articles, images, sketches, comments, etc. Share your enthusiasm with the Club! Send submissions to us at [vickers\[@\]aeneas.net](mailto:vickers[@]aeneas.net).

ASTRONOMEDIA

Celestrak.com Most people are familiar with Heavens-Above.com as a resource for predicting satellite orbits. Celestrak is an alternate resource, and one recommended for its accuracy in the Astronomical League Earth Orbiting Satellite Observing Club information.

Tietronix Animation and Graphics has an interesting animated [video](#) of the evolution of the International Space Station. [Thanks to Vyron Mitchell for this link.]

CLUB RESOURCES

Loaner Scopes/Imager

The club has two Dobsonians (6", 8") and a Meade Deep Sky Imager available for club members to borrow. Anyone who has been a club member for six months, completes a training/safety session, and signs a written agreement may borrow one of the scopes or the imager.

Library

The club has several books and magazines available to members for reference or checkout. Take a look and see what we have at the next club meeting.

Magazine Discounts

Club members who subscribe to *Sky & Telescope* or *Astronomy* magazines through the club receive a discount! Annually you can save \$10 on *Sky & Telescope* and \$9 on *Astronomy*. Contact David Paessler for more information.

CLUB OFFICERS

President: Dale Baltimore—Paducah, KY; 270-554-6603; w.daleb[[@](mailto:w.daleb@comcast.net)]comcast.net

Vice President: Jim Phfistner—Hardin, KY; 270-354-6860; phfistners[[@](mailto:phfistners@gmail.com)]gmail.com

Treasurer/Astronomical League Coordinator: David Paessler—Kevil, KY; 270-488-3784; dcpaessler[[@](mailto:dcpaessler@yahoo.com)]yahoo.com

Secretary: Bob & Melissa Vickers—Huntingdon, TN; 731-986-3082; Vickers[[@](mailto:Vickers@aeneas.net)]aeneas.net

Star Party Coordinator: David Paessler—Kevil, KY; 270-488-3784; dcpaessler[[@](mailto:dcpaessler@yahoo.com)]yahoo.com

Assistant Star Party Coordinator: Bill Kassebaum; Paducah, KY/Key West, FL; ngc1952[[@](mailto:ngc1952@bellsouth.net)]bellsouth.net

Website: John McCubbin—Hopkinsville, KY; mccubbin.astronomy[[@](mailto:mccubbin.astronomy@gmail.com)]gmail.com and John Holland—Hopkinsville, KY; yojohn_ng[[@](mailto:yojohn_ng@newwavecomm.net)]newwavecomm.net