

THE FAINT FUZZY

*The Official Newsletter of the West Kentucky Amateur Astronomers
November 2005*

UPCOMING MEETING:

Our annual chili supper will be Saturday November 5th at 6 p.m. at Golden Pond Observatory. Our monthly meeting will start at 7:00 p.m. As always visitors are welcome to attend both the chili supper and the meeting! If the sky is clear, we will view after the meeting.

STAR PARTY HIGHLIGHTS:

Here are impressions of the star party from three of our officers:

Vice-President, Bill Kassenbaum: Lynn and I arrived at the 2005 TLSP on Friday, September 30 about an hour after sunset. We had planned on arriving well before dark, but work, traffic and my poor planning prevented our timely travel from Paducah. We arrived just as the stars were emerging, but instead of viewing Lynn and I set up our trailer for what we hoped would be a relaxing week of star gazing and catching up with life, besides we were hungry after our travels. Unlike last year, when Lynn and I were essentially alone when we arrived on the first night, this year there were many camps and scopes already set up. These were not just local folks but some serious star party seniors who had traveled for many miles to arrive and claim prime camping and observing spots. Some had been there since Friday morning. This was the beginning of a great week of observing without the clouds and rain of last year's event. Though I was to have to commute back to Paducah for work during the week, we still got to observe 6 of the next 10 nights. The dreaded Pennyryle forest meadow fog only encroached during the dawn of a couple mornings. There were at least three mornings as I was rising from my slumber to head to Paducah for work at 5 AM, only to find a small army of observers still at it trying to get the last objects on their lists done before dawn. It was a great success as a star party, one that WKAA should be proud of.

Treasurer and ALCor, David Paessler: TLSP 2005 is history. We made 9 days without any measurable rain during a star party! There were a few nights that were not the greatest for observing but it didn't rain on us constantly like last year. We had several nights of mag 6.5 skies to enjoy, although dew was a problem.

The field was well attended and early this year. We had more people on the field by dusk the first Saturday than I can ever remember. It was a nice laid back week-long event. The first part started out hot and then by Thursday we had to break out the coats and heaters, but we had fun all week long. Looking back I show 28 single registrations and 11 family registrations, but the field looked like it was much fuller than that.

Of course those numbers do not count club members on the field of which there were several for the whole week. I would like to personally thank Bill and Lynn Kassebaum, Dale and Carol Baltimore, Bob Vickers, and Jim Hall for helping out with registration and monitoring the warm room/snack bar. They volunteered to help which kept any one person from spending all his time tied down to a 'job' all day. Thanks again!

Star Party Chairman, Ross Workman: Another Twin Lakes has come and gone. It's hard to believe that we have hosted 16 star parties. Alan and I have had the pleasure of attending each and every one. And believe me when I say, they just keep getting better and better.

Due to my work and telescope building schedules this year, I was unable to provide much support on the field during the majority of the party. With that, several of you jumped right in to help out. Dale and Carol Baltimore, Bill and Lynn Kassebaum, Jim Hall, Bob Vickers, Jeff Burton, John Holland, Jackie Mathis, Jim and Sandy Phistner, and last, and certainly not least, my partner in crime, David Paessler. Folks, you did an outstanding job this year and without your help and dedication, it couldn't have happened. I want to extend a special thank you to each and every one for everything that they did. You are the reason why TLSP is a success; not me. I just happen to be the one up front doing all of the talking on Saturday. I cannot, and will not, accept the credit for making TLSP happen. It's a group effort. And in my book, I've got the best group of supporters in the star party field.

As with any star party, we learn from the past to make the future better. We did this year and next year, we all can make it better. That said, I would like to propose that the officers and members of the club consider adding a star party co-chairman position to the ranks. There would be two chairpersons heading up the star party instead of just one. I believe that we could be more productive with two people heading up the star party. This co-chairperson would become an officer in the club just as the current chair position. Give this idea some thought and we will discuss it at our upcoming meeting.

Again, many thanks go to everyone who not only helped with the planning and actual running of the star party, but to those who attended the star party and supported our efforts.

The 17th Annual Twin Lakes Star Party is scheduled for October 14-21, 2006. I look forward to seeing everyone there again. And it'll be here before you know it....

ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE (AL) AWARDS:

There has been a lot of progress on AL observing awards! David Paessler has received his Globular Cluster Award. Bob Vickers has submitted his Lunar Logs pending a certificate. Jeff Burton has submitted his Globular Cluster observing logs for approval and a certificate. Several people are making progress on the Messier observing program. – *David Paessler*

The [WKAA website](#) lists club members who have already earned observing club certificates and provides links to the Astronomical League website. [Contact David](#) if you have any questions.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Balance (10/30/05): \$2064.54

TLSP is done but there are still a few bills and shirt sales pending. It looks like we have one large black shirt left to sell. – *David Paessler*

PUBLIC EVENTS:

Princeton, KY: Ross Workman has scheduled a sidewalk astronomy event for Thursday November 10th at Caldwell County Elementary School for their Family Reading Night. He will start at 6:00 p.m. with a short talk and then head to the scopes for viewing. He expects 50 to 100 people, so any help will be appreciated. [Contact Ross](#) if you can help.

Natchez Trace State Park, TN: Thanks to help from Charles Funk, Alan Dudenhofer and my wife Melissa the Sidewalk Astronomy event on October 15 was a resounding success. I did a 20 minute "Tour of the Universe" slide show followed by views through the scopes. We estimate about 70 people showed up. A good time was had by all! - *Bob Vickers*

OTHER EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Club Website: Check out the astronomy forum, photo gallery, and other useful info at www.wkaa.net. Perusing the website and conversing with fellow observers is a great way to spend those cloudy evenings

Club Library: We currently have 18 books and 1 magazine in the library. If you would like to check something out, just remove the card from the book, complete the information, and leave the card in the "Checked Out Items" box. Also please consider donating or loaning books that you don't use frequently to the library.

Loaner Scopes: The club has two Dobsonians (6" and 8") available for club members to borrow. Anyone who has been a club member for 6 months, completes a training/safety session, and signs a written agreement may borrow one of the scopes. [Contact Vince](#) in order to make arrangements.

Magazine Discounts: Club members who subscribe to *Sky and Telescope* or *Astronomy* magazines through the club receive a discount! Annually you can save \$10 on *Sky and Tel* and \$9 on *Astronomy*. Turn in your renewals to David Paessler in order to receive the discount.

Clear skies,

Dale & Carol Baltimore