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SAN ANGELO

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ASTRONOMER

Starbeams and Heliowinds
Newsletter of the San Angelo Astronomy Association
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ALCon 2011: A Report by Andy Oliver



Salt Lake Astronomical Society and the Astronomical League hosted ALCon 2011 at Bryce Canyon, Utah, June 29th thru July 2nd. I was fortunate enough to be there for several days. Along with the convention, Bryce Canyon National Park hosted their annual Astronomy Festival. The combination of these two events provided a plethora of activities for the serious astronomer and those just dabbling.

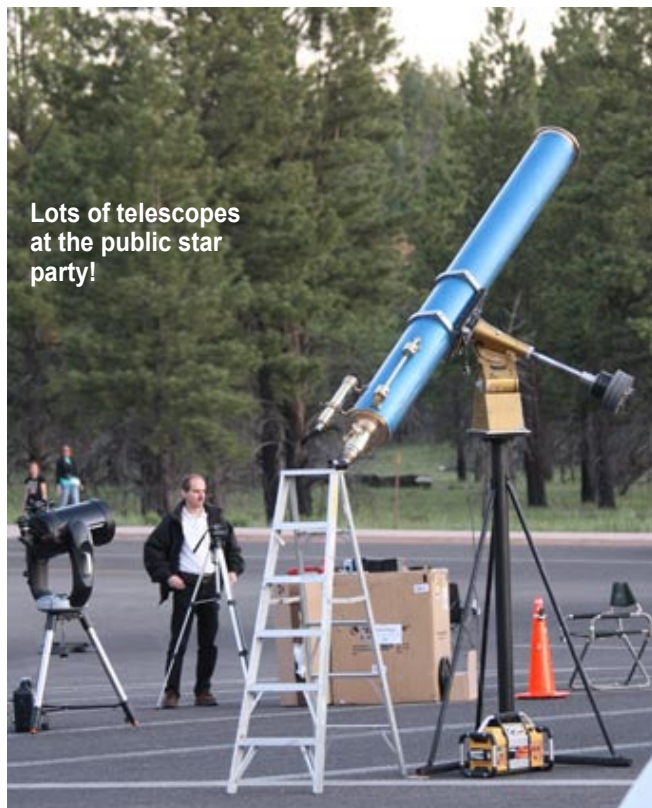
Vendors of items astronomical displayed their wares in a large downstairs room at Ruby's Inn, located near the entrance to Bryce Canyon National Park. Upstairs, various talks and information sessions took place throughout the event. Speakers included:

Mike Murray, Clark Planetarium in Salt Lake City, who spoke on improving your observing techniques; Joe Lopinot, River Bend Astronomy Club, who shared his thoughts on filters;

David Bernson, Salt Lake Astronomical Society – his presentation was titled “Ophiuchus and the Argonauts - Celestial Highlights of the Summer Sky”

John Dobson, Sidewalk Astronomers -- due to Mr. Dobson's deteriorating health, he was unable to attend personally, but gave us a prerecorded question and answer session, which was both enlightening and entertaining.

Other speakers were Bob Parks, Executive Director, International Dark Sky Association; Tyler Nordgren, University of Redlands Dept. of Physics; Steve Edberg, NASA/JPL; Alan MacRobert, Sky & Telescope Magazine; David Eicher, Astronomy Magazine. Carolyn Shoemaker was the Keynote Speaker at the Gala Awards.



Lots of telescopes at the public star party!

Also during the day, presentations and activities were taking place at the National Park Visitor Center. Solar scopes were set up everyday, and park rangers talked about sunspots and prominences. A Planet Walk was given everyday -- a hike with solar system stations set up. Several Rocket Building and Launching Workshops were held. A couple of astronomy programs were being shown in the Auditorium.

All the other activities aside, Bryce Canyon is a prime location for night time viewing. Across from the Visitor Center each evening, over 50 telescopes were out each night, and the viewing was awesome. Park rangers gave



sky tours and answered general questions. The weather was fairly cooperative, although the temperature dropped into the 50s each evening. About an hour into the canyon, the private star party was held, for ALCon attendees wishing to do deep sky observing and imaging.

Speaking of weather, SLAS had arranged to remotely control the 2 meter Faulkes Telescope in Australia on Thursday morning. They had been granted 2 hours (9a-11a Utah time, midnite, Australia Time). Unfortunately, when our time came, a storm had moved into the area, and the dome had automatically closed. We waited a while, but watching the weather, we realized our opportunity was lost. As Alexander's mother puts it, in the book "Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day" -- "some days are like that, even in Australia!"



Roger Fry,
President, Salt
Lake Astronomical
Society



Amateur Rocket Launches



More telescopes

Editorial Information

SAN ANGELO ASTRONOMER is the monthly newsletter of the San Angelo Astronomy Association.

Publication date is the last day of each month. Deadline for the submission of articles is the Tuesday before that day. Please submit articles via e-mail or on disk (.rtf, .doc, or .txt files). Preferred image files are .JPG.

Address all newsletter correspondence to:
editor@AngeloAstronomy.com

The San Angelo Astronomy Association was founded in 1962. Membership is open to anyone. For membership information contact any of the officers or visit our monthly meetings at the ASU Planetarium.

Club Mailing Address:
PO Box 60391
San Angelo, TX 76906

Meeting Schedule



No Meeting on July 4th
Mon, August 1

Meetings are conducted at the Angelo State University Planetarium located in the Physical Science building or in a nearby classroom. Meetings begin at 7:00pm on the first Monday of each month. No food, drink or tobacco in the planetarium, please.

Got any news items or articles to contribute?
Anything to buy, sell or trade? Write to us!

**Deadline for next newsletter
is Tuesday, July 26th.**

Points of Interest, SAAA Activities and Upcoming Events - July/August 2011

July 4 (Mon) – No Regular meeting of SAAA – Happy Independence Day

July 15 - Full Moon

July 16 – Spacecraft Dawn expected to obtain orbit around Vesta

July 20 - Mercury At Its Greatest Eastern Elongation (27 Degrees)

July 28-29 – Southern Delta Aquariids

The Southern Delta Aquariids are a meteor shower visible from mid July to mid August each year with peak activity on July 28 or 29 July. The shower originated from the breakup of what are now the Marsden and Kracht Sungrazing comets.

The Delta Aquariids get their name because their radiant appears to lie in the constellation Aquarius, near one of the constellation's brightest stars, Delta Aquarii. The name derives from the Latin possessive form "Aquarii", whereby the declension "-i" is replaced by "-ids" (hence Aquariids with two i's). There are two branches of the Delta Aquariid meteor shower, Southern and Northern. The Southern Delta Aquariids are considered a strong shower, with an average meteor observation rate of 15–20 per hour, and a peak zenith hourly rate of 18. The average radiant is at RA=339°, DEC=-17°. The Northern Delta Aquariids are a weaker shower, peaking later in mid August, with an average peak rate of 10 meteors per hour and an average radiant of RA=340°, DEC=-2°.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

July 30 – New Moon



**Aug 1 - Alpha Capricornids
Meteor Shower Peak**

Aug 5-7 – Vesta Fiesta:

Celebrate the beginning of Dawn's year-long exploration of new worlds. After close to four years cruising at stunning speeds, the robotic spacecraft is catching up to the object of its first destination in the main asteroid belt: Vesta. Don't Dawn and Vesta deserve a fiesta? FMI: http://dawn.jpl.nasa.gov/news/vesta_fiesta.asp

**Aug 6 - Southern Iota Aquarids
Meteor Shower Peak**

Aug 12 - Perseids Meteor Shower Peak

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STS-135, Final Shuttle Launch For NASA

Upcoming mission events:

- **July 4: Crew arrives for launch @ 2:45 p.m. EDT**
- **July 8: LAUNCH @ 11:26 a.m. EDT**
- **July 10: Docking to space station @ 11:09 a.m.**
- **July 18: Undocking from station @ 1:59 a.m.**
- **July 20: LANDING in Florida @ 7:06 a.m.**

