

Delmarva Star Gazers Meeting
May 1, 2012

Lyle Jones – Update on the Equestrian Center (EC) at Tuckahoe State Park

- The park thinks the EC has drifted in its mission from the State Park's mission.
- The TSP put up the trees along the observing area – not the EC.
- The barn, long been unused, is planned to be the club house instead of the previous plan to build a new pavilion.
- The EC wants to continue to work with us which is good.

Presentation and discussion on the Transit of Venus lead by Don Surles:

- The event is expected to last from 6:05PM until sunset at about 8:30PM.
- Those with scopes should get there by 5:00 PM to set up and get comfortable.
- Last transit observed by the club failed to find the 'black drop effect' where Venus upon ingress and egress sports a lingering connection with the edge of the sun. This effect was not noted in the film photos exhibited and taken by Don. Perhaps digital cameras this year will be able to take enough photos to show the effect.
- The club will be meeting at Woodland Beach straight out Rt. 6 from Smyrna to observe the transit on June 5th instead of the regular meeting at the church. Refreshments will be available to members. Don Surles will provide the grill.
- The public is welcome to participate in the event.
- It has been proposed that a 'Time Capsule' be created containing our observations be created and preserved (perhaps in the state archives).
- Another contingent will be a Rock Hall in MD overlooking the Chesapeake Bay.

Presentation on Virgo by Don Surles:

- Second largest constellation spanning nearly 4 hours of Right Ascension (60 degrees) and 34 degrees of Declination.
- Known by its brightest star Spica (from the mnemonic Arc to Arcturus, Spike to Spica referencing the curve of the Big Dipper's handle) the other bright star is Porrima.
- Home to the Virgo Cluster of galaxies, which our Local Group is a participant, its found between the tail star in Leo (and Vindemiatrix (third magnitude star).
- The Virgo Cluster is part of the Virgo Supercluster (also known as the Great Attractor) (Ed: from the Paper "A Massive Galaxy Cluster at the Core of the Great Attractor," RC Kraan-Korteweg et al: Subsequent follow-up observations find this strongly obscured galaxy cluster to be the nearest, rich, massive cluster in the Universe, comparable to the well-known Coma cluster identified already by Wolf in 1906. Moreover, this massive cluster lies – within its errors – at the centre of the Great Attractor and most likely constitutes the previously unidentified bottom of this potential well (cf. Kraan-Korteweg et al., 1996 for further details)
- The constellation has a big collection of galaxies upwards 1,300 including
- M 49 (elliptical), 58 (spiral), 59 (elliptical), 60 (elliptical), 61 (spiral), 84 (lenticular), 86 (lenticular), 87 (elliptical & radio source), 89 (elliptical), and 90 (spiral).
NGC 4639 is a face-on barred spiral galaxy.
Also contains the optically brightest quasar 3C 273 at magnitude 12.9.

Presentation by Cal Estrada on Astrophotography:

- This was a largely visual presentation that was quite engrossing so there are few notes. The

presentation may be found on the Delmarva Stargazers's web site.

- Presentations like these are very informative and a good reason to attend meetings.