

2009-05-05

Delmarva's Star Gazers Meeting notes:

11 Members were present.

Colonoscopies were suggested for everyone. This led to a discussion of member's experiences.

No new members this past month.

Discussion of the 2009 Star Gaze:

- What worked
 - Weather worked for us.
 - People liked the door prizes (or raffle).
 - Favorable comments about the speaker
 - Favorable comments about the entertainment
“Arabian Nights Belly Dancers”
 - Tent and trailer worked out very well.
- Food: breakfast was a bit light. It seems that people have come to expect it breakfast.
- What can we improve:
 - Sharing setup and takedown responsibilities.
 - Dedicated Registrar
 - Underage attendees without parents.
 - Swap meet was ok, but should be improved.
 - Daily rotation of Host Responsibility – Don did it for the entire event.
 - Frozen fish should arrive by Friday. (arrived on Saturday)
 - Friday night program should be added in case the sky is not cooperating.

- Lets go green
 - No canned sodas (many are left partially drunk).
We will use two liter bottles.
 - No styrofoam cups or plates.
 - Camp bladder for water (for washing?)
 - Wash station (sink with supply and drain).
 - Will need a supply or dispenser for ice.
 - Pack in Pack out garbage policy
 - Sell travel mugs to people not bringing their own cups.

- State all policies plainly on advertisement & registration.
- Port-a-Johns are believed to be an impediment to fine camping. We are exploring trailers with flush toilets. It's something like \$300 something for port-a-potties.
- Need to stat on advertisement and registration forms the availability of inside plumbing at Youth Camping Area.
- We will use a large board to inform people about these systems. It needs to cover our policies and let people know who's currently in charge. – board with that information and who's in charge.
- Need a bullhorn to announce dinner and emergencies.
- Mailing registration forms is now considered a waste of time and money.

Upcoming No Frills star party:

- Come up with a way to including Galileo and his telescope in the next star party. I don't he will personally make it.
- Jerry bought a banner that cost almost nothing strong UV. We could use one for the parties.
- More directional signs would be nice – from Crouse Mill Rd to the star party.
- Raffle something off in the no frills for several hundred dollars.
- Making astronomical items by participants is quite popular.

Star party conclusions from the above list:

- No mailings in the future.
- Bullhorn or other PA system
- Toilet trailers
- Program ready to go for Saturday night if weather is bad.
- Need duty assignments prior to event – registrars, setup and break down, food.
- Dedicated Registrar (cycling among people)
- Underage attendees without parents has to be better controlled. (special name badges?)
- Have limited registration hours.
- Advertise on Cloudy Nights, Astromart, other places.
- Need a kids program.
- Keith Lohmeyer: Are there enough people to handle all the new tasks? This resulted in the general discussion of the same people doing all the work. This is unresolved.

Club Picnic:

- Since we haven't reserved it in the normal pavilion we could have the club picnic at the equestrian center
- Bring out own grill – they have the picnic tables and bathrooms (port-o-potty?).

Jerry Truitt: Outreach information:

- Pittsville Library, Maryland on May 30, 2009 at 8PM. Pittsville is to the west of Ocean City in Wicomico Country.
- Adkins Arboretum will have a camp out and would like us to attend (not sure when, the arboretum calendar doesn't list it).
- There is an inside astronomy program for a library in Lewes. Probably will not be done since our strong preference is to use telescopes outside.

Club Nominations for President-Elect and Treasurer:

- This month requires nominations for president-elect and secretary. We may need a new temporary treasurer to help Kathy Sheldon.
- Kathy Sheldon has been nominated *in absentia* for treasurer.
- President Elect – no one in the room readily volunteered. Jerry Truitt was kind enough to nominate himself on the condition we try to find a newer member to do it to provide some fresh ideas.

Jerry Truitt: Constellation of the month Ursa Major:

- It first appeared in John Bevis's *Uranographia Britannica* of 1786.
- There are 3 stars with orbiting planets 47 UMA, HR 4067, P2=4 4 UMA. (HR - bright star catalog)
- The main stars form the UMA cluster – the big dipper (13 stars) are part of a cluster - 80 ly away.
- There are three pairs of stars that form the feet of the gazelle (Arab).
- It's start point a number of interesting objects north start, Capella (Auriga), Castor (Gemini), Betelgeuse (Prion), and Regulus (Leo).
- M81, M82 a pair of galaxies 4.5 million ly away are tidally interacting.
- M101 – face on spiral - Pierre Méchain discovered it and placed it in Charles Messier's catalog. It's 22 arc minutes on photos only the core is visible an it takes a large telescope of photography to view the arms. This is a 'Grand Design Spiral' (a spiral galaxy with well defined arms) but it's core is is not centered within the arms.
- M108 – edge on spiral also discovered by Mechain.
- M97 (Owl Nebula) a planetary.
- M 109 galaxy (Mechain again). Barred spiral. Southeast of the star Phecda, gamma UMA)

Milligan: Object of the Month – The quasar 3C 273

- Quasar (quasi-stellar radio source)
- It's a galaxy found in Virgo and the quasar is the core of the galaxy, powered by a black hole.

- It's a variable light source because of the variability of the active accretion disk.
- Visible in amateur telescopes astronomers. At Mag 12 to 13 it's the optically brightest and most luminous quasars known and the most distant object amateurs can see at several billion light years. It's almost 5°N of Porrima.
- There is large scale visible jet coming from the galaxy's black hole (not visible in amateur telescopes) but is active in x-rays, optically, and in infra red.
- Visually it appears to be a star and will need a star chart to distinguish it from surrounding stars.