

The newsletter of the Barnard Seyfert Astronomical Society, PO Box 150713, Nashville, TN 37215-0713

Upcoming Events

Board of Directors Meeting

May 7th at the Cumberland Valley Girl Scout Council Building
- 7:30 pm

June 4th at the Cumberland Valley Girl Scout Council Building
- 7:30 pm

Membership Meeting

May 21st at the Adventure Science Center - 7:30 pm

June 18th at Spot Observatory - time TBD

BSAS Picnic

May 23rd at Spot Observatory
4:00pm until...

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Monthly Membership Meeting

Thursday, May 21, 2009
Adventure Science Center
7:30 pm



BSAS board member JanaRuth Ford will be giving a presentation on meteors and will have samples on hand.

Please make plans to attend!

From The President



In case you did not notice, we have just had a busy month and a half. There were three public star parties with a fourth that was canceled because of rain, a monthly meeting, a Messier Marathon, and Astronomy Day at the Adventure Science Center. Of course, a very large fraction of that activity is directly attributable to this being the International Year of Astronomy. If not now, when should we be busy doing astronomy outreach?

Speaking of the Messier Marathon, I had my best year ever. I found fifty nine objects; at least, that is what I said on the check-off sheet I had. Then, there were the Wellingtons at sixty one. That number is truly amazing when you realize that he was manually pointing his new big Dobsonian.

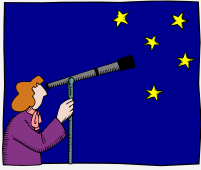
I would like to announce that Drew Gilmore and Santos Lopez are joining Tony Campbell to run our club website. Please join me in thanking them for generously agreeing to help.

The BSAS annual picnic is scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday, May 23. (This is Memorial Day weekend.) Start time is 4:00 PM. This event is cloud or shine. There will be opportunity for viewing afterward if weather permits, but the primary reason for gathering is social. The club will provide paper plates, utensils, cups, and ice. Please bring enough food and drink for your party, plus some to share. Any updates will be posted on our web site: <http://www.bsasnashville.com>. Directions are as follows:

Take I-40 West from Nashville and take Exit 152, Bucksport. At the bottom of the exit ramp, take a left on HWY 230, and follow it back under I-40 and around an "S" curve to a "T" intersection stop sign. At the stop sign, take a left, continuing on HWY 230 (the signs will indicate "HWY 230 East"). From that stop, the entrance to the observatory and campsite is approximately 4 miles on the left. These directions are also available on Mark Manner's web site: <http://www.spotastro.com/Directions.html>.

I want to thank Kris McCall for providing the content for the April meeting. I had not had a chance to see either one of those programs. For May, our own JanaRuth Ford is scheduled to be talking about meteors. I hear she even has some samples. Make sure to come out for the meeting on Thursday, May 21. For the June 18 meeting, we will not be meeting at the Adventure Science Center. During that week, the Sudekum Planetarium will be hosting the 2009 meeting of the Southeastern Planetarium Conference. On that night, they will be meeting at the home of Mark and Anne Manner. We will be providing telescopes for people to look through. Food and program will be provided for us.

Dr. Terry Reeves
President



"This dramatic confirmation of standing water in Mars' history builds on a progression of discoveries about that most earthlike of alien planets.

This result gives us impetus to expand our ambitious program of exploring Mars to learn whether microbes have ever lived there and, ultimately, whether we can."

*Dr. Edward J. Weiler
Associate Administrator for the
Science Mission Directorate*

FREE TELESCOPES!

Yes, you did read that correctly. The BSAS Equipment & Facilities Committee has free telescopes ranging in size from 2.6" to 8" that current members can actually have to use for up to 60 days at a time.

We also have some other items in the loaner program such as a photometer, H-alpha solar telescope, educational CDs, tapes, DVDs, and books.

Some restrictions apply, and a waiting list may be applicable in some cases. The BSAS Equipment Committee will not be held responsible for lost sleep or other problems arising from use of this excellent astronomy gear.

For information on what equipment is currently available, contact Lonnie Puterbaugh at (615) 661-9540.

Observing Highlights

all times listed are Central Standard Time

LUNAR PHASES

May 2009

05/01 FIRST Quarter
05/09 FULL Moon
05/17 LAST Quarter
05/24 NEW moon
05/30 FIRST Quarter

June 2009

06/07 FULL Moon
06/15 LAST Quarter
06/22 NEW Moon
06/29 FIRST Quarter

OBJECTS VISIBLE THIS MONTH

Messier Objects:

Galaxies:

M49 M51 M61 M63 M64
M85 M94 M101 M102 M104

Caldwell Objects:

C32 The Whale Galaxy
C59 Ghost of Jupiter (PN)
C25 Intergalactic Wanderer (GC)

Outreach Update *Dr. Terry Reeves, president*

Astronomy Day on Saturday, May 2, at the Adventure Science was well attended. Several club members were present helping out with talking to people about telescopes, optics, and astronomy in general. I certainly had a good time. Unfortunately, very good attendance at Astronomy Day usually means that the star party scheduled does not happen because of poor weather. Last week was no exception. The star party scheduled for that night at Long Hunter State Park was canceled because of rain.

Our next public event is a "Family Astronomy" night at Warner Park. This is not being held at the normal place for our star parties. Instead, this event will focus primarily on less expensive ways to enjoy astronomy, especially binoculars. It is currently scheduled for Friday afternoon/night on June 26. More details will be posted later.

Book Review: A Traveler's Guide to Mars

by Robin Byrne

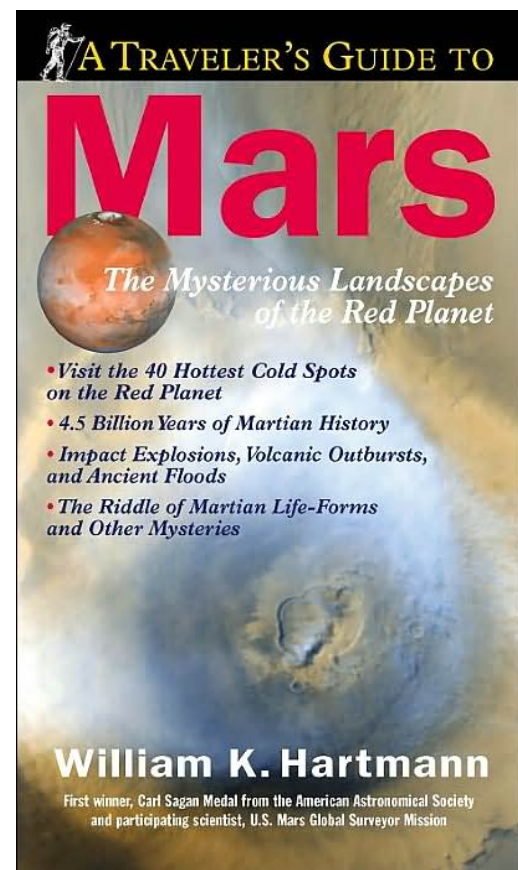
This month, I'm giving the birthdays a rest to write about a book I recently read: "A Traveler's Guide to Mars: The Mysterious Landscapes of the Red Planet" by William K. Hartmann. If you are interested in Mars or planetary geology, this book is for you. The author was one of the participating scientists for the U.S. Mars Global Surveyor Mission, and has a long history in Mars research. He shares not only the historical progression of discoveries (including his own) about the nature of Mars, but also recent findings from Global Surveyor.

He begins with a brief overview of the historical ideas and discoveries, including notions of canals on Mars. This then leads to the bulk of the book, which is divided into three main sections, divided by major geologic eras of Mars. It begins with the Noachian era, which encompassed the first billion years of Mars' existence. This era was dominated by very active geology, a denser atmosphere and, potentially, significant amounts of running water on the surface. We next enter the Hesperian era, which lasted up to about 2 billion years ago (give or take a few hundred million years). During this era, water activity on Mars declined, with less and less frequent water flows occurring. The last era is the Amazonian, which brings us to present-day Mars. This is the Mars we recognize, with little to no geologic activity, very few cratering events, and hardly any evidence of liquid water.

For each geologic era, Hartmann focuses on regions of Mars that give clues to the Martian conditions at each time, making excellent use of Global Surveyor imagery throughout. There may be an entire chapter devoted to a single crater, volcano or other feature and what it can tell us about what has occurred, with particular emphasis placed on water evidence. Other chapters look at larger regions, but still finely focused on the details revealed by Global Surveyor.

Interspersed are Hartmann's personal reflections and experiences. He has been involved with Mars probes since Mariner 9, and almost every chapter includes some of his memories of his earlier studies, discoveries, and how they relate to what we now know about Mars. Additionally, Hartmann is an accomplished space artist, with many of his illustrations gracing the pages of the book.

After reading this book, I felt like I had just completed a semester course dealing solely with Mars. It took me a couple months to finish. There's so much information, I needed time to digest what I had read before moving on. It's not a light read, or one for the beach, but "A Traveler's Guide to Mars" is an excellent way to learn almost everything we currently know about Mars, without having to pay the cost of tuition.



April 2009 Board Meeting Minutes

Bob Rice, Secretary

The board of directors of the Barnard-Seyfert Astronomical Society met in regular session at the Cumberland Valley Girl Scout Council Building in Nashville, Tennessee on April 2, 2009. Due to earlier thunderstorms, the building lost all electrical power and lighting just as board members were gathering. However, enough small flashlights were available among the members to continue the meeting in the dark. Board members JanaRuth Ford, Bill Griswold, Bob Norling, Curt Porter, Dr. Terry Reeves, and Bob Rice were present. Board members Dr. Spencer Buckner, Tony Campbell, Dr. Donna Hummell, Kris McCall, Theo Wellington, and Steve Wheeler were absent. A quorum being present, President Terry Reeves called the meeting to order at 7:40 P.M.

Treasurer Bob Norling reported that the BSAS' bank balance was \$2,480.47. Mr. Norling also requested authorization to purchase a deposit stamp; the board unanimously granted his request without additional discussion. In addition, Mr. Norling suggested setting up a savings account for equipment donations to keep these monies separate from the Society's operating funds. Bill Griswold moved that this be done and Bob Rice seconded his motion that was passed by a unanimous voice vote. Mr. Norling stated that, since the BSAS was a non-profit corporation, he would try to find a free account for this purpose. Curt Porter moved that Mr. Norling investigate this possibility and Bill Griswold seconded his motion that passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Dr. Terry Reeves reported that BSAS member Mark Manner needed to move the date for the planned fall astronomy retreat at his Spot Observatory up a week. He also reported that Drew Gilmore had volunteered to assist Webmaster Tony Campbell with managing the Society's website. Dr. Reeves additionally commented that he hoped other members would also be willing to help out. At 7:55 P.M. two Metro police officers arrived to investigate the silent alarm that apparently was activated when the lights went out earlier. The officers left once we identified ourselves and explained why we were there.

Dr. Terry Reeves reminded the board that the BSAS would conduct a public star party at the Adventure Science Center (ASC) on April 3rd immediately following the planetarium presentation of "Two Small Pieces of Glass." He also noted that a second public star party would be held the following night on April 4th at the Warner Parks. Other planned events included the Messier Marathon on April 25th; a public star party at Long Hunter State Park on May 3rd; and the BSAS picnic sometime in May.

Dr. Terry Reeves reported that the program for the May membership meeting would be on meteors and that the June meeting would be a joint session with the Southeast Planetarium Directors at Spot Observatory. There being no further business to discuss, Dr. Reeves declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:37 P.M.

OFFICERS

Dr. Terry Reeves
President

Dr. Spencer Buckner
Vice-President

Bob Rice
Secretary

Bob Norling
Treasurer

Directors at Large

Tony Campbell
Jana Ruth Ford
Dr. Donna Hummel
Curt Porter
Theo Wellington
Steve Wheeler
Kris McCall (ex officio)

Steve Wheeler
Newsletter Editor
wsw261@hotmail.com

Monthly meetings
are held at:



*The Adventure
Science Center*

*800 Fort Negley Blvd
Nashville, TN 37203*

April 2009 Monthly Meeting Minutes

Bob Rice, Secretary

President Dr. Terry Reeves called the meeting to order at 7:48 P.M. in the Sudekum Planetarium at the Adventure Science Center (ASC) and welcomed new members and guests. Treasurer Bob Norling reported that the BSAS' bank balance was \$2,480.47.

Dr. Terry Reeves announced the Messier Marathon scheduled for April 25th at BSAS member Mark Manner's Spot Observatory and explained the event for the benefit of newcomers. He also announced these other upcoming star parties and events:

- May 02 – Public star party from 8-10 P.M. at Long Hunter State Park,
- May 21 – Monthly membership meeting program on meteorites, and
- May 23 – Club picnic at Spot Observatory.

Kris McCall announced that the ASC would hold its Astronomy Day on Saturday, May 2nd from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. with an emphasis on the 400 years of the telescope. She asked if BSAS members could help by bringing telescopes for display; Dr. Spencer Buckner said that he would bring some from Austin Peay State University. Ms McCall suggested that they might set up a booth to offer advice about choosing a telescope. She also asked Jana Ruth Ford about bringing some of NASA's Night Sky Network educational materials and activities.

BSAS board member and Sudekum planetarium Director Kris McCall then showed two planetarium programs for the evening's presentation. The first was "Two Small Pieces of Glass" that used the dramatization of two young stargazers attending a star party to learn about the different types of telescopes and what can be seen through them. This program traced the development of the telescope and its contribution to astronomy from Galileo's first observations in 1609 on up through the present day. The second program was "Stars" which was narrated by Mark Hamill who played the role of Luke Skywalker in the original Star Wars movie. This program introduced the different types of stars, explained how they formed and died, and demonstrated their essential roles in the creation of the heavier elements that became the vital constituents of life itself.

President Dr. Terry Reeves thanked Ms McCall for these presentations and, since there was no further business to discuss, declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

BSAS Affiliations

The Astronomical League
<http://www.astroleague.org/>



The Night Sky Network
<http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/>



International Dark Sky Association
<http://www.darksky.org/>

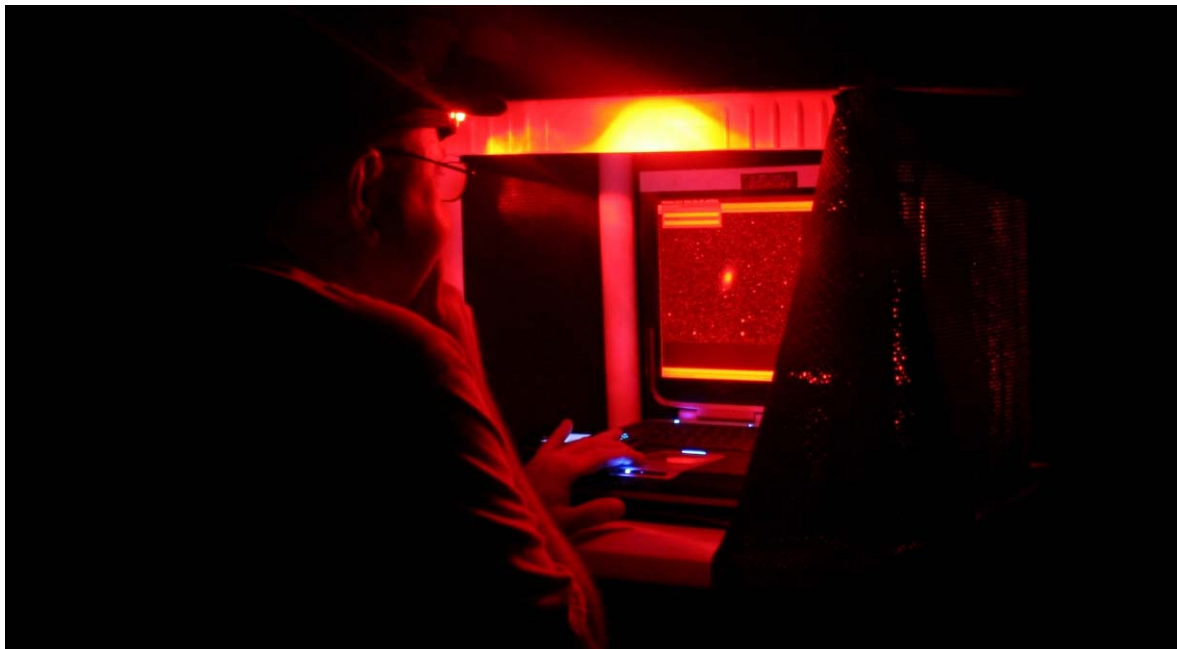


BSAS MESSIER MARATHON 2009

On Saturday, April 25th, Mark and Ann Manner hosted the annual BSAS Messier Marathon at their home near Spot, TN. The weather cooperated (for once!) and all who attended enjoyed an evening of fun, fellowship and observing.

The photos below were taken by Kenna Eaton. Kenna and husband Gary Eaton are new BSAS members and this was their first trip to Spot Observatory.





M101 - The Pinwheel Galaxy



M13 - The Hercules Cluster



M81 - Bode's "Nebula"

LRGB Images by Steve Wheeler

Become a Member of the BSAS!

Download and print the Application for membership from www.bsasnashville.com (Adobe® Acrobat Reader® required).

Then fill it out and bring it to the next monthly meeting or mail it along with your first year's membership dues to:

BSAS
P.O. Box 150713
Nashville, TN 37215-0713

Annual dues, which include membership in the BSAS and Astronomical League, and subscriptions to their newsletters, are:

- \$20** Individual
- \$30** Family
- \$15** Senior (+65)
- \$25** Senior Family (+65)
- \$15** Student*

* To qualify, you must be 21 or younger & enrolled in an accredited institution.

All memberships have a vote in BSAS elections and other membership votes,

Also included are subscriptions to the BSAS and Astronomical League newsletters.

IMPORTANT DUES INFORMATION

On your Eclipse mailing label is the expiration date for your current membership. There will be a two month grace period before any member's name is removed from the current mailing list.



We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.bsasnashville.com

About Our Organization

Organized in 1928, the Barnard-Seyfert Astronomical Society is an association of amateur and professional astronomers who have joined to share our knowledge and our love of the sky.

The BSAS meets on the third Thursday of each month at the Adventure Science Center in Nashville. Experienced members or guest speakers talk about some aspect of astronomy or observing. Subjects range from how the universe first formed to how to build your own telescope. The meetings are informal and time is allotted for fellowship. You do not have to be a member to attend the meetings.

Membership entitles you to subscriptions to Astronomy and Sky & Telescope at reduced rates; the club's newsletter, the *Eclipse*, is sent to members monthly. BSAS members also receive membership in the Astronomical League, receiving their quarterly newsletter, the *Reflector*, discounts on all astronomical books, and many other benefits.

In addition to the meetings, BSAS also sponsors many public events, such as star parties and Astronomy Day; we go into the schools on occasion to hold star parties for the children and their parents. Often the public star parties are centered on a special astronomical event, such as a lunar eclipse or a planetary opposition.

Most information about BSAS and our activities may be found at www.bsasnashville.com. If you need more information, write to us at info@bsasnashville.com or call Joe Boyd at (615) 386-3134.

**BARNARD-SEYFERT
ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**
PO BOX 150713
NASHVILLE, TN 37215-0713

