

Northern Lights

Newsletter of the Coconino Astronomical Society

www.lowell.edu/cas

August/September 2007

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August Meeting – Saturday, 18th 5:45 pm

The August Meeting will feature a presentation by CAS member Padraig Houlahan of Lowell Observatory.

Title: Solar System Geometry (Bode's Law) Explained!

The spacing among planets in our solar system seems to follow a remarkably simple mathematical pattern that was first noted in the 1700s by Titius and Bode. All attempts at explaining this simple relationship have failed and it has puzzled amateur and professional astronomers since then. New research has applied modification of equations previously used to accurately describe stellar structure to our solar system, that have solutions that are even more accurate than Bode's Law and these also tell us about the early solar system's structure.

After the meeting, there will be a brief time to meet others and for refreshments. Weather permitting (the Moon must be clearly visible, with no chance of bad weather and lightning), there will be observing of the Moon, Saturn, star clusters, nebulae, galaxies, and other celestial treats through members' telescopes.

This program is free to those attending the meeting, but there is a fee for additional participation in other Lowell Observatory activities and observing. Observing will begin at 7:30 PM and may continue as late as 10 PM. Remember to dress warmly.

Directions: From Rt. 66 at the center of Flagstaff, take West Santa Fe up Mars Hill to Lowell Observatory. Meet at the Steele Visitor Center.

Upcoming Events

August 11th - CAS Member Observing Night Dave Frisk's

August 17th - Heritage Square Viewing

August 18th – CAS Meeting & Program 5:45 pm Lowell Observatory – Padraig Houlahan, Speaker– Public Welcome

September 8th – CAS Member Observing Night - Dave Frisk's

September 21st – Heritage Square Viewing

September 22nd CAS General Meeting & Program 5:45pm Lowell Observatory -Andy Odell ,Speaker Public Welcome

September 26th CAS Board Meeting 7pm Lowell All members welcome

CAS Member Monthly Observing Nights

The Board of Trustees has decided to re-institute a monthly members' observing night in addition to the public viewing sessions at Heritage Square. Members are looking for opportunities to get together and view as a club, and having a monthly date should make it easier. The Saturday night before New Moon was selected as being most convenient for members who work and for dark sky viewing. Dave Frisk offered to host the viewing site for the present time. This site has the advantages of being easily accessible, having a bathroom, and plenty of observing space for telescope set-up, as well as reasonably dark skies. In addition, members can call Dave for updates on the viewing conditions before venturing forth.

The first session will be August 11th, plan to arrive before dusk to set-up your scopes.

Directions: From Flagstaff take US 40 west to Exit 165 (1st Williams exit). Go north on Rte. 64 about 5 miles and turn right on Barbara Rd. (there is a right turn lane just past the Shell station on the left). 1530 Barbara Rd is on the right. Call 928-607-9189 for updates on local viewing conditions

June/ July Meeting Highlights

June's annual Picnic at the Frisk's was a great success as always. There were about 27 participants who gathered for the cookout and observing. Five scopes, in addition to Dave's four, were set up for viewing. Highlights of the evening included a young crescent moon; Venus, Saturn and Jupiter; the asteroid Vesta. A few members managed to observe Abell 39, a faint and difficult to observe planetary nebulae.

The highlight of the July meeting was the program presented by CAS Vice President, Jeremy Perez on sketching techniques for recording personal observations. Jeremy presented a variety of sketching tips and shared his own outstanding work. Jeremy has co-authored a great book on the topic that was available after the meeting.

In the business part of the meeting Trustee Ernie Webb was elected to fill the position of President for the remainder of 2007.

Mid- Term Election to Fill Vacancy

The election of Trustee Ernie Webb to fill the position of President has created a vacancy on the Board of Trustees. Nominations for the Trustee position are being accepted. The election for Trustee will be held at the August meeting.

Welcome New Members

CAS is glad to welcome the following new members :

Ara Avedissian and Anna Harper of Sedona

Todd Thatcher of Flagstaff.

Welcome, and happy viewing to all of you, hope to see you on Aug. 11th.

New Sky & Telescope Renewal Procedures

Members that have a current club subscription to S&T do not have to deliver renewal forms and payment to club treasurer (David Sanders) now. You may renew your subscription by mailing your renewal form with payment directly to S&T. Or you may renew via phone at 1-800-253-0245 (Outside US 386-597-4277). Payment is required at time of renewal. You may still renew through club treasurer if you prefer.

A **new** club subscription does still need to be submitted through the club treasurer.

Bulletin Board Available for CAS Use

A new Bulletin Board has been set up with a variety of topic areas including astronomy. CAS has been given its own area for posting and sharing information and activities, as well as dialog between members.

<http://www.novitiuearth.com/phpBB2>

You can register for free and then go to the Astronomy Discussion Groups and select CAS, Hopefully this will be a useful tool for communications.

The August/September Night Sky

Some objects to look out for include;

August 12th – New Moon Perseid Meteor Shower reaches its peak

August 28th - Lunar eclipse. .Totality begins at 2:52 am MST

August 29th - Asteroid Vesta passes .4degrees north of Jupiter

September .11th – New Moon

September 22nd- Mercury passes 5 minutes north of Spica

September 29th - Mercury is at greatest elongation

General Information

- CAS Members receive a \$10. discount on *Sky & Telescope* subscriptions if ordered through CAS. Contact Treasurer Dave Sanders for details.

To join CAS or renew membership contact Treasurer Dave Sanders.

- Trustee Dave Frisk offers a free observing session at his home for new members .Current members are also always welcome to come out and take advantage of the dark skies and outstanding observing set-up Contact Dave by phone at 928- 607-9189.
- CAS maintains an email list to send out announcements about club events. Emails are not sent frequently, and the list is not sold or distributed. Register at the general meeting, or send an email through the CAS website.
- The Northern Lights is the bi-monthly newsletter of CAS and is posted online. The newsletter deadline is the Friday following the Board Meetings. All members are encouraged to share information/articles of interest. Please submit articles by email or snail mail to : Linda Webb at lewebb@hughes.net or 2485 W. Whitetail Loop Williams, AZ 86046
- **Deadline for the October/November Newsletter is October 4th**