



Unexpected View

I think it was 2 years ago; maybe 3. It was late a late Summer evening. The skies were clearer than forecast. There were too many trees in the yard to set up a scope. And there was the streetlight in the front yard to contend with. So I decided against hauling out a telescope.

Binoculars? The 15x70 binoculars were up in the spare room. Up I go; grab them and head out the front door to see what I can see.

I turn left and head away from the cul-de-sac circle and the offending streetlight. I slow down and pick a spot along the bend in the street where some bushes across the street block the streetlight at the next corner.

I see Antares. Then the Teapot and the teapot's spout. I aim above the spout, about where . . .

Unbelievable!

At least it is to me. There's the Lagoon Nebula! Bright! Appearing just like in a black-and-white photo! Just like in the books! With lots of black space all around it.

I scan up a little and, yes, there's the Trifid Nebula. It's OK, but

Back to the Lagoon Nebula.

I still can't believe how bright it is in the binoculars!

I've been doing various kinds of and levels of astronomy for over 50 years and I still get surprised on occasion.

This one was . . . Totally Unexpected!

Karl Adlon

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Meeting Notes

Astronomy (discussions) Meeting, June 1

Attendees: Sam Snow, Craig Cox, Gary Sissel, Matt Neilssen, Bruce Brooker, Mitch White, Robert Mitchell, Tom Bullock, Jeff Struve, Dana Taylor and Karl Adlon

A "Solar Observing" presentation was made in which Karl Adlon presented projected solar images and white light images and Jeff Struve presented hydrogen-alpha filtering with the Lunt pressure-tuned system.

Business Meeting, June 15

Attendees: Karl Adlon, ~~Jeff Struve~~ Jeff (as signed), Craig Cox, Mitch White, Jakob Wethington, Sam Snow, Robert Mitchell, Dana Taylor, Bruce Brooker, Shawna Duncan and Ava Duncan.

Mirror update: Dana reported that the back of the mirror was found to be a saddle shape; not flat. OMI ground the back flat and should be just about done / ready to aluminize.

Observatory Vent fan: Will be installed after the mirror is installed

Geneseo event: Sam talked to the church pastor but no date has been set.

12" Menke telescope drive: The drive rate was reported to be slow. Bruce will look at it.

Coming Open House – Bruce will make presentation if anyone shows – S. Duncan will provide info to QC Times. There is a planned tour of facilities and then presentation beginning at 8:30 PM. A number of members said they would participate.

Adjourned at 7:26

Next meeting:

June 6 - There will be a presentation on **eyepieces**, power, field of views, pupil diameter, exit pupil, maximum power, minimum power and examples.

Calendar

Note: **Meetings** are at the Bettendorf Public Library @ 6:30 PM

Observatory **Open Houses** are at Sherman Park, Dixon (Calimus), IA

July 6
Astronomy (dialogs)
Meeting

July 11
SAU's Menke
Observatory Star
Party

July 20
Business/Astronomy
Meeting

July 25
Observatory
Open House

August 3
Astronomy (dialogs)
Meeting

August 17
Business/Astronomy
Meeting

August 22
SAU's Menke
Observatory Star
Party

August 29
Observatory
Open House

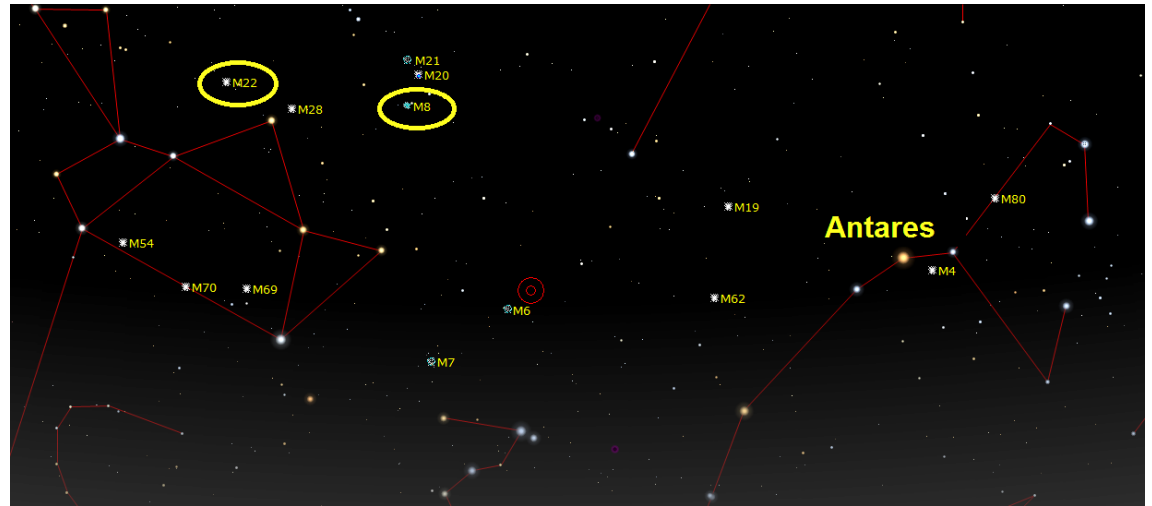
September 7
Astronomy (dialogs)
Meeting

September 24
Business/Astronomy
Meeting

September 19
SAU's Menke
Observatory Star
Party

September 26
Observatory
Open House

My Two July Favorites



Number 1. Let's see. Could it be the Lagoon Nebula? Also known as Messier 8, it's the left circled object above – this is looking south at midnight in mid-July. At right is a blend of images giving my impression of the Unexpected View through 15x70 binoculars. The Lagoon Nebula spans about 1.5 degrees, or about 3 Moon diameters across. It's big!



Number 2 is Messier 22, a globular cluster on the east side of the Teapot. Although, if observing north of light-polluted areas, like Sherman Park, it can be amid hazy skies, it's easier to view in BIG scopes than the Hercules Cluster, M13, which is overhead at this time of year. M22 is about 50% larger in apparent size than M13.

QCAS Correspondence:

Please contact the society at: P.O. Box 3706, Davenport, IA, 52808.

Members are welcome and encouraged to submit articles for The Meridian. Submit any and all interesting items (via e-mail) to: Karl Adlon, Secretary.

QCAS Officers and Contacts:

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Classifieds

For Sale:

- Meade 4000 f/6.3 SCT reducer; \$75
- New, never used, Orion StarShoot Solar System Color Imager IV, \$75

Contact Craig Cox if interested in either of these at admiralcox2000@yahoo.com

For Sale: Canon 20D DSLR. Good astrophotography starter camera. Also good for everyday photography. Includes manuals, software, timer, external power supply, extra memory cards and card reader. \$100 (to be donated to QCAS). Contact Karl Adlon if interested at

kmja79@yahoo.com

Favorite Links

Clear Sky Chart: http://cleardarksky.com/c/Dixon_I_Akey.html
Cloudy Nights: <http://www.cloudynights.com/page/index.html>
Seiichi Yoshida's Comet Info: <http://aerith.net/>
Comet Chasing: <http://www.cometchasing.skyhound.com/>

Midwest Astronomy

Back when there was an Astrofest at Camp Shaw-waw-nas-see in Kankakee with several hundred attendees, a prominent amateur astronomer / writer (wish I could remember who) gave a talk on this subject. It went something like this (short version).

The weather in the Midwest makes astronomy difficult at best. It's often cloudy or hazy and humid when not cloudy. On a decent night, your equipment, including optics if not protected, will dew up. And it's crazy cold in the winter causing many amateurs to forgo observing then.

Dark sky areas are few and inconvenient for most amateurs. The prospect of packing up equipment; travelling to a darkish site; setting up your equipment, observing; packing up, travelling home and unpacking your vehicle makes you wonder if it's worth it.

Planetary viewing is challenging in part due to the higher latitude and more atmosphere you need to look through. And a significant portion of amateurs live in urban or suburban areas that cause further disruption of seeing from the heat plumes of buildings, parking lots and factories.

So, while you might wonder about a Midwestern astronomer's sanity, you have to admire their fortitude in doing astronomy under such circumstances.

Cheers to the Midwest astronomer!



July Sky Events

Be sure to take a look at **Saturn!** Push your telescope to its limits and see what detail is visible.

July 2 – Full Moon: This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Buck Moon because the male buck deer would begin to grow their new antlers at this time of year. This moon is also known as the Full Thunder Moon and the Full Hay Moon.

July 14 – New Horizons at Pluto: NASA's New Horizons spacecraft is scheduled to arrive at Pluto after a nine and a half year journey. Launched on January 19, 2006, this will be the first spacecraft to visit Pluto. New Horizons will give us our first close-up views of the dwarf planet and its moons. After passing Pluto, the spacecraft will continue on to the Kuiper belt to examine some of the other icy bodies at the edge of the Solar System.

July 16 – New Moon: This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as nebula and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere.

July 28-29 – Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower: The Delta Aquarids is an average shower, produced by debris left behind by comets Marsden and Kracht, that can produce up to 20 meteors per hour at its peak. The shower runs annually from July 12 to Aug. 23 and is expected to peak this year on the night of July 28 and morning of July 29. The nearly full moon will block out all but the brightest meteors this year. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Aquarius, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

July 31 – Once in a Blue Moon: The Moon will be directly opposite the Earth from the Sun and will be fully illuminated as seen from Earth. Since this is the second full moon in the same month, it is known as a blue moon. This rare calendar event only happens once every few years, giving rise to the term, "once in a blue moon."