

Skywatchers

Newsletter of the China Lake Astronomical Society

Volume 43 No. 11

November 1, 2006

NEXT MEETING 7:30 p.m., Monday, November 6, 2006

Maturango Museum, 100 East Las Flores Avenue, Ridgecrest

PROGRAM FOR THE NOVEMBER 6 MEETING – THE “BIG BANG AND INFLATION” OF THE COSMOS

Clint Spindler will provide a slide assisted discussion on "The History and Development of Cosmic Big Bang & Inflation Theory and the Standard Consensus Model of Cosmology". The presentation will focus on the first ten-to-the-minus-eleventh seconds of the Cosmos, will briefly address the next 380 thousand years and finally comment on our last ten-to-the-seventeenth seconds.

DATES TO KEEP IN MIND

Monday, November 6, 2006: Regular CLAS Meeting at the Maturango Museum, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 22, 2006: Deadline for next Skywatchers Newsletter

Friday, November 17, 2006: Public Star Party. See below.

Monday, December 4, 2006: Regular CLAS Meeting at the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest, 7:30 p.m.

STAR PARTY SCHEDULE FOR THE 2006 SEASON:

Star Parties will be held on the dates listed below. Star Parties are an activity where members and guests join together to share views of the skies. If you have a telescope, bring it. If not, come and look through someone else's. Star parties are held at a site in the open desert south of Ridgecrest. To reach the star party site from Ridgecrest, go south on China Lake Boulevard 6.5 miles from its intersection with Ridgecrest Boulevard. Continue straight across Highway 395 and you will be on Brown Road (Old Highway 395). Follow Brown Road as it curves to the right and goes west. After 2.3 miles there will be a 30-inch orange cone on the left. Turn left and follow the dirt road marked by 12-inch cones. The CLAS Star party is 0.5 miles along this road. Watch for signs and cones, which will be put out about a half hour before viewing starts. Call Carroll Evans 760-375-5681, or Bruce Churchill 760-375-7247, for more information.

Friday, November 17: Signs out at 6:00 p.m., Star viewing at 6:30 p.m.

Star Parties will resume in March 2007

JUST ARRIVED!

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada Observer's Handbooks and Calendars for 2007 just arrived, and will be available at the meeting. We will hold the price line for one more year, at \$15.00 each for the Handbooks and \$10.00 for the calendars.

THE SKY IN NOVEMBER (Roger Brower)

1. Venus moves to the evening sky this month and will be too close to the sun to be easily visible most of the month.
2. Saturn is in the morning sky rising at 12:30AM at the start of the month and earlier each night as the month goes on. Look for it in the constellation of Leo near Regulus.
3. Jupiter and Mars are also too close to the sun for easy viewing this month.
4. Mercury is the planet of the month in November. Not only does it shine brightly in the morning sky toward the end of the month, it also, transits the sun on November 8th as it moves to the morning sky. The whole transit will be visible from the western US starting at 11:12AM PST and lasting almost 5 hours.
5. The Leonid meteor shower peaks on the night of November 17th and should present a good show due to the fact that it occurs right at the new moon.

TELESCOPE FOR SALE

A Meade LX200GPS 8" telescope with GPS and UHTC and all sorts of accessories in essentially new condition (unused) is for sale. The price new was \$4972.00, and is offered for \$35.00. Call Karen Stiff at 760-375-3612 for details.

“STARGAZING EXTRAVAGANZA” AT GATEWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Neal Barry)

On the night of October 24th, the 3rd Annual Gateway Elementary School - 5th Grades "Stargazing Extravaganza" was successfully completed.

There were about 40 students and parents in attendance for a fun-filled night which included a slide show, computer lab, and of course telescope viewing. At 6:45, a brief talk was given introducing the students and parents to the night's activities and things they might see while at the telescopes. A special emphasis was placed on how they should and should not behave while around the telescopes. Everyone was then divided into three separate groups with each group proceeding to their first assigned activity. From then on the groups would rotate to a new activity every 25 to 30 minutes. For telescope viewing, the air was cool with a slight breeze from the southwest. There were plenty of objects to view and each of the four telescopes was able to view something different. We soon found out though that the school maintenance folks forgot to turn off the sprinkler system. It's amazing how fast the two SCT's and two Dobs were moved to avoid being soaked. Overall the students and parents were very excited and there were a lot of great questions and interest generated. Many thanks to Carroll Evans for running the slide show and to Chuck Morgan, Jay Chun, and Neal Barry for setting up their telescopes. Many thanks to Mrs. Poniek, Mrs. Bell, and Mrs. Rourke; 5th grade teachers at Gateway for inviting us to share our passion and knowledge of astronomy.

RED ROCK CANYON (C.L.A.S. OUTREACH)

On Saturday evening October 21st Chuck Morgan and Peter Eiserloh visited Red Rock Canyon to present astronomy to the campers. The presentation had been arranged by Ted Hodgkinson, but Ted could not be there. The program began indoors with a talk by Peter, then the audience went to the adjacent parking lot where Chuck had set up two telescopes., his own Meade and the club's new Orion Dobsonian. Peter kept the club's scope on M-57, the Ring Nebula the entire time, and Chuck selected various objects. About 30 guests enjoyed the presentation.

GOLDSTONE FIELD TRIP (Carroll Evans)

Bruce Churchill arranged for a club field trip to NASA's Space Tracking facility at Goldstone, in the midst of nearby Fort Irwin. It has been ten years since our previous visit as a club. Goldstone is only nearby geographically, we left here at 6:15 a.m. for our 9:00 tour. We proceeded smoothly through the dual gates (Fort Irwin and Goldstone) and were met by our friendly and knowledgeable host, Ms. Karla Warner. We were joined by another group from Fort Irwin itself, and given the standard tour. The Fort Irwin group went home, and we from China Lake had a good, reasonably priced, lunch at the cafeteria. After Lunch were treated to two more visits that clearly were extra special, and set up especially for us. The first was to the Maser Lab, where we learned a lot about the receivers used to pick up the signals from spacecraft. Then we went to Venus. Well, not literally. But sites at Goldstone have interesting names. The Venus site is not for receiving signals, but rather is a test facility for Jet Propulsion Laboratory personnel working on transmitters.

I have made at least three visits to Goldstone over the years, and this was by far the best. Not to devalue the others, but this one was extra special. This photo was taken of our group by our host, using Peter Eiserloh's camera. Shown at the Mars site are Bob Watson, Carroll Evans, Peter Eiserloh, Bob Philips, Roger Brower, Milt Entres, Bruce Churchill, Getu Asrat, Steve Rainey, and Clint Spindler.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Basic CLAS dues are \$20.00 per year, which includes the *Skywatchers Newsletter*. As a benefit of membership you may also receive *Astronomy Magazine* and/or *Sky and Telescope Magazine*. The fee schedule is as follows:

Basic membership	\$20.00 per year
Membership with Astronomy magazine	\$51.00 per year
Membership with Sky and Telescope magazine	\$53.00 per year
Membership with both S & T and Astronomy	\$84.00 per year

Send your check to: Roger Brower, Treasurer, China Lake Astronomical Society, P.O. Box 1783, Ridgecrest, CA 93556.

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WESTERN AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS WEB SITE <http://www.waa.av.org/>

Meetings of the China Lake Astronomical Society are held at the **Maturango Museum** at 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday evening of each month, except when the first Monday is a holiday.

SKYWATCHERS, Newsletter of the

**CHINA LAKE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
POST OFFICE BOX 1783
RIDGECREST, CA 93556-1783**

FIRST CLASS

NEXT MEETING: 7:30 p.m., MONDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2006: “Big Bang and Inflation of the Cosmos”

AT THE MATURANGO MUSEUM, 100 EAST LAS FLORES AVE.

CLAS WEB PAGE <http://www1.iwvisp.com/brower/clas.html>

INDEX OF CLAS NEWSLETTERS <http://www.ridgenet.net/~clevans/clas/>