

Skywatchers

Newsletter of the China Lake Astronomical Society

Volume 45 No. 9

September 1, 2008

NEXT MEETING 7:30 p.m., Monday, September 8, 2008

Maturango Museum, 100 East Las Flores Avenue, Ridgecrest, California

PROGRAM FOR THE SEPTEMBER 8 MEETING – THE MICROWAVE BACKGROUND

At our September meeting Clint Spindler will present the results of his research on “Understanding the Cosmos Through Information in the Microwave Background.” This topic necessarily involves many principles of physics; Clint will tie them together for us.

The radiation that we detect as the Cosmic Microwave Background comes from a time when the Universe was less than half a million years old; from the so-called recombination era when hydrogen atoms formed in the cooling, expanding fireball of the Big Bang. It was a time when the stars and galaxies had yet to form. There was only gas.

DATES TO KEEP IN MIND

Monday, September 8, 2008: Regular CLAS Meeting at the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 24, 2008: Deadline for next Skywatchers Newsletter

Thursday September 25, 2008: Public Star Party at the Maturango Museum observatory

Friday, September 26, 2008: Public Star Party at Brown Road Site, see below.

Monday, October 6, 2008: Regular CLAS Meeting at the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest, 7:30 p.m.

STAR PARTY SCHEDULE FOR THE 2008 SEASON:

Star Parties will be held on the dates listed below. Star Parties are an activity where members and guests come together to view the skies. If you have a telescope, bring it; if not, come and look through someone else's. They are held at a site in the open desert south of Ridgecrest. To reach the 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. Signs and cones 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, September 26: Signs out at 7:30 p.m., Star viewing 8:00 p.m.

Friday, October 24: Signs out at 7:00 p.m., Star viewing at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, November 28: Signs out at 5:30 p.m., Star viewing at 6:00 p.m.

This is your newsletter, please contribute an article.

THE SKY IN SEPTEMBER by Roger Brower

1. Jupiter moves from the southeast to the south as the evening moves on. Look for it to the left of the Teapot in Sagittarius.
2. Saturn reaches conjunction with the sun on September 3rd and so will not be visible this month.
3. Venus and Mars will be joined by Mercury in the evening sky. On September 11th, there will be a conjunction of the three planets in the west early in the evening. However, soon after this event, Mars and Mercury will fade into the sun, leaving only Venus in the west the rest of the month.

ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY TUTORIAL by way of Carroll Evans

I received an email, which is frankly promoting a product. As usual, I don't endorse any commercial venture, but I do suggest that you follow the links given, to see some excellent astrophotography. You may even choose to buy the product.

From: warhenk@yahoo.com

Dear friends in Astronomy,

I wished to say hello and to share a great resource for learning the art of Astro-Imaging, one I hope you will share with your society members!

My name is Warren Keller, an American astrophotographer and teacher via <http://www.ip4ap.com>, and a presenter at MAIC and NEAIC here in the US. I recently enjoyed my first APOD. Here are three links to sample tutorials, for your imaging members to enjoy.

http://www.ip4ap.com/SamplePS12/PS_Basics-12_ToolsII.html

http://www.ip4ap.com/SamplePS12/PS-1_Intermediate_The%20Nature%20of%20the%20Beast.html

http://www.ip4ap.com/SamplePS12/PS-2_Intermediate_The%20Assembly%20Line.html

Please consider posting word about our easy and concise video tutorials on Adobe Photoshop for astrophotography to benefit your viewers. We stream the movies at the website, www.ip4ap.com, and DVDs are available through us or www.astrovid.com (AVA). We were named a Sky & Telescope Magazine 'Hot Product' last year. I'd appreciate a mention, a review or a link, and anything I can do in return, please let me know!

Best to you, Warren

Warren A. Keller: www.ip4ap.com and www.billionsandbillions.com
The Heavens Declare the Glory of God

ANOTHER EMAIL THAT I RECEIVED

Hello everyone, my name is Tonya, my father is currently building telescope-making equipment. We filmed his garage, where everything he is working on is on YouTube. If you are interested, please view it here. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9hdrS_fa5k Any further questions or comments are welcome, which you can send to Hubach88@gmail.com.

CERRO COSO COMMUNITY COLLEGE STAR PARTY AND BARBEQUE SEPTEMBER 19

Cerro Coso Community College President Dr. Mary Retterer is dedicating a star party to honor the memory of Dr. Alex Shlanta on September 19 at the astronomical site on the campus, starting at 8:00 p.m. The star party will be preceded by a barbeque on the lawn area in front of the library. The barbeque will start at 5:30 p.m. and include with a raffle. In addition to the telescope viewing there will be an astronomical slide show in the Library building.

As in previous years, Dr. Retterer requests the assistance of China Lake Astronomical Society members at the star party. This will be the third annual barbeque and star party. Rather than the hot dogs served last year, this year will see tri-tip sandwiches. The price is still only \$10.00; tickets are available at the Chamber of Commerce, Red Rock Books, and at the College Business Office.

LIGHT POLLUTION CONSIDERATIONS IN KERN COUNTY by Carroll Evans

We received very short notice of an upcoming action at the Board of Supervisors meeting. Several C.L.A.S. members provided input to the Board, and three people from the Kern River Valley made a personal appearance before the board. It is possible that the light control ordinance will affect the entire county, probably exclusive of cities. In any event, this is a positive step forward to arrest the spread of light pollution.

Tuesday afternoon, July 29th, three Kern River Valley citizens spoke before Kern County's Board of Supervisors in reference to an item regarding Dark Sky ordinances for the County's rural areas. Originally, that item was on the 'Consent Calendar', meaning it would have been approved as a RECEIVE AND FILE item with a large batch of other items. Staff would have made no special presentation. The public would have had no opportunity to speak and the Supervisors would not have discussed it and given their staff further direction as to how to proceed. Nothing more would have happened.

By asking that public comment be allowed, KRV residents Richard Rowe, Rick Crockett and Ron Hyatt were able to speak, following a short presentation by Planning Director Ted James. Many others wrote letters, sent e-mails or contacted their Supervisor on this issue as well.

Following all that, our Board of Supervisors discussed the Dark Sky issue, taking the following action unanimously: directed Planning to conduct Public Workshops and return in February 2009 with a draft ordinance for Board consideration.

THE MYTH OF NIBIRU AND THE END OF THE WORLD IN 2012 by Carroll Evans

The September-October 2008 issue of the Skeptical Inquirer features an article by David Morrison, the Senior Scientist at the NASA Astrobiology Institute. The article begins "Skeptical Inquirer readers may not be aware that a rogue planet on a 3600-year orbit is about to enter the inner solar system and visit a catastrophe upon Earth. This threatening planet was discovered by the ancient Mesopotamians, who named it Nibiru. It was known also to the Mayans, who associated it with the end—December 2012—of their 'long count' calendar."

"Although astronomers and space scientists are tracking Nibiru, this information is being kept from the public as part of worldwide conspiracy. This official silence cannot be maintained for much longer, however, since by 2009 Nibiru will be visible to the naked eye from the southern hemisphere, and already Earth's axis is tilting, changing the length of the day under its influence."

I refer you to the magazine for an in-depth discussion of this hoax. Meanwhile, remember that your observations of Nibiru, if any, are classified.

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	\$54.00 per year
Membership with Sky and Telescope magazine	\$53.00 per year
Membership with both S & T and Astronomy	\$87.00 per year

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

PRESIDENT – Earl Wilson – 760-876-5455 (email zearl.email@gmail.com)
VICE-PRESIDENT – Bruce Churchill - 760-375-7247 (email rbchurchill@yahoo.com)
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TREASURER – Roger Brower - 760-375-1181 (email brower@iwvisp.com)
NEWSLETTER EDITOR – Carroll Evans Jr. - 760-375-5681 (email clevans@ridgenet.net)

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 SEPTEMBER 8, 2008: “COSMIC MICROWAVE BACKGROUND” AT THE MATURANGO MUSEUM, 100 EAST LAS FLORES AVE., RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA

CLAS WEB PAGE <http://www.chinalakeastrosoc.org>

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