

The Photon Gazette

A quarterly publication of the Christian Association of Stellar Explorers (CASE)



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Welcome from the President

Well, it's getting to be that time of year again. Spring has sprung, or so it seems here in Northwest Arkansas. This is a great time of year, since the Realm of the Galaxies in Virgo is starting to manifest itself for beautiful viewing by all interested!



It's been a busy winter here in Northwest Arkansas, and CASE has been active and busy, or as busy as we can be when it's 22 degrees outside at night. There was a new comet happening this winter, and most of the local club members managed to take advantage of the clear, cold skies to get a peak at Comet Ikeya-Zhang, which had a tail that measured almost 2.5 degrees!!

MSRAL 2002 is Almost here!!

The Mid States Regional Convention is almost upon us. Make sure and register for the convention at www.christian-astronomy.org/msralconvention.html. This website houses all of the forms that you will need to fill out in order to take advantage of this exclusive event. There is still a lot of work to be done, and anyone who can help out will be welcomed enthusiastically.

Heavenview Observatory

Yes, it's true!! We are building an observatory at New Life Ranch in eastern Oklahoma. Heavenview Observatory at New Life Ranch will now be our official site for viewing and holding star parties. No more meetings in David Cater's front yard. We'll be able to have directions print-

ed on our website for all to see. The observatory will be housing many different astronomy programs, and we will train all CASE members who wish to learn how to use the observatory in the proper usage and storage of the telescope and the building's roll-off roof design. More information is included in this newsletter.

New IDA Section

There is now a new International Dark-Sky Association section here in the state of Arkansas. The Arkansas Dark-Sky Preservation Society (ADPS) will be active in bringing lighting education and concerns to the public. Please be encouraged to join the IDA. We need YOU in order to make dark-sky and environmentally friendly lighting a reality here in Arkansas. The first meeting will be on May 17th at John Brown University in the Bynum Theater in the Walton Lifetime Health Complex.

Education, Education, Education

CASE members have been actively involved in different educational opportunities this past quarter. Some of these include sections in the Creation Nation program at New Life Ranch, teaching 2nd graders at Southside East elementary in Siloam Springs, and travelling to Little Kansas, Oklahoma to speak to the School of the 21st Century, an afterschool program.

It's been a great two years, and I look forward to many, many more from CASE and it's membership!

Patrick Carr

President/Editor/ALCor & MSRAL Chairman

Memberships Coming Due This Quarter

Membership in CASE is based on a calendar year. The following members listed will be responsible for renewing their memberships on or before the date listed beside their name.

Steven D'Annolfo (11/30/01)
 Michael Cater (1/1/02)
 Brian Greuel Family (4/30/02)
 Ken Knight (6/30/02)
 Roger Youmans Family (6/30/02)



Groundbreaking at Heavenview Observatory. CASE members and New Life Ranch staff are involved!

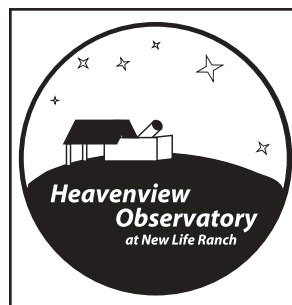
The telescope will be driven by a high-tech mounting which will track astronomical objects on its own as the earth turns, and it will serve as a main observing instrument for CASE. A storage space to keep ancillary equipment will also be provided so that delicate equipment can be kept conveniently at the Heavenview site. This will be a real advantage for club members who, heretofore, have had to lug bulky but fragile instruments to the New Life Ranch dark sites and waste valuable observing time setting up these instruments from scratch each time they wanted to teach and observe.



New Life Ranch, a Christian camping and retreat ministry, sponsors Creation Nation, a camping and educational program for young people and their families, designed to encourage appreciation for the wonders of God's creative work in nature. One aspect of this program is education in basic astronomy. For about two years, members of CASE have provided telescopes and educational expertise for the Creation Nation program. The new observatory is designed to be a dedicated facility which will greatly enhance the mission of

Heavenview Observatory

David Cater, MSRAL Vice-Chairman



The Christian Association of Stellar Explorers is very excited to announce that Case is building a dark-site observatory! With the help and physical contributions of New Life Ranch in Oklahoma and John Brown University, as well as generous donations of equipment by Dr. Michael Cater, CASE has broken ground on its new observatory named, appropriately enough, Heavenview. Heavenview Observatory will house a 16-inch reflector telescope in a roll-off roof observatory built by the facilities construction team at New Life Ranch.



Members of the S.O.W.E.R.S. are busy building the observatory at NLR.

The Gallery . . .

This area is reserved for photographs, drawings and musings from our membership. If you have an interesting thought, please be sure to e-mail it to thecarrs@tcac.net or by mail to the CASE office. If you have photographs or slides of interesting objects in astronomy, please get them to the CASE office for inclusion in our quarterly publication.



M42 by Patrick Carr



M45 by Jon Peterson



Horsehead Nebulae by Patrick Carr

Dues Paid in Full!

The following people have paid their membership dues for the current year.

Steven Sbanotto (Family)
 Patrick Carr (Family)
 Erin Shelton
 Sarah Baach
 David Cater
 Jon Peterson
 Michael Peterson

All dues paid will be good for 1 year from the date of payment.

Treasurer's Report

Income (YTD March 31, 2002)	

Balance Forward:	\$145.39
Membership Dues:	\$95.00
Total:	\$240.39
Expenses (YTD March 31, 2002)	

Signage:	\$15.00
Postage:	\$4.60
501 C(3) Application Fee	\$150.00
Total:	\$169.60
Total Cash Reserves:	\$ 70.79

the overall Creation Nation program and especially the educational program in basic astronomy in our area.



CASE members, most of them connected with John Brown University as faculty or staff, have enthusiastically agreed to staff the astronomy aspect of the Creation Nation program. You can see from the picture of the groundbreaking ceremony, a certain delight on the faces of the builders and educators alike! Additional pictures demonstrate that the structure is coming right along and that, with good weather, the observatory will be ready for 'first light' in a few weeks. If you would like to become part of the observing and/or teaching program of CASE, contact Mr. Patrick Carr, President of CASE at 479-524-7211. Visit the CASE website at: <http://www.christian-astronomy.org>. Dark nights and bright days to all!

The Arkansas Dark-Sky Preservation Society

Patrick Carr, MSRAL Chairman

Arkansas can now say that it has joined numerous other states in the United States by starting their own International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) section. Arkansas now has the Arkansas Dark-Sky Preservation Society (ADPS) to help educa-

MSRAL 2002 is Coming!!

Register NOW for this exciting event.

Application included in this newsletter.

tion the public on the importance of dark skies and light trespass. The ADPS will hold it's bi-monthly meetings throughout the state of Arkansas so that IDA members all over the state can take part in activities pertaining to dark sky preservation. Education is the key to making this section a success. Only through education can we make the problem of light trespass and the issues that it presents to both the environment and the astronomical community something that everyone can appreciate. Get involved! Visit the ADPS website at <http://www.christian-astronomy.org/adpsframeset.html>.

Yes, we CAN!

Patrick Carr, MSRAL Chairman

The Christian Astronomers Network (CAN) is a newly founded organization that strives to be a resource to Christian camping organizations throughout the world. Many of these camps are entering into some form of "Creation" education section, but without the resources or know-how to properly present the astronomical section of "God's WOW!" to the attendees. CAN has written curriculum that is supplied free of charge to any astronomer or camping organization that is wanting to teach a creation-based astronomy curriculum. CAN hopes to bring astronomers together with camps, and to provide a standard curriculum. The CAN website can be reached at: <http://www.christian-astronomy.org/canframeset.html>. We are always looking for more people to get involved, so let's get out there and show them what we CAN do!

Important Club Activities Dates for 2nd Quarter 2002

April:

April 12 - 8:00 p.m. (Star Party)

April 26 - 8:00 p.m. (Lunar Party)

May:

May 10 - 8:00 p.m. (Star Party)

May 24 - 8:00 p.m. (Lunar Party)

June:

June 7,8 - MSRAL Convention

June 21 - 8:00 p.m. (Lunar Party)

Whassup in the Springtime

Mike Peterson, Treasurer

In April, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars are still up. Joining them is Venus. In late April Mercury will also make a showing. As a result, five planets, all naked eye, will be visible in the western half of the sky for a while.

The Pleiades, Orion, and, toward the Northwest, the Double Cluster between the constellations Perseus and Cassiopeia are moving closer to the western horizon with each passing night. The Galaxies M81 and M82 are fairly high up in the Northern sky, along with M51 and M101.

Rising in the east is the Realm of the Galaxies between Leo and Virgo. Not far away is M104 the Sombrero Galaxy. Dropping down closer to the eastern horizon Hercules can be found coming up with M13 and M92. a couple of globular star clusters. Later in the evening Vega, and the Ring Nebula comes up in the constellation Lyra.

In the South, a large number of open clusters can be seen in the neighborhood of Canis Major. As we enter May the planets draw closer to each other in the west. In the south, if your timing is right late in the month, and it's a good clear night

with a very low horizon, you might be able to find Omega Centauri, a very well known globular cluster.

In the East - late in the evening - the constellation Cygnus comes up, and near by is the Dumbbell Nebula. By the dark of the Moon in June, the Summer Triangle can be seen in the east. The Summer Triangle is formed using the stars Vega, Deneb, and Altair. M 57, a globular cluster, can be found between the constellations of Lyra, and Cygnus. Later in the month, around Sagittarius, can be found a wealth of objects like the Lagoon, Trifid, Omega, and Eagle Nebulae. You can also find a great many open and globular clusters like M6, M7, M22, and M11 the Wild Duck cluster.

By this time of the year the Realm of the Galaxies can be found in the western half of the Sky, while constellations like Orion, and Canis Major have set in the west.

It is exciting to think of what can be found this time of year, especially since the summer Milky Way will be returning during the next 3 months. The summer Milky Way is so much brighter than the winter version. Sometimes it is fun to just cruise some of the Milky Way clouds with a telescope, so keep looking up.

Current CASE Membership

(Current dues up to date)

Patrick*, Adriane and Rachael Carr (F) - 3

David Cater* (I) - 1

Michael Cater (I) - 1

Brian*, Jane Greuel and Family (F) - 4

Ken Knight* (I) - 1

Mike Peterson (I) - 1

Jon Peterson (S) - 1

Stephen*, Elaine and Pete Sbanotto (F) - 3

William D. Leiser, Jr. Family (F) - 3

Steven D'Annolfo (I) - 1

Roger Youmans* (F) - 5

Ed Jones (I) - 1

April Lovell (S) - 1

Sarah Baach (S) - 1

Erin Shelton (S) - 1

Total Paid Membership - 28



* = Mailing name on all newsletters.

F = Family Membership I = Individual Membership

S = Student Membership