

The Photon Gazette

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



Volume 3, Issue 1
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The Christian Association of Stellar Explorers
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www.christian-astronomy.org



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Welcome from the President

What a great convention!!! If you missed out on the 2002 Mid-States Regional Convention held at John Brown University here in Siloam Springs, Arkansas you most assuredly missed a great convention. There will be more information on the convention in this issue of the *Photon Gazette*.



We Need Your Submissions

As CASE continues to grow, it has become more and more evident that we need information from our members in order to keep producing a great newsletter. If you have any items of astronomical interest, whether they be photography, poetry, musings or drawings please contact me to get these included on the web page and in the *Photon Gazette*. These publications are only as good as the information that we receive from our members!!

Heavenview Observatory

Heavenview Observatory at New Life Ranch is up and operating! It's been great working with groups from all over the region in the Creation Nation camps, as well as other groups that have come to New Life Ranch for outdoor education. But now, we have a facility with which to teach them in! Heavenview is one of the largest amateur observatories in the area, housing a 16" Newtonian telescope. More information can be found in the article written by David Cater in this issue.

Updated Information

If you move or have a change of address or telephone number we need to know! If we do not have the updated information, then you will miss issues of the *Photon Gazette* and the Astronomical League's *Reflector*. If you are not receiving your copy of the League's newsletter let me know immediately at tcarrs@tcac.net.

Let's see if we can earn some certificates from the Astronomical League. Check out their website at www.astroleague.org and look under the "Observing Clubs" section of the website for awards that we are all entitled to (if we do the work).

Patrick Carr

President/Editor/ALCor & MSRAL Regional Rep.

Dues Paid in Full!

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

Jay Williams (Family)

John Leeman

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

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)
 Brian Greuel Family (4/30/02)
 Ken Knight (6/30/02)
 William D. Lesier Family (8/31/02)
 Roger Youmans Family (6/30/02)

Heavenview Observatory Opens with a "Wow!"

Patrick, MSRAL Regional Representative

Heavenview Observatory at New Life Ranch is currently open for business. Since Heavenview was only open for the last few Creation Nation camps, the observatory has only had a limited number of participants, but those that have seen it are certainly excited. Heavenview houses a 16" Newtonian Reflector, supplied by the John Brown University Advance Program. This scope sets atop a 12" Schaeffer German Equatorial Mount supplied to the Advance Program by Michael Cater, also a CASE member. The roof of the observatory rolls off, opening the scope to the sky. Heavenview started off by having an observing session for the local Siloam Springs Cub Scouts,



The Heavenview 16" Newtonian Telescope.



Visitors from New Life Ranch and CASE members working on installing the scope.

followed by a work group at the ranch from the Ozark Adventist Academy. This is a chance for people who have never had the opportunity to look through a telescope to see a really large instrument in action. The optics of this set-up provide excellent star images, and a wide field of view. Since the opening of Heavenview, six different groups have been able to use the scope. There are also quite a few member scopes stored at the observatory which are used to teach more about God's creation through astronomy. The observatory has the main scope, two 8" newtonians, 12.5", 6" and 4.5" newtonians, 8" and 11" Schmidt-Cassegrains, 6" refractor, and a 6" newtonian astrograph. Some scopes are located on dobsonian mounts, while others are motor driven on german equatorial mounts. There are plans to enclose the opened area where the roof rolls over and to convert it into a teaching classroom. Permanent piers and concrete pads will soon be installed. This is now our permanent meeting place for star parties, however the gate keys are kept by club officers only. Look to the website for more information on accessing Heavenview and directions to the observatory.



The Gallery . . .

This month we're going to do something a little different in the Gallery section. Here are pictures from the 2002 Mid-States Regional Convention of the Astronomical League! The regular gallery will appear next issue.



David Cater and Ed Jones explaining how the scope was installed.



MSRAL members relaxing and enjoying the great food at the BBQ.



Mike Peterson and his rare Schaeffer mount.



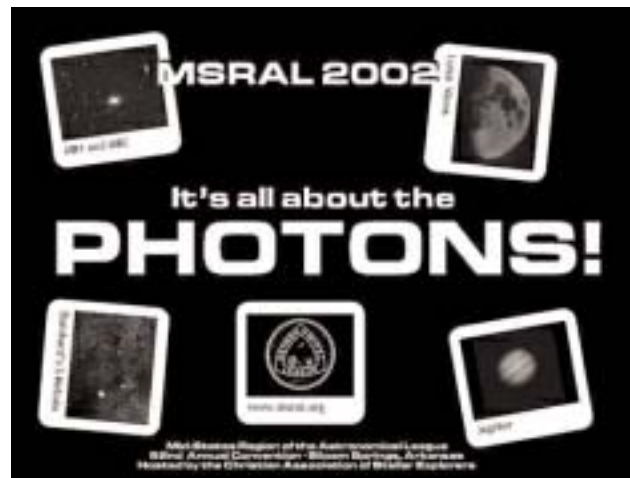
Ed Jones' 6" Fujinon Binoculars were a stellar hit!



Mike Peterson and his father, Robert, at the MSRAL Awards Banquet.



Patrick Carr closing out the convention and handing the banner to Tulsa for 2003.



MSRAL 2002 a Huge Success

David Cater, CASE Awards Coordinator

The Christian Association of Stellar Explorers and John Brown University hosted the Mid-States Regional Convention of the Astronomical League over the weekend of June 7-9. By all accounts the convention was a big success! Each year, the Astronomical League, a national organization of amateur astronomy clubs, sponsors regional conferences early in the summer to advance cooperation in support of amateur astronomy and to promulgate astronomical knowledge within the amateur community.

Last years conference was held at Hendrix College and at that time, CASE members Patrick Carr, David Cater,



and Mike Peterson agreed to host the '02 conference at JBU. With a year lead time, members of CASE began preparation, securing facilities and food services at JBU, lining up guest speakers, creating signage to guide conference visitors, and looking out for the many little details that can make a conference good or a bust.

On June 7th. conference attendees checked in at JBU's new Walker Student Center, where they were greeted by CASE members and shown to their respective dorm rooms. Careful attention was given to placing each attendee close to someone they already knew, hoping that this congenial touch would enhance the friendly ambience of the conference. After renewing friendships and resting up a bit, attendees were invited to attend a splendid outdoor barbecue at Heavenview Observatory at New Life Ranch. JBU food services did an excellent job preparing burgers, hotdogs, chicken breasts and several makings for salads and drinks, along with tasty condiments so one could construct one's own dinner to individual taste. Food was prepared fresh on the spot and cooked to order. Following the meal, several attendees set up telescopes which they had brought along, and everyone was invited to use CASE's 16-inch reflector for a night of viewing. The whole endeavor was blessed by a very calm and clear dark night and several attendees got to see what a well-made reflector can do under good seeing conditions. The evening's viewing ended about 1:00 a.m. with lots of satisfied viewers tucking in at Walker in anticipation of a full day of activity on Saturday.

Saturday, the business meeting for the Mid-States Region, conducted by Patrick Carr, was held, as is the usual custom at this annual meeting. Several financial issues were addressed and representatives were elected for various functions. It was decided that the next MSRAL conference will be in Tulsa, OK, and that it will be sponsored by the Tulsa amateur astronomy club. Patrick Carr was elected regional representative for the Mid-States Region and an official logo was adopted by the region.



Saturday was also a day of many presentations by invited guest speakers. Speakers presented topics ranging from how to get involved, as a club, in the community, to how spectrographs can be built and used by clubs, to constructing precision mounts for instruments, to errors and anomalies found in the data base for double stars published by the U.S. Naval observatory. At frequent breaks between speakers, Patrick Carr gave away door prizes by random drawing. This has always been one of the highlights of these conferences and a lot of fun for everybody! This year, over 20 door prizes were donated by several vendors of astronomical equipment. These prizes ranged from fuzzy blue alien toys for kids to astronomical puzzles, software, books, an excellent high-power eyepiece, and a six-inch Dobsonian reflector! In the evening, a mouth-watering banquet was served up, again by JBU food services, and attendees were privileged to hear a presentation by Dr. Paul Benoit. His talk was entitled, 'Hera and Andromeda: New Views on the Evolution of the Solar System'. He described, with accompanying power-point presentation, experiments which simulate planetary atmospheres. In these experiments, various materials and instruments are placed within a test chamber and subjected to the effects of a variety of atmospheric conditions, complete with appropriate radiation and pressure, consistent with solar system planetary conditions. Patrick Carr was named Amateur of the Year as the banquet ended, but many conference attendees retired to one of the lounges at Walker for congenial socialization and intense discussion of amateur topics. Many remarked that this sort of casual encounter was one of the highlights of the conference.

Sunday was check-out day but it was surprising how many guests wanted to stay just a bit longer to discuss their interests and to give feedback to CASE on its work as conference host. Feedback was very positive with many attendees going out of their way to say how much they enjoyed the conference and to compliment CASE members on a job well-done. There was some suggestion about CASE hosting the national conference of the Astronomical League some time in the future. Well...maybe! Thanks to all who participated in making the '02 MSRAL conference a big success!

Important Club Activities Dates for 3rd Quarter 2002

July:

July 5 - 8:00 p.m. (Star Party)
July 26 - 8:00 p.m. (Lunar Party)

August:

August 9 - 8:00 p.m. (Star Party)
August 23 - 8:00 p.m. (Lunar Party)

September:

September 6 - 8:00 p.m. (Star Party)
September 20 - 8:00 p.m. (Lunar Party)

Treasurer's Report

Income (YTD June 30, 2002)	

Balance Forward:	\$145.39
Membership Dues:	\$140.00
T-Shirt Sales:	\$62.00
MSRAL Convention Funds:	\$490.26
Total:	\$837.65
Expenses (YTD June 30, 2002)	

T-Shirt Purchase:	\$149.75
Postage:	\$11.20
501 C(3) Application Fee:	\$150.00
General Observatory Purchase:	\$20.31
Total:	\$331.26
Total Cash Reserves:	\$ 506.39

CASE Receives Non-Profit Status

Patrick Carr, CASE President

In late June, CASE was pleased to find out that it has received the much awaited 501(c)(3) designation from the Internal Revenue Service. What this means to our organization is immense!! We will now be able to raise funds for the different projects that we encounter and decide to embark upon. It will allow us to accept donations that are tax-deductible for the giver.

These donations can be used for equipment, items for teaching astronomy, or other club uses. Most of the club's treasury is dedicated to teaching God's WOW to students in our area. We were able to reach over 1,000 people in the last year with the good news of the Gospel, all the while striving to teach good solid science.

Projects that are slated for the next year include the purchase of a Hydrogen-Alpha filter to allow viewers to see solar prominences on the limb of the sun, the finishing touches on Heavenview, and possibly a CCD camera to take photographs and do research with.

Since we are now a tax-exempt organization, we will need to form a board of directors. I would like to make the floor now open for nominations to the position of board of director. We will need to have a board made up of three members, with one being elected as the Chairman of the Board. This is over and above any positions that are currently held in CASE. Any nomination should be sent, preferably via e-mail, to hecarrs@tcac.net. After we receive nominations, I will then send a slate of officers, again via e-mail, to our membership to elect the board. Remember, these people will be helping to decide the disbursement of revenues for our club, and assisting in fundraising, so lets choose wisely! Remember, we need you to be involved in this organization, and this may be an excellent way to do it.



With your tax-deductible donation, we can increase knowledge of God's astounding universe in the mind's of young people.

Yes, I want to help contribute to astronomical education with a Christian perspective.

Please accept the enclosed check for \$ _____ to be used for:

Telescopes and Equipment Completion of Heavenview Observatory General Club Use

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Telephone: _____

Please clip out and mail to: CASE, 1005 Hunter Ridge, Siloam Springs, AR 72761

This year, CASE will reach over 1,000 students and adults with the knowledge of God's WOW!. Please help us to continue this important educational ministry.

All donations to CASE are tax-deductible, under the IRS 501(c)(3) guidelines.

Whassup in the Summer

Mike Peterson, CASE Treasurer

Summer is one of my favorite times of the year for looking at the night sky. There seems to be so many interesting things to look at. Early in July, in the East, is M27 the Dumbbell Nebula. Just to the right of M27 is the globular cluster M71. A bit above the Dumbbell is the globular cluster M56. Then, moving to the left is the open cluster Foxhead. Another open cluster, Hole-in-a-wall, is left and up from Foxhead. Moving higher up in the sky, We come to the constellation Lyra, which contains M57 the Ring Nebula. also in Lyra is the Double Double: two binary star systems close to each other. Higher up in the constellation Hercules are the globular clusters M13 and, to the left, M92. You will also be able to see the the summer triangle formed using Vega, in the constellation Lyra; Deneb, in the constellation Cygnus; and Altair in the constellation Aquila.

A little further south along the Eastern horizon is the planet Neptune just coming up in the midst of the constellation Capricornus. Just to the left is the globular cluster M72, and the open cluster M73. In the same area is the Saturn Nebula. Moving more to the Southeast, and South, there is a whole host of objects to look at around Sagittarius and Scorpius. A partial listing of objects include the globular clusters M55, M75, M22, M28, M62, M19, and M9. Open clusters include M25, M24 the Little Star Cloud, M21, M6 the Butterfly Cluster, M7, M18, M26, and M23 the Wild Duck Open Cluster. Nebulae to be seen

include the Hour Glass or Lagoon Nebula M8, the Trifid M20, and M17 the Omega or Swan Nebula, and the Box Nebula. Very close to the clusters M10 AND M12 is the Planet Pluto. In the Southwest, the Realm of the Galaxies and the Sombrero Galaxy is still visible. A third planet, Venus, can be seen in the Western Sky.

As you turn toward the Northwest, you can see Ursa Major with M51 the Whirlpool Galaxy, M101, two galaxies together: M81 and 82. By early August, when the light of the Moon once again does not wash away the ability to see different objects, the Andromeda Galaxy will be on the rise in the northeast. Not too far away is another pretty sight: the Double Cluster that can be found between the Cassiopeia and Perseus constellations. You should also be able to see the open cluster M103 in Cassiopeia. In the Southeast, Neptune will be getting higher in the sky along with Capricornus, with the planet Uranus trailing just a little behind. In the west, the Virgo Cluster is just above the horizon and getting harder to see. Keep in mind that all during this time the Sun will begin to set earlier and earlier each evening, which means getting more and more observing time in the evening before it gets too late.

There is another reason I like the night sky in the summer. The Milky Way star clouds. The summer Milky Way is so much brighter, and more visible then the winter Milky Way. Sometimes it is fun to just cruise the Milky Way with a pair of binoculars, or a telescope. It is amazing how many stars can be seen in one small magnified area.

Current CASE Membership

(Current dues up to date)

Patrick*, Adriane and Rachael Carr (F) - 3	Roger Youmans* (F) - 5
David Cater* (I) - 1	Ed Jones (I) - 1
Michael Cater (I) - 1	April Lovell (S) - 1
Brian*, Jane Greuel and Family (F) - 4	Sarah Baach (S) - 1
Ken Knight* (I) - 1	Erin Shelton (S) - 1
Mike Peterson (I) - 1	Jon Lehman (S) - 1
Jon Peterson (S) - 1	Total Paid Membership - 29
Stephen*, Elaine and Pete Sbanotto (F) - 3	
William D. Leiser, Jr. Family (F) - 3	
Steven D'Annolfo (I) - 1	



* = Mailing name on all newsletters.

F = Family Membership I = Individual Membership
S = Student Membership