



LORAIN, OHIO

GUIDESCOPE

<http://junior.apk.net/~arstar50/BlackRiver.index.html>

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B.R.A.S. Officers: President: Mike Harkey
Vice President: Dave Lengyel
Treasurer: John Reising
Secretary: Dave Gulyas

May 2004 Meeting Dates

- Regular Monthly Meeting at the Boy Scout Camp May 05, 2004 7:00 PM
- Monthly Board Meeting at the Blue Sky Restaurant May 13, 2004 7:00 PM

Observing Dates

- Nielsen Observatory May 14, 2004 9:30 - 11:30 PM
- Nielsen Observatory May 28, 2004 9:30 - 11:30 PM
- Nielsen Observatory Solar Observation May 30, 2004 1:00 - 4:00 PM

Locations

Nielsen Observatory is located at the Lorain Metro Parks Equestrian Center on Nickel-Plate Diagonal Road in Carlisle Township.

Boy Scout Camp is located on Bates Rd about 500 yds west of the intersection of Bates and Gore Orphanage Rd. The gate is on the right.

Blue Sky Restaurant is located on Rt 58 just north of Rt 2 / 90 on the east side of the street in Amherst.

Thanks

The Black River Astronomical Society wishes to express its thanks to the family of Tom Leu for the generous donation of a binocular viewing chair that belonged to Tom. Tom was a long time member of our group.

Sale & Trade

Meade LX200 12" in excellent condition, heavy duty tripod with 416XT / 20XT Astroguider / Imager. Price: \$2000.00 You may examine it in Avon, Ohio. Tel: 440-667-8799

Note: Please include a brief description of the item you wish to sell or trade along with its condition and any accessories that come with it. Also include the price and your telephone Number and/or email address. If you have something you wish to give away to someone in the club, please let me know. It will be included in this newsletter. Send the appropriate information to me at the Guidescope via email or telephone.

What's Happenin'

The third meeting concerning the new Wellington Metro Parks was held on March 24, 2004 at the Wellington Town Hall. Members of B.R.A.S. in attendance were: Tim Hornbeck, Arlene Lengyel, Dave Lengyel, Jim Lengyel and Bill Ruth. Dave spoke briefly on the benefits of down lighting and gave the Metro Parks representative, Dan Martin, written information on the same. As many of you already know, there are plans to have a part of the park set up for astronomical observing.

The next OTAA get-together will be on September 18, 2004 this year. Door prizes are already arriving and this year promises to be a good one. If you've never attended one of

these parties, or if you haven't attended for awhile, please consider coming. Last years event was an excellent experience, with good skies and a lot of really good food. The Metroparks is having it's Outdoor Weekend on Saturday, May 1, and Sunday, May 2 at the Sandy Ridge Reservation from noon til six each day. Our club will be represented on Saturday to give people an exposure to solar viewing, which means sun screens are in order. This 310 acre wetlands area can be accessed from Otten Rd which is east off Case Rd about a mile north of Center Ridge Rd.

The following article was written by Dave Lengyel and describes a 'Mini March Messier Marathon' that he had with fellow B.R.A.S. member Dane Adams. March is the month of madness and marathons, at least this year. Every March is prime time for Messier objects, those fuzzy blobs catalogued by Charles Messier in the 18th century as things to avoid when looking for comets. During the month of March, all 110 of them can be seen in one long night, if you have the stamina to observe from dusk to dawn. The Sun is located in a part of the sky devoid of these comet impersonators, so if you have the strength and desire, plus a telescope and decent skies, you can bag them all in one long marathon viewing session. Well, I have the desire to accomplish this goal, but staying up all night doesn't really appeal to me, so I decided that I'd at least try to see how many Messier objects I could bag in a couple of hours around New Moon time this March. Fellow club member Dane Adams lives not too far from me, and he phoned me on Friday the 19th and asked if I was going to be observing. I invited him over and suggested that we see how many Messier objects we could locate in my Hardin 10 inch reflector in a couple of hours. The sky was looking great just after sunset, but as twilight was ending, some ominous clouds appeared in the west. I figured I better look for M77 quickly, since it is rather low in the constellation of Cetus, and is magnitude 9.6. I was able to spot it before Dane arrived, and by the time he got her, it was gone, covered by some thin clouds. That one turned out to be the only one that I saw that night that Dane didn't. We move quickly to M76, the "little dumbbell" in Perseus, which was also being overcome by thin clouds and so was not very impressive. I had seen it a few nights earlier and it looked a whole lot better. We shifted our attention to the southern part of the sky, where the clouds had not yet invaded and spotted a couple of open clusters, M41 and M93, and then the lesser known reflection nebula in Orion, M78. We moved back to Perseus for the open cluster M34, which Dane was able to spot in his binoculars. Then, since numerical order doesn't matter here, we viewed M1, the supernova remnant in Taurus. Next, a volley of open clusters in Auriga and Gemini, M37, M36, M38 and M35, all of which looked great in both the telescope and Dane's excellent binoculars. Next we decided to make it easy on ourselves and spent a bit of time enjoying the wonders of M42 and M43, the Great Orion nebula, which showed hints of pink in the ten inch. We also marveled at the beauty of the Pleiades, M45. More open clusters followed, since now our only really open sky was in the Canis Major and Puppis regions. M46, with its foreground planetary nebula was very interesting and M47 was a nice contrast to the dimmer cluster. M48 in Hydra was also a nice open cluster. Of course, the naked eye cluster M44, the Beehive, was gorgeous in binoculars. Let's not forget to respect our

elders, that being M67, also in Cancer and often overlooked, but one of the oldest known open clusters. The area around Leo was now clearing, so Dane and I decided to go galaxy hunting. We quickly picked up M95, M96 and M101 in the front part of Leo and then the galaxies M65 and M66 in the back part of the lion. However, our nemesis the high clouds, were leaking into the eastern part of the sky, and we figured that we'd go north to the area around Ursa Major. This would be our final search area, since both of us had to get up early the next day. The spiral galaxy M81 and the irregular galaxy M82 looked great as they always do, and for just for a "hoot" we spotted the Owl Nebula, a planetary known as M97. The galaxies M108 and M109 were next, then the enigmatic M40 (what was Charles thinking?) and finally we completed the evening with M101 and the Whirlpool, M51. We closed up the observatory and figured that we had done pretty well. Thirty-two Messier objects in about an hour and 45 minutes, since we had about 15 minutes during which we had to wait for the clouds to move. So, Dane and Dave did about a third of a March Messier Marathon. All in all, a great time and I didn't feel like I had a hangover the next morning.

[Thanks Dave and Dane for sharing the experience.....ed]

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