The Meteor
The Newsletter of the Astronomical Society of Greenbelt
May 2010

The Meteor is the official publication of the Astronomical Society of Greenbelt, Greenbelt, MD. Articles & other contributions are welcome. Membership in the Astronomical Society of Greenbelt is open to anyone interested in astronomy. The Astronomical Society of Greenbelt is a not-for-profit community- based organization with the goal of encouraging public interest in science & education in general, astronomy in particular. More detailed information on our club’s activities & organization can be found elsewhere at our website.

The editor of this newsletter, Craig Levin, can be contacted at clevin AT ripco.com. Unless specified otherwise, all items in this newsletter were written by the editor.

Editor’s Notes

This issue is dedicated to our late fellow ASG member, Tom Teutsch (1947-2010).

I first met Tom at one of the earliest ASG star parties that Elizabeth & I attended in 2007. Like myself, he was a big fan of binoculars, & he had an interesting collection of them. Later, as Elizabeth & I got to know him better, we had conversations about local history as we’d pack up after star parties & sidewalk astronomy sessions. Tom was a mensch, as they say, & I will miss him.
**Elected officers for 2009-2010**

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<th>Office</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Ray Stevens</td>
<td>stvns.jacht AT yahoo.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>Martha Gay</td>
<td>marty_lou AT comcast.net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Craig Levin</td>
<td>clevin AT ripco.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Sue Bassett</td>
<td>wb3enm AT amsat.org</td>
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**Astronomical Events Around Greenbelt in May 2010**

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<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<td>Special Planetarium show at the Owens at 7:15 PM</td>
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<td>Star Party at Northway at 8:45 PM</td>
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<td>23 Sidewalk Astron. at Roosevelt Sq. at 9 PM /30</td>
<td>24/31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27 Monthly meeting at the Owens at 7:30 PM</td>
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Star Party & Business Meeting Reports

April 3 (star party report from Doug):

We opened at 7:30 to a cloudy sky. Some neighbor's kids came out with me. I showed them the telescope and put the 'scope on the NASA beacon, and tried to get their attention away from chattering. It got dark at 8, and their parents showed up. We started getting sucker holes, so we aimed at whatever stars we could see. The first was in Orion. Pretty soon we noticed Mars overhead and got it properly focused. No detail, but it looked great in a red filter.

We then easily found M42, but nobody else was impressed, even when I described what they were looking at. Then just before they left I showed them Saturn, as the western horizon was clouding up again. The view was murky, but one kid just fell over herself with "Nobody at school is gonna believe that I saw SATURN!!" I had her help me close down, so she knew what is required.

If she can learn to control her chattiness, and becomes an "astronomy nut", ready to share appropriate info. about what we're looking at, she can be a great addition to the staff. Needs to grow into it. Glad to have had them, in spite of the nonstop chat.

April 5 (summary of the officers' meeting):
Sue will work with Mark Todd on our tax situation-the Form 990, equipment, & property. Tom may have had a 12" Dobsonian. Rosalie (his wife) has other gear. Something for TT's memory-could we put a bench next to the dome in his name? A memorial lecture? Buy an erecting prism for her so as to use her Astroscan? Yes-search for one locally available.

The next issue of the Meteor should be a memorial book for Tom; announce that & the link to the petition to preserve Arlington's Brown Planetarium in the newsgroup. Fundraising for a memorial bench? Rosemary for remembrance (planting on the mound)?

4/17-Anne Arundel planet walk - docent backup. Look up destination.

4/24 - Earth Day/Astronomers w/o Borders. Talk to OSC-are we still good? (Yes-CML) Arrange to get MG's light pollution display if we are still on.

October - Utopia film show - Naming Pluto!

Idea for further development: Let's reserve rooms at the GCC before the star parties-classes before observations.

April 18: Sidewalk Astronomy: No Report/Clouded out?

April 24: Star Party: Clouded out. However, judging from comments, it would appear that we played a good part during Earth Day at the Owens during the daytime. The light pollution booth was set up & NASA literature from George was distributed.

April 29: Business Meeting: As Sue was unable to come, we didn't have any business to discuss. We went almost directly to my planetarium show on the Mound Builders, which was well received.
Reminiscences of Tom Teutsch

From Martha Gay:

Remembering Tom

Tom was an active observer. He was occasionally to be found at Tuckahoe State Park with his 90mm Maksutov. He was also one of the kindest, gentlest men I've ever met. And HE SHOWED UP AND HELPED. My favorite image of him is his cheery face peering up into the observatory checking to see what was going on and if there were people to be helped up or down the ladder. He was a frequent participant in the Sunday "moon parties" at the Roosevelt Center and, during the lulls in the action, was a fun conversationalist. He died way too young and I miss him terribly.

From George Gliba:

Tom was always available for the ASG for the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival and for Public Star Parties. He was always at the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival to help with set-up and for breaking-down the booth. At star parties he was the friendly voice in the dark that would ask what object you were looking at, or just there to say "Hi". He was always the friendly member who was available for the ASG at several other events as well.

I remember having a nice long chat with him about his adventures as a young man out west in New Mexico and Arizona. He told me about being lost and out of gas and in need of water in a nearly deserted ghost town, until a friendly person came by on a motorcycle, and took him to gas and water. We also talked about the coal black skies of the mountains and prairies and how wonderful the Milky Way was there. That was last Spring. After that, I had even more respect for him. I still didn't know that he was a noted environmentalist and zoologist until after his death, because he was so modest. He was much more than a golden ASG member and a good friend. He was a good man, and will be sorely missed.

From Doug Love:

Good old Tom Teutsch: he sure was a great guy.
We were planning quite a lot, then he had to die.

I think I first met Tom when I served on the GHI Woodlands committee. He came out to my Sunday afternoon woods cleanups, because it was more convenient for both of us than any other time. When I found out he had a telescope, I invited him to join the astronomy club.

It was good to have him on the Observatory Location committee, as he used to be the County Inspector of the Greenbelt Dump, where Northway Field is now. He knew where Greenbelt's past was buried. Once we dug a 2' hole in a likely spot by the Northway fence, and found milk bottles and pantyhose.
Eventually he became vice president, and was Keeper of the Eyepieces for awhile. He would show up late Saturday night for the star parties when the fainter of heart were about to leave, and he would carry on by sharing the view through his Astroscan with everyone who came.

And when it was time to build the Labor Day booth or tear it down, it was his truck that hauled the plywood. Last year, the two of us did most of the work.

Once he drove me to Baltimore to get the plastic roof sheets for my shed. He was always careful to tie everything down safely.

I had a flat tire in front of his place just a few months ago, and he was right there with a scissors jack when I found out that my hydraulic jack didn't work. I got myself a scissors jack at Christmas, based on his good example.

We were always discussing philosophy, theology and literature. He knew much more of O. Henry and Saki than I did.

And Tom was quite an observer. Together we found the Cyan Star in Canis Major. (I can't even find it on the Internet now!) And it was his 'scope that first showed us NGC 1981, Sagittarius in the Hilt of Orion's sword.

His house was stuffed with puzzles. I never got to work one with him. Perhaps we can visit Rosalie and work one with her someday.

From Michael Chesnes:

I knew Tom mostly as a voice in the darkness. I've observed at Northway a few times with members of your club, and the longest conversations I've had with Tom were on winter evenings when we were the only ones observing. Tom pointed out to me the Great Washington Nebula, which stretched across our southern sky, and said it was also called Aurora DCalis. He also had a fine little Maksutov, and told me an anecdote about it from a star party. Once he was observing next to a large Dobsonian, and someone
asked him what his scope could do that the Dobsonian could not. He picked it up, moved it a few feet, and said "This." People like Tom have been part of the reason why I enjoy amateur astronomy so much.

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A Special Announcement from the Owens Science Center:

Final Show of the 2009-2010 School Year:

More Than Meets the Eye

More than Meets the Eye is an interactive planetarium program designed to provide the audience with the opportunity to compare celestial objects such as planets, globular clusters, and galaxies as seen by the unaided eye, through binoculars or telescopes, and through multiple wavelength imagery. As a natural extension of these observations, you will learn to recognize patterns of stars in the sky, and how they appear to change with the seasons.

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Volunteering at the Anne Arundel Planet Walk

Elizabeth & I got going late in the morning, but we arrived in time to relieve the person who was at the Pluto station, who had to go at half past noon. As it turned out, nobody took the Neptune station, so we did double duty for a couple of hours. There was a constant flow of people, either heading in like long period comets or heading out like the Pioneers & Voyagers & New Horizons. I hope that we're asked to volunteer again, as that was fun!