

S. C. R. A. P. S.

Society's ChRonological Astronomical PaperS



Events – Future

SMAS Annual Picnic at TAO on June 19, 2010 starting at 5 PM.

Once again, David Fields (SMAS Club member and TAO Director) has extended an invitation to hold the SMAS Picnic at TAO. See David's message below

Astronomers,

Let's plan for a good SMAS picnic at TAO on June 19. Bring along food for sharing, plus your favorite telescope/binocs/astro toys to hold in an early evening group photo. Also we'll have a public stargaze later in the evening, where the optical viewing tools will be useful and fun.

If you haven't been there before, then have a look at the map and driving instructions at the 'visit us' link at www.roanestate.edu/obs. The map shows that we have our own campus on an isolated hilltop -- not the local Roane State campus, so note the map and leave early to arrive at 1700 h.

See you there! Cheers,
David Fields



Scene from Previous SMAS Picnic

Michael Littleton has already started up the grille and is preparing the main course in advance. Michael shares some of his secrets in this special article he wrote for SCRAPS:

Making the Barbecue for the SMAS Picnic

By Mike Littleton

I love pork barbecue and while somewhat vain, I think mine is the best. Take a nice Boston Butt (really the pig upper leg and shoulder) and soak it overnight in a brine of salt, water and some sugar like molasses. Make or buy a dry rub and spread it all over the meat after rinsing the brine off. See the picture of the ingredients for the rub and brine on the right. Now comes the long part. Smoke it at around 200° F for 12+ hours. Use lump charcoal not briquettes for the heat source and add some hardwood pieces like mesquite or oak for extra flavor to the charcoal. You don't need to soak the hardwood in water before using contrary to popular belief. The meat is done when the internal temperature is 190° F. Don't cheat and stop cooking at a lower temperature or the meat will not be tender. (This is a cheap cut of meat.) You are just going to have to wait to eat barbecue the next day. (There is nothing wrong with the chef tasting the meat while cooking.)



I have used the Big Green Egg Smoker since Thanksgiving last year and love it. It will cook for 24 hours at low temperature on a single bag of charcoal, but it is pricey and weighs over 100 pounds! Smokers come in a variety of designs and prices. Before the egg, I had a \$60 sheet metal smoker that produces great results. It would smoke for 12 hours on a single bag of charcoal in summer and, but if it was cold outside, it would take three bags of charcoal to cook the same time. It was large inside and could smoke 3 large butts and a turkey chest at the same time.

Here is the product. I hope you come to the picnic and enjoy my barbecue. There also will be a turkey chest, but that is next weekend's project. For more

information on smoking, smokers, are recipes, go to <http://www.amazingribs.com/>.



Minutes of May, 2010 Meeting

Any corrections to these minutes should be sent to JC Sanders (sandersj@chartertn.net)

The regular SMAS business meeting was held at PSTCC on Friday, May 14, 2010. At 7:30 PM, the meeting was called to order by President Lee Erikson. Those in attendance were:

Gary Bridges, Ralph Bridges (guest), Michael Reuter, Ron Dinkins, James East, Lee Erikson, Michael McCulloch, Jim Sanders

Program #1: Ron Dinkins (who has served as the Club's Observing Chairman and SMAS Coordinator with the Astronomical League on Observing Clubs) discussed the Astronomical League's Observing Clubs and the procedures he uses when an award application is presented to him. Some of his points were:

1. If Ron has completed the Observation requirements himself, then he checks the work against his own personal notes and does initial checks such as "was that object visible at that time".
2. For some observing clubs, Ron needs only to review the work and notify the AL that a review has taken place. Other observing club chairmen want to review the observing logs themselves.
3. Major reason for initial rejection is for "lack of detail". The term "small fuzzy object" is not sufficient.
4. Double star club requires sketches with eyepiece orientation marked (North and East).
5. The Solar Club requires a lot of sketching – showing the rotation of the sunspots
6. Some clubs do not allow the use of GO TO scopes
7. Lunar club does not require sketches or descriptions – just a check off and date of the observation.

Ron presented certificates to 2 club members who have recently completed AL Observing Clubs: See photos below



Jim Sanders receiving the Double Star Observing Award



Michael Reuter receiving the Lunar Observing Award



The Double Star and Lunar Award Pins

Both Michael and Jim shared their logs and some of the experiences they had as they worked toward their Observing Club Awards.

Members who are currently working toward AL Observing Club Awards:

- Gary Bridges: Constellation Club
- Lee Erickson: Lunar Club
- Michael Reuter: Double Star Club
- Jim Sanders: Urban Sky and Lunar Club

Program 2: "Know Your Telescope" by Michael Reuter



Michael presented his spreadsheet of handy information to know about your telescope and eyepieces. He also discussed methods to measure EP field of view and how to determine the EP orientation.

The remainder of the meeting was spent in a group discussion of several interesting topics:

1. Ron Dinkins discussed his visit to NASA Huntsville and viewing the Orion Crew Capsule.
2. Mike McCulloch reported on his trip to South Doyle Middle School to talk to 6th graders about astronomy (he was accompanied on this trip by Duane Dunlop).

3. Lee Erickson presented some interesting facts on how the eye perceives color.
4. Jim East suggested that a topic for future discussion should be different “red light” arrangements for use at star parties – what has been tried and what works well.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM

Submitted by J. C. Sanders, May 14, 2010

Planet Triple Play: Saturn, Mars and Venus Appear Together

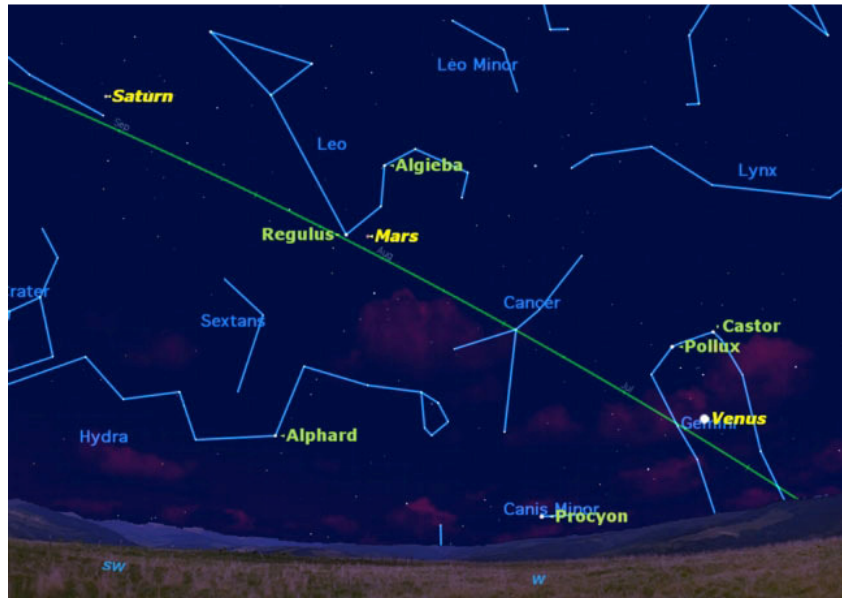
By **Geoff Gaherty**

Starry Night Education
posted: 02 June 2010
08:54 am ET

If you live in the northern hemisphere, go out any night this week an hour or so after sunset and look at the western sky to catch a planetary triple play starring Venus, Saturn and Mars.

The first thing skywatchers will see — weather permitting — is the brilliant planet Venus, slightly north of west, in the constellation Gemini. Look for Gemini's twin first magnitude stars, Pollux and Castor, just above Venus.

As the sky gets darker, the planet Mars can be spotted to Venus' left as it appears in the constellation Leo very close to the bright, first magnitude star Regulus. Further still to the left will be Saturn shining in the western part of the constellation Virgo.



This sky map shows how to spot all three planets as they appear across a 71-degree angle in the night sky. For comparison, your closed fist held at arm's length covers about 5 degrees of arc in the sky.

Venus, Mars and Saturn are all currently appearing slightly north of the ecliptic, the path the sun appears to follow over the year, shown in green in the sky map.

Note the positions of these three planets in relation to the bright background stars, because they are beginning an interesting journey which you will be able to follow over the next two months.

In early July, Venus will have moved rapidly to the left, crossing Cancer into Leo so that now it is next to the star Regulus. Mars, meanwhile, will have moved somewhat to the left. Saturn appears to have hardly moved at all.

By then, the three planets will now cover only 37 degrees in the sky, only half the spread they showed in early June.

A month after this, in the first week of August, the planets will be crowded into a 7-degree angle, and Mars will now be to the left of Saturn in Virgo. Venus, too, will have moved into Virgo.

All three will fit comfortably in the viewing field of a small pair of binoculars.

By August, Venus will still be brilliant, but both Saturn and Mars will have faded so that they just barely reach first magnitude. That's because Saturn and Mars are getting farther away from Earth, while Venus is getting closer.

From the southern hemisphere, the planets will appear in the same positions relative to each other, but the ecliptic will be almost vertical, and the planets arrayed one above the other, rather than forming an oblique angle with the horizon.

This will be a fine opportunity to observe the relative motion of three bright planets against a well marked background of stars, and to see the very different speeds at which they move: Venus traversing four constellations and Mars two, with Saturn hardly moving at all.

This article was provided to SPACE.com by Starry Night Education, the leader in space science curriculum solutions.

June 2010						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4 UT K	5 TAO
6	7	8	9	10	11 No Meeting	12 SMAS Star Party Unicoi Crest
13	14  New Moon	15	16	17	18 UT K	19 SMAS Picnic TAO 5:00 PM
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28  Full Moon  June Bootids	29  June Bootids	30  June Bootids			

UTK – roof of Neilson Physics Building on the Hill At UT on 1st and 3rd Fridays
<http://www.phys.utk.edu/trdc/telescope.html>

TAO – Tamke-Allen Observatory
Public Stargaze
Watts Bar Lake, Roane County
1st and 3rd Saturdays
<http://www.roanestate.edu/obs/>