Smoky Mountain Astronomical Society

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

Society's ChRonological Astronomical PaperS

From the Chair
By Bob Arr

The first draft of the proposed Constitution and Bylaws (dated Oct 1, 2002) elicited numerous responses. Thanks to all who offered constructive criticism and helpful comments. There were several technicalities that have been corrected, which did not change the substance of their subject, and I feel that there is no need to address them here. But there was one significant point raised. It was the requirement in Article VII that a proposed change to the C&BL could be voted on only in October.

Our original intent was to make it harder to make such a change, in the belief that such changes deserved wider and deeper consideration. They should not be rushed to a vote. The AL suggests building in such a slowdown. However, as was pointed out, waiting until October is a big slowdown if you are starting in November (12 months to go). But if you are starting in July, it's no slowdown at all (3 months to go). So it's an unfair tool to begin with. The executive committee agrees, and we are removing it.

A C&BL change still takes a respectable amount of time. To begin with, it always requires @10 members to endorse it for submission. Then, if it is submitted in month 1, it appears in the newsletter of month 2, is placed on the agenda for discussion at the meeting in month 2, and put to a vote in month 3. To be approved, 2/3rds of a quorum must vote for it. We're satisfied that is enough consideration.

We are following a similar timetable for the entire C&BL document. The Oct 1 draft was essentially a notice-and-comment effort, and it led to the Oct 2 proposal. The Oct 2 proposal has 10 signatures endorsing it. It will be distributed at the same time as the October newsletter (but in a separate mailing; we don't need a 16 page newsletter.) The proposal will be placed on the agenda for discussion at the October meeting, and, finally, put to a vote at the November meeting. If passed by 2/3rds of a quorum, it will immediately become our official C&BL.

The Wiz

Dear Wiz,

Last fall I went out observing, but within 2 hours all my stuff dewed up and I had to quit. Got any recommendations? B. Whet

Dear Barry,

Fall is best of all for a large temperature drop from late afternoon to dark skies. And if the drop takes you down to the dewpoint, rest assured, you will get dew. You can find out it's coming before leaving home by checking Intellicast or Weather Underground. (If the forecast low temperature is less than the dewpoint, it's coming. It's just a question of what time it will get there.)

The fix is heat, and if you can rig it, insulation. Most observers have three vulnerable areas: the sky end of the telescope (reflector's secondary, SCT's corrector plate, refractor's objective), your finder (telrad or finderscope), and your eyepieces. (continued)

The Wiz (continued)

For the sky end of the telescope, have a dewshield--a cardboard cylinder, black on the inside, that wraps around the tube (or maybe fits snug inside the tube), and extends a foot or so past the end. Not only does it slow down heat loss, but it also increases image contrast by blocking stray light. If you can flock it, by all means do so.

Newt owners can buy a tiny heater (just an electrical resistor, really) that attaches to their secondary. It involves running a wire across one arm of the spider to connect the heater to a battery; it's a bit of a chore, but once it's done it should work well with little future effort. The battery needs to be big enough to last the night--something like a small lawn mower battery.

Don't gasp at the idea of that much battery--it also has another important use. You may buy a small blower dryer--it looks like a miniature hair dryer--that can also be powered by that battery. Being portable, it can be aimed at whatever has dewed up--eyepieces, telrads, corrector plates, etc. In a minute or two, it will dry up the dew and heat the object enough to keep it from dewing up again for a while.

You may buy a dewshield for a telrad, but they are fairly expensive. However, you can also wrap virtually any kind of insulation around a telrad or finderscope such as black paper or black cloth, and hold it in place with rubber bands. By all means do this when you first set up; don't wait for the dew to form first. But you can still use the hair dryer to dry them off, if needed.

For eyepieces, keep them in their case with the cover closed while they aren't being used. It helps if you can keep the case inside your vehicle. Speaking of which, keep the doors and windows of the vehicle closed also, or you may wind up with dew all over the outside and inside of your vehicle's windows. Dewy eyepieces quickly respond to the hair dryer.

All of the above precautions will work with light dew. But if the temperature continues to drop, the dew can get so heavy that everything dews over--the outside of your telescope, your cases, your skycharts, your car, even your clothes. The mess can overwhelm you. Eventually, the air turns to fog, and you're done for sure. You have to be a little philosophical--the great forces of nature that produced the beautiful stars are also the ones that produced the dew. Have a sip of coffee, put your stuff away, and start planning for the next trip. And the next day, unpack every wet item and let it air dry thoroughly.

Book Review: The Soul of the Night
By Bob Arr

The SMAS library offers you a book by Herr professor doktor Chet Raymo, astronomy writer (*365 Starry Nights*), teacher (Stonehill College, MA) and columnist (the Boston Globe), entitled *The Soul of the Night.* Like many things that come in small packages, it is very good.

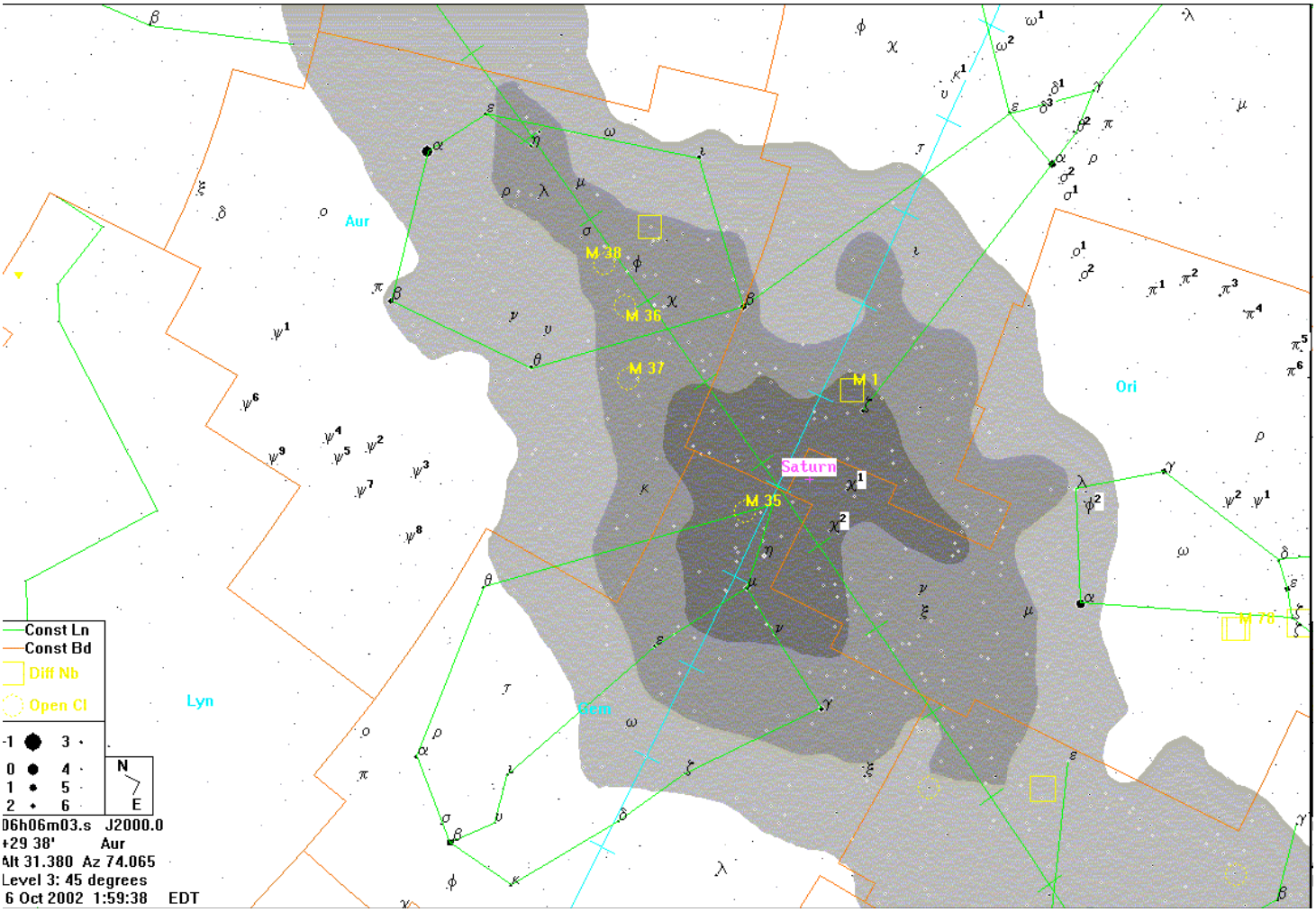
Dr Raymo teaches physics, but not in isolation. He lives in our world where daily events often mask their physical underpinnings, but he sees right through to the bedrock, and finds satisfaction...indeed, joy...in understanding the relationship between a galaxy and a lady-slipper, a Kraken and a black hole.

Like William Blake 200 years ago, Raymo sees the world in a grain of sand and heaven in a wild flower. In the book, he proclaims, "What the physicist has learned is no less frightening, or less wonderful, than the mysteries that drove anchorites to desert rocks and Buddha to the Bo tree." And many of us to our telescopes.

October Star Party by Tom Rimmell

This month we will have our star party on October 5 at Unicoi Crest. Arrival time to the site is at dusk.

Rising from the East around midnight the constellation Auriga will be high enough to view it's large open clusters. Viewed at low power through a telescope or binoculars Messier objects M36, 37, and 38 are a treat to observe. Located below Auriga is Gemini. This constellation holds another nice open cluster M35. Be sure to look at Saturn, which is located above M35.



Fall Mental Workout

Work your mind and share your astronomical experience with the rest of SMAS and everyone on the Internet by writing an article for SCRAPS. Contact Mike Littleton at (865) 671-1022 or email littlen@ix.netcom.com.

CLUB PICNIC by Lee Erickson

SMAS Meeting of September 14 was a picnic at the Roane State Community College Tamke-Allan Observatory. Rain prevented any observing, but we were warm and dry in the observatory classroom. Our host, Dave Fields, explained some of the activities they conduct there such as instruction for Roane State Students, radio astronomy and CCD imaging with the large refractor. There was some discussion of how CCD images were processed and Dave suggested there could be a seminar on astro-imaging. A sign up sheet to indicate interest was passed around. If you were not there, but would like to attend such a seminar, please contact Dave Fields at Fieldsde@aol.com.

The classroom was an ideal place to practice gastronomy. The featured observation this year, as last, were **Protien Protoplanetary Disks** (hamburgers) in carbohydrate dust clouds (buns) with comitary condiments interspersed (ketchup, mustard, tomatoes and lettuce). The disks were provided and cooked in the stellar barbecue of Mike Littleton again this year. Thanks to Mike. Also observed in the same gastric universe are the following items (in no particular order) and a list of their suspected compositions and in some cases a description of the evolutionary process by which they reached their present state.

Carol Rothschild's Super Nova Remnant Taco Salad

Lettuce torn to bite size pieces
Hamburger (cooled before adding)
Shredded cheese (Cheddar)
Tomatoes cut into chunks
Black Olives (optional)
Canned red beans
Catalina Dressing
Crushed Tacos (add just before serving)

Ed Gorney's Milk(ieway) Chocolate Chunk Walnut Oatmeal (Galactic disks) Cookies

2 sticks margarine or butter
1 3/4 cups of firmly packed brown sugar
1/2 granulated sugar
2 eggs
2 table spoons milk
2 teaspoons vanilla
1 3/4 cups all purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 1/2 cups Quaker oats, quick or old fashioned, uncooked
2 cups chopped milk chocolate, I used a combination of Hershey's kisses and some Hershey's chocolate bars I had sitting around.
1 cup chopped walnuts or pecans or what ever nuts you like.
2 big table spoons cinnamon

1. preheat oven to 375
2. beat butter and sugars till creamy
3. add eggs, milk, vanilla, and cinnamon and beat well
4. add combined flour, baking soda, and salt; mil well
5. stir in oats, chocolate, and nuts; mix well
6. drop spoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheet. If you don't want burned bottoms on your cookies use an aluminum baking sheet if you have one. Bake 8 or 9 minutes.

Bob Arr's Bi(nanary) Star pudding

In a very large bowl, whisk together 3 small pkgs. Jell-O instant French Vanilla pudding and 5 cups milk.
Add 8 oz sour cream and med. size (12 oz) Cool Whip.
Whisk some more.
In a deep 9x13 container, layer (from bottom) wafers, banana slices, pudding; repeat.

Save some wafers to place on top.
Use an entire 12 oz box of vanilla wafers.
Chill overnight.

Leigh Ann Kiraly's Big Bang Broccoli Casserole

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a large casserole dish with Pam or other cooking spray. Serves 10-12

Casserole:
32 oz. frozen chopped broccoli, cooked as directed and drained
2 cans creamed soup (I used 1each cream of mushroom & cream of celery)
just enough water to rinse each can - a couple of tablespoons will do
2 cups raw rice, cooked as directed
3/4 cups chopped onion, sautéed in butter until transparent (or can use 2 teaspoons dehydrated onion or onion powder)
1 - 16 oz. jar Cheese Whiz processed cheese
Salt & black pepper to taste
Topping:
1 stick butter or margarine, melted
1 1/2 cups crushed Corn Flakes (put in a qt. sized Ziploc baggie and crush with a rolling pin)
1. Combine the first 7 ingredients in a mixing bowl.
2. Pour into a large casserole that has been sprayed with Pam to prevent sticking.
3. Combine the topping ingredients and sprinkle over the top.
4. Bake in a pre-heated oven 35-40 minutes until bubbly. Serves 10-12

Angela Quick's GoTo Pasta Salad

Buy a pound of your favorite pasta, a pint of grape tomatoes, and a carton of pre-made pesto sauce at the grocery.
Boil the pasta, drain, and rinse in cool water.
Toss with pesto sauce.
Slice tomatoes in half; add to pasta and toss again.
Serve room temperature, or slightly chilled.
(You can also add other vegetables on a whim, like zucchini, olives, etc.)
Just like a GOTO scope, it may not quite meet the standards of a purist, but it gets you out there having fun in a hurry! (wink, smile)

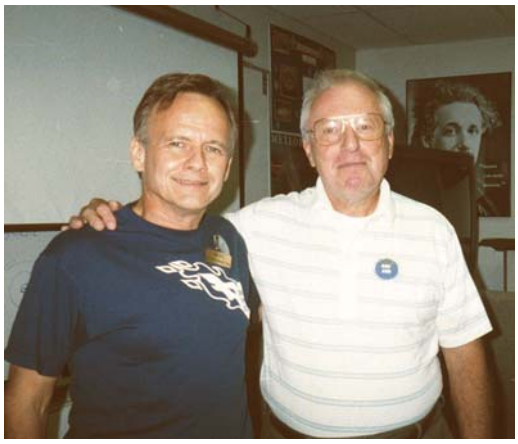
David Fields' Globular Cluster Gravity Bread

Assemble and restrain by gravitational attraction or, if inside Roche Limit, use pan to confine ingredients. A pressure of one atmosphere is about right. If pressure is too low, CO_2 production will cause expansion and dispersion of globule during rising. At lower pressure, H_2O will evaporate too rapidly.
Combine the following:

3 c flour
1/2 t yeast
1/2 t salt
3 T sugar
1/2 cup blanched or boiled wheat grains
About 1.2 cup H_2O, as appropriate

Mix, kneed, and let rise 2x at about 95° F or 308° K. Bake with waste heat from nuclear fusion heating, plasma drive, or electrical resistance unit, as convenient. If the latter, 350°F or 450°F is a good temperature to choose. Duration depends on pressure. The product should be spun during baking to produce more realistic radial distribution of stars (wheat grains).

No preservatives are suggested, thus other life forms will compete to consume the product. Either consume in 2 days or store in region of high ionizing radiation flux.



Dave Fields (Our Host) & Bob Arr

Naney's Oriental Coleslaw Accretion
16 oz.package pre shredded coleslaw mix (cabbage, carrots)
4 green onions, thinly sliced
3 oz package chicken flavored ramen noodles, broken up
1/2 to 3/4 cup slivered almonds, toasted
1/2 to 3/4 cup sunflower kernels
1/2 cup salad oil
1/3 cup vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
1/8 teaspoon pepper.
Step 1. Up to one hour before serving, combine coleslaw mix, green onions, ramen noodles (save seasoning-mix packet for the dressing), almonds and sunflower kernels in a salad bowl. Cover and chill.
Step 2. In a screw-top jar, combine oil, vinegar, sugar, pepper and seasoning mix from the package of noodles. Cover and shake. Chill.
Step 3. At serving time shake dressing again; pour over salad and toss to coat.
Makes 12 servings.

Did We Really Eat All That?

Between Rainstorms

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October 2002

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 UTK	5 Star Party Unicoi Crest T-A Observe
6 New Moon	7	8	9	10	11 SMAS Meeting	12
13 First Quarter	14	15	16	17	18 UTK	19 T-A Observatory
20	21 Full Moon	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29 Last Quarter	30	31		

Schedule of Events

- **10/4/02 and 10/18/02** Public observing from the roof of the Physics Building at UTK
- **10/5/02** Star party at Unicoi Crest, NC
- **10/5/02 and 10/19/02** Tamke-Allen Observatory Roane State CC open to the public
- **10/11/02** SMAS Meeting at the Discovery Center
- **9/15/02** Venus sets at 7:30 PM; Jupiter rises at 2:15 AM; Saturn rises at 10:42 PM
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