

Smoky Mountain Astronomical Society

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

Society's **Ch**Ronological **A**stronomical **P**aper**S**

From the President - Michael McCulloch

Volume 27, Number 9
September 2004



No SMAS Meeting at PSTCC in September

Members, please note that there is no SMAS meeting scheduled for September at PSTCC. We hope to be at Big South Fork/Bandy Creek for our group camping and observing on September 10-11. There is plenty of campground space remaining. Please see the details below and join us!

SMAS Picnic

The SMAS picnic at Tamke-Allan on August 21st was a great success! Many thanks to all members who brought dishes. My only regret is that I could not eat enough of everything. Special thanks to Mike Littleton for cooking the BBQ, Lee Erickson for acting as the coordinator for the event, and David Fields for hosting us at Tamke-Allan.

September 18th Star Party at Look Rock #4

Weather permitting, SMAS will host a star party at Look Rock Overlook #4 on the Foot-hills Parkway on the night of September 18th. The public is invited. Join us!

(Please see the maps on the SMAS web site located under the "2004 Star Party Info!" link or ask for help in finding Look Rock Overlook #4 if needed.)

Big South Fork/Bandy Creek Group Camp and Observing

Only 7 camping sites out of an available 16 in the E-II group campground have been spoken for by SMAS members. Therefore, there is plenty of space remaining. At this point if you have not already made a reservation, all we ask is that if you wish to join us please notify myself (smas@gamesforone.com 691-7019) or Erik Iverson (ebi_banana@yahoo.com) so we may be sure there is space remaining and so that we may provide a list of attendees to the Park Service.

For those that have not already paid for a reservation, please be prepared to pay your

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share of the campground fees to Erik Iverson upon arrival. We do not anticipate this being any more than \$15 for each campsite for the entire weekend, and it may be less depending upon the final attendance list.

Each reserved campsite will be contacted on the evening of Wednesday September 8th for a GO or NO GO vote. If enough members still want to go, we will proceed with the event.

PLEASE NOTE: If you provide a GO vote on September 8th and the event is held, you will be responsible for your share of the camping fees whether or not you attend (barring emergencies). "My dog ate my tent" or "I forgot about the big game on TV" won't be acceptable excuses!

Here are the vital statistics once more:

BSF Group Camp Facts	
Check-in:	After 2 PM on Friday, September 10th
Check-out:	Before noon on Sunday, September 12th
Campsite selection:	First-come, first-serve on Friday
Total number of campsites:	16 (7 reserved to date)
Facilities:	No electrical hookups at sites Modern, E-II private bathhouse with hot water and showers Large covered pavilion with fire-pit, tables, and electrical outlets Some sites have tent pads
Reservation requirements:	List of campers please to Michael McCulloch or Erik Iverson
Observing:	Friday and Saturday nights. SMAS will request the lights be turned-off in the large Bandy Creek Visitor's Center parking area.
Further information:	See: http://www.nps.gov/biso/pphtml/camping.html http://www.nps.gov/biso/bandvcreekcg.pdf

For all attendees please observe the following campground rules specified by the Park Service:

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SPECIFIC INFORMATION Check in at campground office upon arrival. RV dump station nearby. Call 423-286-8368 for specific information. Skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, etc. may be ridden in the F-loop area only. Sleeping in parking lot is not allowed.

MUST READ The pool is closed for the 2004 camping season.

MUST READ II This group camp area consists of 16 sites with picnic tables and fire rings. There are no hook-ups on each site. The group area also includes one large campfire circle and a covered pavilion with electric. There are handicap accessible facilities on this site.

MUST READ III Check-in time is 2:00 PM EDT.

BEAR HABITAT Black bears and other wildlife inhabit the area. Special storage regulations for food and garbage are strictly enforced. Violators are subject to fines.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION Caution: Hazard tree area due to southern pine beetle damage. Beware of broken limbs and damaged trees that may fall at any time. Look up while on trails, especially when it's windy. Use caution when selecting a place to camp. Control your campfire, and make sure it's dead out when you leave.

ALL VEHICLES ON PAVEMENT Campers are allowed 2 motor vehicles or 1 vehicle and 1 trailer per site. Vehicles must remain on the pavement. Overflow parking is available at the visitor center and bath house locations. Multiple RV's are not permitted on one site.

PETS MUST BE LEASHED Pets may not be left unattended in the campground. Campers are required to clean after pets.

QUIET HOURS AND GENERATORS Quiet hours are in effect from 10 PM until 6 AM. Unreasonable noise is prohibited at any time, e.g., a loud generator or use for an extended period.

SMAS requests that you be as quiet as reasonably possible until 9 AM since many members may be out very late observing each night.

FIRES Fires are allowed in fire rings only. These include a cooking grate.

CAMPING SUPPLIES Firewood and other items are sold at the stables; dead and down wood may be gathered. Laundry, gas, and other amenities are available in Oneida (15 miles away).

FISHING A Tennessee or Kentucky fishing license is required to fish in the main river of the Big South Fork.

OFFICE HOURS Office is open approx. 8 AM to 4 PM Sunday through Thursday and 8 AM to 8 PM on Fridays and Saturdays. **All campers must check in at the office upon arrival.** The office is located at the entrance of the public campground.

PARK INFORMATION SOURCES For information on park facilities, programs, local lodging and to request information by mail, call 423-286-7275. Park address is 4564 Leatherwood Road, Oneida, TN 37841. Park website is www.nps.gov/biso

ALCOHOL Open alcohol is permitted in campground.

ALTITUDE 1560 feet

NO ENTRANCE FEES

CONCESSIONAIRE INFORMATION Horses may be boarded at bandy creek stables. Reservations can be made at 423-286-7433. Horse trailers are permitted in the campground, however horses are not allowed in the campground.

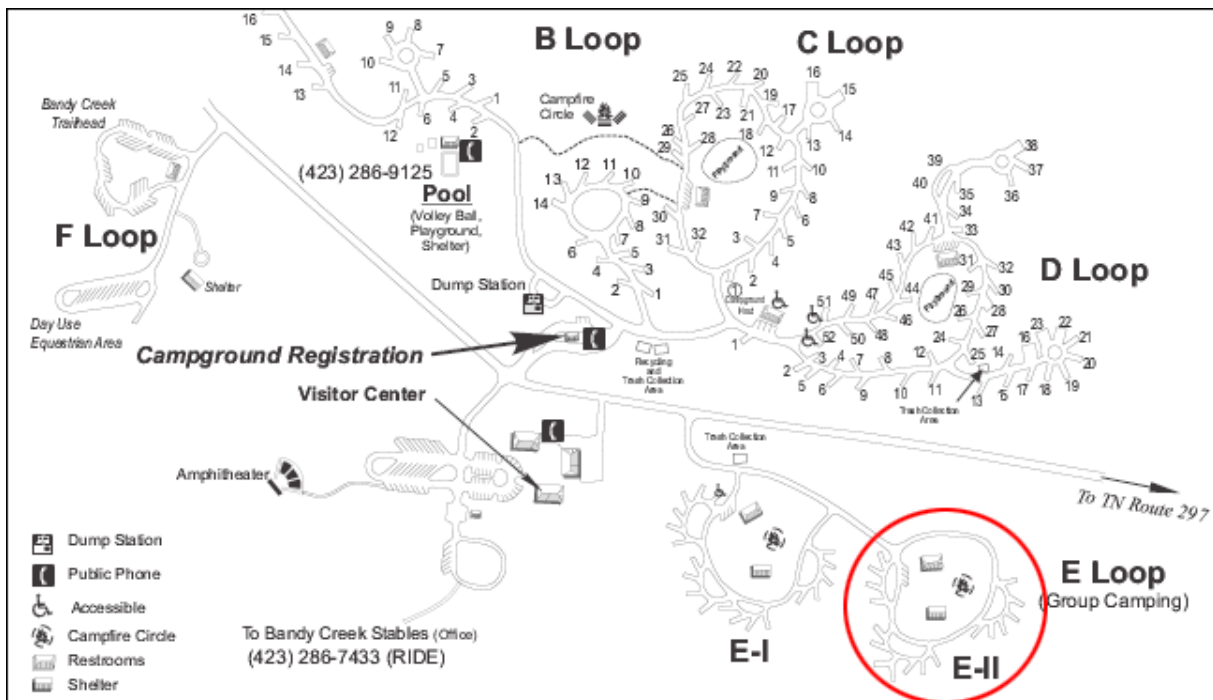
VISITOR CENTER The Bandy Creek Visitor Center is open from 8:30 AM To 5:00 PM.

Directions and Maps:

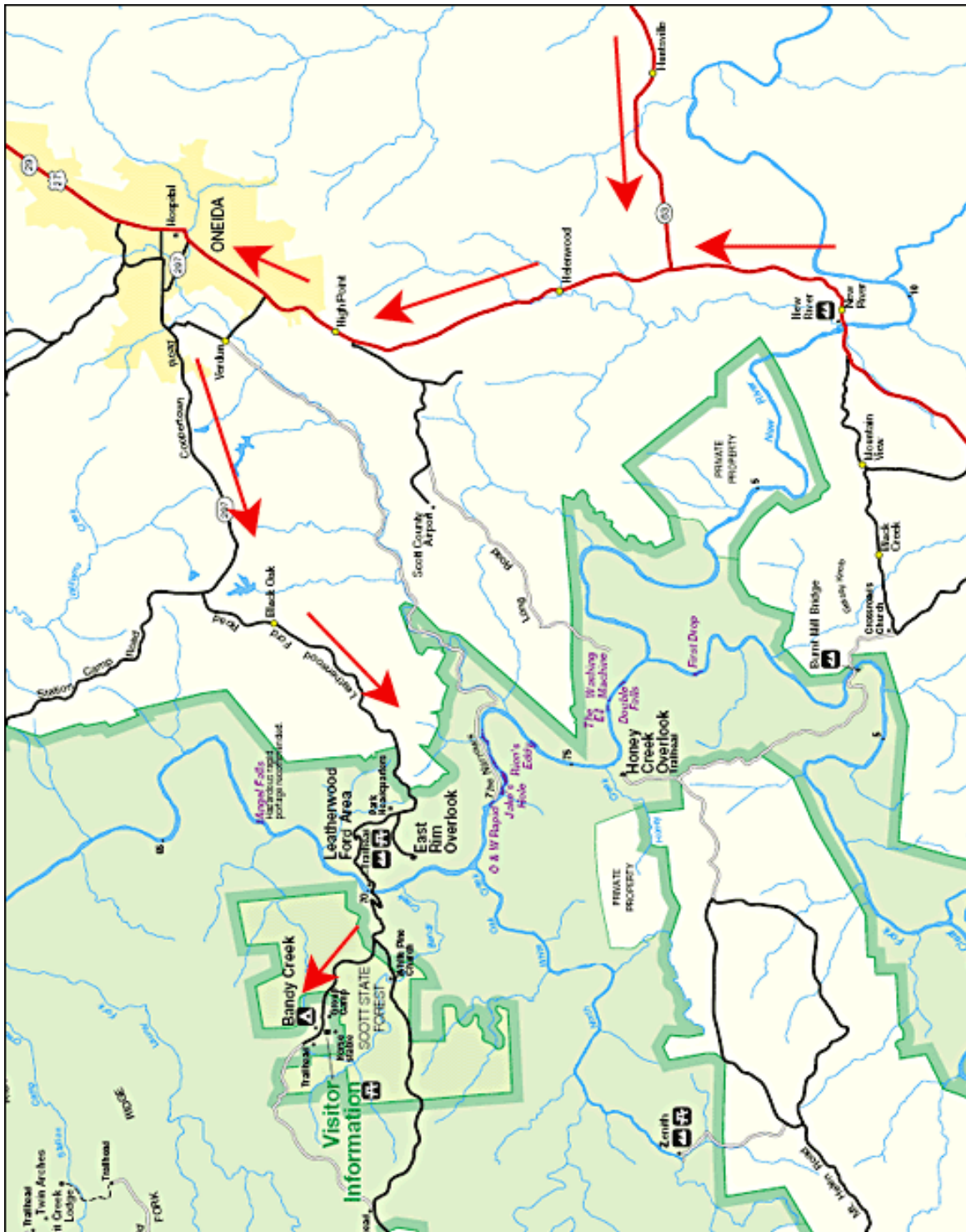
Travelers on I-75 north bound should take the Oneida-Huntsville Exit (#141) onto Highway 63. Follow Highway 63 west for 21 miles through Huntsville to U.S. 27. Turn right on U.S. 27 and drive north seven miles to Oneida. At the first traffic light, turn left on Highway 297 west and follow the signs on 297 to reach the Bandy Creek Campsites (approximately 15 miles from Oneida).

Members may also opt to travel up U.S. 27 from the Oak Ridge/Kingston area. The directions are the same once you reach the Highway 63/U.S. 27 intersection.

See Pages 4 & 5 for details



For a larger PDF version of this map, see:
<http://data2.itc.nps.gov/parks/biso/ppMaps/bandycreekcg%2Epdf>



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<http://data2.itc.nps.gov/parks/biso/ppMaps/BISOMap%2Epdf>

Gastronomical Conjunction Observing Log—Angela Quick

Date: August 21, 2004

Location: Tamke Allen Observ.

Time: 22:00 ut – 1:00 ut

- On arrival, noticed that several gastronomical bodies had already aligned, and several more were approaching. The dual planet Erickson & Erickson showed its usual dynamic equilibrium in organizing and setting up for the event. Solar observing through the SunSpotter, Ron Dinkin's refractor with white light filter, and through Michael McCulloch's hydrogen-alpha Coronado Personal Solar Telescope took place during the prelude to the main conjunction.
- The conjunction proper began at approximately 22:30 universal time, when all the bodies hovered around the gastronomical focus. The focus was laden with barbecued pork shoulder (known to gastronomical aficionados as Boston Butt, prepared by expert astronomer Mike Littleton), sweet and spicy condiments, green bean casserole, baked beans, cole slaw, potato salad, mud cake, banana bread, rice krispie bars, lemonade and tea, chocolate chip cookies, and many other delicious dishes... including the famous but rarely sighted ARR banana pudding.
- A new star, Logan Michael Feldhege, made his first appearance. We can confirm the observation of his parents, Robb and Becky, that Logan is indeed located near the center of the universe. Welcome, Logan!
- After the conjunction proper, gastronomical bodies began to disperse. Many gathered in conversational groupings in the TAO classroom, while others congregated on the dome patio to observe the first quarter moon through intermittent clouds.
- In summary, the 2004 gastronomical conjunction met the expectations of food, fun, and fellowship predicted by the calculations of its long-time observers. Indeed, this is one event that is always sure to satisfy, rain or shine.



Note: this is an observing log – a record of what I saw during the event. It is, by nature, subjective. My apologies for what I failed to note! ☺ - Angela Quick



SMAS Picnic

Big South Fork Activity—Hike the Solar System?

Saturday Activity: Build and Hike The Solar System.

Lee and Janice Erickson have attempted to make a Scale Model of the Solar System. With your help, Lee and Janice hope to construct it to scale there at BSF. There will be some hiking involved to do so, even though the proposed scale is 1: 5.5 Billion. The exact time of this activity to be agreed upon by the participants, who may be groggy from the previous nights observing.

The Wiz


Dear Wiz,

At a star party a few months ago, I borrowed my buddy's barlow, then forgot to return it. I even forgot I had it. Guess what he forgot too! It was three months before he missed it, and when he asked the group if anyone had it, we all said No, including me (because I had forgotten it). I just discovered it in my case, and I'm too embarrassed to admit my mistake. Should I sneak it back into his case at the next star party, and pretend he just goofed?

D. Denighl

Dear Deepin,

There's a word for people like you, but the editor won't let me say it, you scheisskopf. Gimme back my barlow!



Tele Vue Bino Vue, like new, with all caps and documents. Current retail price (new) is \$1030, plus shipping and insurance. My price is \$750. SMASers have first shot, but I will offer it on Astromart in October.

Bob Arr
865-982-3599

Tip: Emergency rain-cover for telescope.

Have you bought a new mattress? Did you notice the large, clear, heavy plastic bag it came in? It will make a super nice stand-out-overnight or sudden-rain cover for a telescope. Furniture stores throw them away. Check with a nearby store; you may have to fish it out of their dumpster, but hey! They may even offer to save one for you.

The Sucker-Hole Seeker's Lament - Erik Iverson

You go to a star party. It's not quite dark yet, and it's a little cloudy, so you wait to set up the telescope. When it gets fully dark, it's pretty much completely covered over. You say to yourself – no problem, they came in, they'll go back out. You sit back in your comfy chair, sip a little coffee/cocoa/tea/20-year old Laphroig, and chat with your observing buddies. Wait! What's that in the West? It's Arcturus! It's clearing! Like a well-oiled team (in more ways than one, perhaps), people leap into action, setting up their telescopes, booting their laptops with observing plans and software; taking anywhere from 5-30 minutes to be ready to OBSERVE.



The big, beautiful swatch of sky around Arcturus, letting you see the wonders of M5, the Realm of the Galaxies, and (the best of all star names) Zubenelgenubi? Gone. Completely covered over.

Sucker.

So you turn the drive off on the telescope to save the battery, and go back to the comfy chair. Somebody breaks out the Nutter Butters. Somebody else puts in another CD. Everybody laughs as Sting's "Heavy Clouds - No Rain" comes through the speakers. Time passes. Suddenly someone says "Hey, isn't that the Summer Triangle, just coming through?" Yup - sure is! Once more, people jump and run---well, struggle to their feet and wander over---to their telescopes, remove the dewcaps, start the motors, and grab their lists, flipping to their "Plan 3A - open clusters around Cygnus" section. You center Deneb in the eyepiece and check the alignment of your telrad and finder. Monitoring the finder, you slew 2 degrees southeast to 56 Cygnus. No problem! You're in the groove now. Now you move northeast less than one degree to 57 Cygnus. Hmmmm, interesting.... 56 is supposed to be 5th magnitude, and 57 4.8. But 57 looks almost the same brightness. Maybe one of them has entered an unknown and un-observed variable status! You could be famous. Feverishly you jot a brief note on your logbook page, and move on to your target, open cluster NGC 6997. Exactly the same distance from 57 as 56 was from 56, and in exactly the same direction. You can't miss! At 11th mag, the OC is easily within the grasp of your 14". You make the move. Unh. There's nothing there. You let the scope rest, let your eye wander the field, and relax. It will come. These little guys like to make you work sometimes. Nothing. Frustrated, you move back to 57 to try the last jump again. Hmmmm, not quite as crisp a view as it was before. Maybe you're more tired than you realized, and you should have taken that afternoon nap after all. You repeat the leap northeast from 57. Nothing. Nada. Zip. In frustration, you

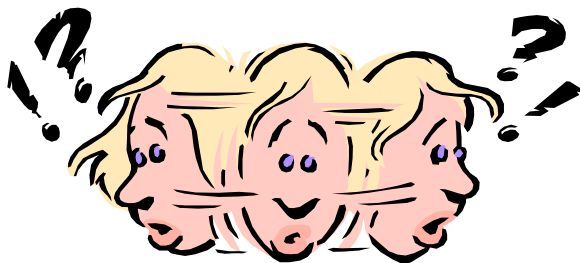
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look up. Completely covered in clouds. Solid. Horizon to Horizon. It's a wonder you could see the 4.8th mag 57 as well as you did.

Sucker.

But, what's that? In the south? Antares is peaking out? GREAT! You still need to do a sketch of M80, the "other globular cluster in the head of Scorpius" for your Messier list! You swing (sway?) into action, turning to "Plan 14F, Head of Scorpius", changing the height on your observing stool, re-arranging the wires leading from your mount to the battery, moving the telrad to the other side of the tube, moving your chair to the other side of the base, pulling your little table around to be next to your chair, running after the thermos you tipped over that's headed right for the storm-drain, to line up on Antares. Hunh. That's not very sharp. Guess it's closer to setting than you realized, and you'll be looking through soup. Maybe it won't work after all. You look up to see that, no, it's just clouded over. Awful suspicion creeping over your face, you look up toward the zenith, to see Cygnus standing clear in all his glory, the Great Rift obvious. 56 and 57 Cygnus stand out as obvious naked-eye points.

Sucker!



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SCRAPS Editor—Peter Bush





Editor—Peter Bush

Please direct articles and pictures to me at: **865-453-8376** or pbush1@bellsouth.net.

Also note the deadline for submissions posted on the calendar (attached). It's my goal to work on the newsletter the last weekend of the month so members will receive it by the 1st of the following. Any and all ideas regarding SCRAPS content are welcome, and will be given due consideration.

*** Special call for Pictures *** I'd like to include some of your pictures and drawings of celestial objects. If you have some you'd like to share, e-mail me a copy for an upcoming SCRAPS!

September 2004

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
UTK—roof of Neilson Physics Building on The Hill at UT TAO —Tamke-Allan Observatory Public Stargaze Watts Bar Lake, Roane County					UTK	TAO
5	6 Labor Day	7	8	9	10  SMAS Camping & Star Party @ Bandy Creek	11  SMAS Camping & Star Party @ Bandy Creek
12  SMAS Camping & Star Party @ Bandy Creek	13	14 <i>New Moon</i>	15	16	17 UTK	18 SMAS Star Party @ Look Rock #4 <hr/> TAO
19	20	21	22  Autumnal Equinox	23	24	25
26	27	28 <i>Harvest (Full) Moon</i>	29	30		