

# Longmont Astronomical Society

## January 2003



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## **The View From Up Here**

Dear members and friends,

Happy New Year – hope your holidays were enjoyable.

I'd like to thank last year's officers for all their work running the club. It was a tough year for many members, officers included; and life certainly has higher priorities than an astronomy club. Here's to a more prosperous year for all of us. Having said that, thanks especially to Gary Garzone and Mike Hotka for being the main 'front men' at the meetings this year, and everyone else for their ongoing contributions and support.

It's been five years since I've been president, and it is gratifying to see how well the LAS has done and grown. We were founded primarily as an observing club – to become more knowledgeable about the night sky, what's in it we can look at, and how it all works. And I think that's what keeps us coming back: getting excited about the new things we've seen with our own eyes, and wanting to see and know more – it is, after all, quite a large universe out there!

As we begin our 17th year, we would like to continue the stargazing tradition for which the LAS has become known. Look for more practical presentations at the meetings to help you learn the night sky. Then apply what you've learned at the star parties to work towards earning one of the many observing certificates available through the Astronomical League.

Here's to a fun year full of great meetings, great star parties, and great fellowship, and I encourage all of you to become as involved as you can to continue making the LAS the type of organization people are proud to belong to.

Here's to clear skies,

Bob Spohn

## New 2003 officers

From left to right:

Fundraising Chairman: Mike Hotka - [deepskymike@interfold.com](mailto:deepskymike@interfold.com)

Vice President: Melinda Deihl - [stargal\\_9@msn.com](mailto:stargal_9@msn.com)

Secretary / Treasurer: Monica Martens (me) - [LASecMonica@aol.com](mailto:LASecMonica@aol.com)

President: Bob Spohn - [jviews@mindspring.com](mailto:jviews@mindspring.com)

Newsletter Editor: Philippe Bridenne - [philippe\\_bridenne@mentor.com](mailto:philippe_bridenne@mentor.com)

Missing from the picture:

ALCor Rep: Jim Crane - [jcrane@ball.com](mailto:jcrane@ball.com)



**LAS Annual banquet**

Did you know it's our club's Sweet Sixteen this year? We've been around for 16 years! We're looking forward to celebrating this next Sunday evening, the 19th, at the Wayside Inn in Berthoud. If you didn't RSVP yet, you got a call today from either Bob Spohn or me. Please RSVP if you haven't done so yet. Help us kick off the New Year!

Date: Sunday, Jan. 19, 2003

Location: Wayside Inn, 505 Mountain Ave., Berthoud

Time: 6:00 pm Social Hour, 6:30 pm Dinner

Price: \$15.00 per person

Entrees (if attending, please pick from the following):

Two piece chicken dinner

Broiled chicken breast

Pan fried rainbow trout

Swedish meatballs

Talk of the town - bacon wrapped ground sirloin

Vegetarian lasagna

Includes:

Salad,

Potato or rice,

Hot vegetable,

Drink, and

Dessert.

Cash bar is available.

If you plan on attending, please mail me your check ASAP. Please indicate:

- 1) # of people attending
- 2) choice of entree, and
- 3) choice of potato or rice.

Make your check out to: LAS and mail your check and reservation to:

Monica Martens

161 Oakwood Ct.

Milliken, CO 80543

## **Calendar**

January – Annual LAS banquet 1/19

February – New moon 2/01 – LAS meeting 2/20

Mars – New moon 3/03 – LAS meeting 3/20

April – New moon 4/01 – LAS meeting 4/17

May – New moon 5/01 – Astronomy Day 5/10 – LAS meeting 5/15 - New moon 5/30

June – LAS meeting 6/19 - New moon 6/29

July – LAS meeting 7/17 - New moon 7/28

August – LAS meeting 8/21 - New moon 8/27

September – LAS meeting 9/18- New moon 9/25

October – LAS meeting 10/16 - New moon 10/25

November – LAS meeting 11/20 - New moon 11/23

December – LAS meeting 12/18 - New moon 12/23

## **Some announcements:**

The next club meeting is this Thursday, Jan. 16th at the usual place (Longmont Christian School), 7 pm. Here's what we'll be talking about:

Our new president, Bob Spohn, will introduce a new series of short mini-talks about getting to know interesting objects in different constellations. Mike Hotka will present Orion for the first mini-talk.

Jim Crane, our ALCor rep (Astronomical League Correspondent), will tell us all about the different Observing Clubs that the League offers. You can find out more at <http://www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/obsclub.html>, but don't miss his talk this Thursday. He's going to tell us about the Messier clubs (can be done with binoculars or telescope).

Mike Hotka is going to give a slide show of the evolution of his 12/5" f/8 telescope.

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Plus, other club events and member news will be discussed.

Next.... club web site. The signature at the bottom of this Email includes the link. If you're new and haven't checked this out yet, please do so. By the way, it provides directions to our meetings, in case you want to invite a friend sometime.

LAS web site: [http://laps.fsl.noaa.gov/cgi/albers\\_las.homepage.cgi/](http://laps.fsl.noaa.gov/cgi/albers_las.homepage.cgi/)

## **December LAS meeting notes**

### New bylaws

New bylaws were approved. Changes included (1) the addition of a fundraising chair position and (2) a correction to the time period that dues are collected for the following year. All members present at the meeting were in favor of the changes.

### LAS patches

Kirk Schneider presented a project to get patches with the LAS logo produced. Patches could be sewn onto jackets, bags or other items.

The patches will have 7 different colors.

The 4" patch will cost \$2.58 and could be sold to the club members / public at \$5.00.

The 8" patch will cost \$11.52 and could be sold to the club members / public at \$15.00.

Standard shipping is 5 to 6 weeks.

We will have to decide on the colors at the January meeting. Kirk will provide some samples.

Kirk will also look into how we can each order various types of jackets if we want to get the patch sewn onto a jacket.

Other club logo items such as coffee mugs, pins and T-Shirts also could be produced.

### Raffle certification from Colorado State

Michael Hotka got Colorado certification for running public raffles.

### Public Access Cable Channel 3

The club is looking into producing a TV program on Longmont Public Access Cable Channel 3. Suggested topics are:

“How do you use this telescope you got for Christmas?”

“Let me show you what you can do with this scope” (would feature information about different types of telescopes).

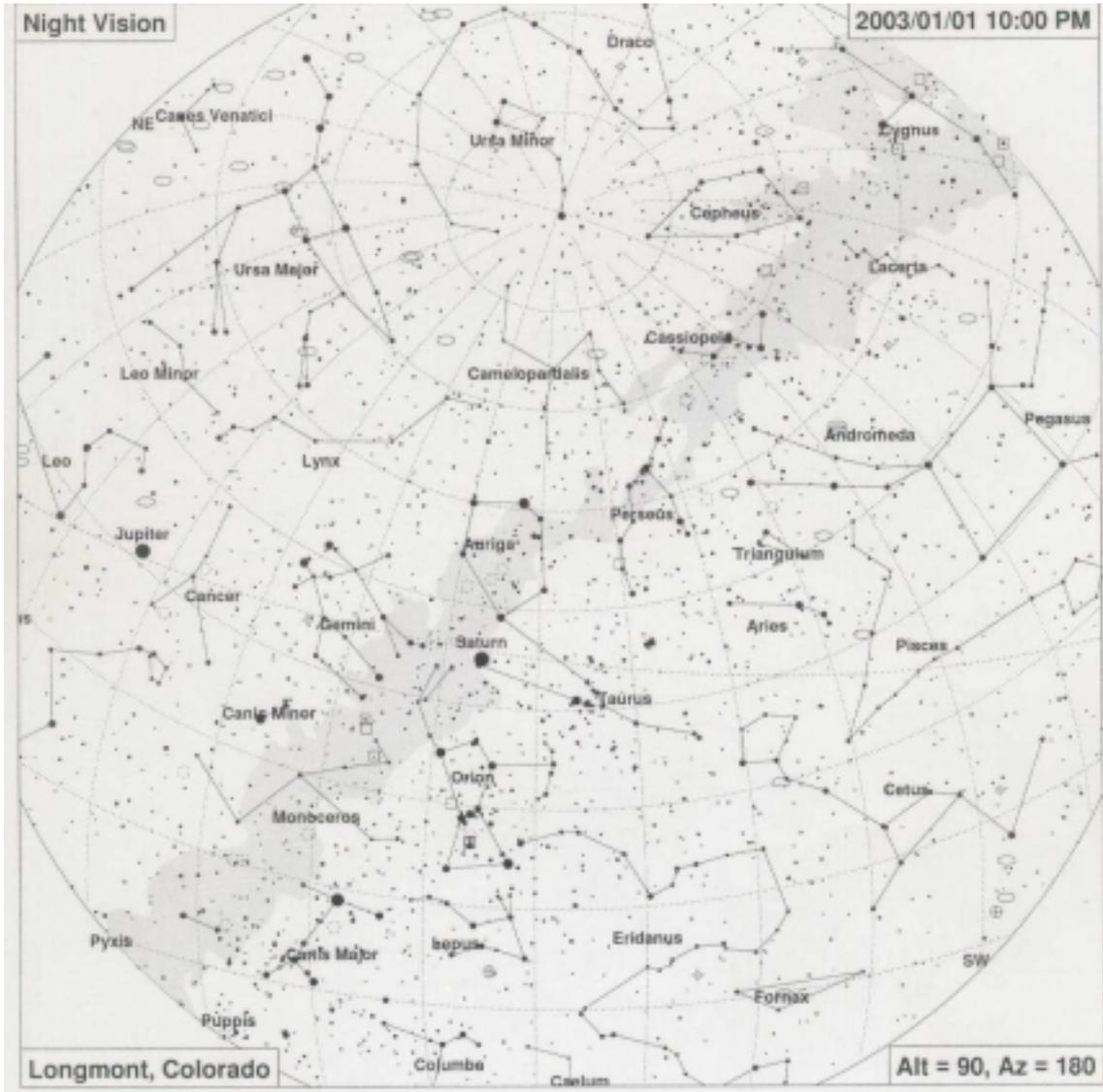
“Constellation of the month”

Producing television shows would provide a public service and good public relations in the community for the club. We may seek assistance from Mike's Camera.

### Astronomical League Observing Club certificate

Brian Kimball received an Astronomical League Observing Club certificate for completing the Double Star Club program. Congratulations! Jim Crane, ALCor rep, presented the certificate.

Sky Map of the month

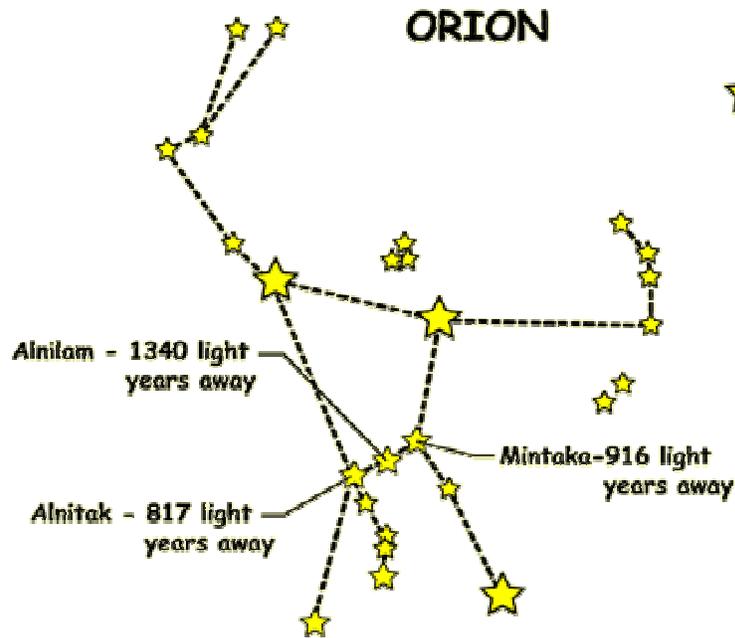


### Constellation of the month

Orion has been recognized has a distinctive group of stars for thousands of years. The Chaldeans knew it has Tammuz, named after the month in which the familiar belt stars first rose before sunrise. The Syrians called it Al Jabbar, the Giant. To the ancient Egyptians it was Sahu, the soul of Osiris

In Greek mythology, Orion was a giant and a great hunter. In one story, Artemis goddess of the Moon and of the hunt, fell in love with him and neglected her task of lighting the night sky. Her twin brother, Apollo, seeing Orion swimming far out to sea, to hit what was no more than a dot on the waves. Not realizing that this was Orion, Artemis shot an arrow and killed him. Later, when Orion's body was washed up on the shore, she saw what she had done. Inconsolable, she placed his body in the sky, together with his hunting dogs. Her grief explains why the Moon looks so cold and sad.

Orion is a treasure, with Rigel, Betelgeuse(pronounced: BET-el-jooze), and its three belt stars in a row lighting up the sky from December to April. The stars are arranged so that it is easy to see the figure of a hunter, complete with a shield in his right hand and a raised club or sword in his left.



### **Desert Sunset Star Party - May 1-4, 2003**

Here is a notice of very cool star party in Arizona. I went one year to the Messier Marathon, very good time in 90 degree weather 70 or so at night, in shirt sleeve all night almost. I had two awesome clear nights, Long drive down but one of the better star parties. Maybe put this into newsletter for up coming star parties. Thanks, Gary

From: Chartmarker <chartmarker@cox.net>  
To: <chartmarker@cox.net>  
Date: 1/12/2003 5:05:03 PM  
Subject: Desert Sunset Star Party - May 1-4, 2003

We again would like to ask you, the local astronomy club officers, to post the following message in your Newsletters, and other postings for your club members. Almost everything is in place for the DSSP now and we want our fellow astronomers to know they can register.

We also ask that you print out the printable flyer at <http://chartmarker.tripod.com/sunset.htm> to post for members who do not have web access.

We thank you for your assistance in publicizing this new star party.

Registration is now online for the Desert Sunset Star Party. Please check our website (<http://chartmarker.tripod.com/sunset.htm>) for details about this new star party and to get your registration forms. We have speakers who will talk on a variety of subjects such as identifying stars, supernovae, Mars and the weather in the Southwest. We will have vendors present and door prizes, and a contest for the best Simple Astronomy Tool (SAT). We also have lots to do during the day and have scheduled tours to Mt. Hopkins (Whipple Observatory), BioSphere 2, and the Univ of AZ Mirror Lab. Catered meals will also be available. If you do not have web access, please contact a club member to get the forms or you could also print out the online registration forms to distribute to members. We hope you will be able to join us.

Chart Markers and More  
Pat and Arleen Heimann  
<http://chartmarker.tripod.com>

### Amateur Astro Pictures

Hi all you star gazers, here are just a few I took from the yard last night, up till 1 am doing these. I bought new video camera but could not get it to focus right. I tried all different eyepieces and camera adapters none would reach perfect focus. I switched to Nikon digital cool pix 995 camera for these shots then compressed them to send out, so some resolution is lost in quality of course, but getting better at this maybe. Bye, Gary



### **Three New Moons Found Around Neptune**

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Astronomers have found three previously unknown moons around Neptune, bringing the total for the distant giant planet to 11, the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics reported on Monday.

These moons are the first to be discovered around Neptune since the NASA (news - web sites) Voyager II flyby in 1989, and the first discovered with a ground-based telescope since 1949, the center said in a statement.

The three new moons were difficult to detect, since they are only about 18 to 24 miles in diameter and their distance from the sun means they are about 100 million times fainter than anything that can be seen with unaided eyes from Earth.

Using the Blanco telescope at the Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory in Chile and the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope in Hawaii, the international team of astronomers took multiple exposures of the sky around Neptune. The new moons showed up as points of light.

Before this, Neptune was known to have eight moons. The two largest -- Triton, discovered in 1846, and Nereid, discovered in 1949 -- are also the irregular ones. Triton orbits in a direction opposite to the planet's rotation, and Nereid's orbit is highly elliptical. The six regular satellites were discovered by the Voyager probe during its encounter with Neptune. Voyager II missed the three new satellites because of their faintness and great distance from Neptune, the statement said.

An image of one of the three new Neptunian moons is online at [http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/press/pr0303\\_image.html](http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/press/pr0303_image.html)