



North American Nebula by Allen Jeeter

Longmont Astronomy Society Newsletter
July 2009

From the President:

The next meeting is this Thursday, July 16 in the Community Room at Front Range Community College. The speaker will be Allen Jeeter. He is a professional photographer and an amateur astronomer who is interested in imaging the night sky. Rather than investing large sums of money on expensive mounts, telescopes, and cameras, Allen has taken a less expensive approach. Learn how Allen produces his impressive astrophotos using affordable gear.

Next month the FRCC will probably be closed as they are between summer and fall semesters. Also the annual Fox Park Star party starts the same day as our meeting, so not many of us would make it even if we could get in the building. We will have an informal LAS "meeting" at 7 pm Friday, Aug. 21st, up at Fox Park, somewhere near Gary's RV in the north part of the east observing field.

(The Prez was ready to climb on a plane, so that's all you're going to get..)

Happy Anniversary:

As we get into the 40th anniversary celebration of Apollo 11 landing on the Moon, several websites are up and active. <http://www.nasm.si.edu/events/apollo11/> is the master source from the National Air and Space Museum in Washington D.C. That will link you to the other events – Apollo 11 objects, videos (<http://www.nasm.si.edu/events/apollo11/video/> is a good history review, with a half dozen short movies), podcasts, various talks.

In the sky this month:

Meteor Showers The biggest of them all, the Perseids, will be on August 11 & 12. The Moon rises about midnight (3rd quarter, right?) to ruin most of the good observing.

Planets

Mars and Venus: both together in the morning sky, nice and bright in the east.

Jupiter: almost to opposition (mid-August) and brightly shining in the south at midnight.

Both Europa and Ganymede will cast shadows starting at 8:20 MDT on Aug 26.

Saturn: fading fast and about to disappear in the west – just 12 degrees up in the west 45 minutes after sunset on Aug 1st.

Interesting Stars/Galaxies

The Moon takes a journey through the Pleiades again on August 14, about 2 AM. Look for the pictures later...

Sky & Telescope goes on about observing M6 and M7 (in Scorpius) with binoculars.

Club Calendar:

July meeting 7/16 at FRCC Community Room

August meeting will be Aug 21 at Fox Park in Wyoming.

Fiske Planetarium:

July 17, 2009, 8:00 pm - Galileo: Messages from the Stars

July 17, 2009, 10:00 pm - Laser Tool

July 21, 2009, 10:00 am - Story Telling with Kay Negash

July 21, 2009, 1:00 pm - Space Storm

July 22, 2009, 10:00 am - Space Primer

July 22, 2009, 1:00 pm - Peter and the Wolf

July 23, 2009, 10:00 am - Perseus & Andromeda
July 23, 2009, 1:00 pm - Adventures Beyond the Solar System
July 23, 2009, 8:00 pm - Colorado Skies: Our Dynamic Sun
July 24, 2009, 8:00 pm - Exposing PseudoAstronomy
July 24, 2009, 10:00 pm - Laser U2
July 28, 2009, 10:00 am - Deep Impact
July 28, 2009, 1:00 pm - Space Odyssey
July 29, 2009, 10:00 am - Kids in Space
July 29, 2009, 1:00 pm - Stars and Lasers
July 30, 2009, 10:00 am - Moons and Lasers
July 30, 2009, 1:00 pm - Great Space Chase
July 30, 2009, 8:00 pm - Colorado Skies: Life after the Space Shuttle
July 31, 2009, 8:00 pm - Two Small Pieces of Glass
July 31, 2009, 10:00 pm - Pink Floyd: Dark Side of the Moon

Internet Resources:

The sunspot stuff featured on Spaceweather.com last week that the scientists at NCAR turned out is flat out gorgeous! View the computer graphics at <http://www.ucar.edu/news/releases/2009/sunspotvisuals.shtml>
Note to Vern: maybe get one of these people for a talk next year?

This month's field trip:

Upcoming Space Missions:

<http://www.jwst.nasa.gov/scope.html> is a site introducing the features of the planned James Webb Space Telescope. Currently planned for launch in 2013, it will replace the Hubble as our premier scope in space. Note: this one is permanent – no periodic shuttle “fix it” missions, so it has to be good.

The ISS crew is getting a new viewing window – the largest ever! Details at http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2009/26jun_cupola.htm?list937934 As of today, the mission has been postponed due to weather, lightning strikes on the launch tower, etc several times. With any luck, they're up there now.

Night-time activity: the ISS is not in very good position for us right now, but you will have a chance at seeing the Shuttle and ISS traveling along in formation. www.heavens-above.com for the times and locations.

The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter has taken a “first light” calibration picture, illustrating the great potential of this mission to map the Lunar surface. Check out the picture at http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/LRO/multimedia/lroimages/lroc_20090702_a.html
More sweet pictures to come!

U Scorpii ready to blow? A nice recurrent novae with a good pattern of repetition.

Details at

<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/community/skyblog/observingblog/43435242.html>

Just take a quick look every time you're out observing – someone has to be the first to see it starting.... See the observing campaign page at www.aavso.org/news/usco.shtml for more details.

OK – how many times can you watch a volcano erupting from the vantage point of the ISS? Watch the volcano yourself on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Riauw5UTnW8>. Spectacular picture, almost 3-D.

Book Review:

Sky and Telescope magazine felt pretty strongly about [The Sleepwalkers: A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe \(Arkana\)](#) by Arthur Koestler and Herbert Butterfield (Paperback - Jun 5, 1990) being a classic book about the history of Astronomy, so much so that I bought a copy. \$20 list, \$14 on Amazon, used for a couple of bucks + shipping. I really liked “The Universe: Flat Earth to Quasar” by Isaac Asimov for the history up to about 1960 – try that one too.

Video: the Kaguya JAXA mission is orbiting the Moon, and it took a nice HiDef video. Online at <http://video.search.yahoo.com/video/play?p=kaguya+moon+video&ei=UTF-8&fr=yfp-t-101&tnr=21&vid=0001306581442>

Humor Dept:

<http://video.search.yahoo.com/video/play?p=kaguya+moon+video&ei=UTF-8&fr=yfp-t-101&tnr=21&vid=0001531848764>

Yes, indeedy – this YouTube dude discovered an alien space base by looking at that very same Kaguya mission video!

What's this going to do to the “Apollo never landed on the Moon” crowd?



