

President's Corner



A hearty "Welcome Back" to all those observers who've been ensconced by the fireplace for the past 6 months. Spring is finally here, despite the minor flaking taking place, and what better time of year to come out of hibernation, particularly if galaxies are your thing. Tucked

between the tail of Leo and the reclining arm of the Virgin is a feast of spirals, ellipticals and irregulars, enough to keep you busy 'til the wee hours for many nights -- dig in.

Onward with the business at hand. We've several schools and community center star parties coming up and we certainly need telescopes and their owners to attend. This is a wonderful way to "break the ice" of becoming involved with the Society in a hands-on fashion -- taking our good work out to the public. If you'd like to lend a hand, let me know and I'll put your name in the corral of DAS scope folk.

A bit of concern regarding the listserv arose this past month. As is always the case with policy, a few items need reconsidering and updating, which the E-Board will address next meeting. It is periodically necessary to "clean the glass" so that clarity is restored. For the present, however, it's important to remember that the promotion of and education in astronomy is the principle around which the Society was formed and continues to exist. These are exciting and thought-provoking times and adherence to fundamentals must remain a priority or we dissolve . . . news at 11.

In the mean time, observe, photograph and enjoy the skies. If you've a thought or image to share, by all means send away to Pat Ryan for publication in our wonderful newsletter. There are 360 voices in the DAS and we'd like to expand whom we hear from.

Steve Solon

The speaker for May 7th will be Jeff Vancleve from Ball Aerospace. His topic will be "The Spitzer Space Telescope" (formerly SIRTf).

SCHEDULE

May

7 General Meeting at Olin Hall, rm 105, DU, beginning at 7:30. The speaker is Jeff Vancleve from Ball Aerospace. Topic is; "The Spitzer Space Telescope" (formerly SIRTf).

13-16 *Desert Sunset Star Party; see page 6*

15-16 Dark Sky Site Weekend

16-23 Texas Star Party

21 8:00 PM E- Board meeting, Chamberlin Observatory

28-30 RTMC

29 Open House, 7:30 pm, Chamberlin Observatory

June

11 8:00 PM E- Board meeting, Chamberlin Observatory

17-20 *RMSS See pages 3-6*

19-20 Dark Sky Site Weekend

25 General Meeting at Olin Hall, rm 105, DU, beginning at 7:30.

26 Open House, 7:30 pm, Chamberlin Observatory

The DAS 2nd quarter participation prize is the Astronomy Encyclopedia by Oxford Press.

Frank T. Mancini, V.P.

MAY (Maius) SKIES 2004

Ron Mickle

With regard to Venus, little has changed as the month begins. It continues to be visible more than 3½ hours after sunset. However, by mid-month it will be visible for only 2½ hours after sunset and by the end of May, only one hour after sunset. Venus will also be decreasing in apparent magnitude from its brightest of -4.5. One of the more outstanding things to look at for telescopic viewers will be the thin crescent of Venus as it goes through its phases. By the end of May, Venus will be less than 10% illuminated, but over 50

(Continued on page 7)

Mountain Astronomers Rendezvous and Starparty

P.O. Box 55032 Grand Junction, CO 81505

Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____, Zip _____

Bringing a scope? what size? _____

Camping? tent _____ Trailer _____ Camper _____ Motorhome _____
Size _____ ft.

Number in party over 16 _____, 10 to 16 _____, under 10 _____ free
@30.00 @20.00

Total remittance _____ send to above address

Member?

WCAC _____, MARS _____, AL _____, IDA _____, ASP, _____

Other _____

When you arrive you will be given a package containing a commemorative T-shirt, a badge, a ticket for Saturday evening's dinner, and assorted papers and reading materials.

Friday night we invite the public for general viewing from dark to midnight, we do or we don't get the site. All other times are ours. While we can't be absolutely sure of clear skies this time of year is usually very good. Due to the large number of lakes and ponds on the Grand Mesa we sometimes get a large number of insects be prepared..just in case.

Normal Star Party protocols will prevail, lights out at sundown, red lights after dark. Thank you for visiting this website and your interest in the MARS starparty, hope to see you there.

Carlo Godel Pres. WCAC



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN STAR STARE
JUNE 17-20, 2004**

For almost two decades, astronomers from across the U.S. and around the world have been gathering each summer in the mountains above Colorado Springs. What mysterious power draws them here each year? What secret treasure awaits those that make this annual pilgrimage? At last, the truth can be revealed. These gazers of the stars are enjoying Rocky Mountain Star Stare! Held each June in Pikes National Forest, RMSS is one of this nation's premier star parties each and every year. Average attendance is over 300 astronomers, and the popularity of this event made it the focal point of the movie "Star Party".

The Colorado Springs Astronomical Society sponsors this amazing gathering of amateur astronomers. This year's event will be held from June 17th through June 20th high up in the Colorado Rockies at 8817 feet! Incredible fields of stars by night are supplemented with workshops, children's activities, door prizes, catered meals and fun for everyone. Pre-registration for this 4-day event is only \$10.00 per adult and \$4.00 per child making RMSS one of the least expensive star parties in the nation!

(Please see pages 4-6!!)

RMSS 2004 Registration Info

IMPORTANT

You will need to go to the following web address to fill out the registration form for RMSS:

<http://www.csastro.org/rmss/registration.htm>

This is **NOT** an online registration where you can submit a credit card payment to pay for this event. You will display this form on the screen, type in your info, and then print it and mail it to the address shown on the form, with your payment. This is the only way to insure that everything (from whether or not you're bringing pets to registering for the meals) is filled out correctly and that all necessary information is displayed. Do remember that the pre-registration price is only good if you have your registration postmarked on or before May 20th.

Pre-registration Prices

(from now until May 20, 2004)

Adults, \$10.00

Children (ages 6-17), \$4.00

Regular Registration Prices

(after May 20, 2004 and on-site)

Adults, \$15.00

Children (ages 6-17), \$5.00

Registration forms postmarked on or before Thursday, May 20, 2004 will qualify for the pre-registration pricing. Any registrations postmarked after May 20 will be at regular pricing. CSAS is not responsible for inclement weather conditions. All registration fees are NON-refundable.

Please check-in at the Registration desk upon arrival at the site. If Registration is closed feel free to set up camp and register later.

Your **food vouchers for the Friday and Saturday Meals** will be included in your Registration Kit when you check-in, as will door prize tickets and nametags.

Preordered merchandise will be available at the site, extra merchandise will be available on-site in limited quantities.

RMSS Schedule

TIME	EVENT
THURSDAY JUNE 17, 2004	
	Events TBA
12PM - 7PM*	Registration / Merchandise Sales
6:04 PM	Moonset
8:32 PM	Sunset
10:31 PM	End of Astronomical Twilight
Midnight	Generators Off
FRIDAY JUNE 18, 2004	
	Events TBA
3:38 AM	Start of Astronomical Dawn
3:50 AM	Moonrise
5:38 AM	Sunrise
11AM - 8PM*	Registration / Merchandise Sales
Noon	Generators May Be On
5:30 PM	Dinner
7:04 PM	Moonset
8:32 PM	Sunset
10:31 PM	End of Astronomical Twilight
SATURDAY JUNE 19, 2004	
	Events TBA
3:39 AM	Start of Astronomical Dawn
4:29 AM	Moonrise
5:38 AM	Sunrise
11AM - 6PM*	Registration / Merchandise Sales
Noon	Generators May Be On
Noon	Swap Meet
1:00 PM	ATM Walkabout
5:30 PM	Dinner
8:04 PM	Moonset
8:32 PM	Sunset
10:31 PM	End of Astronomical Twilight
Midnight	Generators Off
SUNDAY JUNE 20, 2004	
	Events TBA
3:39 AM	Start of Astronomical Dawn
5:16 AM	Moonrise
5:39 AM	Sunrise

RMSS RULES

Our list of "rules" is short, but important. In addition to the usual restrictions on white light after dark, and quiet time before noon each day, the Forest Service requests that all participants follow a few simple rules of their own. Please remember, this is a delicate alpine environment and practice LOW IMPACT camping techniques and follow the "leave no trace" and "pack it in, pack it out" practices. Be sure everyone in your group is familiar with this material!

Our "Prime Directive" - No white light after dark!

Use RED filtered flashlights on the observing field. There will be red cellophane available at the registration table to cover the lens of your flashlight if needed. Please pay special attention to automobile headlights, daytime running lights, dome lights, and backup lights. TIP: Rumor has it that one "click" of emergency brake will turn off your daytime running lights - useful if you're an astronomer! All after dark arrivals MUST park in the separate roped off area. Do not drive past the "after dark parking" area with your lights on! If you need to leave before dawn, you MUST park in the "after dark parking" area.

Please limit vehicle parking to within 100 yards from any access road.

This is to avoid impacting the alpine environment by using only the roads that currently exist. The U. S. Forest Service will only allow us to return to this site if we do not create new roads.

Minimize traffic and drive slowly.

To preserve the observing field and to keep dust down to a minimum, don't drive in and out of this site more than necessary and observe the speed limit of 5 mph.

Quiet time before noon each day.

While RV's and generators are not restricted to a "designated area", we ask that you show due consideration for your fellow astronomers. Because many of us will be observing until dawn, it is very important that the area remain quiet before noon each day. Be kind with generators near other campers, do not run them between midnight and noon each day. Interior lighting of RV's must be shielded so as to not be visible from outside.

No open fires.

No campfires, fireworks or model rockets allowed. This is by order of the U.S. Forest Service. Stoves,

however, ARE permitted.

Please use caution while smoking.

Be sure to extinguish your cigarettes completely and dispose of cigarette butts along with your trash. Do not drop cigarette butts on the ground. This area can be VERY dry in summer, and the risk of fire can be extreme. Also, use caution while smoking on the observing field—matches and cigarette lighters can interfere with night vision and astrophotography setups.

If you bring it in, take it out!

It is important that attendees practice LEAVE NO TRACE camping techniques. Dispose properly of all trash. For more information about "Leave No Trace" call 1-800-332-4100.

Portable rest rooms

Do not put anything into the portable rest rooms that you wouldn't flush at home - this includes trash and diapers.

Pet Rules

If you will be bringing pets to RMSS, you must be familiar with our rules on pets. While pets are not restricted to a "designated area," we ask that you show due consideration for your fellow astronomers. All pets must be either leashed or contained at all times.

No pets will be allowed in the dining areas or presentation/exhibition areas.

Anyone bringing a pet or pets to RMSS must immediately remove any waste or debris caused by those pets. Like all refuse, pet waste and debris must be packed out by those responsible.

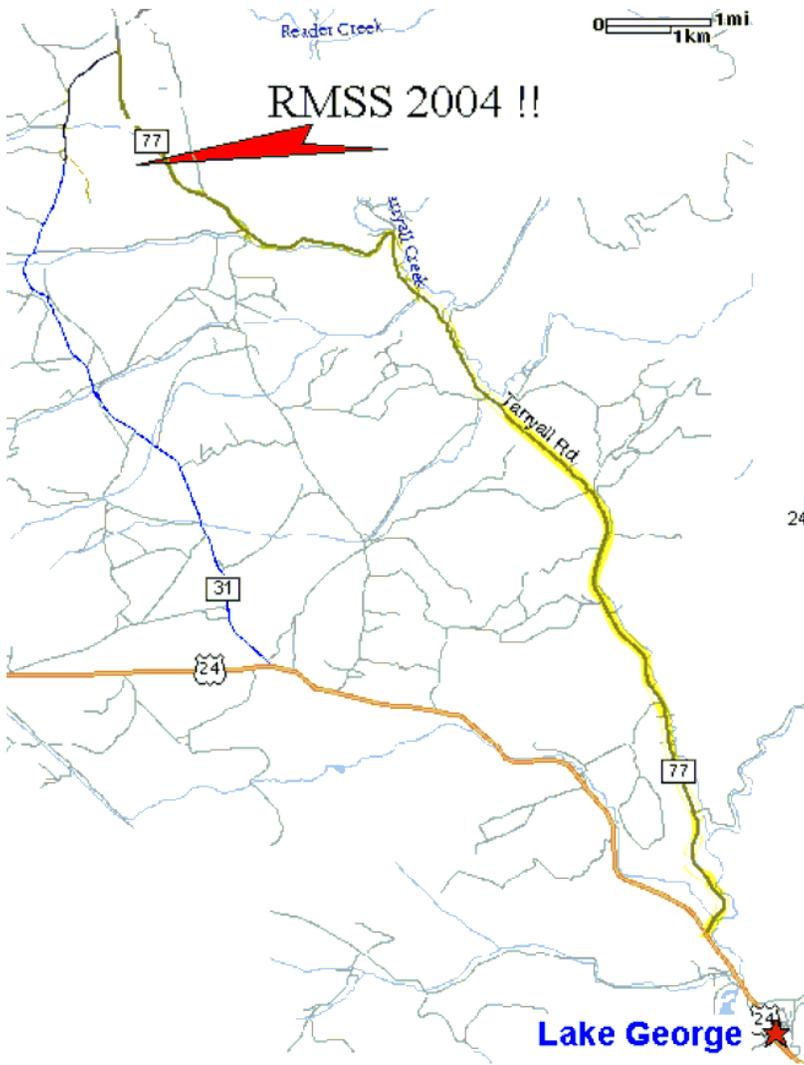
Anyone bringing a pet or pets to RMSS will be responsible for those pets and all of the pets actions.

Anyone bringing a pet or pets to RMSS will be responsible for ensuring that those pet(s) do not disturb, menace, or threaten other RMSS patrons by noise or action. This includes any damage or injury caused by the pet to people, property, animals (domestic and wild), or landscape.

Since RMSS is held on USFS land which is home to many predators, neither RMSS or CSAS will be responsible if any pets are lost, injured, killed, or eaten. All pet food and supplies must be stored in a manner that will not attract predators or scavengers (including insects).

Violators of any of the above rules will be subject to immediate removal from RMSS without refund of any fees. Official Service or Guide animals in working harness are exempt from the above restrictions as required by law.

These rules are to promote the enjoyment of all. Be safe, respect others, have fun!



Directions to RMSS: To get there from Colorado Springs, go west on Highway 24 through Woodland Park, Divide, Florissant, and Lake George. From the Lake George Community Park sign (on the right side of the road), go west exactly 1 mile to the intersection of Hwy. 24 and Park County Rd. 77 and turn right. Continue north on Park Cnty. 77 for 9.1 miles to the turnoff at O'Brien Gulch (left turn off Park Cnty. 77). This is 1.4 miles after a hairpin curve and 2/10ths of a mile after crossing over a cattleguard. As you turn left onto the dirt access road, look for the sign directly ahead marked O'Brien Gulch/Badger Gulch and take the left fork. From the turn off Park Cnty. 77, it is exactly 7/10ths of a mile to the observing field. As you approach, bear to the left up a slight hill to reach the field. GPS coordinates are: 39 degrees 05 minutes 1.2 seconds North Latitude by 105 degrees 27 minutes 8.6 seconds West Longitude

14th Annual Weekend Under the Stars
August 12, 13, 14, 2004
Foxpark, WY
More in a later issue!



(Continued from page 2)
 arcseconds long.

Although Mars will be visible, its $m_{\text{vis}} + 1.7$ makes it the dimmest it can be. Look for Mars midway between Saturn and Venus. Jupiter ($-2.1 m_{\text{vis}}$) is still high in the sky and resumes its eastward motion on May 5.

The Eta Aquarids meteor shower will be partially obscured by the bright Moon during the first week of May.

On May 21, one hour after sunset, look for Venus, the crescent Moon, Mars and Saturn in close proximity to one another.

To get a great view of the planets, stars, and other celestial objects, visit the Denver Astronomical Society's Open House at sunset on Saturday, May 29 at the University of Denver's Historic Chamberlin Observatory. Remember that members of the Denver Astronomical Society have free access to the Clark 20" at Chamberlin Observatory during Open House.

- 4.....Full Moon (also called the Planting Moon or Milk Moon)
- 5.....Eta Aquarid meteor shower
- 11.....Last quarter Moon
- 18.....New Moon
- 27.....First quarter Moon

Astronomical Calendar 2004
Astronomy Magazine, May 2004

OFFICERS AND E-BOARD of
THE DENVER ASTRONOMICAL
SOCIETY

The Executive Board conducts the business of the DAS at 8 pm. at Chamberlin Observatory. Please see the Schedule of Events for meeting dates. All members are welcome.

OFFICERS

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DAS Contact Info

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About the Denver Astronomical Society

The DAS is a group of amateur and professional astronomers that share a mutual interest in the heavens. The DAS operates the University of Denver's Chamberlin Observatory, along with its prized 1894 Alvan Clark 20-inch refracting telescope. Our members have been involved with the first public planetarium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and the Smithsonian Astrophysics Observatory's "Moon Watch" program. The DAS successfully petitioned to have the Chamberlin Observatory listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Our Credo is to provide members a forum for increasing and sharing their knowledge, to promote and educate the public about astronomy, and to preserve the historic telescope and observatory in cooperation with the University of Denver. To these ends we have established three tax deductible funds: the Van Nattan Scholarship Fund, the Chamberlin Restoration Fund, and the DAS Dark Sky Site Fund. This last fund was established in order to construct and maintain observing facilities near Deer Trail in eastern Colorado.

Please call our Info Line at (303) 871-5172 and drop by the General Membership meetings. Become a member and enjoy speakers, facilities, events, and our monthly newsletter, *The Denver Observer*.

Application for membership to the Denver Astronomical Society

New _____ Renewal _____
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Phone numbers: Home () _____ Work () _____
 E-mail Address: _____
 Occupation: _____
 Other Interests: _____

(Associates Only) School: Grade: _____
 Do you want to download the newsletter in PDF format from our web-site instead of by postal mail?
 Yes _____ No _____
 Do you want the above information excluded from the yearly roster?
 Yes _____ No _____

Please Circle All That Apply:
 Regular Membership: \$30 Associate: \$10 (Age 22 and younger)
 *****\$ _____
 Astronomy Magazine/\$29
 Sky & Telescope Magazine/\$32.95
 *****\$ _____
 Van Nattan Scholarship Fund *****\$ _____
 Chamberlin Restoration Fund *****\$ _____
 Total Amount Paid *****\$ _____

Please make **Dark Sky Site donations payable to the DAS EGKDS Fund** and mail to **Steve Solon, 9774 W. Elmhurst Place, Littleton, CO 80128**. Please make other amounts payable to the **Denver Astronomical Society** and mail with this completed form or a copy to:
Sandy Shaw, DAS Treasurer, 1095 Yank Street, Golden, CO 80401



Denver Astronomical Society
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