



President's Message

Fall returns this month, and with it a new event, our first official Fall Messier Marathon at the Wicket's in Lyndeborough, NH Oct 24/25 2008. It will be interesting to see the observing plans that members come up with as they deal with the 6 month shift from the traditional spring Marathon. At least we'll have a chance to see M30! On the other hand, we probably won't be able to observe anything in the Virgo cluster as it will be quite low in the east as morning twilight begins. No doubt this will please some observers!

Also the skywatch schedule picks up with several events including the return of one of our favorites the Reed's Ferry School in Merrimack. Check the calendar on our website <http://www.nhastro.com/calendar.php> for the latest including directions and make-up dates.

★ Gardner Gerry
NHAS President 2008

Highlights for this Month

Overcast skies continued to curtail most observing activity last month, but the occasional patch of clear skies provided some opportunities. Read the reports starting on page 2.

The organizational kick-off meeting for the new Educational Outreach Committee takes place on 20 September.

It's time to start thinking about nominations for club officers for 2009.

We will be taking a slightly different, subscription-driven approach to scheduling the Astro 101 and 201 courses this fall.

John Rose reports on the Arunha Hills Star Party.

★ Paul Winalski
NHAS Secretary 2008

Nominations for 2009 NHAS Officers

At the October business meeting the floor will be open for nominations for the 2009 NHAS officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, junior Director). **Gardner Gerry** is completing his second consecutive term as President and thus is not eligible for re-election. So consider who you might wish to nominate, or whether you might wish to serve as a club officer.

★ Paul Winalski

Astro Photons

We are working on setting up some virtual meetings on the net. The recent clear stretch has produced some nice work from the usual suspects. Please go to the NHAS pictures forum

<http://www.nhastro.com/member/forum/viewforum.php?f=7> to see the latest.

★ Gardner Gerry

Public Observing

With Fall approaching, we have the predictable increase in sky watches. Please check the calendar for the list and dates. Many of the sponsors would like to have presentations along with the observing. I am very interested in giving everyone in the club an opportunity to give a talk or assist in a presentation. I think we all know our knowledge levels and oratory skills... so please check out

the calendar and let me know what you would be interested in doing.

We have a laptop and projector, as well as a small number of programs covering different topics. The World Wide Telescope allows people to develop "Tours", as do a number of other planetarium software programs. Please feel free to do so and share the results!

A final semi-random thought: Whilst at a doctor's office this week (I'm OK, thank you), I noticed a dearth of magazines. I asked if it might be OK to bring in old copies of Sky & Telescope and Astronomy. They were delighted, and I thought this might be a way to spread the word about science education.

Thank you for your continued support!

★ Marc Stowbridge

Outreach Committee Organizational Meeting

Saturday 20 September the first organizational meeting of the NHAS Educational Outreach Committee will take place. The meeting is scheduled to take place at 2:00 PM at 22 Bridge Street in Concord.

If you are interested in attending the meeting and taking part in the committee RSVP to Chase McNiss and he will send you an agenda and directions to the meeting place.

This will be an important group within the NHAS and we are hoping for a good turnout for the first meeting.

★ Chase McNiss

Membership and Astro 101 and 201 Update

Since last newsletter we have the following new members: **Steven Harris**, Framingham, MA; **Keith Berson**, Hudson, NH; **James R. Lynch**, Amherst, NH; **Tim Mauro**, Portsmouth, NH.

When you see these members at a meeting or SkyWatch, please welcome them.

Astro 101 and 201: Our next scheduled Astro 101 Workshop is Collimation presented by **John Bishop** at YFOS on October 10th at 7:00PM. The great part about John's workshop is the hands-on practice after the presentation. Please register with an email to acshirey@comcast.net.

Starting in November, the scheduling for Astro 101 and 201 workshops will change. The number of courses we are now capable of offering has grown to 16. This is a good thing in many ways but means that I have a hard time determining which courses would be most desired by membership NOW. To address this circumstance, we will experiment with a demand-based system. I have posted the course offerings on the NHAS Website Resource Database page: http://www.nhastro.com/member/res_db.php. AAstro 101 and AAstro 201 are the first two entries in the Resource Database.

If you are interested in attending the NHAS member-to-member astro education workshop, please consider the courses posted. Then email me with the courses that you would be interested in attending. As soon as we hit critical mass on a course interest, I will contact our member instructor and schedule the workshop. I will announce all scheduled workshops to the general membership but the members voicing interest will be contacted first.

★ Alan Shirey

Seacoast Area Observing

NHAS members in the Seacoast area recently joined up for some

dark sky observing in Stratham, N.H. **Ted Blank**, **Tom Cocchiaro**, **Jim Moe** and **Tim Mauro** got together on Sept. 1st in one of the back parking lots of Stratham Park on Rt. 33 in Greenland, N.H. for a grand tour of the Summer Triangle. The site is reasonably dark, with only a light dome from the town of Exeter in the South, and general Seacoast illumination in the background. No lights are visible except for one dim streetlight at the far end where you drive in. There are no gates and a dirt road leads straight to the observing site—and mosquitoes were close to nonexistent during the session. For members in the Seacoast area this provides an opportunity to observe on those nights when there just isn't time to drive to YFOS. If you are interested in getting together to observe in the Seacoast area, contact Ted Blank (tedblank@gmail.com) or Tom Cocchiaro (tomcocchiaro@comcast.net). Those interested in finding out more about Seacoast area activities should check out the group's informal website at <http://seacoastastronomy.ning.com>. The website features a blog, photo album, map to observing locations and an events listing where the group hopes to coordinate observing sessions...

★ Ted Blank

Arunha Hills Star Party

At Stellafane **Mike Townsend** got a flyer for Arunha Hills Days. There is no pre-registration and only a \$10 parking fee for parking at the top of the hill (it's free if you park at the bottom parking lot). I had nothing on the calendar and decided to go also. With the poor weather report we almost dropped the trip, but decided to press on anyway and at least scout things out for a future trip in better weather. Unfortunately the flyer's directions didn't give an exit number for I-91, and we had trouble finding Rte. 9. But just at the turn off Rte. 9 we saw an Arunha Hills sign and then others to make this part easier.

The drive into the site is a one lane track. We passed a small parking area with a porta-potty then continued up the hill. It is quite a hill so it is well worth the parking fee even if you are not bringing anything! We had picked up some rain on the way but not while we were there. Being on the side of a hill the only flat ground is artificial: one small roll-off observatory (forgot to ask what is in it), a couple of other small buildings, and a small pavilion with picnic benches for eating and talking. The food there was rather limited. Breakfast was commercial muffins, omelets, and toast. Lunch and supper was hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, and kielbasa. Coffee, water, and Soda to drink. Perhaps with the poor weather they decided to keep things real easy.

The small group of die-hards was friendly and we had no problem sitting in with them. I had a nice chat with Barlow Bob but he left early due to the weather. The swap table was limited to what Tony Costanza brought over from the Astronomy Shoppe. I picked up some books and some other small items. The prize drawing was moved up to noontime. Tickets were a dollar each. Each prize had its own ticket jar so you put your tickets toward whatever you want. I got a book (*Star Lore* by William Tyler Olcott) and Mike got an eyepiece. The grand prize was a small Maksutov from Edmund Scientific, which went to one of the Arunha Hills members.

This must be a great spot on a clear night with very little light pollution. A great southern horizon, down hill! There are trees in the other directions, so one may have to set up accordingly. Mike and I did enjoy the trip, but we might find it hard to justify going again unless the weather is good for observing. Hopefully it will be and we can put together a group for it. We did leave about 12:45 PM and didn't get rained on until almost Mike's house.

★ John Rose

Family Night at YFOS

On Saturday, Aug. 23rd, my daughter and her fiancé Dan finished giving me my Father's Day gift (my idea—an evening at YFOS with me). We got there at 7:45pm, joining **Herb Bubert**, **Bob Schultz**, **Jeff Carter**, **Steve Forbes** and his son Steve. After setting up Soulshine, I started to go through my list of objects to show them, starting with Jupiter (good view of four or five bands and three moons), then M13 and the Ring Nebula. I then started pointing out some of the visible constellations to them with my GLP and was just showing them the "teapot" and its steam of the Milky Way when a car came down the road.

It was my wife and eldest son Phil arriving on their way back from dropping off my other son Marc at Keene for school. This was their 2nd time at YFOS, but first since I got Soulshine. I backtracked to Jupiter, then went on to the Blue Snowball (my daughter loved its color), the Wild Duck Cluster, the Butterfly Cluster (Dan's a senior at UVM majoring in Entomology) and the Swan Nebula followed. At this point we all started to notice quite a few "shooting stars" which became the sky's entertainment when others were taking turns at the eyepiece.

Then on to galaxies, starting with M31. First a view at 127X (Nag22), then at 68X with the 41mm Panoptic. In this view I had M31 & M32 both in the finder. Then I swung over to M81 & M82, with both in the same view, so they had a good idea of the size of M31 in comparison. With the panoptic still in, showed them the Double Cluster (not as good as through a wider field scope, but still pretty nice) and M52.

I had mentioned that Mizar was a double star, and Phil could see that it was without looking through the scope, but Heather wanted a view through the scope, so I started a series of double stars starting with Mizar and ending with Albireo. Then (as Carbon Star Paul has taught me!) I had to go through a series of carbon stars. Ending with

T Lyrae shining like a jewel by itself up near Vega.

By this time the group had all seen some of the "shooting stars" overhead and decided that it was getting late. I quickly went back to Jupiter which was now showing four moons, then to the Dumbbell Nebula (which Phil really liked), and then ended with M13 as Phil and Sheila hadn't seen it earlier. Boosted the power to 215X with the Ethos, and Heather told Dan she wanted a necklace that sparkled like that. With that for an ending, I let them head home.

I stayed a while longer, chatting with Herb and Bob over some KFC, then came out to look at the rising moon. About 1:45 AM the clouds rolled in quickly, and we all packed up and headed for home.

All in all, a nice night with most of my family under the stars. I really enjoyed it

★ Ken Charles

NHAS August 2008 Business Meeting

ATM

Larry Lopez reported that the donated 8" dob telescope isn't worth fixing up. We will sell off the useful pieces.

Steve Forbes fixed the mount from the old **Ed Ting**-donated scope.

YFOS

Larry Lopez reported that the Mosquito Magnet is still working.

Membership

No report. Three new members were in attendance.

Astrophotography

No meeting recently. There are new photos at the website.

Radio Astronomy

No report.

Public Observing

Marc Stowbridge reported that he is looking at schools where we've had ongoing relationships and how to keep connected with them.

A library wishes to donate \$200 to us. Marc suggested getting an Orion Starblast for the library, to be

available for loan. Discussion pointed out that we need to have people around to check on the scope. We need to find the right library who will follow through and NHAS members nearby who will check in on it and make sure it's being used.

Webmaster

No report.

Book of the Month

New Atlas of the Moon by Theirry Legault and Serge Brunier. It presents the daily phases of the moon, oriented for Newtonian telescopes. There are labels on plastic overlays. There is a section on lunar cartography, major mares and features, and how they vary with phases of the moon.

Scope of the Month

Steve Forbes presented the Ioptron Cube altazimuth mount with Nova go-to control. Over the past year it has a new mini-tower, improved metal gears, very solid motors. He also presented a 150mm f/12 Maksutov OTA prototype.

Miscellaneous Business

The 2009 Astronomy Magazine calendar is available to members for \$7 (regular price is \$12). Contact **Chase McNiss** if you are interested.

Evening Program

Dave McDonald gave a presentation on the International Year of Astronomy (2009), its organization, and planned events.

★ Paul Winalski

The Bottom Line

Starting Balance:	\$5535.03
Deposits/Credits:	243.00
(membership, calendar sales)	
Accounts/Paid:	601.24
(publishing, insurance, Newmarket Square)	
Net Account Balance:	\$5176.79
Petty cash drawer:	\$100.00
Cash Balance:	\$5276.79

2008 Membership: 138

Donations: **\$0.00**
Balance of Grant Funds **\$809.70**

★ Chase McNiss



2008 Officers
 President: Gardner Gerry
 VicePresident: Mike Townsend
 Treasurer: Chase McNiss
 Secretary: Paul Winalski

DEADLINE September 2008 Issue: 5 PM October 13

E-mail articles to the Editor.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS – Notify the Treasurer of changes to postal or e-mail address.

How to Join N.H.A.S.

Write to us:

NHAS
 P.O. Box 5823
 Manchester, NH 03108-5823
 Attn: Treasurer

Send E-mail to:

info@nhastro.com

Use our web site:

<http://www.nhastro.com/>

This month's contributors:

Gardner Gerry, Marc Stowbridge, Chase McNiss, Alan Shirey, Ted Blank, John Rose, Ken Charles

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NHAS Upcoming Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Coffee House Night	September 26	5:00 PM	YFOS
CMP Public Sky Watch	October 3	7:00 PM	Christa McAuliffe Planetarium
Mary E. Bartlett Library Star Party	October 3	7:00 PM	22 Dalton Rd, Brentwood NH
New England Environmental Educators Alliance Sky Watch	October 4	8:30 PM	BU Sargent Center, Hancock NH
Astro 101: Collimation	October 10	7:00 PM	YFOS
NHAS Business Meeting	October 17	7:30 PM	Christa McAuliffe Planetarium
Bicentennial School Sky Watch	October 21	7:00 PM	Nashua NH (backup date October 23)
Fall Messier Marathon	October 24	5:00 PM	The Wicket's, Lyndeboro NH (backup date October 25)
Lyndeboro Central School Sky Watch	October 29	7:00 PM	Lydenboro NH