The Objective View
Newsletter of the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society
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WWW Page: http://lamar.colostate.edu/~rmoench/ncasrdm.html
Meetings first Thursday of each Month
Next Meeting: September 5, 1996, 7:30pm
Tom Meyer, “The Case for Mars”

September 5 Meeting Directions
Aspen Medical Center, Building H, 2001 S Shields St
Fort Collins (north of Rolland Moore Park)
From Loveland, take Taft Ave, North. From W Drake Rd in Fort Collins, go about 0.5 mile North and turn Left into Spring Creek Medical Park.
In Spring Creek Medical Park, turn Left, then park in front of the building with the Pharmacy, Building H. Entrance is in the middle of the East side of the Building. Meet upstairs. An elevator is available.
Call Dan Laszlo with questions, 498-9226.
Business Meeting Sept 10
All members are welcome. Meet at Dorothy Pillmore’s, 2631 Shadow Court in Fort Collins.

Next NCAS Starparty Sept 7, Hermit Park
Location will be Hermit Park just south of Estes Park. This is the Hewlett Packard recreational park and is a beautiful mountain site. Setup will be on maintained grass in a mountain meadow (about 8500 feet elevation). There are facilities, and recreational provisions (horseshoes, volleyball courts, playground for the kids, tables, and a covered pavilion area. No camping will probably be available and NO driving off the established roads is allowed. This will be a fine site for a family picnic in the evening. Take US34 to Estes Park and then US36 to Lyons (do not take Colo Rd 7 toward Ward). On US36, go south, pass Lake Estes and climb a long hill until you reach the top. Take the next right (west) through the gate onto a dirt road (Hewlett Packard property). This road turns back to the north. Stop at the building to sign in as guests of Gerry Reynolds. Then continue on the main dirt road to the west and up over a ridge. Off in the distant southwest you will see a meadow. The main road will take you there and we will setup next to the pavilion. You will need to call me (226-0705) and leave a message with your name and phone number and number in your party so I can make arrangements for the size of the party. I will also need to be there before visitors can arrive so plan on arriving after 4:00pm (I’ll arrive about then). In case of bad weather, I will attempt to call those that leave their number. Also, I will leave a message on my answering machine for those who call to indicate the status of the starparty. Gerry Reynolds, 226-0705 gerry@fc.hp.com
FRASC Star Party September 14 at the Deadman Site
Take US 287 about 20 miles North from Fort Collins. At Livermore, go West on Red Feather Lakes Road. Continue past Red Feather Lakes on Deadman Road to Forest Road 303, between mileposts 15 and 16. Site is about 0.25 mile North on Road 303. The star party is jointly sponsored with the Longmont Astronomical Society.

NCAS Events, from Brad Jarvis, Vice President
October 3 Dr. Roger Culver, CSU Observatory
November 7 Brad Jarvis, Comet and Asteroid Impacts
December 5 Gerry Reynolds, Optics
January 2 Club Business, Elections
FRASC and Other Events
Sept 14 Pawnee or Deadman site, LAS + NCAS
Recent Events
RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME!
The weekend before attending a National Park Service meeting at the Shenandoah National Park, I stopped in Washington D.C. area to visit a good friend, Joe Boyce. He is Chief Planetary Scientist for NASA. After a good weekend of downing local brew, doing tourist stuff in D.C., and solving all of the world’s problems, I accompanied him to work at NASA Headquarters on Monday morning, August 5th.
At NASA, Joe gave me a report to review - 'Search for Life on Mars: Possible Biogenic Activity in Martian Meteorite ALH84001'. It definitely raised my eyebrows. He said that they have had the report since March and that it was planned to be published formally in 'Science' magazine. Later that morning, the weekly publication 'Space News' came out and they somehow got a hold of this not yet released report. In 'Space News', there was a short blurb on the speculation on Martian life. This premature release prompted NASA to answer numerous phone calls and inquires about 'Life on Mars!' Later, NASA held a press conference confirming the existence of the report and it's findings.

Being at NASA headquarters during the news releases about the possibility of Martian life was a real treat - especially among all of the chaos and confusion! Mars probably developed as a life sustaining planet sooner than Earth - therefore in theory, we could all be transplanted Martians!!

John R. Benham

August 1 Meeting: Astronomy on the Internet, by Randy Moench
The Internet is a descendant of Cold War planning, which identified the value of many, interconnected computer sites. The system would not present a simple target, and would not be vulnerable to damage at a few locations. The first incarnation, ARPANET, came into use on September 1, 1969. It permitted 4 supercomputers to be shared among many users. ARPANET was used for news and personal communications. Electronic mail was born in 1971, and by 1976, England's Queen Elizabeth had sent her first message. In 1986 the National Science Foundation sponsored NSFNET, to link 5 new supercomputer centers. It was promoted for use of the public, US allies, and particularly academic faculty, staff, and students. Ease of use took a major step forward with creation of the World Wide Web in the 1990's. Milestones in 1993 include the first White House Web Page and links to 3rd world countries (and Randy obtaining his LAMAR account). With input from Dan Doner and Tom Teters, Randy put the NCAS Home Page on the Web in 1995. He followed this historical perspective with a summary of resources the Internet provides. Gopher is used to retrieve text-based information. USENET newsgroups are forums for discussion, currently covering over 3000 topics. Users can select among hundreds of messages to read for current opinions. FTP (File Transfer Protocol) sites are libraries of computer data, images and software. IRC, Internet Relay Chat, supports verbal discussions. WWW, the World Wide Web, allows users to view and exchange still pictures, video, and sound as well as text. List servers support mailing lists, and participants exchange messages on a topic of mutual interest. All participants on the list receive all messages posted. Randy then displayed the latest from astronomy newsgroups, the colorful sci.astro and more focused sci.astro.amateur. He opened the NCAS Home Page, the home pages for the Hubble Space Telescope, the image archives at SEDS at the University of Arizona, the SkyView Virtual Observatory comprised of Palomar Sky Survey images, and the local AstroSystems page. Randy has collected the Messier Catalogue as digital images, and is working on the NGC! He invites local contributions to our Web page. It has already proven to be a timely resource for local skywatchers not in our club.

Club Business: Magazine Subscriptions
Renewal Sept 5
Dorothy Pillmore asks that you bring your check, written to the magazine, not the club, for $16 to Astronomy magazine; $27 to Sky & Telescope. Current subscribers should bring an old address label, to help insure your check is correctly credited by the magazines.

Members' Activities
Ken VanLew coordinated star parties for two Elderhostel groups. Thom Peck has been working with Lee Youngblood on a home observatory and mirror grinding machine. They, plus Bob Cline, provided an astronomy program for a Scout campout at Hagler Reservoir. Unaided eyes gave great views of the Milky Way for Tom Fay in Steamboat Springs, Dick Clark in Missoula Montana, Dorothy Pillmore in the Wind River Mountains of Wyoming, Gerry Reynolds in Yellowstone, and Ernie Crewdsen in Canada. Erin Handgen has been modifying his Newtonian for improved contrast. Doug Moench and Gene Fatton are each observing with the Meade ETX. Jamie MacArthur operated a set of 20" Newtonian binoculars at the CSAS Star Stare. Brad Jarvis attended the recent Case for Mars conference. He provided a worksheet for logging meteor observations. John Benham brought a demonstration image from the new optical interferometer at the US Naval Observatory at Flagstaff, showing the one-month orbital motion of Zeta-one Ursae Majoris, a 0.02 arcsecond binary. Dorothy Pillmore encouraged members incorporate and to participate with our neighboring clubs to develop a local observatory.
Club 10" Scope
Astrosystems has offered work space and a discounted Telekit for completion of this project. Erin Handgen reported that top priorities in the club telescope survey were smooth tracking, stability, and portability. He offered to host a meeting August 7, to finalize plans for construction.

Star Party assistance needed in October 19
Erin Handgen invited members to bring scopes to the Fort Collins Discovery Center, 703 E Prospect Rd. Program starts at 6:30.

Best Looks
Moon: Near Venus and Mars Sept 8
Total lunar eclipse evening Sept 26
enters umbra 7:12 pm MDT
total eclipse begins 8:19 pm MDT
mideclipse 8:54 pm MDT
total eclipse ends 9:29 pm MDT
leaves umbra 10:36 pm MDT
Mercury: In am, end of month, low in E at dawn
Venus: Near Mars in E, ams, 1st week of Sept
Mars: In E, ams, in Gemini
Jupiter: In South, eves. Near M22
Saturn: Opposition 9/26