



THE OBSERVER

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS
Member of The Astronomical League
Celebrating Fifty Years of Amateur Astronomy

Volume #50, Issue 9

Since 1958

September 2008

Meeting:

September 20, 2008

Main Feature:

“The Sky Can Be Your Laboratory”

Location:

San Bernardino County
Museum, 7:00 p.m.
Redlands, CA. California St.
exit, I-10 Fwy.

Pre-meeting Dinner, 5:00 p.m.,
Hometown Buffet, Loma
Linda, CA

After the meeting telescopes
will be set up for viewing and
members will be available to
answer questions. Bring your
telescope to observe with us.

*No telescope is too humble, and
beginners are always made
welcome!*

After viewing the group will
head for Coco's in Redlands,
Tennessee exit, I-10 Fwy.

Program

The Sky Can Be Your Laboratory
Guest Speaker, Robert Buchheim

“Today, telescope construction is funded by national budgets, and instruments are launched into space to get clearer views of celestial objects. Our speaker poses the question: “Is there still a role for ‘small telescope science,’ “ and “can amateur astronomers contribute to astronomical research?” Yes, indeed! There are still some research projects that require the small telescopes, flexibility in observing schedule, and familiarity with the night sky that are attributes of the advanced amateur astronomer. These projects provide results that are valuable to the astronomical community.”

Mr. Buchheim is a long time astronomer, beginning at age 10 with simple star gazing, acquiring a 3-inch Sears refractor in junior high school and then rapidly graduating to larger instruments, including 13 and 16-inch dobos, ultimately culminating with a backyard observatory. His educational and professional background includes a BS degree in Physics from Arizona State University, working as an electro-optical systems engineer and as a plant manager for one of Lockheed-Martin's manufacturing facilities. He is also a trustee for the Orange County Astronomers. He has also written numerous articles for various science and engineering journals.

Come see what opportunities exist for amateur astronomers to contribute something significant to the science of astronomy.

Join us for a little casual observing after the meeting

SBVAA Officers

President: *Vacant*

Vice President: John Deems 909-584-7568

Treasurer: Fidel Hernandez 909-864-0615

Secretary - Educational Outreach: Chris Clarke

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Star Party Coordinator: Tom Lawson 909-8828198

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Newsletter Editor: Jim Sommer 909-792-3587

Summer Potluck Highlights

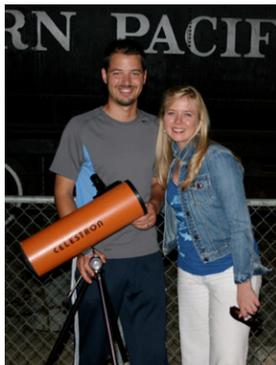
By Chris Clarke

As usual, the SBVAA's annual summer BBQ/Potluck was a resounding success!

Lots of great food was shared and friendly conversation prevailed. The club also celebrated its 50th year of existence with a special cake and a big raffle. About 40 people were on hand to celebrate and 28 sets of prizes were awarded. The grand prize, a brand new tabletop 4.5" Orion StarBlast dob, was won by our friendly museum guard, Sam.



Another telescope, a 1980s vintage Celestron Comet Catcher, was won by a visiting young couple who was just starting to get into observational astronomy—just what they needed!



The Celestron five-inch Schmidt-Cass OTA was won by John Simpson. Our webmaster, Steve Miller, won the big Barska 20x80 binoculars,

Calendar of Upcoming Events

September 1, Labor Day

September 13, Planet Party public outreach at the Museum

September 13 & 14, Pacific Astronomy and Telescope Show, Pasadena Conv. Ctr.

September 20, Club meeting at the Museum

September 26 28, Grandview star party weekend

October 7, "Moon Party" outreach at the Museum

October 18, Club meeting at the Museum

October 25, Star party at Cottonwood Springs

(Watch for upcoming outreaches this fall and winter. SBVAA is a popular guest at many of our local schools, several of which invite us back year after year.)



while other members took home more binoculars, including a pair of 15x70s, a pair of 10x50s and four pair of 8x21s. Finders, eyepiece filters, and lots of observational aids including books, charts and planispheres were awarded as well. Every single family won something.

A beautiful ice cream cake was also brought by Fidel Hernandez' daughter, Linda, to celebrate his birthday---Happy Big Seven-O, Fidel!! It was also shared to celebrate all of the other member's birthdays that are in August. Afterwards, lots of observing took place as people caught sight of majestic Jupiter low in the southern sky. The weather was perfect; clear, pleasantly warm and no bugs! When it was all over there was

nothing but big smiles and full tummies. If you missed it, you really missed out!



for home. Some members go down to Big Pine for a group breakfast. Grandview affords us a terrific opportunity to get away from it all. The beautiful site, the awesome sky and the wonderful companionship all make for a great escape from the hustle-bustle of our daily routines. If you can, make the effort to get there, you won't be disappointed!



Grandview Again!

By Chris Clarke

Well, it's time for our last trip up to our favorite dark sky site for the year. From Friday, Sept. 26 thru Sunday, Sept. 28, we'll be enjoying the stellar amenities of Grandview! Our June trip was wonderful, with 20 members in attendance. Since this visit is a little later in the year, being in early autumn, be sure to bring along some cold weather gear, as it could be fairly chilly up there. Remember, you're at 8600 feet. As to the campground, there are some BBQ pits, picnic tables and clean outhouses available. Lots of pinon pines for shade and plenty of room to set up. Also, note that the campsite is dry, with no water available. Bring plenty of water, tasty treats, sleeping gear, a scope and an appetite for dark, star-filled skies.

The remnants of the summer sky will be featured in the early evening, with the wonders of the rich Milky Way begging for your attention, while the fall sky, filled with such favorites as M31, M33, the Silver Dollar Galaxy, the Helix Nebula and other goodies will be rising high in the east. For those who stay up 'til three or four in the morning, the glories of the winter sky, including magnificent M42, the Pleiades, the "Crab" and other objects along the winter Milky Way will be slowly ascending in the east, waiting to be savored. It's fun to view three season's worth of sky in one night.

As usual, there will be a community breakfast potluck on Saturday morning. Bring something to add to the table and dig in! On Sunday morning, we break camp and head

Upcoming Outreach Information

By Chris Clark

On Saturday, September 13, the club will have a "Planet Party" outreach at the Museum. We'll be showing the waxing gibbous moon, Jupiter, Venus, Mars and Mercury; the latter three all congregated over in the western sky. Setup is at 7:00 and the viewing will go from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. We'll be setting up on the parking lot near the entrance, where we have a clear view of the southern and western skies.

Our last event in August had at least 125 or more people in attendance, so that many, and maybe even more, will be showing up for this one.

The public is always amazed at the sights they see through a telescope. Children are usually ecstatic and it makes for a wonderful family activity. No matter what kind of telescope you bring, your participation is important and the rewards uncountable. Many folks have never looked through a telescope before—so be the one to give them that first great experience!

See You There!

2009 Astro Calendars

Club Treasurer Fidel Hernandez wants us to know that reservations are now being taken for Astronomy Magazine's 2009 Calendar. "Deep Space Mysteries." Orders will begin being taken at the July club meeting. See Fidel or Chris. Store cost is \$12.95 plus tax, **your cost through the club is just \$10**. Deliveries will probably begin in Sept.

EINSTEIN: THE MAN AND HIS LEGACY

Come celebrate the life and work of the great scientist who turned our notions of the universe upside down!

Saturday & Sunday, November 1 & 2, 2008, in 147 Dodd Hall at UCLA. Sponsored by UCLA Extension

Astronomer Andrew Fraknoi and physicist Alan Friedman will present an illustrated non-technical exploration of Einstein's astonishing concepts of space, time, and the atom. The emphasis is on ideas, not equations. Beautiful images from telescopes on Earth and in space, science demonstrations, and many opportunities to ask questions will complement the lectures.

Key topics to be covered include:

- * The theories of relativity -- what do they really say?
- * Black holes -- bizarre warps in space and time
- * $E = mc^2$ -- the real meaning of the famous formula
- * Einstein and the Bomb -- myth or reality?
- * Quantum theory - why did Einstein dislike a theory he helped create?
- * Einstein and popular culture -- Einstein as a symbol

No prior knowledge about science is required. The presenters specialize in explaining abstract concepts in everyday language. The program may be taken for credit or just for fun. Full-time students are eligible for discount registration. Participants will receive an annotated guide to the best science and fiction resources about Einstein's work.

For more information, a program schedule, and to register, go to the course web site:

www.uclaextension.edu/Einstein08

or call 310-825-7093.

(Cosponsored by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, Griffith Observatory, and Friends of the Observatory)