



# aslc bulletin

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY of LAS CRUCES  
New Mexico  
[www.aslc-nm.org](http://www.aslc-nm.org)



**AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2004**

**THIS MONTH - August** [ Mark Vincent ]

**Regular Meeting; August 27;** 7:30 PM, Room 77; Dona Ana Branch Community College

**"Beginners Corner"** at 7:00 PM, an open discussion prior to the meeting on astro-technical fundamentals.

**Program** *Mark Vincent* "I observed the **Venus transit from Bay City State Park, Michigan**, with members of the Sunset Astronomical Society. We were all disappointed when the haze on the horizon blocked our view of sunrise. That all was forgotten minutes later as a very red sun rose through the haze. What an awesome **NAKED EYE TRANSIT!** For about two minutes we all just stared at the sun with out filters and marveled at how large Venus appeared. I'll show a few of his own tranist images and some from other Michigan astronomy clubs. I will also talk about the upcoming *Palisana occultation* that will cross over the *White Sands Star Party*. The asteroid is occulting an easy to observe 7.2 mag star, so there's no reason to miss this shadow. ... Clear Skies,-Mark  
[http://www.asteroidoccultation.com/2004\\_09/0912\\_914\\_1908.htm](http://www.asteroidoccultation.com/2004_09/0912_914_1908.htm)

**LAST MONTH - July** [ Dave Dooling ]

**Regular Meeting; July 23;**

**Program** "*High Resolution Solar Telescopes*" - by Dave Dooling Dave Dooling is the Outreach & Education Officer for the National Solar Observatory in Sunspot, NM. He presented a talk about high-resolution solar telescopes in general from the 65 cm Big Bear Solar Observatory up to ATST; about 15 telescopes existing and planned, including a discussion on why we need hi-res. Dave also discussed plans he has for starting a community solar system model that would stretch from Sunspot, NM (the Sun, of course) to Cloudcroft (Pluto) and Alamogordo (Neptune, by playing with Pluto's eccentricity), a comet or TNO in the museum.

**NEXT MONTH - September** [TBA]

**Regular Meeting; September 24;** 7:30 PM, Room 77; Dona Ana Branch Community College

**"Beginners Corner"** at 7:00 PM, an open discussion prior to the meeting on astro-technical fundamentals.

**Program** No Data! Program to be announced next issue.

**Business** Nominating Committee will submit candidate list for approval. Floor nominations will be accepted.

## NEWS & VIEWS

### WSSP VI September 10-11

The time is getting near for the White Sands Star Party September 10 - 11. Registration forms can be downloaded in PDF at <http://www.zianet.com/wssp> to get the early registration prices, you need to send your form and check in by September 1st . We had a good group there last year and it was great! It would be fun to do that again this year. The proceeds go to support Project Astro New Mexico. The star party allows participants the special opportunity to take advantage of one the nation's premier national parks as well as share our passion of observational astronomy with the general public. Only registered participants of the White Sands Star Party are offered the opportunity to "camp" at White Sands.

Registered Star Party participants will have special access to keynote speakers, camping privileges, and tours. Public programming will be a part of the overall schedule. Registered participants will be asked to share their telescopes during Saturday night, September 11, for public observing from Dusk to 11PM. In keeping with the spirit of this unique partnership a night of "Astronomers Only" observing is also offered Friday night, September 10 to participants. For more Information, schedule and registration form - visit

<http://www.zianet.com/wssp/> Contact us at [wssp@zianet.com](mailto:wssp@zianet.com).

**Earthrise Project Benefit Event** An Invitation to Participate. *Alan Hale ahale@swisr.org*

"You may recall that I attended, and spoke at, the Star Trek convention in El Paso last fall. I've been working with the promoter of that event on putting together a benefit event for the Earthrise project I'm developing; we'll be having it at the Tays Center in Alamogordo over the long weekend in October (October 8-10). We'll be having a few members from the Star Trek cast, as well as some other "notables," in attendance, and among other things we're planning on having an observing session (from the Space Museum parking lot -- admittedly, not the best viewing site around, but convenient) on one of the evenings for donors. I was wondering if any of the members of the Las Cruces society might be willing to help out with this. Anyone who has experience in CCD imaging and analysis is especially welcome, but anyone who can help in showing astronomical objects would be an immense help. Anyone who does come to help out will get free attendance to the event and will be able to "schmooze" with the stars (Earthly kind) who come. If anyone is willing to help (or if the society as a whole is willing to do so), let me know. Sincerely, Alan

### **Cloudcroft Star Party September 3 ? Jackie Diehl [jdiehl@nso.edu](mailto:jdiehl@nso.edu)**

"Dear all, As part of my EPO (Education and Public Outreach) functions here at the National Solar Observatory, I've been contacted by the Cloudcroft Chamber of Commerce regarding the possibility of amateur astronomers helping support a Chamber-sponsored public star party on Sept. 3 in Cloudcroft. I don't have all of the specifics yet, but basically what they want is to have 4 or 5 telescopes set up (at a yet to be determined location) for the public to have an opportunity to look through the scopes. I am currently wanting to poll "who" might want to attend and can support the star party with telescopes. Any takers? Please contact me directly at: [jdiehl@nso.edu](mailto:jdiehl@nso.edu) so I can get details to everyone later.

### **Jed Durrenberger one of three inducted into WSMR HALL of FAME** by J. Eckles "The Missile Ranger"

Three men from diverse backgrounds were inducted into the White Sands Missile Range Hall of Fame during a luncheon ceremony Aug 25 at the Frontier Club. The three are: *Lloyd Briggs*, the first-ever Navy inductee; *Jim Scott*, a longtime operations manager; and *Jed Durrenberger*, an expert in photo optics.

Induction into the missile range hall of fame is the highest honor White Sands can give an individual locally. It was established in 1980 to recognize those who have made outstanding contributions to White Sands during their tenure on the range.

Jed Durrenberger joined White Sands in 1951 as a trainee in the Ballistic Camera Section of the Ballistic Research Lab after he graduated from New Mexico State University with a degree in mechanical engineering. *Jed is a founding member of the Astronomical Society of Las Cruces (ASLC) and has been an active member since inception in 1952.*

Later, as a ballistic camera station chief Durrenberger was the key person in developing the Loki Firefly instrumentation system. The rocket received its name from a strobe light that flashed when the rocket was in flight. The ballistic cameras operated by Durrenberger could record these flashes, which allowed the computation of exacting trajectory data for the very small rocket.

As Durrenberger moved up in responsibility, he made larger impacts at White Sands. He assisted in the development and design of the BC-4 very precise ballistic camera system used at White Sands and elsewhere. He became chief of a section of 60 employees charged with using optical instruments such as ultrahigh speed cameras to obtain performance data on missiles launched at White Sands.

In 1957, the Smithsonian Institute gathered people such as Durrenberger from various agencies to help design instrumentation to obtain data on satellites. The Soviets launched Sputnik in October 1957. Durrenberger assisted in developing and manufacturing the Baker Nunn Satellite Tracking Cameras that were placed around the world to track Sputnik and follow-on satellites.

Jed, retired from White Sands in 1980 and living in Las Cruces, is still an active ASLC Director.



## Cares and Concerns

As some of you may have already heard, **Scotty Murrell** has been getting treatment for cancer of the larynx. He is now in Clovis in his sisters house and no longer taking chemo. He could use your prayers, thoughts and cards. Cards and notes can be sent to him care of Betty Hicks, 1219 N. Merriwether St., Clovis, NM 88101-5652.

Also while in London, England, **Walter Haas** fell and broke his hip, requiring a partial hip replacement. He is now here in Las Cruces at the Retirement/Nursing facility at the corner of Northrise and Roadrunner before you stop by to visit him, give them a call at 521-1352 to make sure he is able to see you. Cecil Post has been to visit him and he is able to get up out of the wheel chair and slowly move around with a walker. Things are looking up for him.

Another member, **Jed Durrenberger** had some surgery today to remove a cancerous growth on his head. I understand that he did real well and is home. Due to the bandages on his head, it is hard for him to hear on the telephone right now, so it would be best to send him a card. His address is Jed Durrenberger , PO Box 1655, Las Cruces, NM 88004.

Walter and Jed have been with the society since it's beginning in 1952 and Scotty has been with the Society for as long as anyone can remember. ... *Richard Jones*

## Astrophotography Contest Announced ! ...submit by August 31

ALBUQUERQUE - The *LodeStar Astronomy Center* and *The Albuquerque Astronomical Society (TAAS)* have announced their co-hosting of the third annual "*Astro-Images of New Mexico: Portraits from the Foothills of Space*" astrophotography contest and exhibition. The contest invites amateur photographers to submit their celestial images for an exhibition celebrating the beauty of New Mexico's skies. Entries must be postmarked or hand-delivered, by August 31, to *Karen Keese, LodeStar Astronomy Center, 1801 Mountain Road NW, Albuquerque NM 87104*. Hand-carried entries may be delivered to the security desk at the *Museum of Natural History & Science, 1801 Mountain Road NW*. For more information, contact Karen Keese at 505-841-5972 or [pr@taas.org](mailto:pr@taas.org).

## LOOKING AHEAD

### Enchanted Skies Star Party Gets Bigger and Better for 2004! October 5-9, 2004

The Enchanted Skies Star Party is adding several exciting new features for 2004, including a unique opportunity for a night of observing at an elevation of 10,000 feet. In addition, we're hosting three new hands-on workshops designed to give you added skills to enhance your enjoyment of astronomy. We'll continue our decade-long tradition of presenting outstanding lectures by leading professional and amateur astronomers, and of course, we'll once again gather at Socorro County's Pound Ranch for a night of great food, Southwestern entertainment and excellent, dark-sky observing. Our star party is expanding to five days, running from Tuesday, October 5, thru Saturday, October 9, 2004. <http://www.socorro-nm.com/starparty/>

### 21st ANNUAL OKIE-TEX Star Party October 9 - 16 , 2004

The Oklahoma City Astronomy Club Is Pleased To Announce Okie-Tex Star Party. The Okie-Tex Star Party started as a weekend retreat for members of our club has now grown to a star party of national and international fame! Okie-Tex is consistently ranked as one of the TOP TEN star parties in the nation! How to Get There Camp Billy Joe, which is on the outskirts of Kenton, Oklahoma, is located 37 miles west of Boise City on State Highway 325. For Brochure and Registration forms, updates and additional information. Please check our web site at <http://www.okie-tex.com> ...Sincerely, Larry Beatty Star Party Coordinator

## Renaissance Faire 2004?

Last years Renaissance Fair was a success! Do we want to participate again this year? Do you have any ideas as to how we should participate? If you have other ideas on what we could do, or have resources to carry out any of the ideas above, please contact the Renaissance Faire Committee - John McCullough, Cindy Sellards or Richard Jones, or better still join us on this committee. The Fair is getting close and if we plan to do something we need to decide what it will be and start working out the details.

## MEMBERSHIP in the ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY of Las CRUCES, offers:

Frequent observing sessions and parties; Opportunities to work on club and public educational projects and the ASLC Bulletin, our monthly newsletter, plus the quarterly A.L. Reflector, newsletter of the Astronomical League. Also, as an ASLC member you are entitled to the \$10 club discounted rate on subscriptions to Sky and Telescope magazine. To join the ASLC, or renew membership; your dues are only, \$35.00 per year. For those who opt to receive this BULLETIN electronically, a \$5.00 discount will apply. The optional club discounted *Sky and Telescope* presently adds \$33.00, totaling \$68 or \$63 per year. At either of these rates, mail dues, payable to **A.S.L.C.** with application form or a note to:

**Treasurer ASLC, PO Box 921, Las Cruces, NM 88004**

**Sky & Tel. subscribers MUST** submit their renewal through the Society Treasurer for the special club rate.

To avoid a lapse in delivery, this must be done when S&T sends their reminder, 4 months in advance.

**Members so equipped are encouraged to receive this BULLETIN electronically.**

## CALENDAR August - September 2004

<b>New Moon:</b>	August 16/Monday	September 14/Tuesday
<b>Public Star Parties:</b> La Llarona Park	Aug 7 Saturday	Sept 4 Saturday
<b>Dark Sky Gatherings:</b> Upham DSO site	Aug 14 Saturday	Sept 11 Saturday
<b>Moongazes:</b> International Delights Café	Aug 21 Saturday	Sept 25 Saturday
Aug 27/Fri	<b>Regular Meeting</b> 730 pm DABCC <i>NAKED EYE TRANSIT! Venus</i> from Bay City SP, MI	
Sep 3 /Fri	<b>Cloudcroft Star Party September 3 - Help?</b> Contact Jackie Diehl <a href="mailto:jdiehl@nso.edu">jdiehl@nso.edu</a>	
Sep 10-11	<b>WSSP VI; White Sands Star Party.</b> <a href="http://www.zianet.com/wssp/">http://www.zianet.com/wssp/</a>	
Sep 22/We	<b>Autumnal Equinox</b> 4:30 pm <a href="http://weather.wsmr.army.mil/astro.htm">http://weather.wsmr.army.mil/astro.htm</a>	
Sep 24/Fri	<b>Regular Meeting</b> 730 pm DABCC <b>Prog. TBA; Business; Approval of nominations</b> for 2005	
Oct 5-9	<b>ESSP XI; Enchanted Skies Star Party</b> <a href="http://www.socorro-nm.com/starparty/">http://www.socorro-nm.com/starparty/</a>	
Oct 9-16	<b>21st ANNUAL OKIE-TEX Star Party</b> <a href="http://www.okie-tex.com">http://www.okie-tex.com</a>	
Oct 31/Su	<b>Mountain Standard Time Resumes</b> 01:00 Set your timepiece <i>back</i> one hour!	
Nov 6-7	<b>Renaissance Faire</b> <a href="http://www.zianet.com/daac/renfaire.htm">http://www.zianet.com/daac/renfaire.htm</a>	

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