

# STAR FIELDS

NEWSLETTER OF THE AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON, INC.

Vol. 3, No. 6

June 1992

## ***OUR JUNE MEETING...***

Thursday, June 11, 1992, 8 p.m.  
Phillips Auditorium, Harvard-Smithsonian  
Center for Astrophysics

**A NEW SUBMILLIMETER INTERFEROMETRIC ARRAY (SMA)** to be operated by the CfA will be the subject of this month's talk by Dr. Eric Silverberg. The SMA, consisting of six 8-meter dishes, will be assembled across the road from our clubhouse before the array is sent to Mauna Kea, Hawaii for permanent installation. Dr. Silverberg received his PhD in astronomy from the University of Maryland. He worked for 13 years at the University of Texas in charge of the Lunar Laser Ranging program. He is currently the CfA director of the SMA project.

Join us for a 5:45 p.m. pre-meeting dinner with our speaker at the Changsho restaurant, 1712 Mass Avenue, Cambridge.

## ***MAY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS...***

The May meeting had a large turnout of some 78 members and friends to hear TV Meteorologist, Bruce Schwoegler, deliver an animated, witty, and humorous dissertation on TV, education, philosophy, and yes, the weather. He showed two videos; one of a tornado shot from a traffic helicopter in Minnesota that was absolutely spell binding, and the other an educational one he made to explain to young people how highs and lows make the weather. After the talk, our regular business meeting with its usual reports was held. Phil Rounseville gave the shop report in the absence of Greg Chase. Bernie Volz thanked all those who participated in Astronomy Day. Peter Bealo announced that we may receive a donation of an 18-ft. radar dome for our 20-inch scope observatory. Marlon Hochull indicated that the Astronomical League has available a club liability insurance for \$389 a year. A discussion was held as to whether we should buy this insurance, no vote was taken until more information was obtained. John Reed announced that the current issue of Mercury magazine is devoted to meteorites. Marlo Motta said that his 32-inch mirror is now fully ground and is ready for polishing. Guests, Ray Burke and Joe Zuraw of the 5A's, sold raffle tickets and T-Shirts to benefit the Arunah Hill project. Ed Dougherty demonstrated the club's 6-inch Maksutov with its new CAT installed. Finally, Dick Koollsh, member of the nominating committee, presented the slate of officers to be elected in June (see page 3).

## ***THE NIGHT SNATCHERS...***

The lights of the city keep shining, keep coming. On a nightly sojourn in the not too distant future, I will glance across a field, above the tree line to the south or west, and there the glow will hover in the horizon like some force straight out of science fiction. The invasion of the night snatchers is imminent. Already circles of vaporish metallic light glow interminably above houses and barns in the vicinity like an advance guard. When every step you take in the dark becomes visible; when all your surroundings and possessions appear protected in such deadly silver light: when you have sacrificed the dark night of the soul for a Big Brother light designed to ease your fears, deny your dreams--then you are lost for certain. The night finally has been vanquished. And the country of darkness lives no more.

—Meditations on a Small Lake, Norbert Blie,  
Ellis Press, Granite Falls, MN 58241.

## ***THINGS YOU MAY WANT TO KNOW...***

DR. ERIC CHAISSON, a recent Lowell Lectures speaker and well-known for his many popular writings, will be leaving the Hubble Space Telescope Science Institute this summer. He will be joining Tufts University as director of the H. Dudley Wright Center for Innovation in Science Education.

THE WALLACE PLANETARIUM in Fitchburg has reopened its doors after being dormant for several years. As part of the Wallace Civic Center Complex, the planetarium has a Spitz projector and is housed in a 40 ft. dome, unique because of its gold exterior. Ron Hurley is the planetarium's director. Public shows are given on Saturdays at 2 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m., and Thursday nights at 7:30 p.m. The planetarium is located at 1000 Johnfitch Highway in Fitchburg, 508-343-7900.

THE BOSTON MUSEUM OF SCIENCE needs volunteers for a variety of programs. If you are interested contact the Volunteer Services office at 617-589-0380. Currently, four ATMoB members are volunteers in the Exhibit Interpreter program: Phil Shutt, Barry DeCristofano, Ted Kochanski, and Ted Poulos.

CLUB LIABILITY INSURANCE PLAN (CLIP) is being offered by the AL through Albert H. Wohlers & Co., Park Ridge, IL for an annual premium of \$389. Details of the coverage will be posted at the June meeting. For your info, our clubhouse lease with MIT includes two sections concerning this issue: Section 9: Tenant understands and agrees that it shall be his own obligation to insure his personal property. Section 12:

Tenant shall indemnify Landlord against all liabilities, damages and other expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees, which may be imposed upon, incurred by, or asserted against Landlord by reason of (a) any failure on the part of Tenant to perform or comply with any covenant required...under this lease, or (b) any injury to person or loss of or damage to property sustained or occurring on the Leased Premises on account of or based upon the act, omission, fault, negligence or misconduct of any person whomsoever other than Landlord.

### **ATMoB ACTIVITIES...**

ASTRONOMY DAY ACTIVITIES at the BMOS were attended by about 20 ATM'ers—dedicated amateurs who gave up a Saturday to promote astronomy! LISA CACOULIDIS, RICHARD BURRIER JR., DANIEL FELDKHUN, and PAT KELLY demonstrated mirror grinding. Lisa also provided signs that described the steps in the process. JACK FLANAGAN showed off a 8-inch reflector with the classic 'Boston' equatorial mount; PHIL ROUNSEVILLE displayed his Gregorian, DENNIS MILLON an all brass 3-inch Clark refractor; and JOHN REED his dual 6-inch scope. KEN FYE provided a video, a slide show, and album of astro photos that he took and darkroom processed for some unique affects. Talks in Wright Theater by MARIO MOTTA, BERNIE VOLZ, and TED POULOS were well attended. ATMoB members and regular museum volunteers, BARRY DeCRISTOFANO and TED KOCHANSKI, wheeled their cart of models and props into the museum halls to introduce astronomy to visitors. Although the weather forecast and the day's beginning were gloomy, it cleared out in the afternoon and the roof-top star party was held in the evening. Scopes were set up for public observing by ATM'ers: MARIO MOTTA, BERNIE VOLZ, GEORGE ROBERTS, PHIL ROUNSEVILLE, JOHN REED, ED BUDREAU, and GARY WALKER (hope we haven't missed anyone). Noreen Grice, Education Coordinator for the planetarium, sent the ATMoB a letter thanking us for again helping to make Astronomy Day an important event at the museum.

A RADOME FOR OUR OBSERVATORY has been donated by Essco Corporation of Concord, MA thanks to the efforts of PETER BEALO. It is a geodetic type dome 18-feet high assembled from 55 triangular sections. The unit must be disassembled for transport to the clubhouse. Scaffolding will be required to both disassemble and reassemble the dome. Also, some means of rotating the dome and providing a slit and shutter arrangement must be improvised. A vote will be taken at the June meeting on whether the club wants to accept this donation.

THE 'SOLAR ALPHA-HYDROGEN ORGY' and pot luck supper held at the Clubhouse on Saturday, May 23 was attended by some 25 members and guests. Several solar scopes were setup and the sun provided some activity for the observers. David Huestis of the RI

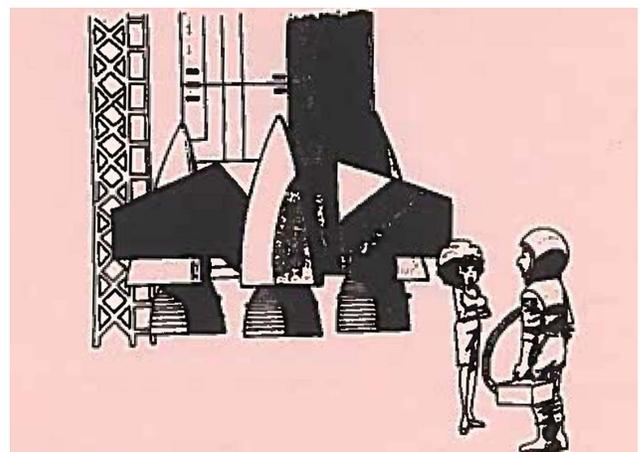
Skyscrappers attended with several students from his Museum of Science class. The food was reportedly good and plentiful. Special thanks goes to Cindy and Ed Dougherty who made three visits to the clubhouse before the event to cut the grass and clean up the clubhouse.

JOHN STANSFIELD has been teaching a meteorology and astronomy class at Sunset Heights Elementary School in Nashua since January. He has a group of ten 4th through 6th grade students who are interested in one or both subjects. John is currently in the astronomy half of the course which consists of six classroom sessions—one with solar observing. The course will wind up in June with one telescope observing session in the evening. In addition to the above program, John gave a presentation on solar eclipses to all the 4th graders of the same school. He used the new video "Eyes on Hawaiian Skies" as the centerpiece of his discussion. Besides footage of the 1991 eclipse, the video included how eclipses occur and scenes and descriptions of some of the Mauna Kea telescopes. A question and answer session followed the video.

ATMoB BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS. In addition the correction of typographical errors in the By-Laws, the following amendments are propose to bring the By-Laws into line with our actual practices. These amendments will be voted on at our July meeting.

Article V, Section 3: Membership Dues: ...Upon receipt by the Treasurer of payment in full of the dues owed by a Regular Member for the current fiscal year of the corporation plus any fees for optional publications, application shall be made to the appropriate publications for subscriptions in the name of such member. Payment for all such subscriptions shall be made by the Treasurer from the funds of the corporation.

Article VIII, Executive Board, Section 3, Meetings: A regular meeting of the Executive Board may be held, at the behest of the President, either before or after each regular meeting of the members of the corporation



**"And what am I supposed to do while you're gallivanting around Mars?"**

provided an Executive Board quorum is present.

Article IX, Committees, Section 1, Permanent Committees: There shall be two permanent committees of the corporation as follows: Workshop and Observing Committee. --Ted Poulos

OUR ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS will take place at our June meeting. The nominating committee (Gary Walker, Chairman, Ed Wallner, and Dick Koolish) have selected the following candidates for club officers:

Bernard Volz	President
Marlo Motta	Vice President
Ted Poulos	Secretary
John Samolyk	Membership Sec.'
Anthony Costanzo	Treasurer
Anna Hillier	Members at Large
Peter Bealo	

THE ATMob WELCOME the following new members:

Irene James	Lexington, MA
Peter Lou	Weston, MA
Koula Photion	Peabody, MA

A REPORTER from the Lowell Sun newspaper visited the clubhouse on Saturday, May 30 and interviewed Marlon Hochull for a forthcoming story on the ATMob. In view of this, we may have many more guests at the clubhouse on our Monthly Observing Night, June 20th. Therefore, Marion asks that members make a special effort to come to the clubhouse that evening with their scopes.

### ***ATMOb MEMBER PROFILE...***

John Samolyk, our soon to be new Membership Secretary, is a relatively new member but one who has contributed to club activities by being a member of the ALCON 91 committee and organizing the Baxter Dark Skies trips. He hails from Middletown, CT where as a teenager he became interested in astronomy. An amateur astronomer and neighbor, Don Chase, gave John his first views of the Moon, Saturn, M57 etc. through a 6-inch scope. This spurred John on to make his own 6-inch and gain the experience to later build a 12.5-inch, f/8 Dobsonian that won 1st prize in optical excellence at the 1990 Stellafane convention. John says one of his special talents is "finding new, expensive, and fun hobbies!" He currently enjoys hiking, backpacking, and SCUBA diving. A graduate of the University of Connecticut in electrical engineering, John is presently employed as a Systems Engineer at GTE in Waltham.

### ***WHY STAR FIELDS IS SO COLORFUL THIS MONTH...***

To remind you that your annual ATMob membership renewal notice is on the back page of this issue. You will also be receiving a Sky & Telescope renewal notice shortly after June 7. NOTE that S&T has raised its price from \$18 to \$20 (still \$7 under normal subscription) and it is now an OPTION. If you choose the S&T option you

will also be eligible for a 10% discount on all Sky Publishing products.

Regular ATMob membership dues is \$17 and with the S&T option, \$37. Please return the included renewal form (with the address label) and your S&T form (if you choose this option) with your payment before July 31 to assure continuance of your membership and S&T.

Examine your mailing label carefully. Some members have credits from 1992 and these credits are marked on the label. Be sure and make any address or telephone number changes necessary on the renewal form.

We apologize to new members who have half-year memberships and may be surprised by a renewal notice so soon. Regrettably, the long lead times for subscription renewals makes it necessary to send out these notices so early. If you have any questions about renewal procedures and policies, please send me a note and I will do my best to satisfy you.

--John Samolyk, Membership Secretary

**ATMOb OBSERVER GUIDES:** Members who have volunteered to provide one-on-one observing assistance to anyone requesting it are: DICK KOOLISH, Arlington, MA (617-646-6086) STEVE MOCK, Somerville, MA (617-625-5670)

### ***MARKETPLACE...***

FOR FREE Sky & Telescope back issues from 1983 thru 1992. Contact Faye Borison, 617-527-3630.

### ***ASTRO-TRIVIA...***

DIAMONDS occur in many types of meteorites. They are formed from embedded graphite by the high-temperature, high pressure shock such as that caused by collisions between asteroids in space or by impact of the meteorite hitting the Earth. Diamonds formed in this way are relatively large, 0.1 to 1.0 mm across.

In 1967, Edward Anders of the University of Chicago isolated diamonds from the Allende carbonaceous chondrite. These diamonds are small--usually less than 5-6 mm in diameter. The Allende meteorite is of the unshocked type; it shows no evidence of a collision in space. Therefore, the diamonds must have formed outside the solar system before the meteoroid was formed, and the diamonds entered the solar system as fully formed grains.

Current theories hold that these diamonds were formed by a complex process in the outer shell of a carbon star. They were then either swept away by the stellar wind or thrown out by a star as it passed through its planetary nebula phase.

ABOUT 100 TO 1000 TONS of meteoritic material falls on the earth daily. If this same flux persisted throughout the Earth's 4.5 billion year history, it would yield a layer of meteoritic material about five feet thick.

**COMING EVENTS...**

- Thru June MYSTERY OF THE DARK MATTER and NIGHTSCAPES: A TOUR OF THE NEW ENGLAND SKY at the Hayden Planetarium. For more info, call 617-723-2500.
- June 18 CfA MONTHLY OBSERVATORY NIGHTS, "Studying Atoms to Learn About Stars" by Peter Smith, CfA, 8 p.m., Phillips Auditorium, CfA, Cambridge, MA. For more info call 617-495-7481.
- June 20 ATMob MONTHLY OBSERVING NIGHT at the clubhouse with Maksutov training beginning at 7 p.m. For more info, call Ed Dougherty, 508-458-8857.

**JULY STAR FIELDS DEADLINE...**

June 26th is the deadline for items to be included in the July issue of *STAR FIELDS*. Mail or phone your contribution to Ted Poulos, 18 Cushing Rd., Brookline, MA 02146 (617-566-5127).

----- Cut here and mail form together with mailing label panel -----

**ATMoB MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Club dues Sept. 1, 1992 to Sept 1, 1993	\$17.00
Sky & Telescope magazine (optional)	\$20.00
Astronomy magazine (optional)	\$16.00
Tax-Deductible Contribution (optional)	
Total	
Check No.	
Date	
S&T Card Enclosed (Y/N)	

Make checks payable to "Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston, Inc." and send to John Samolyk, 65 Court Street, Medford, MA 02155. Please include the "Sky & Telescope" renewal notice if available.

Deadlines: July 31 for S&T Nov. issue; Sept. 15 for the optional magazine subscriptions for 1993; Dec. 1, 1992 is the end of the ATMob renewal grace period.

**THANK YOU!**

**FIRST CLASS**



AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON  
 c/o John Samolyk  
 65 Court Street  
 Medford, MA 02155