



**STAR  
FIELDS**

NEWSLETTER OF THE AMATEUR  
TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON

Vol. 5, No. 7                      July 1994

## Our July Meeting...

Thursday, July 14, 1994  
Phillips Auditorium, Harvard-Smithsonian  
Center for Astrophysics

THE JULY meeting will be on club member activities. If you would like to share some project, photos, or experience with other members of the club, now is your opportunity to do so. Let us see those eclipse slides you took this past May. If you would like to contribute, plan to make your presentation about 10-15 minutes, and notify me as soon as possible to schedule the meeting presentations (remember, if you do not volunteer to speak, I will be forced to show you yet MORE slides of MY activities!). Call me, Mario Motta, at 617-334-3648.

Please join us at a pre-meeting dinner at the Changsho Restaurant, 1712 Mass. Avenue, Cambridge. Please meet at the restaurant by 6:00 PM.

## June Meeting Highlights...

Our June meeting was attended by some 45 members and guests. John Samolyk, our out going Membership Secretary, reported that our membership stands at 255, 39 less than this time last year. He received applause of appreciation for his two year service to the club. Our Treasurer, Tony Costanza, reported sales of optical glass, eclipse filters and T-Shirts have contributed nicely to the club treasury. Our annual election for the ATMob Executive Board was held by voice vote. The membership voted unanimously for the officers recommended by the Nominating Committee. Our new President, Mario Motta, asked for a second round of applause for out going President, Bernie Volz, who has done an excellent job the past two years. Bernie reminded us that it is membership renewal time. He also read a letter from the Boston Museum of Science thanking the club for its participation in the recent Star Party for the Egleston Square neighborhood group. The BMOS is donating \$75.00 to the club as a tangible sign of

their appreciation. The membership voted to hold a July meeting. Finally the meeting was topped off with a great talk by Steve O'Meara on weird atmospheric sights that have been observed. The slides of these phenomena were spectacular.

Special thanks to Ted Poulos for taking last month's minutes -SPB.

## President's Message...

I wish to thank all members of the ATM's for the honor of being elected to serve as president of this fine organization for the next year. I hope that I am able to perform to a level that justifies your trust in me. The ATM's of Boston will be 60 years old this year, and it has grown and prospered because of the talents and energies of many dedicated members all of whom share a love of astronomy and an appreciation of the beauty and majesty of the universe around us.

The sense of fulfillment and wonder after a night of peering through your telescope at distant vistas of the cosmos is difficult to describe to non amateurs, but that is precisely what we should be doing. If every member of the club could share his or her joy of discovery and wonderment of the universe about us with another non amateur, not only will we discover a sense of purpose and fulfillment, but we will be initiating another fellow being into the joys of astronomy. Please take the time to show a galaxy's swirls, a nebula's soft glow, or a crater on the moon to friend, family member, or neighbor. You will be richly rewarded and your friend will be enlightened and gratified. I especially ask that we all try to spend some time with children (especially your own) and pass on your love of astronomy to them. Children are intensely curious and innately interested in astronomy. Though most will not go on to become astronomers, exposure to you and your hobby may spark an interest in science in general and lead to better students and grades in school. At the very least the child will grow up to appreciate a hobby you love. On a more practical level, if we do not develop this interest in children, our club is doomed to a future of geriatric meetings sharing old memories! For all of the above, I ask that we have more volunteers at star parties. Even better, why not organize one yourself for your community or local school?

I would now like to thank all former members and officers of the club who have made this organization what it is, one of the largest and most respected amateur astronomy organizations in the country. A special thanks must go to our immediate past president Bernie Volz, who over the past two years has worked tirelessly to improve our organization. This talented and organized individual has moved and expanded our club in new and exciting directions. If I can only manage to do half as much in twice the time, I will consider my term as President a success. Let us all thank Bernie for a job well done!

The past few years have seen enormous growth and activity within the club and is most evident at the clubhouse. I am gratified to see so much activity. Many members and students are grinding mirrors again. There has been almost continuous reconstruction of the clubhouse itself. Saturday nights are busy with many observers in attendance and now we even have our own aluminizing chamber. None of this could have happened without the energetic efforts of many members, But a special thanks must go to Ed Dougherty as a prime mover. If you haven't been to our clubhouse recently, I would urge you to do so, as it is a center of energy and excitement these days.

In summary, we now are proud members of an exciting and dynamic organization and I urge you to get involved and enjoy both the club and the hobby we all enjoy.

Mario E. Motta, MD.

## Membership Renewals...

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS are due. Last month's *Star Fields* had a renewal form. Please complete and return it, with your payment, as soon as possible to Mark Bruckner (address is on the form). Do it today so you don't forget!!

Please note that you may now also purchase CCD Astronomy through the club. Existing subscriptions will simply be extended for 12 months.

If you are subscribing to one or more magazines, please note that deadline dates (on the form) to make sure your subscription will not lapse.

## Space Day Volunteers ...

WE NEED volunteers for the Museum of Science in July. On Space Day, July 23 (Saturday), we have been asked to man some display tables with exhibits. If you can contribute anything (mirror grinding, telescope building, photography, etc.), please call John Reed at 617-861-8031 as he will be coordinating this event. If you cannot think of anything I am sure John can find something for you!

STAR PARTY at the Museum of Science, Friday July 22. We need as many telescopes as possible as the museum will be advertising this event and a large crowd is expected. This is a great way to show off your astronomy knowledge and your altruism at the same time. Please call me at 617-334-3648 to volunteer. Come even if all you have is binoculars, or even to point out constellations.

- Mario Motta

## Tal's Movie Review...

WYATT EARP rates a "Ho-Hum", but ten minutes into the movie, there is a view of a full moon over a Missouri cornfield that had Tal on the edge of his seat! That view of the moon, with craters on the backside visible, could only have been seen from a spacecraft!

## Announcements...

WGBH WILL be broadcasting two space related shows this month. On July 17th, from 12:00PM until 6:00PM, six hours of the Apollo 11 lunar landing will be shown in it's original broadcast form from 25 years ago. Then on July 20th, from 8:00PM until 11:30PM, three programs will be shown: A summary of the missions to the moon, Apollo 13, and a summary of data collected on the Shoemaker-Levy 9/Jupiter encounter.

Anyone who has a good VCR is requested to make a high quality tape of the programs and forward them to John Reed for use at the July 23rd Space Day exhibit.

I AM calling a meeting of the Executive Board for Sunday July 24, 1994. The meeting will be at my home in Lynnfield at 7:00 p.m. I ask that all Executive Board members attend. If any member has an issue that they feel needs to be addressed, please notify any of the Executive Board members to place it on the agenda. - Mario Motta

THIS YEAR is the 60th anniversary of the Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston. In my research, I have found notices stating that the club did indeed have at least an annual get together during the World War II years. Picnic notices were posted in 1940, '43 and '44 issues of *The Sky* and *Sky and Telescope* magazines.

- Anna Hillier, Historian

TWO TALKS will be given free of charge at the Museum of Science. At 3:30PM, Tuesday, July 19th, Kelly Beatty of *Sky & Telescope* will present "Awaiting the Crash" and Sam Palmer of the CFA will give a Saturday, July 23rd talk entitled "The Real Extraterrestrial - Comets, Meteors and Asteroids". Both events begin at 3:30PM in the Cahners Theater. Tickets can be obtained by sending a SASE to Space Week Lecture, Hayden Planetarium, Science Park, Boston, MA 02114-1099.

ATMOB APPAREL - Caps, T-shirts, and sweatshirts imprinted with our logo, are available for purchase at meetings and by mail (postage extra). All proceeds go to the ATMOb. We offer yellow T-shirts with a blue logo for \$10, gray sweatshirts/blue logo for \$18 and blue and white caps with a blue logo for \$6.

- Ted Poulos

## Clubhouse News...

WE NEED several air conditioners (central, window or any other type) for the clubhouse. We can even use pieces of air conditioners, they need not be functional. We have people who can repair, rebuild or even construct working units from old parts. Remember, donations of this type are tax deductible.

A PROBLEM we believed to be solved has come up again. Now that warm weather is here we have a lot of faces at the clubhouse we have not seen for several months. These people do not realize that the Coke, Pepsi, juices, coffee and snacks at the clubhouse are NOT FREE and must be paid for when they are consumed. The money from the sale of these items is used to replaced the items taken and, to purchase supplies for the facility such as light bulbs, toilet paper, bug spray, soap, etc.. Through the winter months, a small profit was realized and we were in good shape. During the past six weeks, well over \$40 worth of supplies have been used and there is less money in the payment can than there was at the start of this period. Instead of there being a small profit, there is not enough money to buy replacements for the items used. If this problem is not resolved immediately, we will have to discontinue this service.

- Ed Dougherty

WE ARE sinking! Help is needed at the clubhouse. There are hundreds of small and large tasks that need to be done to keep the facility functioning. Presently, only about four people do all the work. If you can help, if you can hold a screwdriver, broom, paintbrush, hammer, saw, push a lawnmower or have any other skills, technical or non-technical; call Ed Dougherty (508-458-8857) or John Reed (617-861-8031).

### CLUBHOUSE SCHEDULE

July 2: Brucker, Milon, Mock, Volz  
July 9: Fill, Ledford, Beckley, Chase  
July 16: Volz, Johannson, Heller, Swedlow  
July 23: Suslowicz, Reed, Cichetti, Rounseville  
July 30: Green, Bruckner, Beckley, Budreau  
August 6: STELLAFANE!

## From The Editor...

ONE YEAR'S worth of *Star Fields* are behind me now and with that experience, you would figure I'd have the situation in hand getting this news letter out the door. Somehow that never seems to be the case. Once again I'm well past my own article submission deadline printed on the back of each issue and I'm pondering a variation of Einstein's relativity theory proving that if it wasn't for the last minute, nothing would get done...

However, it could be a lot worse. You see, I have a lot of help publishing *Star Fields*. Members such as Ted Poulos, Mario Motta, Anna Hillier, Tal Mentall, Kevin McCarthy and Brian Stone all have helped by submitting product reviews and articles. Bernie Volz and Ed Dougherty have regularly submitted ATMob happenings and clubhouse news items to *Star Fields* and, at least once a month, John Reed rings me up with tidbits for the announcements section. My wife, Jan, just walked up and asked if I'd like some tea, ice cream, etc.. I've help from all areas. Lets talk about my bride, she's helped tremendously by proof reading *Star Fields* along with addressing stamping and mailing all three hundred news letters once a month. They say when you marry a person, you marry their family. It looks like Jan got the ATMob...

So thanks to everyone who helped make this job easier than it should be. I'm looking forward to working with you and future writers in the coming year of *Star Fields*.

- Steve Beckwith

## Keep Looking Up...

YOU FIRST read about it in *Astronomy* or *Sky and Telescope* magazines. Then heard lectures and read more on it in the *Boston Globe* or *Time Magazine*. The club has sponsored observing lessons at the clubhouse and Ed Dougherty has reminded everyone since January at the monthly meetings to get ready for it. Now it is here! The Shoemaker-Levy-9/Jupiter encounter. Starting July 16th (UT) in southwestern skies everywhere.

The following are dates and times of strikes visible from North America. This information was pulled from *Sky & Telescope's* COMPUSERVE on line service (GO SKYTEL).

Fragment	Date (UT)	Time (UT)
B	July 17	2:34
F	July 18	0:12
R	July 21	5:31
U	July 21	21:52
V	July 22	3:44

Times take into account 42.5 minutes of light time from Jupiter to earth and are accurate to +/- 30 minutes. Position uncertainty is still uncertain large. Good observing!

- Steve Beckwith

## Summer Events...

STELLAFANE! August 5th-7th on Breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont. Talks, swap tables and telescope judging. Recent conventions have included Friday night tent pitching in torrential down pours followed by Saturday

night observing under crystal clear, steady night skies. Send SASE to P.O. Box 50, Belmont, MA. 02178 for information (or ask a club member...).

## For Sale...

4.25" f/26 Schiefspiegler. Professionally made by Lorraine Precision Optics and Dobbins Instrument Co. Finders: Telrad & 6x24. All metal square tube, black inside and out. Great small 'scope. \$625.00, optics only. Also, Celestron Super Polaris mount, dual axis drive. \$500. Duke Briscoe 617-259-9688 or briscoe@world.std.com.

### EXECUTIVE BOARD 1994-95

PRESIDENT: Mario Motta 617-334-3648  
VICE PRESIDENT: Peter Bealo 603-382-7039  
SECRETARY: Steve Beckwith 508-779-5227  
MEMBERSHIP: Mark Bruckner 617-648-4426  
TREASURER: Anthony Costanzo 508-521-5382

MEMBERS AT LARGE: Gary Walker 508-785-0352  
Dick Koolish 617-646-6086  
Phil Rounseville

HISTORIAN: Anna Hillier 617-861-8338

PAST PRESIDENTS: 1993-94 Bernard Volz  
1990-92 Marion Hochuli

### COMMITTEES

OBSERVING: Edward Dougherty 508-458-8857

### SEPTEMBER STAR FIELDS DEADLINE

August 27th is the deadline for items to be included in the September issue of *Star Fields*. Mail or phone your contributions to: Steve Beckwith, 195 Wilder Road, Bolton MA. 01740

## How to Find Us...

MEETINGS: Held the second Thursday of each month (September to July) at 8:00PM in Phillips Auditorium, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, 60 Garden St., Cambridge MA.

CLUBHOUSE: The Tom Britton Clubhouse is open every Saturday from mid-afternoon to late evening. It is the white farmhouse on the grounds of MIT's Haystack Observatory in Westford, MA. Take Rt. 3 North from Rt. 128 or Rt. 495 to exit 33 and proceed West on Rt. 40 for five miles. Turn right at the MIT Lincoln Lab, Haystack Observing at the Groton town line. Proceed to the farm house on the left side of the road. Since clubhouse attendance varies with the weather, it is wise to call in advance: 508-692-8708.

## Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston

FIRST CLASS