



STARE FIELDS

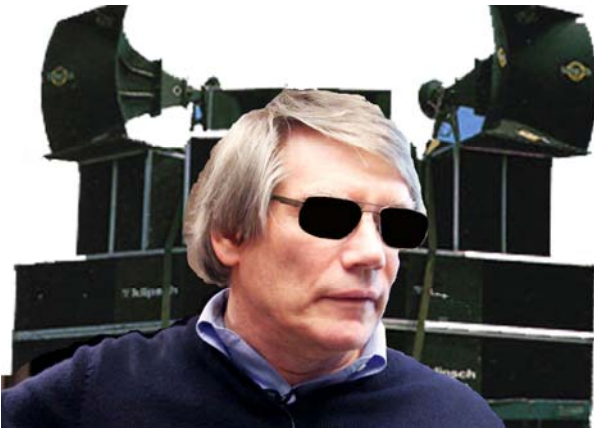
Newsletter of the
Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston
Including the Bon Bon Astronomical Club
Established in 1934
In the Interest of Telescope Use & Abuse

Vol. 26, No. 4A April Fools 2014

This Month's Meeting...

Tuesday, April 1st, 2014 at 12:00 AM
Phillips Candy House Auditorium
Harvey-Smite Center for Abysmal-physics
Cars will be towed from CfA lot during the meeting.

It's Cosmic



The speaker this month will be Dr. Alan (Cosmic) Goth, theoretical physicist, cosmologist and musician. Dr. Goth points out in interviews with the press that while growing up in New Jersey he developed a radioactive personality. People stayed away from him, so he stayed away from people. Someone once said to him, "Since light travels faster than sound, people appear bright until you hear them speak." As a result he grew up preferring to see the darker side of things. He enjoyed math, physics and astronomy in school, also music. Goth explains that the idea of inflation actually came to him while crafting some sonic mayhem music for his band Blackriver-Astronomy. Thinking about how to make the sounds he wanted really explode into the room, he had an "aha" moment, and realized he had the

answer to the question of what drove the universe into expansion.

Now he really wants to put inflation theory in the backseat and focus on getting more fans for his band. Cosmic said he is pleased that he was asked to present to ATMOB on this year's Black Thursday. He will speak about the ripples detected by the telescope Bicep2 and how they support his theory of inflation. He did however warn us that he is planning to wear his own style of clothing, including the pentagram he usually wears around his neck on a silver chain, to him a symbol of the golden ratio and the mathematical order of the universe. Please join us to witness this unusual talk.

Please join us for dinner with our speaker at 11:58 PM at the Yumshu Restaurant located at 1712 Massachusetts Ave. in our fair city, Cambridge, MA.

President's Message...

Spring is the blissful season. The bitter cold has retreated and the warm breezes caress our face. Spring allows us to look out of our Milky Way to the realm of the Galaxies. We humans are but a bug spot on the celestial windshield as our earth plows through the flotsam and jetsam of our solar system.

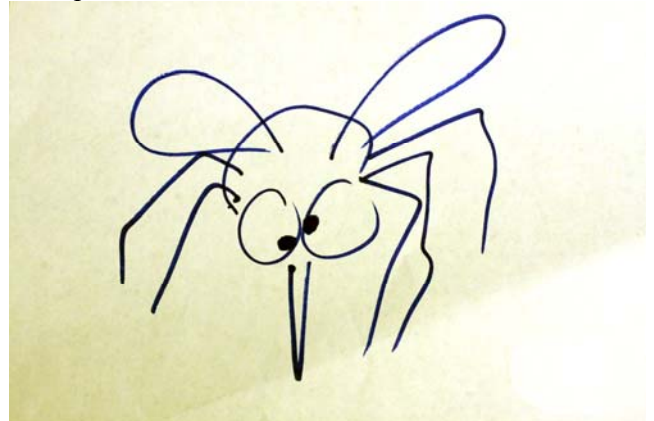
Oh, but soon the harbingers of doom arrive with the staccato of buzzing beasts. Buzzing at a frequency of 400 Hz, the sound of cruel torture waxes though the air giving us a shiver, knowing that the night will reveal its secrets.

As you gaze skyward to marvel at the heavens, your mouth opens in awe and snaps shut as you realize that a mosquito has flown in. The waltz of the sky becomes punctuated by the slapping of palms and the gagging and spitting out of vile creatures that inhabit the night.

The night sky delights the viewer as planets arc overhead in a celestial dance and the pirouetting and swinging of the body trying to escape the perpetual stinging torture that has befallen us.

Soon the night has turned against us and the legions of vile creatures have mounted an all out assault on our bodies. As we are running toward the shelter of the Clubhouse we should take a moment to contemplate our insignificance in the vast cosmos. The night is a wise teacher and philosopher. It tells us that the mosquito always wins.

~ Your Supreme Leader ~



Genus Anopheles Painintheneckus. Drawing by A.T.

March Meeting Minutes . . .



The Prototype Slothberg Mark I™

The March meeting of the Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston including the Bon Bon Astronomical Club featured Dr. Igor Slothberg, Professor of Astronomy at the Harvey-Smith Center for Abysmal-physics, speaking on “Rapid Fabrication of Telescope Mirrors.”

While completing research on the stroke patterns of amateur astronomers grinding and polishing mirrors, Dr. Slothberg discovered the optimum technique to fabricate the perfect mirror in short order.

His research involved inserting a chip into the brains of advanced mirror makers and measuring their neural patterns as they made their mirrors. Using Diffusion Tensor Imaging (DTI) he spent months reviewing the patterns and the corresponding hand motions. After the 6th month trying to correlate the hand motion with brain patterns he became bored and sped up the DTI images. To his amazement, the strokes that made the most difference were ones made in a fractal pattern.

Rather than using the age old technique of walking around the barrel and relying on a 1/3 stoke with random hand motions to smooth out the errors, Slothberg discovered that an “Exact Stroke Pattern™” (ESP™) should be applied instead. Using simulations, he discovered that if he removed 98% of the grinding strokes and only moved in a specific fractal pattern, a mirror maker could make a mirror in minutes instead of months.

His “Over the Barrel™ (OtB™)” technique is a combination of Fractal, Fractional Anisotropy, and Frontal Center-over-Center strokes. Slothberg realized that no human could reproduce those patterns consistently and at the speed required.

At the meeting, Dr. Slothberg unveiled his prototype mirror making machine. The Slothberg Mark I™ can fabricate a 10-inch spherical mirror in 15 minutes. The more complex shapes, such as the parabolic or hyperbolic mirrors, will take an extra .01 seconds. The device also has mirror coating capabilities which take an additional 5 minutes if you use the default settings. The prototype currently has only 3 coatings available: aluminum, silver and silver with an overcoat.



Slothberg Mark I™ menu options

Using a plain quartz mirror blank, Slothberg demonstrated the mirror making machine for the membership. He placed the blank into the device and selected the button for a spherical mirror. Amazingly, in exactly 15.01 minutes, a fully ground and polished parabolic mirror emerged. Using the club’s portable Focault tester we measured the mirror and determined that its wave front was an astounding 1/199 of a wave, just shy of the spec. Slothberg then placed the mirror back into the machine and in 6 minutes we had a fully cleaned and coated mirror. Dr. Slothberg apologized for the extra time in producing the mirror and promised that the next revision of the Slothberg Mark I™ will perform to specifications.

His next mirror machine, the Slothberg Mark II™ will fabricate mirrors up to 20-inches. His largest mirror making machine, the Slothberg Mark III™, will fabricate mirrors up to 39.9-inches. The Mark III development has been slow due to problems obtaining motors and actuators. Negotiations are in progress with the Large Telescope Consortium to get their surplus equipment.

Dr. Slothberg is currently running a long term trial on the brains of amateur astronomers to discover the mysteries of “aperture fever”. He appoligizes for any twitching that may occur while looking at larger and larger mirrors. He is still in need of subjects for his trial. Please contact him if you are interested.

~ Al. Giddy, The Editor ~

Clubhouse Report . . .



PODs on the Observing Field

To allow members to have an ownership stake at the Clubhouse, the Directors have installed a Personal Observing Domicile (POD) on each of the concrete pads.

Each POD is environmentally controlled and has the latest biometric interfaces to allow customization for the owner of the POD. The owner controls the POD with voice commands. As an example, "Open the POD bay door, HAL" will open the roof in 1 second.

Interior options include elbow rests and a hot tea or coffee dispenser.

To purchase a POD, contact The Committee. Custom paint colors are available, and each POD will have a 14 karat gold engraved name plate attached.

~ *The Committee* ~

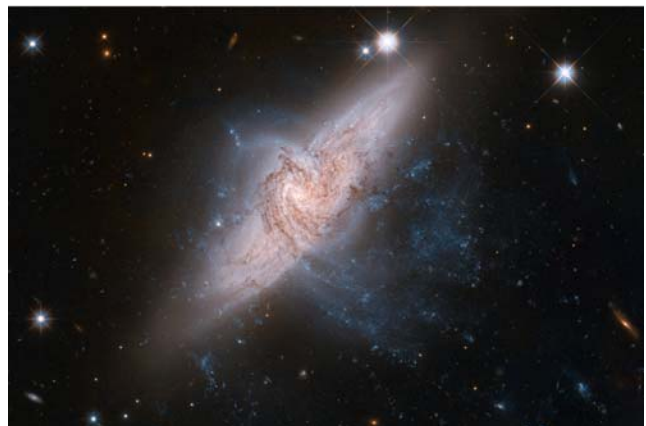
Clubhouse Saturday Schedule

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| April 5 | Closed – Snow Forecast |
| April 12 | Closed – Rain Forecast |
| April 19 | Closed – Mud Forecast |
| April 26 | Closed – 1 st Mosquito Forecast |

A New Member gets an Astrograph . . .



M83. E-10 Fibahashi, 10mm, f /0.001 scope. 10 minutes with a Point and shoot Cannon camera. Processing by Images Minus and GUMP. Image by Fred PDQ.



NGC 3314. Fibahashi, 10mm, f /0.001, Astrograph. 10 minutes with a Point and shoot Cannon camera. No processing necessary. Image by Fred PDQ.

Newsletter Corrections . . .

Editor: April 2014 Stare Fields: "There is no way you are going to pin this on me."

April Stare Fields deadline
Friday, April. 1st, 2015
Email articles to Al. Giddy at
newsletter@atmob.org

Way out and ridiculous stories
are not only welcome but encouraged.

Stare Fields is a parody of Star Fields and any relation to persons living or deceased is purely coincidental