



EPHEMERALS JUNE 2008

DATE	WHEN	WHAT & WHERE
6	7:00p	Night Hike @ NWRP
7	Dusk	Nightwatch @ Chippokes Plantation
14	11:00a	BBAA PICNIC & Meeting @ NWRP
14	7:00p	Garden Stars @ Norfolk Botanical Gardens ??????????
18	8:30p	Boardwalk Astronomy @ 24th Street Stage, Virginia Beach Oceanfront
27	Dusk	Skywatch @ NWRP Equestrian Area
SEE Y' ALL AT THE PICNIC!!!!		

Looking Up!

Well gang summer has officially started and the season of dripping scopes, bedewed objectives and eyepieces is upon us. Don't forget the "Off"! It's time to start targeting Hercules and the summer triangle once more.

First up this month is our annual picnic at NWRP. Don't forget that this replaces our usual monthly TCC club meeting and we usually include July's meeting with this one as well. So what better excuse can you have not to come June 14th to NWRP for fun, friends, and "water sports". And please don't forget that the canopy area is off limits to you water freaks. I promise a brief meeting during lunch. Maybe we will observe another special wedding day too. <G>

As we fan out for vacations and trips this summer, I suspect that many of us will visit various Star Parties both near and far. I'm hoping to at last visit Cherry Springs SP and a several others as time and spouse allow. I've got to shrug off the cloud curse that came with that new equipment ordered at NEAF. Who else out there is a guilty party? Please take pictures of your travels (Dale?) and bring them back to share at the regular meetings in September.

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Looks like our newest public outreach venue, "Boardwalk Astronomy" is a go after much consideration, meeting, and planning by your officers and representatives from the City of VB courtesy of Chuck Dibbs of the VB Planetarium. Three dates have been chosen (06/18, 07/23 & 08/14), all at the 24th street stage area. Check the May meeting minutes and the sign-up sheet on the Yahoo BBAA website database. Watch the News Letter's calendar for specific dates and times. And of course check the postings on the website often. This promises to possibly be one of our best ever events and will be strongly supported by Beach officials. It can only further our goal of "Bringing Astronomy to the People" and inspire both kids and adults alike to "look up".

Lastly, I can't forget the recent fun we all had at Kent's ECSP. Best skies (box wine) I have ever seen! While the skies may not have been perfect the company sure was and I look forward to fall's event.

If we do not see you at the picnic, I wish all a fun, healthy, and safe summer. And as always – CLEAR SKIES.

Bruce "Doc" Bodner

The Back Bay Amateur Astronomer's Observer

May's Meeting Minutes

There were 19 members and 2 visitors in attendance at the May 1st meeting held in room JC-12 at TCC's science building.

Meeting Attendance:

Benito Loyola, Jordan Bramble, Hunter Hughes, Bill McLean, Dale Carey, Dan Falvey, Bill Powers, Georgie June, Kenny Broun, Jeff Dunn, Don Ives, Jay Garrard, George Reynolds, Neill Alford, Steve Hamilton, Chuck Jagow, Matt Swingle, Bruce Bodner, Matt McLaughlin.

Guests -- Chuck Dibbs (Virginia Beach Public Schools Planetarium), Mike Eason (City of Virginia Beach).

Treasurers Report:

5/1/2008 \$5,173.03 Total \$1,830.80 Scholarship

Secretary's Report:

Reading of the March meeting minutes waived due to availability on the internet.

Astronomical League Coordinators Report:

Our club Alcor, Georgie June reported that Cliff Hedgepeth had 19 objects to go in order to finish up his Master Observer award.

RRRT:

No Report

Old Business:

None

New Business:

The majority of the meeting was spent listening to, and discussing, a proposal about doing Boardwalk Astronomy events this summer at the Virginia Beach oceanfront. The proposal was for BBAA to set up scopes at the boardwalk stage areas (24th street and/or 17th street were suggested). The event would be part of the city's summer event schedule at the oceanfront. Chuck Dibbs and Mike Eason presented the request to the club. Chuck described it as a good way for BBAA to advertise the club and fulfill our club mission of bringing astronomy to the people of Hampton Roads. Mike Eason spoke of the event as meshing with the city of Virginia Beach's goal of bringing family friendly type activities to the oceanfront, during the summer tourist season. BBAA would set up scopes, and show the public the Moon and other bright objects available that particular night.

Issues discussed were:

1. Parking.
2. Expected Attendance.
3. Issues concerning bringing optics to the salt and sand of the oceanfront.
4. Getting enough club members to support the event.
5. Liability Issues.

The proposed dates discussed were:

1. Wednesday, June 18th
2. Wednesday, July 23rd
3. Thursday, August 14th

A motion was presented and voted in favor of supporting this outreach event.

A signup list will be set up on BackBayAstro for those members wishing to participate. Look for more details concerning this event on BackBayAstro and Club emails. Chuck Jagow is the clubs POC for this event.

Club Meeting Presentation:

Dale Carey and Steve Hamilton presented short video clips.

In conclusion, the meeting adjourned around 9:15PM

Until Next Month, Clear Skies!!!

Matt McLaughlin

BIG NEWS BBAA!

I am pleased to announce that during the ECSP Mr. **Cliff Hedgepeth** completed the Herschel 400 list which qualifies him to be the BBAA's second recipient of the **MASTER OBSERVER AWARD!**

Yippee!!! Yippee!!! Yippee!!! Yippee!!!

The Master Observing Award is earned by completing at least 10 of the Astronomical Leagues observing programs. There are 5 required programs which Cliff completed which include Honorary Messier Club, Bino Messier Club, Lunar Club, Double Star Club, and the Herschel 400 Club. The other 5 programs Cliff chose to complete were the Globular Cluster Club, Open Cluster Club, Urban Club, Silver Caldwell Club, and the Constellations Hunters Club.

**Congratulations Cliff!
We're all super proud of you!**

The Back Bay Amateur Astronomer's Observer



Ozone, the Greenhouse Gas

Provided by The Jet Propulsion Laboratory

We all know that ozone in the stratosphere blocks harmful ultraviolet sunlight, and perhaps some people know that ozone at the Earth's surface is itself harmful, damaging people's lungs and contributing to smog.

But did you know that ozone also acts as a potent greenhouse gas? At middle altitudes between the ground and the stratosphere, ozone captures heat much as carbon dioxide does.

In fact, pound for pound, ozone is about 3000 times stronger as a greenhouse gas than CO₂. So even though there's much less ozone at middle altitudes than CO₂, it still packs a considerable punch. Ozone traps up to one-third as much heat as the better known culprit in climate change.

Scientists now have an unprecedented view of this mid-altitude ozone thanks to an instrument aboard NASA's Aura satellite called the Tropospheric Emission Spectrometer—"TES" for short.

Most satellites can measure only the total amount of ozone in a vertical column of air. They can't distinguish between helpful ozone in the stratosphere, harmful ozone at the ground, and heat-trapping ozone in between. By looking sideways toward Earth's horizon, a few satellites have managed to probe the vertical distribution of ozone, but only to the bottom of the stratosphere.

Unlike the others, TES can measure the distribution of ozone all the way down to the heat-trapping middle altitudes. "We see vertical information in ozone that nobody else has measured before from space," says Annmarie Eldering, Deputy

Principal Investigator for TES.

The global perspective offered by an orbiting satellite is especially important for ozone. Ozone is highly reactive. It is constantly being created and destroyed by photochemical reactions in the atmosphere and by lightning. So its concentration varies from region to region, from season to season, and as the wind blows.

Data from TES show that ozone's heat-trapping effect is greatest in the spring, when intensifying sunlight and warming temperatures fuel the reactions that generate ozone. Most of ozone's contribution to the greenhouse effect occurs within 45 degrees latitude from the equator.

Increasing industrialization, particularly in the developing world, could lead to an increase in mid-altitude ozone, Eldering says. Cars and coal-fired power plants release air pollutants that later react to produce more ozone.

"There's concern that overall background levels are slowly increasing over time," Eldering says. TES will continue to monitor these trends, she says, keeping a careful eye on ozone, the greenhouse gas.

Learn more about TES and the science of ozone at tes.jpl.nasa.gov/. Kids can get a great introduction to good ozone and bad ozone at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/tes/gases.

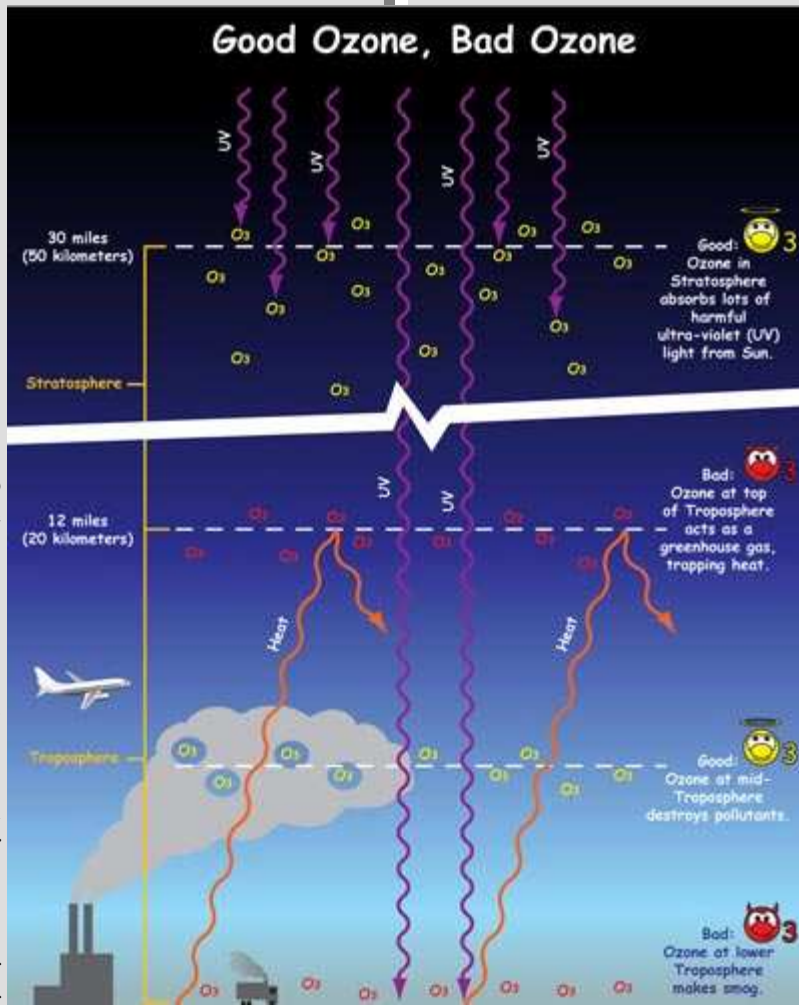


Image Caption:

Ozone behaves differently at different altitudes in the atmosphere. High in the stratosphere and at mid-troposphere it has positive effects on life at the surface. At the top of the troposphere ozone is a greenhouse gas and at the surface it makes smog.

The Back Bay Amateur Astronomer's Observer

BBAA INFO

The BBAA usually meet the first Thursday of every month. While school is in session we meet at the VA Beach TCC campus. However, since school is not in session during the summer the June meeting will be held in conjunction with our annual BBAA Summer Picnic on Saturday June 14th starting at 11:00 AM. The picnic is held out in Chesapeake at the Northwest River Park. Detailed directions are just below!

WHERE IS THE MEETING?

This month the meeting will be held during the annual summer picnic at the Northwest River Park which is located at 1733 Indian Creek Road in Chesapeake. Watch for brown and white signs marking the route to the park. Driving directions are as follows:

- Take Interstate 64 towards Chesapeake.
- Take Exit 291-B. Once you take the exit, traverse to the left two lanes which become the Chesapeake Expressway the 168 Bypass South. Follow this for approximately 8 miles.
- Take exit 8-B, Hillcrest Parkway East, which is the last exit before the toll bridge. Continue to the second light.
- At Battlefield Blvd turn right on 168 S. You will go past the Hardees & through Hickory.
- In approximately 3.4 miles you will turn left onto Indian Creek Road. There will be a convenience store here on the corner.
- Follow Indian Creek Road approximately 4.2 miles to the entrance of the Northwest River Park on your right.

Once inside the park, bear to the left and look for area #3, labeled Purple Martin, which is on the left. Drive to what looks like the end of the trees and you will see that it opens up into a larger area, the Cabana is to your right. Parking is along the side of the road as long the road is not blocked. Additional parking is provided in the larger lot.

BBAA INTERNET LINKS

BBAA WEB SITE

<http://groups.hamptonroads.com/bbaa>

YAHOO GROUP

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/backbayastro>

BBAA OBSERVER NEWSLETTER

<http://www.backbayastro.org/newsletters/newsletter.shtml>

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What do you want to do?

OBSERVER INFO

The BBAA Observer is published monthly, the monochrome version is mailed to members who do not have Internet access. Members who do have Internet access can acquire the full color version on the Internet at:

<http://www.backbayastro.org/newsletters/newsletter.shtml>

Please submit articles and items of interest no later than the 15th of June for the July issue. Please submit all items to:

ObserverBBAA@cox.net / chuck@jagowds.com

OR

BBAA Observer

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The Back Bay Amateur Astronomer's Observer

EAST COAST STAR PARTY & FASHION SHOW

May 2008 marked the 17th year I've hosted the East Coast Star Party at Hampton Lodge Camping Resort in Coinjock, NC. What started as a small gathering of a few friends has grown into a fairly large group, although I still try to keep the party small. By doing so the party maintains its charm and flavor. There

are plenty of large star parties throughout the nation if that's your fancy but this party is kind of fun and intimate the way it is.

A few people arrived on Thursday, although the star party didn't officially begin until Friday, May 2. Despite the beautiful weather in the daylight hours by night-



fall the sky became mostly cloudy. The brighter stars were still visible though, as well as the planet Saturn. The seeing was impeccable; I rated it a 10 out of 10, even though transparency was very poor. Saturn was simply incredible. The best views I had of it all weekend was through Tim Lucas's 12.5" and C.J. Wood's 14.5". Both scopes are Dobsonian's and both are non-commercial homemade telescopes. Often, the best images are had by homemade telescopes.

Much like Thursday, Friday's weather was very clear during the daylight hours and proved to be a good day to simply relax and talk shop with other attendees. A few people took side trips to the beautiful beaches on the Outer



Banks of North Carolina. I stayed and manned the registration desk as more and more people arrived. It's always good to see familiar faces; some I recognize from BBAA Skywatches and other outings, while others I only see semi-annually at East Coast Star Party.

Just before dark my dear friends Roy & Dee Diffrient served thirty-two of us a spaghetti dinner, complete with glasses of red wine. Thanks also go out to Daryl Douglas for the salads and others for various contributions to the spontaneous dinner.

Years ago, most of us would come to ECSP armed with our favorite 6" - 8" telescopes. My how times have changed! I counted one 25" f/5 Dobsonian, two 20" Obsession Dobsonians, an 18" Obsession, a 15" Obsession, a 14.5" homemade Dobsonian, and a myriad of scopes



under 14". There were also several high-dollar Takahashi, Tele Vue, William Optics and T M B apocromat refractors. Are telescopes getting less expensive these days or are we just getting older and have more resources, i.e. money? Whatever the reason it's always fun to look at, and through, so many telescopes "under one roof".



Friday remained mostly clear into the night, although a bit hazy. Atmospheric seeing wasn't as steady as Thursday night but still quite descent. I rated both the seeing and transparency 7 out of 10. Those who stayed up late informed me that the haze dissipated after 2:00 am and Roy Diffrient obtained a reading of

21.3 on his Sky Quality Meter. That equates to a visual naked-eye magnitude limit of about 6.2; pretty good for a so-so transparent night!



Some of the most spectacular objects I observed with my 25" that evening were M 3 in Canes Venatici and M 13, the great globular cluster in Hercules. I showed both to a number of students

from Tidewater Community College, whose initial reason for attending the star party was extra class credit. Although they came for that extra credit most were so impressed they remained long after their required time. Some had rarely been under such a dark sky and none had ever had the opportunity to look through so many telescopes.

We started Saturday morning at 10:00 am with a side-trip and brunch at Mel's Diner in Grandy, NC, about 15 miles south of the star party. We crammed about twenty hungry star gazers into the quaint little diner, a diner that sits in a corn field. Most unusual, for sure!

The Saturday cookout at 3:00 pm offered up more than enough food. Robert Hitt and Chuck Jagow manned two large grills, and cooked 100 hamburgers and 98 hot dogs in a matter of minutes.



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The Back Bay Amateur Astronomer's Observer

OBSERVER'S CORNER

June 2008 - Under an almost full moon I was joined by Cecil and Stan for a really nice night of observing. Indeed it was exceptionally nice despite having no cause for dark adaption; perhaps it was the long lay off since ECSP due to some of the toughest weather we have seen in a spring.

Transparency was excellent with variable seeing. Better than I initially thought as I started a survey of new and a few old doubles. Struve 1604 is a lovely triple with the shape of an equilateral triangle. This tight group is one of the best multiples for color as each star has a distinctly different shade. Epsilon Bootes (an old standard) also displays a nice contrast of shading.

Fun double of the night was 25 CVn. This double combines a narrow separation and two orders of magnitude difference making it a reasonable challenge for 4 inch and larger scopes.

Struve 1632 like wise in CVn also offers a fair difference in magnitude with the secondary coming in at 10th magnitude. Easily seen even under a full moon.

My large cat decided earlier in the day to go through the screen in search of a play toy (rabbit). After being gone all day, and not showing up at quitting time, around 0 dark 0, the prodigal cat decided to return at 03 dark thirty and return through the bedroom window screen. This I took as a clue to go out and continue observing since the sun would be up in an hour and the late hour offered the possibility of a superb milky way. Clouds had started to come in obscuring most of the sky and making seeing tough on Jupiter. In moments of relative calm. My first look at Jupiter included a nice shadow transit that was barely distinguishable during 7/10 seeing moments. Became convinced I was NUTS for even getting up at that hour and went back to sleep. But what a nice night for observing!

Mark Ost

SUMMER PICNIC

Hello BBAA Land!

It's time for the BBAA Family Picnic!

BBAA has reserved the large picnic shelter at Northwest River Park for June 14th from 11:00 AM -3:00 PM!

There's plenty of seating, plenty of shade, and best of all we're close to the bathrooms and the water pump.

BBAA will have hotdogs, hamburgers, and buns. YOU folks will provide the side dishes and all the fun!

Bring your family, a friend, a comfy chair, and maybe some bug spray.

Please be sure to RSVP either in the DATABASE section of the BBAA Yahoo site or you can give me a call at **547-3752**. You can also email me at:

doublestarjune@msn.com

Hope to see everyone there!

Sharp Shootin' Georgie

WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS!

The following people have recently joined the Back Bay Amateur Astronomers:

Joe & Vicki Hansen

Don Ives

Mathew Swingle

Hunter Hughes

Dan Falvy

Larry Wade (re-upper)

Let's all wish them a warm welcome to the club!

Now, do you have acreage near Pettigrew?

MINI-BOOK REVIEW

I just received another book from Willmann-Bell Titled "The Arp Atlas of Pecular Galaxies". In 1966 Mr. Arp created a list of odd shaped Galaxies. The Astronomical League has an observing program as well. Both visual and CCD.

One that everyone has seen is M82. Also the Leo triplet is listed as one Arp object and M66 again as a separate one. One needs to view 100 of these objects. While some are as dim as 18th magnitude and suited for CCD imaging, there are 116 visible from this area that are brighter than 12th magnitude.

This book, in the tradition of Willmann-Bell, is beautifully put together. The paper is heavy glossy paper. It is well indexed and includes pictures, descriptions and finder charts for all 338 objects.

There is a ton of historical material. It is well written, something you can actually sit down and read. Kent has to have this.

I give it 5 stars.

Cliff Hedgepeth

The Back Bay Amateur Astronomer's Observer

Seneca Shadows Star Party

I have had about a half dozen people ask me about going to the Seneca Campground in W.Va. this year. Any excuse to go to W. VA. sooooo, Sept. 23rd - 28th. (Tues thru Sun). If you have never been to this campground, you're in for a treat. <http://www.seneca-rocks.com/seneca-shadows.html>. I have reserved site "E". No electric on the field, but there are 120 VAC charging stations available during the day. Brick and tile bathrooms, it is a beautiful State Park. The cost is a small at \$5.00 per night per person, under 13 free. Includes campsite, parking, restrooms and showers. This site has 5 "pads"; each pad will hold 2 8'x10' tents.



Also there are 6 picnic tables and a grill, with rest rooms and showers with in 100' from the site. Each parking area will accommodate about 3 or 4 campers (+ cars) and up to 40 people. Registration each day is after 2 PM or when ever you get there. See Dale Carey at the site to register.

The mountains take away about 15/20 degrees on the horizons but when night falls, WOW! The sky is the best I have seen anywhere on the East coast. It takes 5 hrs from VA .Beach. On a map just take I64W past Charlottesville, go N on I81 to Harrisonburg, then take 33W to Seneca.

During the day you can turn your scopes to scenic views of Seneca Rocks, these giant 1000' rocks stick out of the mountains in the distance



and are a climber's paradise. Also visit the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Green Bank or take a ride up to the top of Spruce Knob, both less than an hour away, and for a really good time, climb to the top of Seneca Rock. You will not be disappointed at this park. Saturday we

will have cook out. If you would like to join in, sign up on the BBAA Yahoo site and click on "database" and look for "Seneca", or send me an e-mail at vbstargazer@verizon.net or call 431-8556 or, you can just show up.

SEE YOU THERE!

PS - Space limited, first come first served/ Only have room for 10 tents on this site and 3/4 small campers in parking lot -there are plenty of nice shady campsites in the park though with elec/water if you prefer a more private site, call ahead to reserve.

Dale Carey

(Continued from page 5)

Besides the burgers and dogs we had 32 feet of food lined up on four, eight-foot long picnic tables! You can be assured you'll never go hungry on Saturday night at the East Coast Star Party.

I always have a theme to the ECSP and this year's theme was the Nerd Fashion Show, complete with cash prizes. If you missed it you really missed a fun time! Kevin Weiner provided the nerd music with his P.A. rig, as well being part of the show. Everyone was great in their nerd attire but in the end the \$50 cash prize for the adult category went to none other than C.J. Wood from Ridgely, Maryland. C.J. had the mannerisms down pat; he was the epitome of a true nerd! Congratulations to C.J. in the adult category and to Courtney Flonta in the child's category.



After the nerd fashion show it was time for the door prize drawings. About 20 prizes went to various winners. Jenna Elliott won an Edmund 3" Newtonian telescope and C.J. Wood lucked out again, this time winning a Howie Glatter laser collimator. John Raymond and Courtney Flonta

each won Software Bisque's "Seeker 3-D Solar System Journey" computer program. Dale Carey walked away with the computer-mapping program "Starry Night" and new ECSP attendee Tavi Greiner took home a Meade ETX-80 AT-BB portable telescope.

I don't know about everyone else but I had a great time. I'd like to extend my thanks to Roy & Dee Diffrient for providing us with good eateries, Robert Hitt & Chuck Jagow for their cooking duties at the Saturday cookout, Ted Forte for helping me with registrations, Barb & Kevin Weiner for the sound system and appropriate nerd music and most of all, thank everyone else who contributed to make this the best East Coast Star Party ever. The next party is scheduled for October 24 & 25, 2008. Be certain to look your scariest because rest assured they'll be a theme; it's going to be the 2008 East Coast Star Party & Halloween Costume Party.



Kent Blackwell

The Back Bay Amateur Astronomer's Observer



JUNE 2008

BBAE EVENTS	SPECIAL OUTREACH	ASTRONOMICAL EVENTS
06 = NIGHTWATCH @ Chippokes State Park, Dusk		03= NEW MOON
07 = NIGHT HIKE @ NWRP, Chesapeake, VA @ 7:00 PM - POC: Ted Forte CONTACT TED FIRST as NWRP limits # of people.		
		10 = FIRST QUARTER
14 = BBAE PICNIC & Meeting @ NWRP, Chesapeake, VA @ 11:00 AM - POC: Georgie June.		
14 = GARDEN STARS @ Norfolk Botanical Gardens, Norfolk, VA @ 7:00 PM - POC: Kevin Weiner ON HOLD Scheduling issues.	18 = BOARDWALK ASTRONOMY @ 24th Street Stage Oceanfront, Virginia Beach, VA @ 8:30 PM—11:00 PM - POC: Chuck Jagow	18 = FULL MOON
27 = SKYWATCH @ NWRP, Dusk		26 = LAST QUARTER