



OBSERVATIONS



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
Chester County Astronomical Society

★ *President:* Mike Turco
★ *Treasurer:* Pete LaFrance

MAY 2000
(VOLUME 8, NO. 5)

★ *Vice President:* Steve Limeburner
★ *Secretary:* Doug Liberati

http://members.tripod.com/~ccas_2/ccas.html



M42, the Orion Nebula, imaged by Roy Furman

Taken on March 6, 2000 at Jack Newton's Florida Imaging Center in Chiefland, Florida, using a 16" Meade LX200 telescope at F/6.3 and a Pictor 1616XTE CCD binned 2x2 (757x512 resolution). The white (luminance), red, and green exposures were all 5 minutes each. The blue image is the sum of two 5 minute exposures. Processing of the image was done in Maxim DL CCD and Photoshop to create the final image.

Roy is working on a review of his stay at the Florida Imaging Center; look for it in an upcoming issue of *Observations*.

CCAS May Meeting

DATE: **Tuesday May 9, 2000**
TIME: 7:30 p.m. EDT
PLACE: Department of Geology and
Astronomy Lecture Room
(**Room 112** – Boucher Building)
West Chester University
LOCATION: South Church Street
West Chester, PA (see map)

Please note the change in room for our May meeting: we will be next door to our usual meeting room.

Parking is available behind Sykes Student Center on the south side of Rosedale Avenue, and behind the Bull Center at the corner of Rosedale Avenue and South High Street. If you arrive early enough, you may be able to get an on-street parking space.

CCAS member Jim Anderson will give a presentation entitled "What will I look at tonight?", based on the skies of May, the Astronomical League Double Star List and Messier List, and other random thoughts on getting ready for a night of stargazing in the lovely month of May.



CCAS June Meeting & Observing Session

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday June 30 (cloud date is Saturday July 1). In June, July, and August we combine our meetings with the Observing Session at the Brandywine Valley Association. Before darkness falls, we tend to whatever business needs to be taken care of. There may or may not be a informal presentation of some kind. The Observing Sessions then start at about 8:30 p.m., when it becomes fully dark. At the observing sessions, there is help available to set up and use your telescopes. If you're having trouble using your telescope, or finding your way around the sky, come on out and get some assistance. All members are invited whether they have a telescope or not. Telescope owners are always glad to share the view through their scope. CCAS Observing Sessions are always free of charge. Children are always welcome.

To get to the observing site at the BVA, turn off Route 842 into the parking lot by the office: look for the signs to the office along Route 842. From that parking lot, go up the farm lane to the left; it's about 800 feet or so to the top of the hill. If you arrive after dark, please turn off your headlights and just use parking lights as you come up the hill.



Telescopes and Members Needed: May 11

The Society is providing an astronomy program for Westtown School third graders and their parents on Thursday May 11. This will be at the White Clay Creek Preserve in southeastern Chester County. The Preserve includes a marker for the Mason-Dixon Line. This event will start at about 8:00 p.m. EDT. If the weather is bad, the event will be cancelled. If you have any questions, contact Observing Chair Ed Lurcott at 610-436-0387.



Telescopes and Members Needed: May 19

The Society is providing an astronomy program for a Girl Scout campout on Friday May 19 at Cochranville Community Center in Cochranville, PA. This event will start at about 8:00 p.m. EDT. If the weather is bad, we will do a program inside the Community Center. We ARE the program for that evening, rain or shine. If you have any questions, contact Observing Chair Ed Lurcott at 610-436-0387.



Telescopes and Members Needed: June 6

Mark your calendars for Tuesday June 6 for our Third Annual Star Night at East Goshen Township Park. This event will start at about 8:00 p.m. EDT. The rain date will be the next day, Wednesday June 7. We will set up on the soccer field(s) as we have in years past. This event is a fund-raiser for the Society, so please turn out to help. This year's event will be the first public appearance of the Society's new 20" telescope. If you have any questions, contact Observing Chair Ed Lurcott at 610-436-0387.



Calendar Notes

July 28/29, 2000 (Friday)	CCAS Meeting & Observing Session BVA 8:00 p.m. EDT
August 25/26, 2000 (Friday)	CCAS Meeting & Observing Session BVA 8:00 p.m. EDT



Mason-Dixon Star Party: June 23-25, 2000

The 11th Annual Mason-Dixon Star Party is being held on Friday June 23 through Sunday June 25 this year. This excellent star party, with good dark skies, is hosted by the York County Astronomical Society and the York County Department of Parks and Recreation. It is held at Spring Valley County Park. This year's guest speaker is Dr. Larry Marshall of Gettysburg College. Ed Lurcott has heard Dr. Marshall before, and says that he is a good speaker. For more information, contact Ed Lurcott. He has copies of the flyer and registration form.



CCAS Newsletters Now Available via E-mail

You can now receive the monthly newsletter by e-mail. When the newsletter is finished, I convert it to a special type of file (a .pdf, for Portable Document Format) using a utility called Adobe Acrobat. Then all you need on your PC, besides an Internet connection with e-mail, is the Adobe Acrobat Reader program for your PC or Mac. This program is available free of charge from Adobe. Just connect to their Website at www.adobe.com and follow the links and directions for downloading and installing the correct Reader program for your PC or Mac. On the main screen (home page) of Adobe, at the top look for a "button" labeled "Products" and click it. On the next screen, scroll down to where it says "Adobe Acrobat Reader", and click that. Then click on "Download Now". Make sure the version number of the Reader you get is at least 4.0 because I'm using Adobe Acrobat version 4.0 to make the .pdf files. If you have an earlier version of the Reader, like 3.0, you'll have problems reading the files I make with Acrobat 4.0. The 4.0 Reader, however, can read 3.0 files without a problem, so if you're currently using a 3.0 Reader you will still be able to read older files produced by Acrobat 3.0 if you upgrade your Reader to 4.0.

Once you've done that, then just send me an e-mail to let me know you want to switch to e-mail delivery of the newsletter. The biggest advantage of getting your newsletter this way is you get it two to three days earlier. Another of the advantages of getting the newsletter this way is that the photos and/or drawings that are color in the original will be in color in your copy of the newsletter. When we make the paper copies for mailing, they get copied in black & white, and sometimes the copy quality of pictures is not good. Another advantage is that getting your newsletter by e-mail will save the Society money in copying and mailing expenses. In the past year some issues have cost the Society \$75.00 and more in copying and mailing costs. So if you want your newsletter by e-mail, send me an e-mail at sny114@aol.com and I'll get you set up on the e-mail distribution list.



Contributing to Observations

Contributions of articles relating to astronomy and space exploration are always welcome. If you have a computer, and an Internet connection, you can attach the file to an email message and send it to the editor at jim.anderson@hbc.com or at sny114@aol.com. Or mail the contribution, typed or handwritten, to:

Jim Anderson
19 Bluff Road
Thorndale, PA 19372-1104



CCAS Lending Library

Contact our Librarian, Bill O'Hara, to make arrangements to borrow one of the books in the CCAS lending library. Copies of the catalog are available at CCAS meetings. Bill's phone number is 610-696-1422.



CCAS Lending Telescope

Contact Kathy Buczynski to make arrangements to borrow the Society's lending telescope. The lending telescope can be borrowed by CCAS members for a month at a time; longer if no one else wants to borrow it after you. Kathy's phone number is 610-436-0821.



AL Observing Programs

One of the benefits of joining the CCAS is that you also become a member of the Astronomical League, a national federation of astronomy clubs. The AL has a series of Observing Awards, and four observing clubs based on these awards have been started in the CCAS. These are the Messier Club, the Binocular Messier Club, the Lunar Club, and the Double Star Club. Working on these awards also gives you a plan of observing: "What will I look at tonight?" becomes "Which Messier objects are visible tonight that I haven't seen yet?" Each club has a volunteer coordinator:

Messier Clubs (both): Frank Angelini (610-873-7929)

Lunar Club: Ed Lurcott (610-436-0387)

Double Star Club: Jim Anderson (610-380-4512)



CCAS Website

Pete LaFrance has set up a Web page for the Society on the World Wide Web (Internet). He has included some pictures taken by CCAS members. Check it out at:
http://members.tripod.com/~ccas_2/ccas.html

Pete welcomes any additions to the site by Society members. The contributions can be of any astronomy subject or object, or can be related to space exploration. The only requirement is that it is your own work; no copying copyrighted material! Give your contributions to Pete LaFrance (610-268-2616).



Join the Fight for Dark Skies!

You can help fight light pollution, conserve energy, and save the night sky for everyone to use and enjoy. Join the nonprofit International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) today. Individual memberships start at \$30.00 for one year. Send to:

International Dark-Sky Association
3545 N. Stewart
Tucson, AZ 85716



CCAS Membership Information

The present membership rates are as follows:

REGULAR MEMBER.....\$20/year
SENIOR MEMBER.....\$10/year
STUDENT MEMBER.....\$ 5/year
JUNIOR MEMBER.....\$ 5/year
FAMILY MEMBER.....\$ 30/year

Membership Renewals

Check the date printed on the address label of this issue of *Observations*; "exp." appears in front of it, just after your name. If you are due to renew, you may send your renewal check made out to our Treasurer, Pete LaFrance. Mail to:

Pete LaFrance
413 Church Rd.
Avondale, PA 19311-9785

Sky & Telescope Magazine Group Rates

Subscriptions to this excellent periodical are available through the CCAS at a reduced price of **\$29.95 (note that this has just increased, as of October 1999)**, which is much less than the newsstand price of \$54.00, and also cheaper than individual subscriptions (\$39.95)! Make out a check to the Chester County Astronomical Society, note that it's for *Sky & Telescope*, and mail to Pete LaFrance. Or you can bring it to the next Society meeting and give it to Pete there. Buying a subscription this way also gets you a 10% discount on other Sky Publishing merchandise.



CCAS Officers

For further information on membership or society activities you may call:

President:	Mike Turco	(610) 399-3423
Vice Pres:	Steve Limeburner	(610) 353-3986
Treasurer:	Pete LaFrance	(610) 268-2616
Secretary:	Doug Liberati	(610) 827-2149
ALCor and Newsletter:	Jim Anderson	(610) 380-4512
Librarian:	William O'Hara	(610) 696-1422
Observing:	Ed Lurcott	(610) 436-0387





