Martz/Kohl Observatories

Sept. 2016
Oct. 2016

Volume 02#04

TED WOLFES TALK 7/27/16

Renowned astroimager Ted Wolfe was introduced by both President Nelson and Walter Pickut on this warm sultry July evening. Ted has spoken at the observatory on several occasions and it was our pleasure to have him return this year to talk about his adventure entitled "Are We There Yet", a program about him relocating his telescope high in the Atacama desert in Northern Chile where the night skies are magnificent and far away from light pollution with reported 319 clear nights a year.

Ted's deep space astroimages have been displayed across the country in science museums, the Roger Tory Peterson Institute and a 20 month showing at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral. His work has appeared in the Sky and Telescope and Astronomy magazines numerous times. Ted also writes a monthly column in the Naples, Florida Daily News.

Our speaker spoke highly of the recently renovated Martz/Kohl observatory he toured on his return visit, remembering the humble beginnings where he had spoken on previous occasions. He remarked about the spaciousness of the renovated observatory compared to what he had been accustomed to during his previous presentations.

Our audience learned that the altitude of Ted's Chilean observatory is 9,000 feet a location devoid of trees inhabited with some denizens most people might not want to cross paths with. Ted displayed a picture of a giant spider the size of a frying pan and another photo of an enormous scorpion the size of a small chicken which left the audience wide eyed. It is here where Ted's observatory joins 12 other observatories with similar clam shelled designed domes that house several types of remote telescopes belonging to owners scattered far and wide.

The advantage of an observatory located in Chile, other than desert's pristine sky conditions is the fact that Ted will be able to capture images of objects taken in the Southern hemisphere remotely from his home in Naples, Florida that are unseen from Northern latitudes

A large round of applause followed our speaker's program followed by Questions and answers.

NEW MEMBERS

The observatory would like to welcome Travis Smith a Frewsburg, NY resident. Amy Choboy of Fredonia and Amy Chase, David Poole and Dakota Wagoner all of Warren, PA. as new members.

Events for Sept,Oct. 2016

General Meeting
Sept. 14th
Oct. 12th

Observatory Board Meetings
Sept.28 th
Oct. 26th

Major Donors

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Caster Well Drilling

CHAPMAN STATE PARK IN JUNE

A planned Night Sky Exploration at Chapman State Park in Pennsylvania was hosted by Tom Traub from the Martz Observatory on June 17th at 8:00 pm. The event was announced by Jen Moore, Environmental Education Specialist PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of State Parks. Tom's invitation was to focus on learning the essentials of stargazing and describe where to discover the currently visible planets, Saturn, Mars and Jupiter adorning the night sky, and include a selection of deep sky objects. It was suggested visitors who had a telescope of their own to bring it to the park to get some tips on from an expert on using it.

The observatory was represented by Tom Traub and Brian Ceci who managed the telescopes for the group. They used the Park's Dobsonian telescope and Tom's own 8 inch telescope. Prior to sunset, those who attended had an opportunity to view the sun in the 8 inch which was fitted temporarily with a special solar filter. As nightfall desended the group of mostly campers expanded and clearly enjoyed looking through both telescopes under a great sky.

This was another in a series of off-site outreach programs offered to the public this season by volunteer Martz/Kohl members.

CHAPMAN DAM IN JULY

The observatory was represented for the second time this year by Tom Traub on July 8th at it's Star Party. The group of campers and members from the International Bow Hunters Association who were holding a tournament at the park started to gather at 8:00 pm. I was present along with Naturalist Jen Moore for a presentation on the Moon and planets Mars and Jupiter using the park's 6 inch Dobsonian Reflector. All together we had over a dozen people in attendance including a couple who had purchased a small refractor at a yard sale and wanted to know how to use it.

We were able to get views of the Moon, Jupiter and Mars through the small scope. Many questions were asked about Jupiter and the Juno spacecraft along with a multitude of other space related subjects.

We had to close up shop early due to the incoming arrival of thunderstorms with lightening for the protection of those in attendance. Overall the evening was a success with many smiles on those who looked through the scopes.

Credit Tom Traub

CHAPMAN DAM IN AUGUST

By popular demand, Tom Traub was asked to return to the park on August 13th to offer a program on the Perseid meteor shower. Unfortunately the program was cancelled due to the weather.

SITE OF THE MONTH
30 METER TELESCOPE
http://www.universetoday.com/130147/new-poll-shows-2-1-margin-support-hawaiians-thirty-meter-telescope/

AUGUST PUBLIC NIGHT AT THE OBSERVATORY

Plan to attend the observatory on August 27th. Doors will open at 8:00 pm. Weather permitting, telescope observing can be expected. A tour and video slide program will be offered regardless of the weather. Our staff will hold a telescope clinic inviting those with telescopes to bring their instruments to the observatory for advice on their use and care. Sky conditions will not be a factor for help.

RENEWED VOWS

25 years ago on the same ladder I proposed to my wife, Melody while she was 12 feet off the ground looking through the eyepiece of the Martz 30" telescope looking at the Moon. I would not let her down till she gave me an answer and it was YES! The first person we saw to tell them was Mary Martz. Well now it's 25 years later and tonight, July 28th after a nice dinner at Millers Grove we went to the Martz/Kohl Observatory and while she was looking at Mars through the Kohl 20" telescope, only this time a little closer to the ground I asked her again for another 25years and the answer was YES! and she got a little bauble for the occasion. Where has all the time gone to? We are both so blessed to have each other and such a wonderful family and friends! God is good and has blessed us abundantly. So my love is my universe and it is awesome and I look forward to sharing it with my wonderful woman.

Tom Traub

OBSERVATORY SPECTRUM

Often the word observatory conjures the imagination to expect a place where astronomers look at the stars and planets. When first time guests visit the Martz/Kohl observatory they find a broad spectrum of unexpected aspects and frequently a question arises asking what we do at the observatory when all that was expected was to look through a telescope.

The observatory's mission is to inform, educate and inspire the general public and support teaching in the sciences of astronomy and physics. The avenues of approach to its mission are surprisingly diverse. The voluntary observatory staff has the experience and means to open the door of wonderment to whomever crosses its threshold. The complexity of the observatory's offerings and the science that takes place at the observatory comes as a total surprise to many.

Aside from open houses, guest speaker programs, providing tours, video presentations, offering hospitality to walk-ins, conducting scheduled programs to many organizations, providing observing sessions under the stars and occasional off site outreach programs, the observatory has been engaged to expand its itinerary to include an introduction of astroimaging to students. In addition to its normal activities, it may come as a surprise, many hours have been engaged in scientific investigations and most recently the observatory has begun to share its findings with the scientific community.

OBSERVATORY SCIENCE

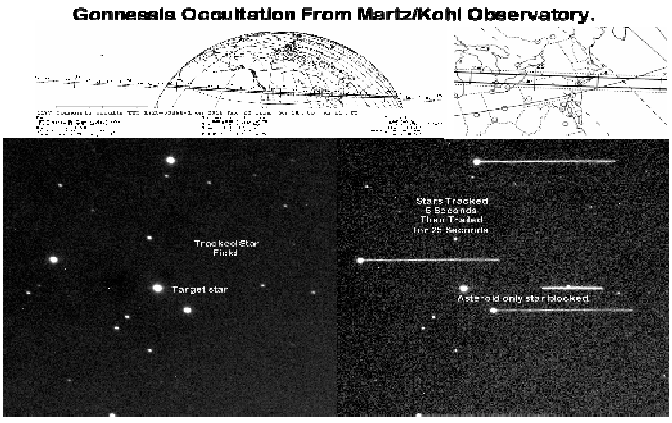
Our images of comet 67P/Churymov-Gerasimenko and related data is now an official part of the data the European Space Agency/ NASA cooperative will be using. We uploaded 69 image files and 4 data lists to them. This data along with 160 other observers/ observatories will be used in conjunction with the Rosetta spacecrafts to increase our knowledge of the cometary environment and how we on earth see it.

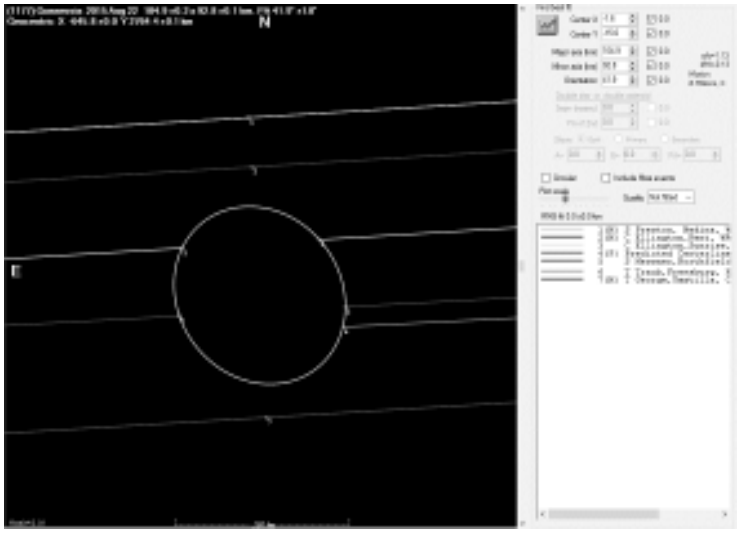
Often our members are asked if the observatory does science. The answer is yes and the following demonstrates this fact. Recently asteroid 1177 Gonnessia was tracked and the findings were forwarded to Brad Timerson, Head Coordinator of the IOTA Asteroidal Occultation Program, North America.

As reported by Tom Traub, the Martz/Kohl observatory's background information in combination with other observatories was used to make occultation observations. As shown, the asteroid is an oblate spheroid with its major axis tilted 41.9 degrees at the time of observations.

Details of scientific interest about asteroid 1177 Gonnessia was discovered on November 24th 1930 by L. Boyer at Algiers include the following information. Its orbit was determined to be 6.13 years with an inclination of 15 degrees and a rotational period of 30.51 hours. The visual magnitude at the time of observation was 14.77. The distance from Earth at observation was 243,071,813 miles. The asteroid's distance from the Sun was 318,373,639 miles at that time. Its location was RA 23h 57m 23s. Its declination was 20d 47m 43s. The new size of the spheroid is determined to be 105 km x 93 km versus the old measurement of 93 km spherical.

This information will probably have little meaning to a majority of our readers and is only presented as an example to verify the observatory has embarked on contributing useful information to the scientific community in its quest to do science.





AUGUST SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT CANCELLED

Dr. James LoPresto a retired solar astronomer who was scheduled to have spoken at the observatory on August 11th had to cancel his appearance due to illness.

PUBLIC NIGHT ANNOUNCEMENT

The observatory will open its doors to the public on September 10th at 8:00 pm for **Viewing of the Heavens.** The Moon will be featured during half phase. Tours and a video object viewing can be expected. This is a rain or shine event. Donations are greatly appreciated.

SEPTEMBER SPEAKER

On September 14th our very own member Phil Evans, an ever popular speaker who captivates his audiences with his engaging assortment of astronomical facts and personal experiences that delight our audiences will give his talk at 8:00 pm. Be prepared for an interesting evening and to survey the improvements to the observatory following the evening's presentation.

HELP WANTED

THE OBSERVATORY IS LOOKING FOR ENGINEERS, MECHANICS, WRITERS, SCIENCE TEACHERS, A WEB MASTER, DOCENTS AND OTHERS TO CONSIDER

BECOMING PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

VOLUNTEERING TO HELP

educate and inspire the general public and support teaching in the sciences of astronomy and physics. There is a need for maintenance support also.