

Cache Valley Clear Skies

The Journal of the Cache Valley Astronomical Society



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Meeting Announcement

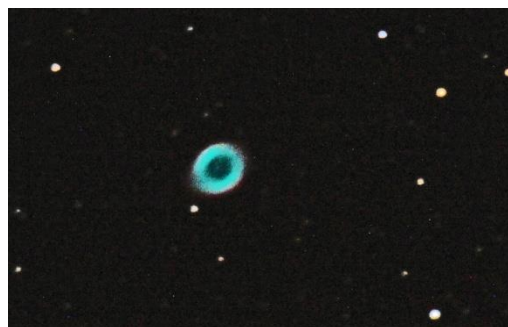
Our monthly meeting will be held on **Wednesday**, March 20, 2014 at 7:30pm at the Physics Conference Room (room 244) in the Science Engineering Research (SER) building directly east of the library. We will be discussing the upcoming Messier Marathon and ways we can make our club more helpful to its members.

Presidents' Corner

Thanks to Lyle Johnson for letting us hear his dad, Dr. Hollis Johnson, speak to us in February. If you did not get a chance to come to his lecture, you missed a great discussion on the life cycle of stars. We hope we can get Dr. Johnson to speak to us in the future. Speaking of future topics, I am officially inviting any interested party to submit topics for future Cache Valley Astronomical Society meetings. We have two months left of regular meetings at the USU campus, for April and May.

Our March meeting will be centered on organizing a Messier Marathon which we plan to hold March 28 at the home of Dell Vance in Newton. Even if you don't want to stay all night, plan to come and view as many of the Messier objects as possible. There are 110 objects in the list, and like doing a runners marathon, there is the same sense of accomplishment by viewing all these wonderful objects in one night. But it is more than that, when a group of like-minded people get together like this where we can share the

experience with others, adds to the enjoyment of the event. Those of us who have done this before hope we can help those of you who have never had this experience. We will also have food and snacks. It will be a fun evening. We hope you will consider this event. So come to our March meeting, March 19th and we will develop an observing plan for success. We will have charts and other handouts for those who want to take the challenge.



**Figure 1- M57, Ring Nebula, Lyra,
photographed by Tom Westre, 6/27/2013**

In April we plan to discuss astrophotography. But our May topic is wide open. If you have any suggestions about the topic or speaker let me know.

I would like to thank Dale for putting this newsletter together. I would like to see articles on equipment or book reviews. If any of you have something you would like to contribute, let me know the topic and write an article and submit it to us. March is a great time to view the Great Orion Nebula. If you are into astrophotography this is one

of the easiest deep sky objects to image. It spans 1 degree in diameter and is the brightest diffuse emission nebula seen from the northern hemisphere. It contains several young stars called the Trapezium. Jupiter is well positioned this month in the constellation Gemini. This is my favorite planet as the four Galilean moons change in their orbit even in one night's viewing. And sometimes you can see the shadow transit the planets or glimpse the Great Red Spot (GRS).

Finally, we all like free stuff. Go to skymaps.com and download a free star chart for the month of March. This website has a lot of great stuff. Dell, Ned, Dale and I are looking forward to seeing you all at the March meeting, March 19th and at the Messier Marathon on March 28 and the camaraderie in the coming weeks.

Clear Skies,
Tom

CVAS Minutes – February 2014

The February meeting of the Cache Valley Astronomical Society was held on January 15, 2014 at 7:30pm in Room 244 of the SER Building.

President Tom Westre conducted the meeting. Tom mentioned that the club will discuss the Messier Marathon in March and astrophotography in April. Tom also discussed and showed some images of the M82 supernova, M42, Jupiter, Eskimo Nebula and the Hubble Nebula.

Dale Hooper mentioned that Neil Tyson will be speaking at the U of U in March and also mentioned the upcoming total lunar eclipse April 14th – 15th.

We were then treated to a fine discussion entitled "The Life Story of a Star" by Dr. Hollis Johnson. Dr. Johnson is an emeritus professor of physics and astronomy from Indiana University and is the father of club member Lyle Johnson.

Dr. Johnson grew up in Garland and shared with us how he became hooked on astronomy as a child. He explained to us the four stages of a star's life which he also equated to the seasons:

1. Star Formation – Spring

2. Main Sequence – Summer
3. Red Giant Phase – Fall
4. End game – Winter

He explained the fusion processes that differing stars will undergo and discussed stellar structure. He explained how important the initial mass of the star is for determining what the star will do over the course of its lifetime. It was a very enjoyable lecture and we really appreciate Dr. Johnson's willingness to speak to us.

TUMOL – The Ultimate Messier Object Log

A few years ago while I was preparing for a Messier Marathon I came across a helpful free tool known as TUMOL – The Ultimate Messier Object Log which can be downloaded from:

<http://www.davidpaulgreen.com/download.html>

This tool consists of an application for Windows or Mac OS X or you can download a PDF file of the charts and information. TUMOL will help you to organize and record your observations of the Messier objects.

TUMOL includes several types of displays to help with Messier Marathons or general observing of the Messier objects. The first includes most information for each object that could be useful for the marathon such as: the object coordinates, a thumbnail image, a small star chart including a telrad finder view, etc. (Figure 2)

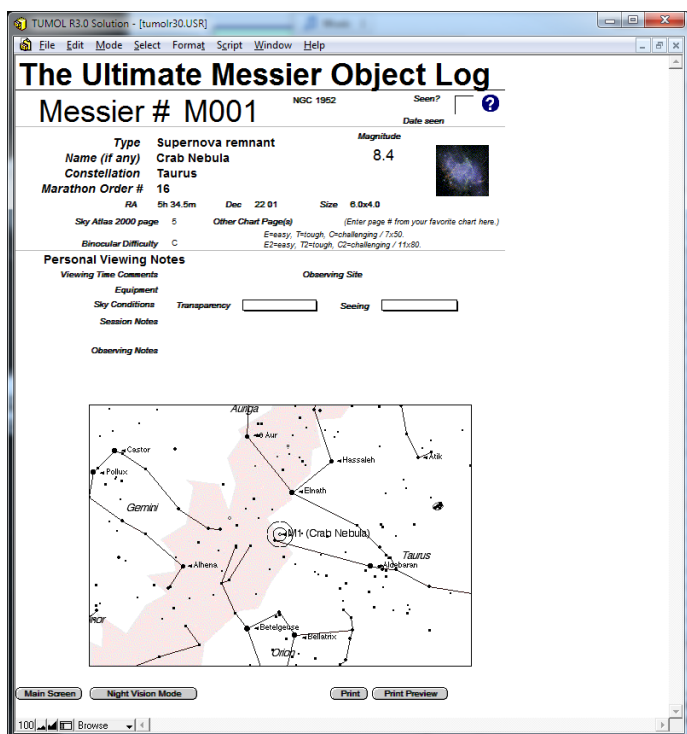


Figure 2 - TUMOL Messier Object Screen

Another included display is the Sketch View (Figure 3). This also provides some useful information about each object and gives you a nice template for making a sketch of what you observed in the eyepiece.

Other helpful displays include an object checklist as well as an object checklist which includes thumbnail images of each object.

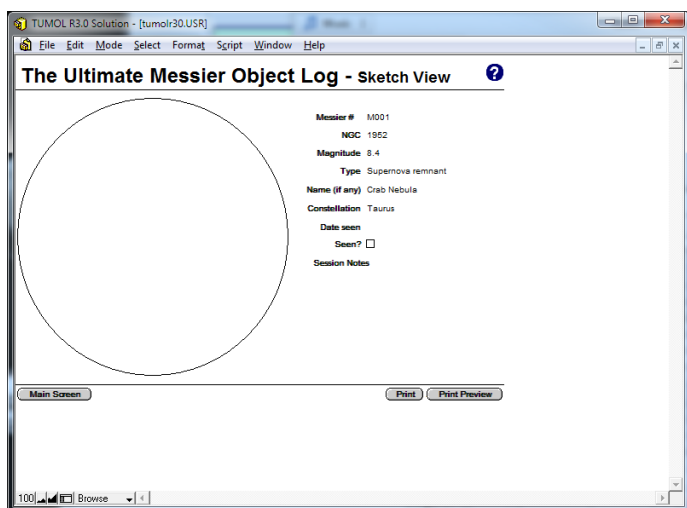


Figure 3 - Sketch View

If you don't have a laptop or don't wish to take your laptop with you for your observing sessions you can make printouts of the pages from the PDF document which match the views provided by the program.

- Dale Hooper

Upcoming Star Parties

Mar 28th Half Messier Marathon
 (Primary) V.P. Dell Vance's House
 Mar 29th 240 N 100 West, Newton
 (Backup) Lat: 41 deg 52.062' N
 Long: 111 deg 59.347' W

Upcoming Events

April 3rd - Moon Occults (covers) several stars
 April 4th in Taurus' Hyades cluster

April 8th Mars is at opposition (up all night)

April 14th - Total Lunar Eclipse
 April 15th (Approximate Times (all MDT) - from S&T)
 11:20pm Penumbra First Visible?
 11:58pm Partial Eclipse Begins
 1:07am Total Eclipse Begins
 1:46am Mid-Eclipse
 2:25am Total Eclipse Ends
 3:33am Partial Eclipse Ends
 4:10am Penumbra Last Visible?