

Newsletter of
The Black River Astronomical Society

Guidescope

Lorain County, Ohio

July 2016

Website: blackriverastro.org

Newsletter submissions: [Editor](#)

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--Friday, July 1, 10 p.m.-midnight: Public observing, Nielsen Observatory
(cloud backup date Saturday, July 2)

--Wednesday, July 6, 7 p.m.: Regular Meeting, Carlisle Visitors Center "Ten
Unsolved Mysteries of Astronomy and Cosmology" by Denny Bodzash

--Friday, July 8, 10p-midnight: Public observing, Nielsen Observatory (cloud
backup date Saturday, July 9)

--Thursday, July 14, 7 p.m.: Board Meeting, Blue Sky Restaurant, Amherst

--Sunday, July 17, noon-4 p.m.: Solar observing, Sandy Ridge Reservation

--Saturday, July 30, 3 p.m. - ?: CAA OTAA, Letha House (note: Spencer
Lake Road closed—take Garver Road to Richman Road south to Letha House)

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Visit Our Website

Explore the informative BRAS [website](#) and all its interesting, timely [links](#), and join the interactive members-only [BRAS Forum](#) to better keep in touch.

WORLD WIDE SOLSTICE FESTIVAL 2016

The World Wide Solstice Festival was held Sunday June 26th at the LCMP Mill Hollow Reservation. This was the second annual festival and was part of a series of solar festivals taking place all over the globe. Locally, we did solar observing with Tim Kreja, Mike Harkey and Bill Ruth running telescopes. Also, John O'Neal, who recently moved to North Carolina, drove up for the event and manned both his hydrogen alpha and calcium K solar scopes. Dan Walker, Jeff Walsh and Rick Barger ran the popular Planet Walk, and Greg Cox helped Gary Smith man his Worlds Largest Portable Sundial. The Welcome tent was staffed by Greg Zmina and Jim Cunningham with help from Jean Ruth. Rick Barger's wife also helped to monitor the laptop computer and projector that were being used to show solar videos. A special highlight was Dave Lengyel's band, Men Of Steele, who performed for most of the afternoon.

Internationally, the festivals started in Australia with noted astronomer David Reneke hosting a festival and streaming his event live on the WWSF Facebook page. Festivals then started up in countries all over the world until the Sun finally set back in Australia. It was fun to monitor the Facebook page to see posts from all of the groups also hosting Solstice Festivals. It was estimated that 350 organizations in over 30 nations hosted festivals, so we were part of something impressive. What is even more impressive is that this entire movement was started by us. John O'Neal and former BRAS members (now living in Arizona) Pam and Randy Shivak conceived of the idea of a series of global festivals, and promoted the idea through the SolarActivity online community.

The weather was very hot and humid, but we occasionally got good views of the Sun, and enjoyed the experience. The Board of Directors will discuss participating again next year, and any changes we may want to make, at the July Board meeting.

~Steve Schauer

BOARD SUMMARY June 9, 2016

The BRAS Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. with 10 Directors present.

Minutes were read and approved with no additions or corrections as was the Treasurer's report.

Committee reports came next with the *Guidescope* and Website committees reporting that all was well. Under Instrumentation, the telescopes are operating well with only a few minor maintenance issues to deal with. The finder scope on the black C-14 needs a new mounting bracket as it can't currently be adjusted, although the Telrad is aligned well. The digital setting circles on the Losmandy mount still do not work properly. The big concern was the west roof of the building. While rolling the roof up at our last observing session, one of the eyebolts that holds one of the pulleys failed. The roof was fully closed, but was being solely held by the cable which was hanging on the opened eyebolt by a hair. Since there was danger of the cable snapping into the middle of the building with considerable force, we promptly contacted the MetroParks for repairs. (NOTE: the roof was repaired within 10 days and is currently operating well as of June 24th).

Under OTAA, there was discussion about attending the CVAS convention on June 11th. Schauer promised to drive and several Directors committed to riding with him. CVAS will be charging a \$5.00 registration fee this year (which most other clubs already do) which will help them provide door prizes. A BRAS member (Schauer) won a 20mm Bresser 1-1/4" 70 degree field eyepiece which will be placed in the Nielsen as we need a wide field 20 mm.

Programming is set through December as follows:

July	Denny Bodzash	Ten Unsolved Mysteries of Astronomy and Cosmology
August	Barb Hubal	Spectroscopy
September	Dave Lengyel	Member photos of the transit of Mercury
October	Lee Lumpkin	Elections and using our website, Member Forum, Member gallery and using our TNS program.
November	OPEN	
December	Christmas Pot Luck and party at the LCMP Amherst Beaver Creek Reservation.	

Old Business mostly concerned last minute planning for the World Wide Solstice Festival. Schauer distributed a map of the Mill Hollow Reservation to help Directors decide where to put the

sundial, the solar scopes and the various pop-up tents we will use. There was also discussion about protecting scopes in case of rain. Each area where there will be scopes, or groups of people (like the start of the Planet Walk) will have a pop-up tent for shelter from any rain or from the Sun. Scopes can be moved under these tents and we will also provide large, heavy duty garbage bags with which to cover the scopes. The NASA solar videos will be in the summer kitchen of the Bacon House and we will use Tim's laptop and the club projector to show these. We will not be doing any of the interactive displays as no-one could volunteer to learn and present them. Assignments were then given to the Directors who were able to attend.

There was very little New Business with only two items before the Board. One was a program the Amherst Library wanted us to present as part of their summer reading program. We always enjoy working with them, but we have such a busy June with BRAS events every weekend and some during mid-week, that we simply couldn't schedule them. Luckily Denny Bodzash volunteered to do the library program himself, which is much appreciated.

The second item was a request from the Firelands Council Boy Scouts for help with their evening hikes and astronomy merit badges. Their request was for BRAS members to conduct these sessions every Tuesday and Thursday for four weeks. This is a bit more than we will be able to do, so Dan Walker will meet with them to see what we can provide for them.

Finally, the Board was reminded that our Public Observing session on Friday June 24th had NO back up date on Saturday night, due to the World Wide Solstice Festival being on Sunday the 26th.

We have a busy July with dates set as follows:

Fri./Sat July 1 st /2 nd	Public Observing	10:00-midnight	Nielsen Observatory
Wednesday July 6	General Meeting	7:00 p.m.	Carlisle Visitor Ctr.
Fri./Sat. July 8 th /9 th	Public Observing	10:00-midnight	Nielsen Observatory
Thursday July 14	Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.	Blue Sky Restaurant
Sunday July 17 th	Solar Observing	noon-4:00 p.m.	Sandy Ridge
Saturday July 30	CAA OTAA	3:00 p.m.-?	Letha House Park

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

~Steve Schauer



The Southern Milky Way from the Nielsen Observatory June 24, 2016 – Lee Lumpkin

This photo is a quick first edit, and was taken with 22 exposures of 2 minutes each at 1600 ISO. A Vixen Polarie drive was used with a 40mm lens at f:2.8. The 22 images were first adjusted with a “flat-field” image taken the next morning with the same lens and aperture to compensate for natural vignetting of the lens. Then the images were aligned and the median value for each corresponding pixel in the 22 images was used to generate a single image. This is an excellent way to reduce digital image “noise”. Then the contrast and color balance were adjusted. You can see the bands of high thin clouds that continued to cross near the horizon, but car headlights on the trees at the bottom of the frame and the dozens of aircraft that crisscrossed the sky are eliminated by taking the median value from 22 exposures.

Sagittarius is at the lower left. The brightest object near the top 2/3 of the way across the frame is Saturn, and the brightest object below and to the right of Saturn, about 1/3 down from the top of the frame, is Antares.

All the software used is free to download, install, and use, free to give away, and free to modify. Rawtherapee, Darktable, and Hugin were used and are available for Windows, macOS, and linux.

~Lee Lumpkin

