



# R. A. C. NEWS

## June - 2000



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### Observing Locations

**Iron Horse Farm** Campbell Hall, NY

914-496-6320

**Wawayanda State Park\***

973-853-4462 Highland Lakes, NJ

**Tahganic State Park\***

Taconic State Parkway, Ancram, NY

- *Special permits are required to observe.*

### OBSERVING SESSIONS

Lake Sebago - Saturday, June 10.

Anthony Wayne, Saturday, June 24.

Wawayanda (Club members only) June 2, 3, 30, and July 1.

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Susan Haskell** 4 Peabody Ct. Teaneck, NJ 07666 (201) 287-0580.

**Brad Thorne** 8 Pond Hollow Drive Oak Ridge, NJ 07438 (973) 697-4482.

### WHAT ON EARTH. . .

Will we be keeping an eye on ourselves using an out-of-this-world internet? Looks like it. NASA is taking the first steps toward internet-like connectivity among its future earth sensing satellites with "Sensor Web," an orbiting system that will incorporate a variety of technologies like satellite on-board processing, data collection and analysis, information transmission and wireless networks, and satellite platform control.

It's anticipated that Sensor Web will make possible the delivery of space-based earth observations to the end-user at the cost of placing a long distance telephone call. When fully implemented, an unprecedented amount of scientific data on the earth's atmosphere, land, and oceans should be available for study and public use.

"Sensor Web will be similar to the internet in that scientists and other users will have access to on-orbit sensors and be able to direct and control those sensors in the same manner as we access information on the internet today," according to Dr. Ghassem Asrar, Associate Administrator for Earth Science, NASA. (The Office of Earth Sciences is dedicated to the long-term study of how human-induced and natural changes effect our global environment.)

### More Books

In case your bookshelves aren't crammed-full enough, here are some more new astronomy books for your consideration:

*Handbook of CCD Astronomy (Cambridge Observing Handbooks for Research Astronomers, 2)* by Steven B. Howell, Cambridge University Press, Paperback \$24.95.

*A Different Approach to Cosmology : From a Static Universe Through the Big Bang Towards Reality* by Hoyle, Burbidge, and Narlikar, Cambridge University Press, hardcover \$59.95. This controversial book argues that the astronomical community is wrongly interpreting cosmological data by using the standard Big Bang model, and presents an alternative theory.

*A Walk Through the Southern Sky: A Guide to Stars and Constellations and Their Legends* by Heifetz, Heifetz, and Tiron, Cambridge University Press, paperback, online price \$12.71.

*The Talk of the Galaxy: An ET Message for You?* by Paul LaViolette, Starlane Publications, online price \$13.60.

*Patrick Moore on Mars* by Patrick Moore (author of *Exploring the Night Sky with Binoculars*), Sterling Publications, paperback, online price \$16.96.

*Destination: Mars* by Seymour Simon, Harper Collins Children's Books, library binding, \$15.89, an updated tour of the Red Planet for young astronomers.

*Great Ideas for Teaching Astronomy* by Stephen M. Pompea, Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., paperback, \$18.95.

**Angelo Parra**

### **FOR SALE**

Celestron C-8, 1995 model. Like new. Please call Chris at (914) 268-2814 after 6:00pm, for more details.

I have a 60mm Bushnell Refractor with an 800mm focal length for sale (Sky Chief II). It is in great condition. Complete with adjustable wooden tripod and brand new Meade 25mm and 9mm eyepieces (.965"). Paid \$130 when I bought it new. Please make a fair offer. You may contact me by phone or e-mail. Thanks! Will Klein. (914) 356-3373 or [wklein@bestweb.net](mailto:wklein@bestweb.net).

Bausch & Lomb 15x - 60x Discover Telescope with photo adapter for Olympus 35mm camera. Two years old, never used. Asking \$175.00. Contact Andy Smith at 914-942-1326 evenings or 914-942-5873 days for more info.

Celestron 80mm EQ-WA refractor. Brand new in box, never used. Won as prize at NEAF. Complete with mount, tripod and eyepiece. Asking \$400.00 or best offer. Contact John

Packard at 914-446-9548. May be seen / picked up at the home of Don Urban after first contacting Mr. Packard.

### **BARLOW BOB'S CORNER**

The Ultimate Toy of the New Millennium

After we discover amateur astronomy, we begin a lifetime study of it starting with Astronomy 101. Here we observe bright night sky objects including the moon and planets.

We continue with A201 where we observe faint night sky objects including nebula and galaxies.

With the proper solar filter, we can advance to A301 and safely observe the sun.

As part of our continuing education, we can proceed to A401 studying a variety of subjects ranging from meteors to CCD imaging. While we may not be interested in certain subjects, we can sample all of them.

I am fascinated by A501: Amateur Spectroscopy. Several years ago, the man in charge of spectroscopy on the Hubble Space Telescope, attended STARCONN. He demonstrated spectroscopy using light bulbs containing gases of different elements.

These light bulbs are called Geissler Tubes and contain gases under low pressure. Passing electricity through these tubes causes the gas to glow. They were invented in the mid 1850's by Johann Geissler and are the forerunners of today's street lights and neon signs.

We observed the bright emission spectrum of these elements through Holographic Diffraction Gratings. However, we had to return the gratings. I bought my own Geissler Tubes and gratings to demonstrate spectroscopy.

**Barlow Bob**

Next month: What the Rainbow Star Spectroscope can do for you!

### **JUST FOR LAUGHS**

A few weeks ago, NASA sent out a news item with the headline, "LOST AND FOUND: HUBBLE FINDS MUCH OF THE UNIVERSE'S MISSING HYDROGEN." I didn't know we'd lost any. Anyway, immediately my twisted mind came up with a follow-up headline, "LOST AND FOUND: HUBBLE FINDS THE BLACK HOLE OF MISSING SOCKS."

Just for laughs, e-mail me ([angel@acd-pc.com](mailto:angel@acd-pc.com)) what odd thing you think that the Hubble telescope is going to find next, and I'll reprint the best responses in the next issue of R.A.C. News.

**Angelo Parra**