

STARRY NIGHTS



April, May, June 2005

Volume 24, Issue 2

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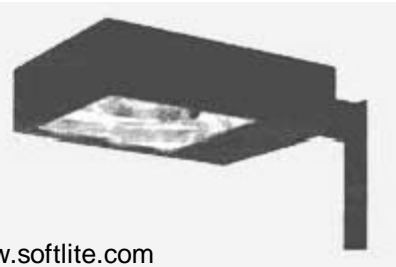
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A Request from Soft Lighting Systems

Recently our webmaster got a call from Soft Lighting Systems (www.softlite.com). They requested permission to link to our website's Sports Lighting pages. Soft Lighting Systems manufactures true full-cutoff sports lighting. The lights that are installed at the soccer field at the Sports Complex on Ryan Road are from Musco. We've seen the results from the Musco lights, with no difference before they were shielded and after. Once the links



www.softlite.com

are in place, our Observatory Director is waiting to see how long it takes Musco to call him. Musco representatives have called our



www.softlite.com

Observatory Director before asking what they could do. Unfortunately it isn't up to us, but the City Council. They know that our website is bad publicity for them. Our website was even mentioned

to the International Dark Sky Association back in 2002. Our local chapter of the IDA can be found at www.darkskywisconsin.org.

Tele Vue NP-101 Telescope Is smaller better?

So, here I was in Bryce Canyon Utah, reputed to be one of the darkest skies in North America, and I only had a lousy pair of binoculars!

Actually, even in binoculars the sky looked great. At one point several of the bright belt stars in Orion disappeared. It took me a while to realize that they were covered by clouds. In a truly dark site you can't see the clouds, as there's no light pollution to illuminate them.

Anyway, one result of that trip was the need (or excuse) for an airline portable telescope. The first thought was to get an inexpensive small refractor. But since I wouldn't be traveling very often, it would not get much use for regular observing. If I could get something to improve my CCD imaging, that would be a big plus. Also, I've always had an interest in having a high quality Apochromatic refractor.

I originally decided on a Takahashi Sky 90; it had a very good reputation for both visual and imaging uses. I placed an order, but after waiting for two months without a firm delivery date I reconsidered.

After more analysis, I decided on a Tele Vue NP-101 4-inch refractor. It was one of only two 4" APO refractors that are airline portable, the other one being the very hard-to-get Astro-Physics Traveler. The Tele Vue was in stock, and is designed to have a very well corrected flat field for photography. The Tak Sky 90 would have required adding a field flattener and various adapters to get it to work for imaging. The Tele Vue basically was good right out of the box.

My experiences with it so far have been very positive. It has the best optics of any telescope I've owned (it's the 4th). It needs no collimation, and cools down quickly.

On a good night the stars look like textbook examples. Splitting most close double stars is usually very easy. Saturn looks as good as I've ever see it on a night of good seeing. I can take the 4" up to a magnification of 225X without any problem, and on the low end it can go down to 10X with a 55mm eyepiece.

On the dimmer deep sky objects it is limited by the 4" aperture, but still does pretty well due to its exceptional contrast and wide field of view. The whole Veil Nebula is visible with a suitable filter.

I have it mounted on my Losmandy GM-8 Equatorial mount. This was easy to do; I just had to buy a universal mounting plate. For airline travel I bought an ash wood Gibraltar Tele Vue Alt-Az mount.



For some reason, I've been going down in the size of telescopes. The last three I've bought were 8", 6" and now a 4". They've also gotten more expensive as they've gotten smaller. Does that mean that smaller aperture is better? No, but a small telescope does have its advantages if it is of a very high quality.

In the future, I plan to write an article detailing the photographic abilities of this telescope.

-Phil Schumacher



WAS Positions Available

Like all organizations, the Wehr Astronomical Society is only as good as its members and their involvement within the organization. We have many opportunities for you to become a contributing member of the club with very little effort. You can help with setting the direction of the Society or simply assist as resource during various club-sponsored events.

If you would like to become more involved with the club, here is the information you need. We have need of:

- ★ Froemming Park Observing Helpers
- ★ Newsletter Article Writers (any astronomy topic or experience story is welcome)
- ★ Tuesday meeting greeters, help set up hand outs on table
- ★ You can also volunteer to hand out observatory schedules in your local area (library, etc). You could pick up the schedules at Tuesday night meetings.

Other positions open are:

- ★ Membership coordinator
- ★ Newsletter editor
- ★ Public outreach Coordinator

We also have 2 openings coming up on the Board of Directors. Those positions are:

- ★ Vice-President
- ★ Secretary

Both positions involve meeting with other board members 4 times a year to discuss and implement ideas to encourage the growth of the Wehr Astronomical Society.

Please contact any member of the board via phone or email to express your interest in anyone of these voluntary positions. The more our members become involved the more successful the Wehr Astronomical Society will be.



Real Hand-on Astronomy

At the January regular meeting - Hands On Astronomy Product Roundup we had Michael Bakich, Associate Editor from Astronomy Magazine, present various items that the magazine receives for review. To many of our members, it was a surprise when he gave away quite a few of the items by a random drawing. Some of the items that were given away were Starry Night Pro planetarium software, Lunar Map Pro, Red Shift 5 planetarium software and a few astronomy related DVDs. Also given away was a complete set of Meade 4000 Plossl eyepieces, Meade's Deep-Sky Imager CCD camera, Meade's NightView night vision scope, the Astronomer's VersaTool by Orion and a free one-year subscription to Astronomy magazine. Some of the other items that were displayed, but not given away, were a Denk II binocular viewer with dual arm Power x Switch™ optical system, Coronado's Personal Solar Telescope (P.S.T.) and a Televue refractor. We thank Mr. Bakich for literally sharing with us the products that Astronomy Magazine receives.



Matching Company Donations

Once again our generous club member Phil Schumacher has donated money to our club and his company, Cooper Industries, has matched his donation with a check for \$200 to our fund raising account. Thank you, Phil and Pauline. Many companies offer matching funds, so if you are considering making a monetary donation to WAS, check with your employer. Donations such as this are always welcome.

Phil and Pauline have also donated 12 video taps to our club with topics ranging from Early History of Astronomy to Einstein's Biggest Blunder. We are hoping to view a couple of these videos at our Tuesday meetings in 2005. The complete list of topics will be available at our regular meetings. Check it out and make a suggestion for which ones we should view.



SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

FOR

THE WEHR ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

<http://www.wehrastr.org>

REGULAR MEETINGS

(FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)



April 12, 2005

Wehr Nature Center

"Introduction to Astronomical Image Processing" given by Phil Schumacher



May 10, 2005

Wehr Nature Center

Dr. Joe Otu, Professor of Physics at the University of Wisconsin will be presenting a program for us.



June 14, 2005

No Meeting

OBSERVATORY ACTIVITIES

(FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)

April 1	7:30	Deep sky observing. Astronomy Hoaxes and Misconceptions. See Jupiter (closest to Earth April 5th. Io shadow transit 12:00 am) and Saturn
April 15	8:30	Observing the Moon and deep sky objects. Celebrate Astronomy Day. See a 1st quarter moon and the brighter deep sky objects. See Jupiter (GRS transit 7:01 pm) and Saturn.
April 29	9:00	Deep sky observing. Locate Leo the Lion. See Jupiter (GRS transit 8:32 pm) and Saturn.
May 13	9:30	Observing the Moon and deep sky objects. See a 1st quarter moon and the brighter deep sky objects. See Jupiter (GRS transit 10:04pm) and Saturn.
May 27	10:00	Deep sky observing. Locate Virgo the Virgin. See Jupiter (GRS transit 11:37 pm)
June 10	10:00	Observing the moon and deep sky objects. See a crescent moon and the brighter deep sky objects. See Jupiter (GRS transit 1:11 am)
June 24	10:00	Deep sky observing. Locate Hercules and the Great Globular Cluster. See Jupiter (GRS transit 2:47 am)

Note: All observatory dates fall on a Friday, and are held at Froemming Park, on 51st Street between Ryan Rd. and Puetz Rd.



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W.A.S. Board of Directors and Officers

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* Signifies the position is available and the name represents the acting volunteer. Contact a board member if you are interested in the position.

Starrynights

**The official newsletter of the Wehr
Astronomical Society.**

We are a group of amateur astronomers organized to promote the study of astronomy and further public and members' interest in astronomy. We have been serving the Milwaukee area since 1981 and welcome the public to our meetings. Our aim is to give guidance and information to those who want help in the pursuit of stargazing.

Back issues of starrynights can be requested or downloaded from our website at: www.wehrastro.org