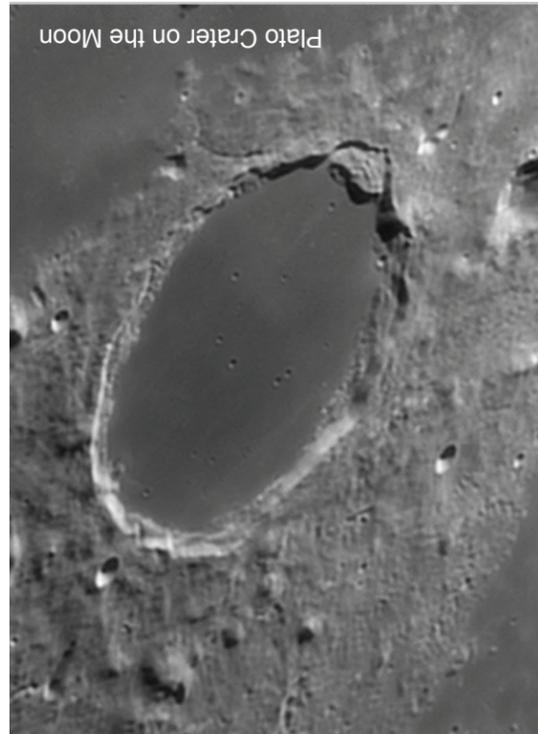




WNCC Foundation (WNAS)
2201 West College Parkway
Carson City, NV 89703



Plato Crater on the Moon

Events Calendar

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
May		1	2	3	4 First Qtr Moon, Jupiter Opposition	5	6 Star Party Astronomy Day
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Star Party Full Moon
	14	15	16	17 BOG Mtg	18 WNAS Mtg	19	20 Star Party Last Qtr Moon
	21	22	23	24	25	26 New Moon	27 Star Party Dark Sky*
	28	29	30	31			
June					1	2	3 Star Party First Qtr Moon Novice Trng
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Star Party
	11 Full Moon	12	13	14 BOG/OPS Mtg	15	16	17 Star Party
	18 Last Qtr Moon	19	20	21	22	23	24 Star Party *Dark Sky
	25 New Moon	26	27	28	29	30	

Dates to Remember:

MAY, 2006

4th 1st Qtr Moon Rise, 11:44am
4th Jupiter Opposition
6th Astronomy Day
13th Full Moon Rise, 08:00pm
17th BOG 07:00pm
18th WNAS Gen. Mtg, 07:00pm
20th Last Qtr Mn Rise, 02:06am
26th New Moon Rise, 04:51am

May 18th WNAS General Membership Meeting 7:00 p.m.

JUNE, 2006

3rd 1st Qtr Moon Rise, 12:36pm
11th Full Moon Rise, 09:08pm
18th Last Qtr Moon Rise, 01:02am
14th BOG/OPS Mtg, 07:00pm
25th New Moon Rise, 05:08am

*These are the best dark sky weekends for observing faint objects.



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President's Corner



WNAS is making a difference in the life and career potential of many individuals and it shows. The following are a few examples:

On the evening of March 24th WNAS members hosted a special night under the stars to a diverse group of middle and secondary students from all around the state of Nevada. Over 300 students were on the WNCC campus for the 2006 State Science Olympiad competition. Students engaged in more than 40

science competitions ranging from Astronomy to Health Science and from the Fermi Question to Bridge Building. Our WNAS membership team of volunteers took the opportunity to introduce these bright young students to the planets and stars.

- Local K12 teachers are sending students to the JCDO to make observations and ask questions regarding the position of the constellations, star clusters, and to learn how telescopes operate. TMCC and WNCC astronomy students are getting hands on information and practical experience as they apply their new knowledge of planetary and stellar astronomy they are learning at the college level.
- Many local citizens took advantage of the popular WNAS Novice Training Classes in 2005 and others can prepare for more Novice Training this spring and summer. If you need help learning how your telescope operates, if your telescope needs adjustments, or if you just want to use your telescope at the observatory, WNAS volunteers want to help you get started enjoying the sky dome over Carson City. See the WNAS Information Board on the next page for dates and times.

We will see you and yours at the JCDO...*Bulletin*: Our very own Amanda Heiderman (former WNCC astronomy/physics student) has finished her research program at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) in Greenbank, W. VA. and has been accepted in the Astronomy PhD program at the University of Texas, Austin <http://www.as.utexas.edu/>. Congratulations Amanda!!

New to Astronomy - Enroll in Astronomy 105

Would you like to know more about the night sky? Be able to identify constellations, the brighter stars and planets? Learn how to use different types of telescopes? Understand the movement of the night sky? WNCC is offering ASTRONOMY 105. Classes are held at the Observatory on Friday evenings from 8:00 to 11:00 with most of the time spent outside under the sky. For information call (775) 445-3277.

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WNAS web site:
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Ask Jack

This is the memberships column to ask questions about WNAS activities, the JCD Observatory and the field of astronomy. Please submit questions to the Editor at www.zapkgbg@msn.com or at the next WNAS membership meeting on **May 18th**.

Q: What is the difference between a geosynchronous and geostationary orbits? The term geosynchronous applies to any satellite with an orbital velocity equal to the rotational velocity of the Earth. The term geostationary applies to any satellite with an orbit with a constant *distance* from the earth's surface.

Q: What is meant by a Blue Moon? People first used the words blue moon back in the year 1883, when the Krakatoa volcano erupted. It put a lot of dust into the air and the moon actually appeared to be blue through the dust. It was something you could see everywhere on earth and people talked about. These days the term blue moon does not refer to the color of the moon. Instead it means that a full moon occurs twice in the same month and is a rarity.

Q: What are exoplanetisms? The search for planets around other stars has spawned new observing methods and new terminology. This new terminology is referred to as exoplanetisms. Here are a few examples: *Exoplanet* is planet circling a star in another solar system. *Goldilocks Zone* is a very colorful exoplanetism referring to the zone in a solar system where life can evolve. One last example is the *Continuously Habitable Zone*, this comes from the fact that stars brighten and swell as they age, thus the Goldilocks Zone gradually moves further from the star.

WNAS Information Board - Past and Future Events

First off, I would like to remind all members that **May 18th** will be the next general membership meeting of the WNAS. The meetings are back to the normal Thursday times. We hope to see a good crowd and it would be great if everyone could arrive by 7:00 pm at the Observatory. The planned lecture for this meeting will be given by retired biology professor and observatory volunteer Walt Dillard. The title of the lecture will be "Who Needs That Moon Calendar" and will explore the motions and phases of the moon!

The first Novice Training Class will be in conjunction with Astronomy Day on May 6th and will start at the Jack C. Davis Observatory at 7:30 pm with actual observing starting about 8:45 pm. Robert Collier will give a short lecture on the Observatory and how to use a telescope. This will be followed by a description of the current night sky and what interesting objects are in view.

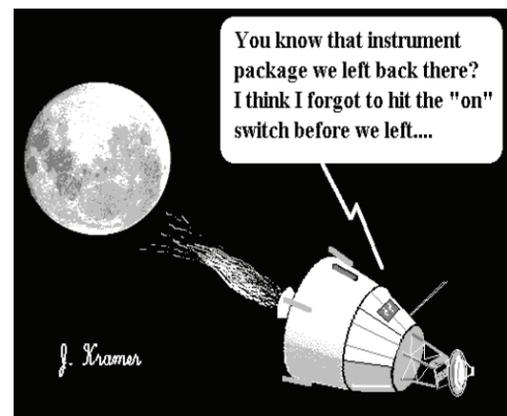
Remaining Novice Training Classes are scheduled for June 3rd, July 1st and Sept. 2nd. These are one night events and are in conjunction with the normal Saturday night star parties. We ask participants to arrive an hour before dark. Observatory volunteers will present a lecture on the use of telescopes and what interesting objects/constellations are in that evenings night sky. After the lecture, volunteers will take participants out to the observation deck and let them find some of the wonders of the universe.

WNAS volunteers participated in the Dayton Schools Family Learning Night on March 21st. Red Sumner, Dana Luterick, Al Pennington and Brian Guerin set up telescopes outside the elementary school gymnasium showed great views of Saturn and the Orion Nebula to adults and students. This is the second year WNAS has participated in this event and both were great successes, we are looking forward to next years event.

As a reminder to all members, we are still in need of Saturday night volunteers for our weekly star parties. If any of you have an interest in imaging the night sky the C-400 is fully operational and the BRC-250 should be fully functional by summer!

Objects in the Night

Can you identify the celestial objects in the Desert Sky logo? See page 3.



Cartoon provided by permission of Jack Kramer

Note from the Editor: Some of the pictures may not come out as clear as we would like in the newsletter, go to our website for the best resolution.

WNAS March General Meeting Minutes

The March 15th meeting of the WNAS general membership opened at 7:15 at the Jack C. Davis Observatory. The meeting started with a review and approval of the last meetings minutes, followed by the treasury report by Dana Luterick.

Robert Collier announced that the new WNAS website was fully functional. We all owe a great deal of thanks to Ryan Collier (Robert's son) for designing and implementing the updated website. The new website was shown on the overhead projectors and Robert reviewed some of the most interesting features. There will be more information added to the site as time permits, for now the past newsletters are not available. Frank Davis recommended that anytime new info is submitted to the website it would nice if an email could be sent out to the membership. Ryan explained that with the current software that may not be possible, but he will investigate that possibility.

Robert handed out to attending members a preliminary copy of the new Jack C. Davis Observatory brochures for recommendations. This initiated a long discussions with many helpful suggestions.

The date changes for the WNAS meetings is now back to the third Thursday of the month, check the newsletter and website to confirm meeting dates and times. The next general membership meeting will be Thursday, **May 18th**.

It was mentioned that the next issue of Carson Magazine would be the issue with the short article on WNAS. I have seen this issue and it's a great two page article with full page photo of Robert and a small photo on me on the second page.

Old business topics were reviewed and discussed. The light blocking wall is awaiting money from a yet undetermined source for completion and it looks like the three main observatory telescopes will be fully operational by summer.

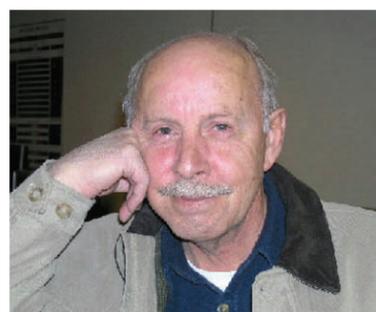
This concluded the business portion of the meeting and we moved on to more interesting events.

Gary Cole, an amateur astronomer, specialist on spectroscopy and trained physicist, gave an excellent lecture on the history and significance of spectroscopy. This is the second time Gary has presented a lecture on this subject for the WNAS membership and we would all like to thank him for his time and effort.

The presentation was followed by a Q & A session and comments from the membership. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Officers of the WNAS ask that all members visit the new website and let us know your opinion, we will try to archive all the past newsletters in the near future. Once again we would like to thank our new Webmaster, Ryan Collier for all the fine work.

Space Notes - The Survival of Single Planet Species



Apollo astronaut John Young, who walked on the moon, says single planet species do not survive. We have discovered that our place in the cosmos is dynamically evolving. An evolution which is bound to create some very bad events just like it has many times in the past. The worlds of our solar system are covered with many impact craters. On Earth they are quickly eroded by wind and water but that doesn't mean these collisions don't happen. The last four major extinctions on this planet were caused by impacts big enough to wipe out our entire civilization or species. This is normal. Also of concern is the occurrence of a super volcano capable of putting much of the Earth in a state of all year freezing, causing world starvation. The Permian extinction which wiped out 90% of life on Earth is believed to have been triggered by this type of event. A third concern is solar activity. The Little Ice Age in the Middle Ages was centered on solar radiation decrease for 70 years and caused the death of more than 25 million people.

The bottom line, John Young warns, is the single planet species do not survive. This is what space exploration is all about. Not about the Adventure of Human Space Exploration, but the deadly serious business of saving the species.

Objects in the Night Sky answers: Left center - Doomed Star Eta Carinae , Upper right - Phoebe: Comet Moon of Saturn