

# Friends of The Observatory

## Newsletter

April 2002  
Phone 513-321-5186

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www.cincinnatiobservatory.org Bill Cartwright, editor

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### A Letter From President Huber

Dear "Friends,"  
April showers! It doesn't sound too great for astronomy, HUH? Well never fear, there are a number of activities planned this month, "weather" or not. Astronomy Day is Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, and it should be a blast down at the downtown Public Library.

And it looks like all attending the astronomy display at the Flower Show will have a good time as well. So even if it showers this month, we'll still have a lot of fun. I hope to see you all at our monthly meeting in April.

### The April Meeting

This month's meeting will be held as usual at 7:30 PM on Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, in the basement of the church. If you need directions, call 513-321-5186.

Before the meeting, join the growing crowd who meet for supper at 6 PM at Cooker's Restaurant in the Hyde Park Shopping Plaza.

### The Planning Meeting

The planning committee will meet at 6 PM on Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, at Max & Erma's Restaurant in the Rookwood Pavillion.

### Did You Know....

Did you know that Hubble's WFPC2 is a big as a baby grand piano?

### FOTOKids Meetings

The next FOTOKids meeting will be at 7:30 PM Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, at the Observatory.

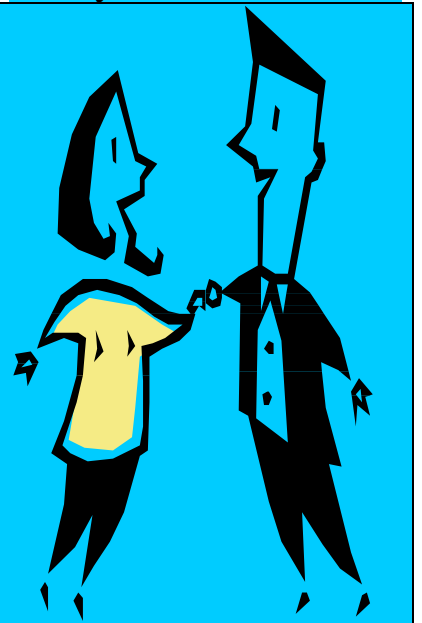
We will be running our first Messier Bingo, a new astronomy game. There will be prizes and fun galore followed by time at the telescopes, weather permitting.

Also, sign up for the May 2nd trip to the WXIX Studios for a tour of their weather studio. Weather guru, Rich Apuzzo, will give the tour.

The tour is on a Thursday night from 6:30 to 7:15 PM. Please be aware, there might not be room for adults. We will have an informal meeting on May third. Call Chuck (513-886-7600) to sign up if you can't make the meeting.

If you have a child who is interested in astronomy and might want to join FOTOKids, contact **Chuck Strubbe** at [jstrubbe@one.net](mailto:jstrubbe@one.net) or (513) 886-7600.

### We Welcome Our Many New Members!



**David McBride, Karen & Steve Myers, Susan & Michael Schock, Donald & Esther Ball, Dr E. Robert & Linn Wanat, Mark Schaut, Stephen & Carla Booth, Anne Peaker, Greg Thomas, Sueann Burge, Harmon McClung, James Danehy, Mara Wilson, Nancy Fuller, David & Cynthia Park, John & Margie Keller, Anthony & Yvonne Ressig, and Thomas & Cecilia Kloecker.**

## More Hot Astronomical Websites

By Chuck Strubbe

I decided to take the title of this article literally. Just how hot is hot in astronomical terms?

### Hot Stars

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/astronomy/stars/startypes.shtml> -- Though the URL is a bit long, this is a simple guide to star classification.

<http://theawww.gsfc.nasa.gov/users/allen/obafgkmrns.html> -- If you've never heard the term 'Oh Be A Fine [Guy/Girl] Kiss Me' then you will want to discover just how hot stars are at this site.

### Hot Cosmology

[http://www.damtp.cam.ac.uk/user/gr/public/bb\\_home.html](http://www.damtp.cam.ac.uk/user/gr/public/bb_home.html) -- The Hot Big Bang Model -- This is a good sight from Cambridge University (UK) that gives a quick but thorough explanation of the Big bang theory.

### Hot Sun

<http://www.seds.org/nineplanets/nineplanets/sol.html> -- What's the hottest body in the region? Why the sun of course.

## Hubble Reveals Blue Galaxy Ablaze with Star Formation



A new photo released from the Hubble Space Telescope shows how galaxy NGC 7673 is teeming with hot star nurseries. Located 150 million light years away in the constellation of Pegasus, each cluster in this new photograph contains thousands of infant stars burning at incredibly high temperatures. Astronomers aren't sure why this galaxy is so active, but it could be because the galaxy collided with another millions of years ago.

## Stonelick Lake Star Parties

By Scott Naylor

The next Stonelick Star Party and Cloud Dates will be **Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>**, with a rain date the following Saturday, April 13th. We will be setting up around dusk in the beach overflow parking lot.

They're held at Stonelick Lake State Park, which is open to the public all night year 'round. For updates, directions or information phone **Scott Naylor** at 513-575-5556.

## Did You Know....

The Universe is not only expanding, but also *accelerating!*

## A Wet Mars?



Today the Red Planet is dry and barren, but what about tomorrow? New data suggests that the long story of water on Mars isn't over yet.

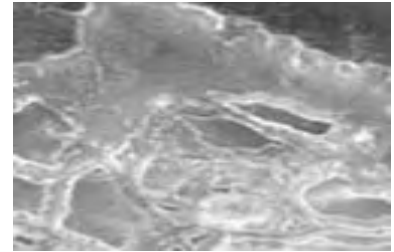
[http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2002/12mar\\_waterplanet.htm](http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2002/12mar_waterplanet.htm)

## Bright New Comet Graces Evening Sky

The brightest comet since 1997's Hale-Bopp is currently gracing the western skies of North America. Comet Ikeya-Zhang was discovered on February 1st by two amateur astronomers in Japan and China. Ikeya-Zhang is the first long-period comet (a comet with a period longer than 200 years) to be identified on its return to the inner solar system.

<http://spaceflightnow.com/news/n0203/23ikeyazhang/>

## First Mars Odyssey Photos Released



They're only the first few photographs from Mars Odyssey, but scientists are already excited about what the spacecraft has turned up on the surface of Mars. Odyssey, which began mapping the planet last week, has detected significant amounts of hydrogen near the planet's south pole. Scientists believe this hydrogen is evidence of water ice - and not just surface frost, but a large quantity of frozen water.

<http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/odyssey/newsroom/pressreleases/02mar01.html>

## Did You Know....

There are about a billion galaxies for every person on Earth! And each galaxy contains 100-200 billion stars!

## Upcoming Dayton Star Party

The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual **Apollo Rendezvous & Star Party** sponsored by the Miami Valley Astronomical Society, will be held in Dayton on June 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>. Circle your calendars.

## Easy Method For Estimating Mass Of Distant Black Holes

An Ohio State University astronomer has developed a method for reliably estimating the mass of black holes in distant quasars.

Based on this method, a postdoctoral astronomy researcher at Ohio State, has begun to address the long-standing issue of why only a small fraction of quasars are capable of producing very powerful radio emission.

<http://spaceflightnow.com/news/n0201/17blackholes/>

## Shrinking Violets, Shrinking Newsletter?

By Craig Niemi

If you thought this newsletter has fewer pages than the ones in the past, you're right. That's because it costs us more to produce the newsletter than we're getting from the membership fee. You can help us reduce the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter by requesting we email it to you instead of mailing it.

F.O.T.O. is facing a bit of a money squeeze. Nothing drastic, just a slow, steady drain on our limited resources. You can do your part!

Sign up to receive your monthly newsletter via email. It's easy. Just download the free Adobe Acrobat Reader from:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>

Then email Bill Cartwright at [wcartw@aol.com](mailto:wcartw@aol.com) and let Bill know you want your name added to the Newsletter email list.

The files are fairly small (March was 400K) so even those with phone connections can download the files quickly.

### The Advantages:

You receive the newsletter in glorious full color! You save a small tree! It's Easy! It even works on my Mac. You receive your newsletter days before regular mail! JoAnne has fewer stamps to lick! You can easily save the newsletters for future reference.

And most importantly you help FOTO save money that we could better put towards our members' needs. Did you know that First Class postage might rise to 37 cents this summer?

### The Disadvantages:

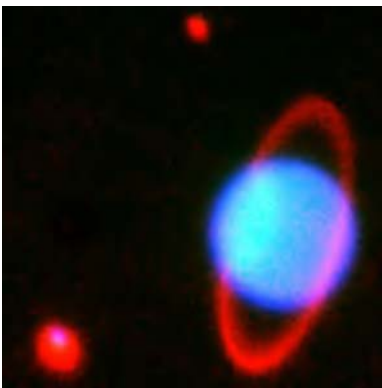
None.

Please sign up today! Email Bill Cartwright at [wcartw@aol.com](mailto:wcartw@aol.com).

## Expiring Membership?

If you know your membership is about to expire, please renew. \$35 single, or \$50 family, payable to Cincinnati Observatory Center, 3489 Observatory Place, Cincinnati, OH 45208.

## Japanese Observatory Views Uranus And Two Moons



This near-infrared image of Uranus, its ring system, and two of its satellites -- Miranda and Ariel -- is from the Subaru Telescope of the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan.

<http://spaceflightnow.com/news/n0203/17uranus/>

## Did You Know....

Move to Mercury and you'd better bring a pretty wide range of clothing. Nighttime temperatures go way down to -300F, while in the afternoons it warms up to a toasty +800F.

## A Bow Shock Near a Young Star



The Hubble Space Telescope continues to reveal various stunning and intricate treasures that reside within the nearby, intense star-forming region known as the Great Nebula in Orion. One such jewel is the bow shock around the very young star.

Even though the Hubble Space Telescope is out of commission while it's upgraded, older images are still being released to the public. This image,

actually taken back in 1995, reveals how a bow shock has formed around a young, hot star located in the Orion Nebula. The star, LL Ori emits a powerful solar wind that collides with the slower moving gas of the Orion Nebula. This bow shock, similar to that found at the front of a boat, is formed where the two winds collide.

<http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/PR/2002/05/index.html>

## April's Trivia Question

What distance did Cassini calculate in 1671? And what did it allow him to compute?

**March's Trivia Question:** "In 1633 the Church forced Galileo into house arrest for believing and publishing proof of what idea?"

**Answer:** Galileo was forced by the Church to rescind his support of the Copernican system, that the earth orbits the sun.

## Star Wars Technol- ogy Closer Than Gal- axies

Technology introduced by members of a galaxy far away, a long time ago, is now one step closer to reality. And, it's with funding from a space medicine research institute that this breakthrough device will one day kill tumors and stop internal bleeding without knives, scalpels or stitches -- basically without surgery as we know it.

<http://spaceflightnow.com/news/n0203/20starwars/>

## Astronomy Day

Astronomy Day is almost here! FOTO in conjunction with CAS, is looking for a few good volunteers who would like to help out.

The event is scheduled to take place at the downtown Public Library on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, and will run from noon to 5 PM. There will be a volunteer sign-up sheet at the April FOTO meeting or you can call the Observatory at 513-321-5186.

So come on out and let's make Astronomy Day 2002 a good one!

## April's Word of the Month

"Hydrostatic Equilibrium"

**Answer to March's word of the month:** "Plerion".

Plerion is a rare form of Super nova remnant in which the radiation is being radiated from both the center and the expanding shell of gas. The Crab Nebula is one such example.

## FOTO-SETI Update

26 dedicated FOTO members have completed 12,006 SETI studies, up 417 studies from February, for a total of 32.9 years of computer time!

There's still time to sign up to become part of the greatest search in history!

<http://www.space.com/searchforlife>

## Did You Know....

Eratosthenes measured the size of the earth with 2 sticks and a chain, and was correct within just a few % of the accepted figure! Not bad for 230 BC!

## Off-The-Shelf Camera to Hunt for Distant Planets



It could fit on your desk, and it's made mostly from parts bought at a camera shop, but two scientists believe their new instrument will help them find a slew of large planets orbiting stars in our Milky Way galaxy.

[http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/releases/2002/release\\_2002\\_57.html](http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/releases/2002/release_2002_57.html)

## Did You Know....

American Astronomer Asaph Hall discovered Phobos and Deimos in 1877 using the 26-inch telescope at the Naval Observatory?

## UC Communiversy Classes At The Observatory

Consider attending one of the UC Communiversy classes, which are being offered at the Observatory. Attending astronomy classes is the next best thing to viewing on cloudy evenings. Here's the schedule:

**Binocular Astronomy** - Tuesday April 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:30-9:30 PM.

**Constellations** - Monday, May 20th, 7:30-9:30 PM with **Dean Regas**.

**Heavens in Your Hands** - Wednesdays on May 1st, 8th, 15th, & 22nd, 7:30-9:30 PM with **Greg Huber**.

Enroll in these classes now by telephoning UC at 513-556-6932.

## Did You Know....

Because photons keep bouncing back and forth off other photons, it takes about a million years for a single photon to work its way from the Sun's core to the surface, all the while traveling at nearly the speed of light. Then it takes those photons only 8 minutes to reach the Earth!