THE

FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 26, No. 7 July 2022

* * *

Club Calendar:

FRAC Meeting: Thursday, July 14 on Zoom only. There is no planned program this month, but if anyone has updates or would like to share their progress on some observing programs, we will set aside time at the end of the meeting to share and discuss.

Look for the invite in your email during the second week in July.

Public Observing Events:
Friday, July 8, 9:00pm. Fayette County Rec Department public observing at Lake Horton in Fayetteville. Weather date is Saturday, July 9.

FRAC Observing Events:
Friday and Saturday, July 29-30
From sunset until whenever at Joe Kurz Wildlife Management Area.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

* * *

President's Message:
Hello FRAC Members,

By the time you get this, we are almost a week into July. My apologies for the lateness of the newsletter, but June was pretty busy for me. You might remember I was out west for a week and a half. The stargazing was pretty good, despite the full moon. If you have the chance to go out west and see the stars in truly dark skies, I highly recommend it.

Happy Independence Day!

Thanks,
Sean

* * *

Astronomy Trivia:

1. What is the only large moon in the solar system with a retrograde (backward) orbit?
2. How long does it take the International Space Station to orbit Earth?
3. When was the earliest recorded sighting of Halley's Comet?
4. How many recognized dwarf planets are in our solar system?
5. What is the most reflective body in the solar system?

* * *

Previous Meetings/Activities:

June Events:
FRAC Meeting - June 9, 2022 - 7:30pm on Zoom.

- 20 club members participated on Zoom: Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Clement and Debbie Smetana, David and Rosanne Stone, Carlos Flores, Mark Grizzaffi, Alan Pryor, Ben Barker, Dave Mandell, Scott Hasson, Tom Moore, John Cruickshank, Aaron Calhoun, Wade Simmons, Nelson Stephenson, Mark Sutton, Chip Reahard, and Felix Luciano.
- Our guest speaker, Ryan Hannahoe gave a detailed overview of the programs at the Montana Learning Institute and his work in astrophotography.

FRAC Observings:
The June observing events on 6/24 and 6/25 were a rainy and cloudy mess.

Public Observing Events:
June 10, 2022: Stargazing at Lake Horton, Fayette County Rec Department. The night turned cloudy and very little observing was done. George Ruff gave walking tours of the scale solar system model. Thank you to the club members that participated, George Ruff, Nelson and Kathy Stephenson, David and Rosanne Stone, Felix Luciano, and Scott Hasson

* * *

Solar System Observing – July 2022

Mercury is close to the sun and not visible.
Venus is visible in the morning sky at 4:30am until sunrise at around 6:00am.
Earth continues.
Mars is visible in the morning sky, rising around 2:00am, and staying visible until sunrise.
Jupiter is visible starting around 1:00am, visible until sunrise.
Saturn is visible at midnight, fading from view as dawn breaks.
Uranus is visible with a telescope at around 3:00am.
Neptune is visible in a telescope starting around midnight.
Moon: FQ: 7/6 Full: 7/13 LQ: 7/20 New: 7/28
https://in-the-sky.org/

* * *

Classifieds:

If you have something you would like to buy, sell, or trade, email the specifics, including your contact information to stneckel@gmail.com

* * *

NGC6894, Courtesy of Alan Pryor

NGC 6894 is a planetary nebula in the constellation of Cygnus, and it has a remarkable resemblance to the Ring Nebula. It is about 5400 light-years away, and the planetary phase of the star probably started 10,000+ years ago. Planetary nebulae do not last very long. Once the outer atmosphere of the star is blown off it does not take long for the gases to dissipate (10's of thousands of years). That is not long compared to the life of a star of that size which is billions of years.

It has a magnitude of 12.7 and is visible under dark skies with an 8" scope or larger. The central star is very faint and can be detected through photography. NGC 6894 is in the Milky Way's galactic plane. To find it look at the bright star, Sadir, in Cygnus and go almost 10 degrees south of it.

This image was taken with a Celestron 11" EdgeHD scope and a QSI 683wsg camera with no binning. The total exposure was 3 hours and 10 minutes (3 sets of 5-minute RGB's and 14 five minute L's) with a sensor temperature of -15 degrees C.

A full size image can be seen at NGC 6894.

* * *

Trivia Answers:

1. Neptune’s moon Triton.
2. 92 minutes
3. Chinese astronomers first documented Halley’s Comet in 164 BC.
4. 5, Ceres, Eris, Makemake, Pluto, and Haumea.
5. Saturn’s moon Enceladus.

##