

AstroBlast 2004

Hi all,

Just wanted to make a report on Oil City's AstroBlast 2004 convention.

I drove up to the ORAS Observatory around 1:30 pm yesterday. There I met other AAAP members on hand, including Bob Kalan, George Guzik, Joe McCafferty, Bob Novack, Charlotte Tunney, Fred Klein, and Terry Van Horne & family. Later Terry and JoAnne Trees joined the group, but didn't stay overnight. (Terry gave an excellent 'How to' astronomy presentation later that evening).

Also present were a number of our friends from some of the regional astronomy clubs, including Winni and John Labrecque of the Kiski Astronomers. I estimated that about 70 or so amateurs were in attendance, including our good NASA Bus friends Howard and Jules. (the bus is currently broken down, but they came in another NASA vehicle, bringing many hands-on NASA items). About 3:00 pm, the clouds began to clear. Out came Bob Kalan's new Coronado PST solar telescope, and we all enjoyed views of the Sun's chromosphere. After the famous pizza party dinner, the door prizes were drawn. Once again, the AAAP did well, with Charlotte, Joe, Terry, and myself winning. (there were a lot of rumors flying around about how much Terry paid off Grant Van Horne to pull Terry's name out of the drawing box) ;)

Once the sun set, and twilight ended, the Milky-Way was spectacular, even with a bright near first quarter moon nearby. Just goes to show how good a spot the ORAS club has for their observatory. The only downside to the evening was the heavy dew that soon wiped out most of the telescopes on the field. (except for those packing mega-watt dew heaters). Dew was even forming on people's hats and coats as they stood around taking in the naked-eye views of deep-sky objects along the Milky-Way.

Thanks to Tim Spuck, John O'Hara, and all of the ORAS members for once again putting on a great little convention!

I didn't get around to taking a photo of everyone present, but here's a few.

Also, ORAS is expanding their observatory, and I've included a few 'construction' shots.

Larry

<http://home.comcast.net/~lsmch/astroblast2004/ab2004-01.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~lsmch/astroblast2004/ab2004-02.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~lsmch/astroblast2004/ab2004-03.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~lsmch/astroblast2004/ab2004-04.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~lsmch/astroblast2004/ab2004-05.jpg>

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<http://home.comcast.net/~lsmch/astroblast2004/ab2004-08.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~lsmch/astroblast2004/ab2004-09.jpg>