

## Cherry Springs 2007

Hi all,

This was the first year that I've ever been to Cherry Springs, so please excuse my enthusiasm! What they say is true! It is an 'Astronomers Paradise!'.

The facilities are great!!!

A large flat meadow in the middle of a forest, with gravel roads bisecting the field for easy access, multiple concrete telescope pads and electrical outlets scattered throughout the field, several permanent restrooms with more planned to be built this summer, a large amphitheater with seating and a built-in projection screen, and a large double pavilion connected in the middle by a long covered patio! (if only we had something like that at StarCruise!) They also have two small observatory domes, and a roll-off roof observatory with full electrical hookup that one can rent for an evening! The only downside is there are no showers. But the ranger says they are putting showers in at a park campground a few miles down the road.

Like others, I almost bailed out on going. Even though I had the van packed, Thursday was so dismal that I didn't go. (it's a 4.5 hour drive for me). Friday morning didn't look good either, but after checking the various forecasts, it seemed like Friday evening was going to be the only half-decent night, so I decided to go for it, and left at noon Friday. That turned out to have been an excellent move, as Friday afternoon, the Sun came out and dried up the field and that night was fabulously clear! (though the old timers tell me it was just an average night at Cherry Springs).

The evening started out with observing the usual Spring favorite galaxies and globulars, along with Venus and Saturn, and later Jupiter. There were lots of telescopes of various sizes about the field, SCT's, refractors, reflectors, and a couple of monster 30" & 32" dobs. (which was a good thing as I only brought my little 80mm spotter and deep-sky video camera, as my observing plan was for wide-field video imaging, and then walking around looking thru others telescopes). By 2:30 am, the Summer Milky-Way had risen high enough for great naked eye views. I recorded several clips, and when I get a chance later in the week to process them, will see if anything looks good enough to send out a link too.

The highlight of the evening was seeing the new StellaCam III (peliter cooled) deep-sky video camera in action on a 8" SCT! The views were simply amazing! (this is the same camera that is on order for piggybacking on the 24" at Mingo).

Saturday, the predicted weather forecast continued to be off, as we had sunny skies, (good for solar observing), but a persistent 10-15 mph breeze, which kept attendees busy chasing tent canopies and things. A fella setup behind me, and it took four of us to keep his tent from going airborne while he staked it down.

There were only about four vendors present, and the swap table was sparse, but there were plenty of folks to talk with, with a number of us there representing the AAAP, KISKI, and ORAS.

Saturday evening, the wind finally died down, but not before a number of campers had called it quits. There was still a good crowd that remained, (about the size of an average StarCruise in number), and everyone was enjoying the clear views of the Venus / Moon conjunction. Around midnight, a cloud bank began moving in, and sometime before dawn Sunday morning it rained.

After the Sun came up, it didn't take long for the place to clear out as everyone headed home. Still, it was well worth the drive time.

I am already making plans for going back in the fall for Black Forest!

Larry

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Here's a few images from Cherry Springs. Not too happy with how they came out, so I might try another processing technique later in the week.

Larry

Friday's Crescent Moon using an 80mm f3 refractor & stellacam:

<http://home.comcast.net/~lemastro/vidcap/images/Crescent-Moon-051807.jpg>

Saturday's conjunction using the stellacam with a 3.5 - 9mm f1.4 CCTV lens:

<http://home.comcast.net/~lemastro/vidcap/images/Venus-Moon-051907a.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~lemastro/vidcap/images/Venus-Moon-051907b.jpg>

Friday's Milky-Way using the stellacam with a 3.5 - 9mm f1.4 CCTV lens:

<http://home.comcast.net/~lemastro/vidcap/images/Summer-triangle-051807.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~lemastro/vidcap/images/tent-scorpius-051807.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~lemastro/vidcap/images/tent-sagittarius-051807.jpg>