

From Russ Valentine:

Congratulations to **Steve Doerr** for being inducted into the Planetary Nebula Club awarded by the Astronomical League (<http://www.astroleague.org/>). One gain membership in the Planetary Nebula Club by observing and recording observations of 60 planetary nebulae.

If you are looking for something new to observe, using an Observing Club list as a guide is a good way to go. You can view new things and get an award at the same time.

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Free Training Available. No Hidden Costs or Obligations. Guaranteed Results or Your Money Back !

(Small Print: Results may vary, there are risks of addiction to the 'joys' of Astrophotography, and of course there is no money to return !)

Introduction and training for the use of the Tombaugh Telescope will be available on an individual basis. Once April comes around the commitment to use the Tombaugh telescope primarily for Near Earth Asteroid observing will be ended. Though some Near Earth Asteroid observing will still be done, it is anticipated that the volume will decrease considerably. This frees up the scope and associated equipment for more varied uses such as mainbelt asteroid searching, deep sky photography, astrometry, photometry, supernova searches or followup's, trans Netpunian searches. etc. The telescopes ability to image beyond 20th magnitude provides the opportunity to discover new asteroids which eventually could lead to your ability to claim and name them. The brighter asteroids have all been found or are being quickly located by professionally run surveys.

The telescope and computer programs become easy to use with experience, but initially they can be intimidating and there are some do's and dont's that needs to be addressed. If you are interested in learning to use the scope, myself and others can arrange to lead you through the process.

Also, if you do not desire to use the scope yourself, but have a desire to acquire images of selected objects, you may request them, though the actual acquiring of the images would depend on the aviability, patience, rectitude, devotion, enthusiasm , and whim of the operator. So if you have an interest let us know at the meetings , at the observatory or on the NEKAAL Members Yahoo group.

Dan Tibbets - President

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Get in Shape, Half Marathon planned for March 17th at Farpoint Observatory FOOD PROVIDED !

If you are out of shape like me and you don't think you can handle a full Messier Marathon, then come out to Farpoint on Mar 17th at 6 pm (dinner time) for a Half Marathon (Weather permitting).

By observing ~ 2 weeks earlier than normal for the 'Full' Marathon, it will be easier to catch those early targets, and there is no need to slave all night and hope to catch the last few objects at dawn. And you will have more time to enjoy observing the first half of the Messier objects (and eat)! A second _ Marathon will be held in the summer to finish up the list. We will hopefully have lists of the objects that you can observe. Once you've completed the Messier Marathon you can get a pin from the Astronomical League and have the satisfaction of a job well done.

And at 6 pm we will have a chili feed to give you the gas you need to last the _ Marathon, or to get home. Solar observing will be available for those who arrive early enough.

Be sure to check the Yahoo NEKAAL Members group before coming out to confirm that the event is on and has not been canceled by Mother Nature.

Some Internet sites that cover the Messier Marathon:

<http://www.messiermarathon.com/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messier_marathon
<http://www.willbell.com/handbook/mess.htm>

Dan Tibbets – President

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February and March Meeting Topics

Meeting topic for February will be “[The Tombaugh Telescope: Trials and Tribulations](#)”.
Going through the evolution of the telescope from its original to current configuration.
Or - “Now I know how Vampires feel” - presented by Dan Tibbets

Meeting topic for March will be [NASA Satellites-J through Z](#). A description of the last half of the alphabet soup of NASA scientific satellites – presented by Russell Valentine

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Note to NEKAAL Members: Please remember that you can use this newsletter to submit your own articles, questions, observations, even suggestions on how to improve NEKAAL. All of these things can be placed in this "miscellaneous" document in each issue. You are welcome to try to buy or sell astronomy equipment by posting it in this newsletter. You can send birthday announcements, birth announcements, news about yourself, acknowledgements, thank you's, complaints, etc. You are also most welcome to write your own separate article. Please email or mail any items you want to appear in the newsletter to the editor, Bill Leifer.

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