

2016 Orange Blossom Special Star Party

March 2016

Editors -Kelly Anderson & Steve Robins



From Your Chairman

JACK FRITZ

★ I hope everyone had a great time at the 2016 Orange Blossom Star Party. I know I did, and from the feedback I received, that seems to be the case.

I would like to thank everyone who had a hand in helping out with everything from set-up to tear-down. Nancy Huff is always my right hand, and I could not do what I do without her consult. Wally Vazquez did a great job with the door prizes. Joe Canzoneri, Kelly Anderson, Chris Curran, Jim Hunter, Kyle Brinkman, and Wally Vazquez, all jumped in to help with set-up and tear-down. My wife, Roni helped with the registration packages and both she and Nancy covered check-in. I know I have left out some others that helped but my brain is fried.

From Your Editors

KELLY ANDERSON
STEVE ROBBINS



Aerial shot from Joe Canzoneri's drone.

★ The Orange Blossom Special 2016 was another great success, blessed with lovely weather and mostly good seeing. One hundred seventeen people attended, which included ten children. The weather for the event was delightful throughout, with highs in the 70s and lows that were a little brisk but improved as the week progressed. The only precipitation for the week was a light rain shower in the wee hours Thursday morning. Seeing was fairly good except for Wednesday evening,

which was completely clouded out, but cleared about 4:00 AM. The upper air was humid and a little murky following the rain, but improved into the weekend.

Two hayrides were enjoyed on Saturday, one after lunch, the other in the early evening. The latter took us out of the Park boundaries and across the Lanier Bridge for a stunning view of the Withlacoochee River. To the south the river flowed lazily towards us past stately cedars. To the north lay the Green Swamp, dark and forbidding, no doubt teeming with alligators, snakes, fairies and swamp apes. All of this contributed to a fun trip through the wilderness in comfort on our hay bales.

That same day were two trips through the park for a closer look at the natural wonders, one by bicycles led by (puff-puff!) Kelly Anderson, the other a guided nature walk led by Mike Davis. After an exhilarating ride and a brisk walk, we were ready for (what else?) lunch.

On Thursday Mike led a demonstration of mirror grinding, helping to lift the veil of mystery from this process of taking a plate of glass and turning it into a parabolic wonder of near perfection.



Mike Davis on mirror grinding

On Friday afternoon our President, Kyle Brinkman, led a group through a walkabout, viewing a variety of scopes, from the whimsical (Shark Dob) to the diminutive (3 and 4-inch refractors) to the amazing (26-inch Dobsonian with go-to and auto-guiding), and many

in-between those extremes. Each demonstration included an invitation by the owner to return after dark to look through these optical wonders.



Tom Spano's infamous shark Dobsonian.

Bob Stelmock demonstrated his state-of-the-art imaging equipment (his "electro-telescope") and process for getting superior images with less pain and effort than conventional techniques.

Saturday morning Allen Force gave a comprehensive presentation on stellar photography for those of us who are newcomers as well as more experienced but still struggling imagers.



Allen Force's Presentation

The week culminated in the gathering at the Lecture Tent for the Wrap-up and awards presentation.

The John Dobson Award Committee awarded a Life-Time achievement award to

John O'Neill for his considerable contribution to SPAC and the Astronomy Community in genera.



John O'Neill receiving a Life-Time Achievement Award

The winners of the astro-imaging contest were Joe Canzoneri for his deep-field image of Messier 51, the "Whirlpool Galaxy," and Allen Force for his wide-field image of Barnard 33, the "Horsehead Nebula."



Joe's winning deep-field image.



Alan's winning wide-field image.

The winner of the 50/50 drawing was Mary Garner, and husband Richard won the drawing for the replica of Newton's telescope, lovingly crafted by Tom Spano. Big day for the Garners ... Congratulations!



Handcrafted Newtonian

Door Prize Winners

Celestron Rechargeable Hand Warmer

Elizabeth Wood

Celestron 2 in 1 Solar Panel Device

Steve Robbins

Lowell Observatory Admission Tickets

Tom Spano

Astronomy Magazine Subscription

Matt G. Labadie

Bob's Knobs Gift Certificate

Joyce Waters

Sky and Telescope Pocket Atlas

David Swann, Charlie Hoffman, and Kyle Brinkman

Sky and Telescope Binocular Highlights

Brent Hilker and Kathy McAlvy

Tele Vue 40 mm Plossal Eyepiece

Ellen Roth

Vixen 25mm Eyepiece

Natalie Anderson

Agema Astro Products 20mm Eyepiece

John O'Neill

Scientific Direct Atlantis Space Shuttle Frame

Steve Biondo

Explore Scientific 8 x 50 Illuminated Polar Finder

Ron Wayman

Howie Glatter Parallizer Adapter

Linda Hoffman

Chiefland Fall Star Party Gift Certificate

Brian Roth and Cal Waters

Observer's Handbook

Walter Tripp, Richard Garner, Alex Velez, Chris Craig, Mary Favaro, Dario Diaz, John Galle, David, Tylor Fox, Mary Garner

Astronomy Calendar

Jackie Tobergte, Penny Hunter, Mike Davis, Diann Morningstar, Steve Burner, Keevy McAlavy, and Matt Terry

Good Eats Provided by Kickin Caribbean

Kickin' Caribbean catered our food this year, and it was a notch above the ordinary. If you took your own food you were rightly kick-in' yourself for not buying the best meals served in recent OBS history. Hope she comes back next year and appreciative people can leave her a review at <https://www.facebook.com/Kickin-Caribbean-785503311570173/timeline>.



Merrill Wright



Bob Stelmock explaining easy astro imaging



Chris Craig setting up for Meet-n-Greet



We look forward to seeing everyone next year. Be sure to mark your calendars for January 25th through January 29th, 2017.