

2009 STELLAFANE CONVENTION



The 74th Convention of Amateur Telescope Makers on Breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont.
Thursday, August 13th to Sunday, August 16th, 2009
43° 16' 41" North Latitude, 72° 31' 10" West Longitude



"For it is true that astronomy, from a popular standpoint, is handicapped by the inability of the average workman to own an expensive astronomical telescope. It is also true that if an amateur starts out to build a telescope just for fun, he will find before his labors are over that he has become seriously interested in the wonderful mechanism of our universe. And finally there is understandably the stimulus of being able to unlock the mysteries of the heavens by a tool fashioned by one's own hand. Russell W. Porter, Founder of Stellafane, March, 1923

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday, August 13th:

3 p.m. - 10 p.m. Convention early entry.

Friday, August 14th:

9 a.m. Registration gate opens.

10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Shuttle bus operates.

11 a.m. Astronomy activities for kids in McGregor Obs.

12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Mirror grinding Demo in the Pavilion.

1 p.m. ATM Demo Talk in the Pavilion.¹

1:30 p.m. Horseshoe pitching contest near the Pavilion.

2 p.m. ATM Demo Talk in the Pavilion.¹

3 p.m. Astronomy activities for kids in McGregor Obs.

3 p.m. ATM Demo Talk in the Pavilion.¹

3 p.m. - 6 p.m. Hartness House Museum open.

4 p.m. ATM Demo Talk in the Pavilion.¹

4 p.m. Solar System Walk (behind Pink clubhouse).²

5 p.m. "Stellafane for Beginners" in McGregor Obs.

5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Registration for optical competition.²

8 p.m. - Astro Imaging Seminar near the Ash dome.

8:30 p.m. Informal talks begin in the Pavilion.

9 p.m. "Harrington on Binoculars" in McGregor Obs.

10 p.m. Optical competition begins.²

10 p.m. Registration gate closes.

The events in the shaded boxes are specially geared to beginning amateur astronomers and amateur telescope makers.

Saturday, August 15th:

7 a.m. Registration gate opens.

7 a.m. - 5 p.m. Swap Tables open.

8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Registration for mechanical comp.²

9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Shuttle bus operates.

9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Mirror grinding demo in the Pavilion.¹

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Telescope mechanical competition.²

10:30 a.m. "Telescope Field Walk" (meet at Pink House).²

11 a.m. Astronomy activities for kids in McGregor Obs.

11:30 a.m. "Tour the Turret Telescope" (meet at Turret).²

12:30 p.m. Solar System Walk (behind Pink clubhouse).²

1 p.m. - 5 p.m. Technical talks in the Pavilion.⁴

1:30 p.m. "Dipper Full of Stars" talk in McGregor Obs.

3 p.m. Astronomy activities for kids in McGregor Obs.

5 p.m. "Introduction to Telescopes" in McGregor Obs.

5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Registration for optical competition.^{2,3}

7 p.m. Evening program begins in the amphitheater.

8 p.m. - Astro Imaging Seminar near the Ash dome.

10 p.m. "Discover & Enjoy the Sky" in McGregor Obs.

10 p.m. Optical competition begins.^{2,3}

Sunday, August 16th:

8 a.m. - Noon. Convention cleanup.

9 a.m. - Noon. Hartness House museum open.

1 - Beginner Amateur Telescope Maker talk.

2 - Event takes place in or near the Pink Clubhouse.

3 - Only if the competition is clouded out on Friday!

4 - Advanced Amateur Telescope Maker talk.

AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKING - MIRROR GRINDING DEMONSTRATION

There will be a HANDS ON mirror making demonstration Friday from Noon until 6 pm in the Flanders Pavilion. Gain first-hand experience working on mirrors at every stage of grinding, polishing and testing. Experienced ATMs will help explain each step of the process. The demonstration will continue Saturday 9:30 a.m. until 1 pm

AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKING - SHORT TALKS

There will be a series of short talks on various ATM topics **Friday in the Flanders Pavilion, every hour on the hour, during the ATM demo starting at 1 p.m.** The purpose of these talks will be to describe, in detail, the procedures that will be demonstrated during the ATM demo and to introduce beginner ATMs various introductory subjects. Please check www.stellafane.com for the titles of the talks as the convention approaches.

SATURDAY TECHNICAL TALKS

The Saturday afternoon program begins in the Flanders Pavilion at 1 p.m. Wayne Zuhl, of the *Springfield Telescope Makers*, will be Master of Ceremonies. Please check www.stellafane.com for the titles of the talks as the convention approaches.

BEGINNER AMATEUR PROGRAMS

BEGINNER TALKS

There will be six ~45 minute presentations during the convention which will be geared for people who are new to amateur astronomy and the Stellafane convention. Please see the schedule of events for subjects and times.

SOLAR SYSTEM WALK

There will be two ~½ hour walks, conducted by Thomas Gorka of the *Springfield Telescope Makers*, of our scale model of the Solar System which are geared for those just beginning in astronomy. Please consult the schedule of events for the times and meet behind the Pink Clubhouse.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

There are several astronomy related classes for children ages 5 to 12 which will take place in the McGregor Observatory. Please consult the schedule for the times.

HORSESHOE PITCHING CONTEST

The 12th-Annual Stellafane horseshoe pitching contest is scheduled to begin at 1:30 p.m. Friday near the Flanders Pavilion. There will be adult and kid's competitions. "Astro" prizes will be awarded.

JEANNE KRZYWICKI LIBRARY

The Jeanne Krzywicki Library, in the McGregor Observatory, will be open throughout the convention, unless the room is otherwise occupied by convention events.

THE FAMOUS STELLAFANE RAFFLE

Help support the convention and have fun by participating in our raffle. Thousands of dollars in prizes, including books from Willman-Bell and eyepieces from Televue, are provided yearly by gracious contributors. Tickets are available at the T-shirt table and from designated STM members roaming the grounds. Your dollar goes a long way!

FRIDAY EVENING INFORMAL TALKS

Friday evening, August 14th, at 8:30 p.m. Bob Morse, of the *Springfield Telescope Makers*, will conduct the informal talks in the Flanders Pavilion. If you wish to contribute a short talk during this session, you must submit a brief description of your planned presentation with your registration payment or at www.stellafane.com. Talks are limited to 10 minutes and 20 slides. The time limit will be strictly enforced! A 35-mm slide projector, overhead projector, VCR and a digital projector will be available for your use. Note that if you plan to use the digital projector you must bring your own laptop.

SATURDAY EVENING PROGRAM

The evening program will begin at 7 p.m. Saturday in the hillside amphitheater. Bob Morse, of the *Springfield Telescope Makers*, will be master of ceremonies.

- Greetings, announcements and raffle drawing.
- Stellafane Shadowgram: by Bert Willard.
- Presentation of telescope competition awards.
- **Stellafane Keynote Talk: by Capt. Alan Bean - Apollo XII Astronaut, commander of Skylab 3, accomplished artist and the 4th man to walk on the Moon.**

Capt. Bean will cover his days working in the Apollo program, culminating in his Moon walk. He will also cover his days as Commander of Skylab 3, where he set numerous records in space. Upon leaving NASA, Capt. Bean turned his efforts to his career as an artist, documenting the Apollo program from the perspective of a person that was there and a part of it all.

THE PORTER/HARTNESS MUSEUM OF AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKING

The Porter/Hartness Museum of Amateur Telescope Making is located in the underground rooms at the Hartness House Inn. Visit the museum on Friday or Sunday (see the schedule of events). **Admission is free.** Follow the signs in town. Many of the items on display are by or about Russell W. Porter, including the Springfield and Garden telescopes. His artwork traces his arctic exploration years to his work on the 200" Palomar telescope, culminating in his famous cutaway drawings. Other items of interest include early 'scopes and mirror making parts. The Hartness turret telescope, with its 10" Brashear objective may also be inspected. We are actively pursuing the addition of new items and a new room and several new exhibits have been opened this year.

CONTACT INFORMATION

convention@stellafane.com

POLICIES REGARDING OPTICAL JUDGING ENTRIES

REGISTRATION for the optical competition will take place on Friday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Pink Clubhouse. In addition, you are encouraged to register your telescope via the Stellafane web page. Keep in mind that if you register your instrument via the web, you must still check in at the Pink Clubhouse Friday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. or your telescope will not be judged! Set up your scope on Breezy Hill before you check in at the Pink Clubhouse and inform the judges of the location of your scope. If the position of your scope changes it is your responsibility to report its new location to the judges in the Pink Clubhouse. Failure to do so will result in your scope not being judged!

All telescopes in the competition must be fitted with an eyepiece with a focal length, in millimeters, approximately equal to the focal ratio of the instrument. Your instrument must be properly collimated before judging begins at 10 p.m. Also, be prepared to point your scope at the star Altair when the judges arrive. Please note that the judges may inspect your telescope more than once. Therefore, you should remain on the field with your instrument until the preliminary results are announced via loudspeaker.

If the weather permits the completion of the judging on Friday night, the optical judging will be closed for the duration of the convention and optical awards will be presented during the Saturday evening program. If the optical judging cannot be completed Friday night, it will be continued on Saturday night, weather permitting. Additional optical entries may be accepted on Saturday, at the discretion of the judges. To inquire about this possibility, please ask a judging representative in the Pink Clubhouse from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. or from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday.

In the event that the competition will have to be continued Saturday, some telescopes that were judged on Friday might need to be judged again. Please inquire with the judges if your scope will need to be available again on Saturday. If the optical judging cannot be completed by the end of Saturday night, a partial field of optical excellence awards may be given, at the discretion of the judges.

Please note that it is the intention of the Stellafane judging committee to have the optical competition completed Friday night, weather permitting. Therefore, to ensure that your instrument is judged you must be registered for the Friday night judging.

2009 Optical Judging Chairman: Rick Hunter

STELLAFANE LIGHTING POLICY

Stellafane does not allow open white lights, on clear nights, except for ½ hour after the Friday and Saturday evening talks end. Vehicular travel after this time is strongly discouraged and is done only at the risk of the operator. We thank you for your cooperation.

TELESCOPE MECHANICAL COMPETITION THE HEART AND SOUL OF STELLAFANE!

If you have built a telescope, special gadget or restored a historical instrument, we strongly encourage you to bring it and enter it in the competition. **We welcome all home-made telescopes in the display area. They do not have to be entered in the competition!**

REGISTRATION: Registration for the mechanical competition will be between 8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Saturday morning in the Pink Clubhouse. In addition, you are encouraged to register your telescope via the Stellafane web page. Keep in mind that if you register your instrument via the web, you must still check in at the Pink Clubhouse Saturday morning or your telescope will not be judged. You can drive up to the Pink Clubhouse area Fri. or Sat. to drop off and pick up your telescope but there is **no parking** as space is very limited. The telescope judging for mechanical excellence will begin at 10 a.m. so please register your telescope as early as possible.

COMPETITION: Only telescopes that are operative both mechanically and optically will be accepted in the mechanical competition. Telescopes do not have to be entered in both categories. The judges will visit the telescopes in several small groups. You must attend your telescope until the end of the competition is announced via the loudspeaker. Be prepared to describe any special construction techniques and components to the judges. Awards for mechanical design, craftsmanship, special gadgets, restoration of historical instruments and junior telescopes, made by persons less than 16 years of age, will be awarded at the Saturday evening talks.

2009 Mechanical Judging Chairman: Chris Houghton

WHERE TO SET UP YOUR TELESCOPE

We strongly recommend that you set up your telescope in the fields around the Pink Clubhouse or in the field to the south of the McGregor Observatory. You may not set up your telescope in a designated parking area. Please consult the site map, which you will receive when you arrive, as well as the signs posted throughout the convention site for the designated parking locations.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE FLANDERS PAVILION

Following the tradition set down by our founder, Russell W. Porter, the *Springfield Telescope Makers* continually work to improve the Stellafane convention. Our new Flanders Pavilion has been a big hit! However, the *Springfield Telescope Makers* need your help to raise the funds necessary to pay off the loan that was needed to complete the Pavilion. If you are interested in donating to this project please go to www.stellafane.com for details. Thanks!

SATURDAY MORNING SWAP TABLES

The Swap Tables (located at the NORTHEAST edge of the main camping/parking area) are provided to give amateurs an opportunity to trade, buy or sell their surplus astronomical and telescope related items. They operate from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, August 2nd.

POLICY OF THE *SPRINGFIELD TELESCOPE MAKERS* REGARDING COMMERCIALISM AND THE SWAP TABLES AT THE CONVENTION

The Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc. has clarified its policy regarding commercialism and Swap Table sales at the Stellafane convention. For the sake of historical continuity, to preserve the uniqueness of the Stellafane convention and to encourage conventioners to build their own instruments, the Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc. do not allow commercial sales, of any kind, at the Stellafane convention. All swap table sales must comply, in concept, with the above objective but are also specifically subject to the following criteria:

- 1) Only surplus astronomical, telescope and telescope making related items may be sold.
- 2) Each person will be allowed 16 square feet of table or ground space.
- 3) Items which have the appearance of being specifically purchased or manufactured for sale at the Swap Tables may not be sold.
- 4) All sales must take place within the designated Swap Table area only between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., the Saturday of the *Stellafane* convention.

The *Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc.* may choose to grant a limited exception to the above policies to astronomy related organizations for their fundraising. Any request for an exemption must be made, in writing, at least one month prior to the convention. If granted, the President of the *Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc.* will notify the requesting organization in writing.

Any member of the *Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc.* has the authority to determine whether a party is in compliance with the established regulations. Any person who is found to be in violation of the stated policies will be required to comply. Failing compliance, the offending party will be asked to leave the convention and may be escorted from the premises by convention security.

The *Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc.* encourages those with questions regarding this policy to contact the Club via the *Stellafane* web page (www.stellafane.com). During the convention, any questions regarding this policy, the appropriateness of items being displayed, or any information being disseminated should be directed to a member of the *Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc.*

HAVE A GREAT CONVENTION!

The *Springfield Telescope Makers, Inc.*

STELLAFANE ENDOWMENT FUND

The Endowment Fund will one day guarantee that Stellafane can pay unavoidable costs due to a catastrophic event or if the convention cannot be held. For info please go to the Pink Clubhouse or www.stellafane.com. All contributions to the endowment fund are tax deductible. . *Thanks!*

2008 COMPETITION WINNERS

OPTICAL – SMALL NEWTONIAN, ADULT AWARDS:

1 st	Jeff Parenteau	8" f-7 Newtonian on Dobsonian
1 st	John Symborski	6" f-6 Newtonian on Dobsonian
2 nd	D. Groski & T. Harding	6"f-8 Newt. on Springfield Mt.
2 nd	Andrew Johnson	8"f-5 Newtonian on Dobsonian
3 rd	Joseph Dechene	6" f-5 Newtonian on Dobsonian

OPTICAL – COMPOUND, ADULT AWARDS:

1 st	A. Hall & R. Parker	16" f-16 Cass. on German Equ.
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MECHANICAL DESIGN, ADULT AWARDS:

1 st	A. Hall & R. Parker	16" f-16 Cass. on German Equ.
2 nd	Ross Sackett	12" f-5 Newtonian on Dobsonian
3 rd	John Novak	32" f-4 Newtonian on Dobsonian

MECHANICAL DESIGN, JUNIOR AWARDS:

1 st	Adam Miller	8" f-6 Newtonian on Dobsonian
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CRAFTSMANSHIP:

1 st	A. Hall & R. Parker	16" f-16 Cass. on German Equ.
2 nd	Ross Sackett	12" f-5 Newtonian on Dobsonian
3 rd	John Novak	32" f-4 Newtonian on Dobsonian

SPECIAL AWARDS – ANTIQUE RESTORATION

1 st	D. Groski & T. Harding	6"f-8 Newt. on Springfield Mt.
2 nd	David Sliski	5"f-18 Alvan Clark

SPECIAL AWARD

Roger Greenwood	Binocular Chair
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INNOVATIVE COMPONENT:

1 st	A. Hall & R. Parker	Novel Thrust Bearing
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For photos and additional information please see the *Stellafane* web page.

FAMILY SERVICE RADIOS

The convention staff uses family service radio channel 7 to facilitate communications during the convention. Please avoid using this channel when you are at the convention site. Of course, if you have an emergency please contact the staff via channel 7.

