M-STAR

http://mstar-astronomy.tripod.com

Vol. 9 No. 4 | May /June, 2005 | Founded in 1982

Fun with Science Night Spring 2005

@ Hanshaw Middle School

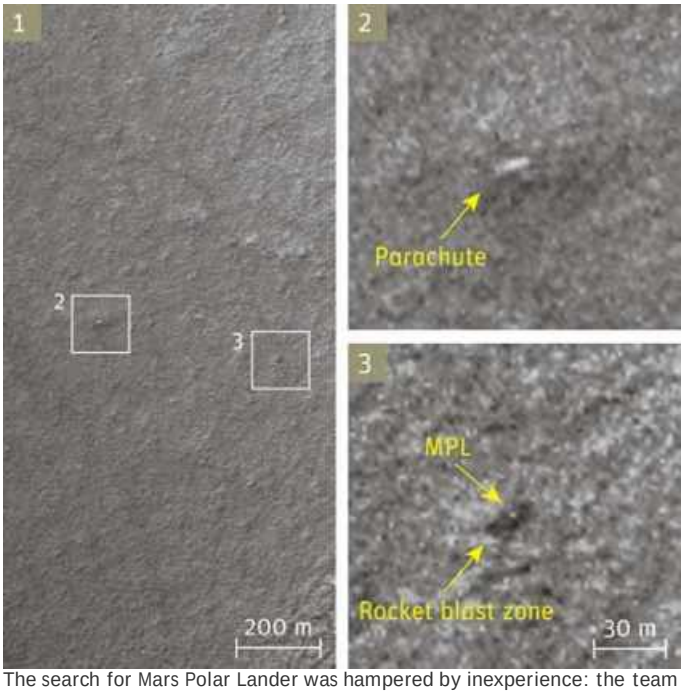
1725 Las Vegas St. Modesto, CA

Friday, May 27th from 6pm-10PM.

M-STAR has been invited to assist with another evening program at a school in Modesto. This will be similar to the event in April[ed.]

Here are some directions and a map…

1: Start out going NORTH on HWY-99 to Modesto.
2: Take the exit toward HATCH RD WEST.
3: Turn RIGHT onto JOYCE AVE.
4: JOYCE AVE becomes HERNDON AVE.
5: Turn RIGHT onto E HATCH RD.
continue on for 1.4 miles
6: Turn LEFT onto DALLAS ST.
7. Turn RIGHT onto BUTTE AVE.
8. Turn LEFT onto LAS VEGAS ST.
9. End at **1725 Las Vegas St**



The search for Mars Polar Lander was hampered by inexperience: the team didn't know what a parachute should look like or how the ground would be disturbed by the landing rockets. Lessons learned from observations of the Mars Exploration Rover landing sites helped team members identify what they think are the parachute *(2)*, the rocket-blast zone, and ultimately the lander itself *(3)*. *Courtesy NASA/JPL/MSSS.*

Mars Polar Lander Found at Last?

By the Editors of *Sky & Telescope*

May 5, 2005 | In December 1999 NASA's Mars Polar Lander (MPL) was supposed to touch down near the red planet's south pole. But shortly after it entered the Martian atmosphere, the spacecraft disappeared without a trace. Only now, 5½ years later, do scientists think they may have finally located the lander's wreckage and confirmed what went wrong with the mission. The full report, by planetary scientist Michael C. Malin (Malin Space Science Systems), appears in the July 2005 issue of *Sky & Telescope,* now in press.

[Excerpts from skyandtelescope.com]

SKY & TELESCOPE's WEEKLY NEWS BULLETINS

Welcome to S&T's Weekly News Bulletins. Images, the full text of stories abridged here, and other enhancements are available on our Web site, SkyandTelescope.com, at the URLs provided below. Clear skies!

AT LAST! SWIFT PINPOINTS A SHORT GAMMA-RAY BURST

NASA's Swift Observatory, launched last November, was designed to detect gamma-ray bursts billions of light-years away and to chase them down to their points of origin in a matter of seconds. It's now doing exactly that -- and on May 9th Swift scored a historic first. It recorded a short burst lasting just 0.03 second and imaged a weak, fast-fading X-ray afterglow that revealed the event's location to within about 8 arcseconds accuracy. Never before has a mysterious short burst been located so precisely. A closer look at its position with other telescopes is giving hints of what short bursts may actually be....
http://SkyandTelescope.com/news/article_1513_1.asp

NEW HOPE FOR HUBBLE

NASA's new chief, Michael D. Griffin, has told the Hubble servicing team to resume preparations for a possible shuttle flight to upgrade the orbiting observatory. Although a decision on returning astronauts to Hubble won't be made until after at least two successful shuttle missions to the International Space Station, the telescope's prospects look better now than at any time since Griffin's predecessor, Sean O'Keefe, abruptly canceled Hubble servicing in January 2004 -- a decision that outraged astronomers, key members of Congress, and the public....
http://SkyandTelescope.com/news/article_1511_1.asp

TWO STELLAR OPPOSITES

The little constellation Corona Borealis, currently lower left of bright Arcturus in the evening sky, holds two variable stars that behave in opposite ways. Read about R and T Coronae Borealis, then check on them this evening with binoculars:
http://skyandtelescope.com/observing/objects/variablestars/article_1504_1.asp

FULL MOON TO OCCULT ANTARES

Early on the morning of May 24th, North American telescope users can watch the full Moon occult (cover) the 1st-magnitude star Antares. Times are in the May SKY & TELESCOPE, page 57.

JUPITER IN GRAND VIEW

Jupiter, a month past opposition, is now shining high in the southeast to south during evening -- the brightest "star" in the sky. What can you detect on the planet's changing face with your telescope? See our new Observing Guide to Jupiter in the May SKY & TELESCOPE, page 67, or the old article online at:
http://skyandtelescope.com/observing/objects/planets/article_174_1.asp

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Central Valley Astronomers (CVA) www.cvafresno.org
June Calendar

4 – CVA Star Party at Hensley Lake
Sunset: 8:16 p.m. Moonrise: 4:33 a.m. next day

7– Fred and Debi Lusk's 25th wedding anniversary

11 – CVA Star Party & Star-B-Q
Sunset: 8:20 p.m. Moonrise: 9:44 a.m.

25 – CVA Meeting at CSUF East Engineering Room 191, 7:00 p.m.
Speaker: TBA
Topic: TBA

2005 RTMC Astronomy Expo

www.rtmcastronomyexpo.org

The 37th annual RTMC Astronomy Expo will be held Friday, May 27, through Sunday, May 29, 2005 (Memorial Day weekend). It will be held at YMCA Camp Oakes, five miles southeast of Big Bear City on State Route 38 at Lake Williams Road between mileposts 44 and 45. This location is about 50 miles northeast of Riverside in the San Bernardino mountains.

NASA / JPL / Space Science Institute

Tethys and the rings of Saturn

The Cassini spacecraft captured this view of Saturn's moon Tethys and the planet's rings on April 3, 2005. The large impact basin located on Tethys' top is Odysseus. This basin measures 280 miles (450 kilometers) wide.

Join M-STAR and See the UNIVERSE

Membership terms are on an annual calendar from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31

Mail to: M-STAR Treasurer, 1136 N. Stratford Ave Atwater, CA 95301

Name_____
Address_____
City_____State_____Zip_____
Phone # _____
e-mail _____
Main Astronomical Interests:_____
_____

Membership Plan:
New_____Renewal_____
Family/Individual ($15)____
Student, over 18 ($10) _____
Youth, under 18 ($5)_____

What some astronomers do in daylight.

The Walkers with their *DARTH D2* rocket and a flight to 1000+ feet.

CVA President Greg Morgan and his *Blue Smoke*!

M-STAR
CLUB NEWSLETTER
1812 N. Quinley Ave
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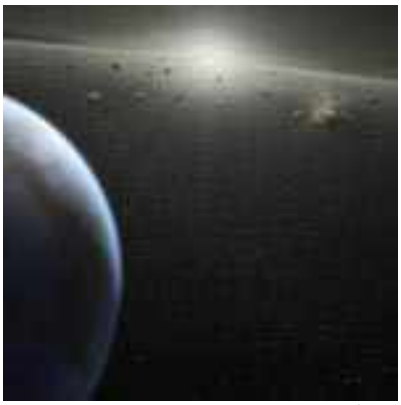

NASA/JPL

This artist's concept shows a massive asteroid belt in orbit around a star the same age and size as our Sun.
A collision between two asteroids is depicted to the right.