



# Snake River Skies

Magic Valley Astronomical Society

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## Clouds Unable to Dim the Craters Spirit

The Craters spirit was still alive in 2002 with another great sky viewing event at the popular Craters of the Moon National Monument. The National Park Service desires a special

recognition in keeping the Monument in beautiful condition.

Special concessions were made to those attending the

event including free admission for those bringing telescopes and on site camping for those bringing large telescopes. Although the crowd size was down from what it was a year ago, the views from the caves area are some of the best in southern Idaho.

Clouds showed up to make the viewing Friday night very difficult, but at least most everyone got a good

nights sleep that night.

Saturday night was a different story with reasonably clear skies til the wee hours of Sunday morning. Another Craters

event is scheduled for the 6th through 7th of September.

Craters of the Moon is a great place to visit so be sure to plan a trip there soon.



*2002 Summer Craters Star Gazers getting a view of the setting sun. Left to right IFAS members Wendell Random, Fritz Frauenholz, and MVAS officer John Dean*

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Yearly membership is  
\$20 per person, \$20  
per family \$10 per student,  
Sponsor \$100

## Message from the President

This summer has offered Western amateur astronomers a plethora of premier star parties to attend. June offered us the Craters of the

Moon Star Party, where the club's Tom Gilbertson gave a public presentation for the park's patrons. Although attendance this

year was down from previous years, the Craters of the Moon Star Party still offers some of the darkest skies in the continental United States. Other upcoming star parties include the Astronomical League convention in Salt Lake City, July 31—August 1st. The following week, August 9th & 10th, is the Lava Hot Springs Star Party, near the Lava Hot Springs resort south of Pocatello. Contact Tom or Jeanine Lawler at 208-776-9746 for more information.

The first week in September offers the Idaho Star Party at Bruneau Dunes. Held September 6th—8th, this party brings some of the best telescopes in the region, including the superb 25" Obsession at the Bruneau Dunes Observatory. Sponsored by the Boise Astronomical Society, speakers, drawings, and a BBQ await for participants.

On June 28th, several members of the club drove into the South Hills to put on a star party for the Girl Scouts at Camp Tawakani, near Diamondfield Jack's. It was a superb location, high on a hill, which treated all of us to a splendid view of the Milky

Way. Much thanks to all who brought their scopes. The girls were really thrilled at the experience. I received an email the following Monday from one of the Camp mothers.

Jay, I just wanted to thank you and the Astronomy club for coming up to girl scout camp and showing us stars, planets, etc. That was so interesting. I wanted to stay later but some girls were tired so I had to take them back to camp at about 11:45pm. I would love to see that again, thanks again.

Catrina Chapple

Our next club meeting will be held Saturday July 13th at 7pm at the Herrett Center. Doug Jones will continue his lectures on stellar characteristics, what stars are made from, what they are like. We appreciate his willingness to share his findings with us. As always, a star party follows on the Herrett Center grounds. See you Saturday!

Jay Sneddon, President

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### Lava Hot Springs Star Party

To be held the nights of August 9 and 10 at the Lava Airport located 1 mile south of town. A variety of lodging is available in town with swimming, tubing, water slides, hot pools and fishing for the family during the day.

Visit [LavaHotSprings.org](http://LavaHotSprings.org) for details, or call Tom or Jeanine Lawler, (208) 776-9746 for details

## E-Nose is E-Nose is E-Nose

It is very important to keep a “nose” on the air during space missions. Odors from dangerous chemicals in the air must be detected early and fast. One possible danger is hydrazine, the rocket fuel carried on board spaceships. If it leaked into the cabin area, it could do a lot of damage before anyone knew it was there. The job calls for a “super nose” that can detect faint smells far beyond the ability of human beings.

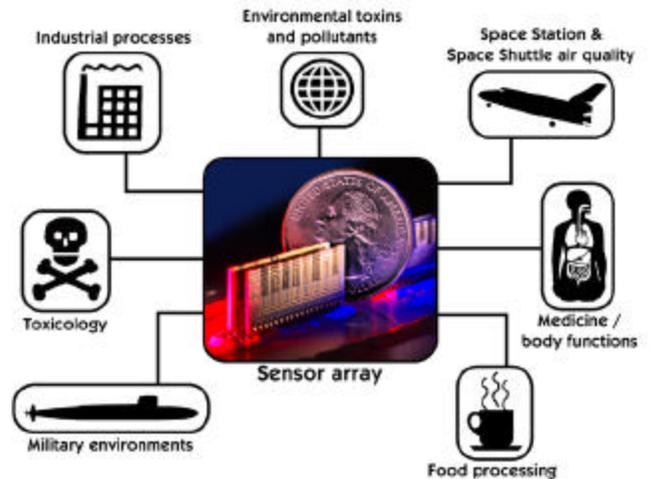
Scientists at Caltech studied the way human and animal noses worked. They thought it might be possible to make a super-nose. NASA thought this was a good idea, so scientists and engineers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena developed an electronic nose, or “E-Nose.” This nose can sniff using a pump, smell using polymer sensors, and decide what’s in the air using a mini-computer. E-Nose was developed to monitor the air that the crew in the international Space Station will breathe. It was tried out on the Space Shuttle, and it worked just fine.

E-Nose will also have many uses here on Earth. It can monitor the air inside submarines and in factories to warn people very early if something is making the air unsafe to breathe. It can be used in processing food to tell if food is beginning to spoil. And someday it may be used on another planet or moon to sniff out what’s “cooking” up there.

You can find out more about E-Nose and have fun testing your own nose at the Space Place Web site, [spaceplace.nasa.gov/enose\\_do1.htm](http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/enose_do1.htm). The Space Place has fun and educational activities for parents, children, and teachers—



and lots of facts related to many of NASA’s space missions.



*This article was provided by NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, managed by Caltech in Pasadena*

The above article was provided directly to us from the people at NASA specifically Nancy J. Leon. NASA is contacting notable astronomy clubs in the USA and of course we qualify as being very notable (at least we think so). This monthly service is free to the club and promises to be an interesting addition to our already news worthy newsletter.

Yes I think these NASA guys may know something about Astronomy too.

## Magic Valley Astronomical Society

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## What's in the Sky for July

Most of the planet dancers seem to have shifted their attention from earth dwellers and are now entertaining the sun. With the exception of Venus the planets are difficult to see without binoculars and may be hidden by the glare of our summer sun. The exceptions are Pluto in Libra, Neptune in Capricorn, and Uranus in Aquarius. They are more suited as telescope objects, but are well placed for some late night viewing.

July 2002 is not particularly noteworthy month for Astronomical events, but hosts an impressive assortment of constellations including the asterism of the summer triangle, our best views of the year for Scorpius, Sagit-

tarius, and Capricorn and the wealth of deep sky object's those constellations contain. Don't miss the famous Hercules Globular M13 and late night rising of the Andromeda Galaxy. If at the Bruneau Observatory ask to see the Vail Nebula in Cygnus.

For early August be sure to keep the nights of August 12, and 13 open for the Perseid Meteor shower. We are particularly lucky this year to have a relatively thin crescent moon to contend with during this often spectacular show. Unfortunately this just misses the dates of the Lava Hot Springs event. Good luck in your summer sky gazing adventures.