

AAI Research Committee Report for August 2019

The sky continues to be dominated by the planets Jupiter, Saturn, and distant dwarf planet Pluto.

Solar System: Clif Ashcraft imaged Saturn with its rings, Jupiter with the ingress of a transit by Io, and Jupiter with the Great Red Spot storm. However, the most exciting thing he produced was a series of images of *Pluto moving* across a starfield in four days. The green numbers are its positions on August 25, 27, 29, and 30. It looks like it is gradually slowing down as it approaches orbital aphelion in February, 2114. Clif hopes to observe the motions of

other dwarf planets and Kuiper Belt Objects.

Clif also imaged the first quarter Moon, and closeups of *Crater Copernicus* and also Mare Imbrium.

Deep Space: Frank Napolitano imaged the *Milky Way* from Marahau, a small town in the Tasman Region of the South Island of New Zealand near the southern entrance of Abel Tasman National Park. He used a Nikon D600 with a 24mm f/1.4 lens, using long exposure and high ISO. His daughter Victoria is an engineering student at Northeastern University and is studying abroad there.

Presentations: Jack Cleeve gave an informal Friday talk on "Origins of the Universe" on August 23.

Other: The Stellafane Convention of Amateur Telescope Makers on Breezy Hill in Springfield, Vermont attracted Clif Ashcraft, Al and Bonnie Witzgall, Brian Lemley, Alan Midkiff, Emily Mailhot, and Steve Clarke and his family.

Clif reported another bright Jupiter impact, this one discovered on August 7 by amateur astronomer Ethan Chappel from Texas. He only noticed it afterwards thanks to DeTeCt software by Marc Delcroix which is designed specifically for finding these flashes.

I have been investigating a possible iron meteorite from Clifton.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Lou West, Research Chair

