

The Refractor

The Bulletin of the Eastbay Astronomical Society
 Founded in 1924 at Chabot Observatory, Oakland, California

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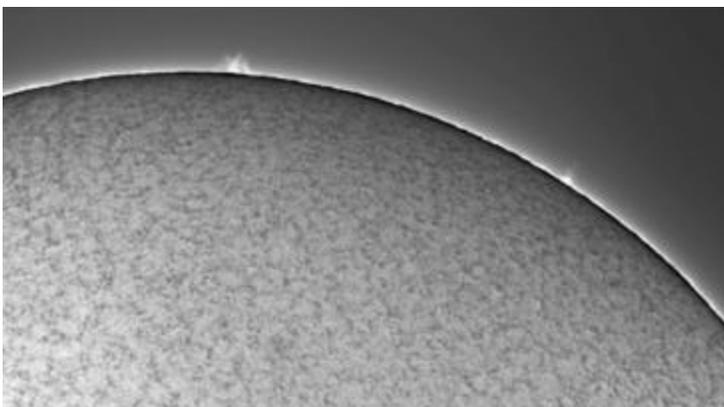
Journey's End! Don Saito Successfully Circumnavigates the 48 Contiguous United States on a Recumbent Tricycle

Howdy Astro Fans! It's me - your former newsletter editor Don Saito. As you may recall, I took off on a cycling tour to see America, starting earlier this year in San Francisco on March 1st. Eight months, fourteen days and 12,614 miles later, I returned to the City, a thinner but very happy man. This was a self-imposed challenge, to see if I could circumnavigate the 48 contiguous United States within the timeframe defined by winter - as in avoiding it - and I did! It was very tough, though, with daily pains, discomforts, dangers, and challenges, but nothing I couldn't (or didn't) survive. I had two major goals for the trip: to hit the extreme compass points of the 48 contiguous United States (north, south, east and west), and to see fireflies, which I've never seen before. Here is a real brief synopsis of my adventure:

I took off from south tower of the Golden Gate Bridge at Ft. Point on March 1st, and headed south along the California Pacific Coast (gorgeous views), all the way down to Los Angeles. From there, I headed northeast to Las Vegas..... (cont. page 3)



After cycle touring 12,614 miles around the USA, Don returns back to where he started, the South Tower of the Golden Gate Bridge.



Solar activity persists!

H-alpha photo of chromosphere and prominences by Jim Ferreira. To see more of the many faces of the sun, come out to the CSSC observing deck any sunny Sunday afternoon.

>>> NOTICE <<<
 NO DECEMBER LECTURE MEETING

EAS Officers Elections
 Volunteers are still needed for a nominating committee and nominations are still being sought for EAS President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. If you'd like to help or have a nomination, contact EAS President Paul Hoy at (510) 814-8325 or by E-mail at ahoy@aol.com

NOTICE!
 NO DECEMBER DINNER WITH THE SPEAKER

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METEOR AT DAWN by Tony Rowell

NASA Astronomy Picture of the Day (APOD), November 18th, 2009

On the morning of November 17th, braving 14 degree temperatures in the thin eastern Sierra air, EAS member Tony Rowell captured a brilliant Leonid Meteor in the light of approaching dawn. The dark spires in the foreground are limestone towers known as tufa, found in and around eastern Sierra’s Mono Lake. The bright star to the right of the meteor is Arcturus. Tony used a Nikon D700 set at ISO 1000 for a single 38 second exposure. The photo was chosen as NASA’s November 19th Astronomy Picture of the Day (APOD) and posted on the APOD web site at <http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/ap091119.html> The photo was also showcased in the Bishop newspaper.

FUTURE CONJUNCTIONS—2009

Dec	No EAS General Meeting
	10 Board Meeting, Chabot, Soda Board Rm, 7:30pm
	27 EAS MOVN*, 7pm-10pm, Wightman Plaza, Chabot
Jan	TBA - EAS General Meeting
	TBA - Board Meeting
	TBA - EAS MOVN

*Please call Gerald McKeegan at (925) 926-0853 after 5pm on the date of the MOVN to verify that it has not been cancelled due to weather or other considerations.

Chabot Space & Science Center Invites EAS Members to Volunteer with Us!

- Share your knowledge of and passion for astronomy with thousands of CSSC visitors
- Experience the unique opportunity to operate Chabot’s historical telescopes
- Share your own telescope at Chabot*
- Inspire young astronomers and future scientists by assisting students in our astronomy education programs

Explore these opportunities at our next Volunteer Orientation!

For upcoming orientation dates, or for more information, please contact us at: volunteers@chabotspace.org or, call our Volunteer Manager Megan Gray at (510) 336-7414

**EAS members who are only interested in sharing their own telescope at Chabot are required to attend a Chabot volunteer orientation and complete a self-guided training worksheet entitled “Getting to know Chabot.” After completion, you may join us on deck and share your own telescope any Friday or Saturday night!*

***Full Chabot Volunteers must make the regular volunteer commitment and pursue official placement through the Volunteer Manager.*

Continue: Journey's End

.....I headed northeast to Las Vegas (astounding largess), into southwest Utah, and then southwest through Arizona,



into New Mexico (way cool Carlsbad Caverns). I crossed the oilfield deserts of west Texas, and visited the Texas Star Party thanks to Bill Drelling - thanks, Bill!)

Then on to Austin, then Houston, and just before getting to Louisiana, I saw my first fireflies! Went through New Orleans and saw alligators, ghosts (well, *one* ghost - actually, a picture of one), and the famous French Quarter (crazy place - parties all night, every night). Then went through Mississippi, Alabama, down the west coast of Florida, down to Key West, and hit the first extreme compass point: Southernmost! Then, up the east coast of Florida to Cape Canaveral, where I visited the Kennedy Space Center to try to see a shuttle launch, but it got delayed, and I couldn't wait, durnit. Then further up the Florida coast to Jacksonville, where I visited and had lunch with Dr. Mike Reynolds (former Director of Chabot), and then inland into Georgia (I rained sweat in the summertime heat and humidity), and North Carolina to the (most torturous) Blue Ridge Parkway. Did the entire length of the BRP - over 460 miles - and then back out to the coast, to Washington DC.

I then went up the eastern seaboard: Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, where I visited my sister. Continued northeast through New York State, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, a small corner of New Hampshire, and then up and through to the northeast tip of Maine to hit the East most Point - the Quoddy Head Lighthouse, in Lubec (terrible road quality!) As luck would have it, the northeast region of the US was experiencing more rain that summer than they'd ever had in recorded history. It wasn't nice. I backtracked a bit to head west through Maine, then into New Hampshire again, through Vermont, and to New York State. LOTS of very pretty but nasty hill work, there - fled south to avoid more hills, and then continued west through Rochester, where I visited my nephew and his fiancée.

I entered Canada through Niagara Falls, and went north to the Trans-Canadian Highway, reinserting back into the

USA at Sault Saint Marie in Michigan. Continued west below Lake Superior into Wisconsin, then headed north in Minnesota to hit the Northernmost point, a place called the Northwest Angle. An interesting location: you can only get there (via land routes) by going through Canada, first! Went diagonally southwest through North Dakota (I was thunderstruck by the vast, open fields of crops), the southeast corner of Montana, and into the northeast corner of Wyoming. I continued heading west through northern Wyoming until I got to Yellowstone National Park (severe bear country - but never saw a one), and then headed southwest to skirt the mountains of Idaho before turning northwest again. It was getting a bit late in the year, now, and the weather began to get colder - like 20 degrees Fahrenheit - water bottles frozen solid kind of cold. From Idaho, I passed to the northwest through Oregon, and into Washington State to Seattle, where I stayed with a friend who I've known since grade school. After re-energizing there, I continued to the northwest to hit the fourth and last extreme compass point: West most, at Cape Flattery.

I then headed south, down along the coast of Washington, into and through Oregon, and back to California. I stayed with more relatives in Arcata (close to Eureka) a few days, before doing the final leg of my long journey, arriving back to the South Tower of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco at 1:04pm on Saturday, November 14th.



I saw and experienced a lot of amazing things I've never seen or experienced before; met a lot of very nice people who helped me along the way; survived an encounter with one certified bone-head whose brains were in his pectorals; and had a wonderful life-experience that I'll never forget (thanks to the fact

that I documented the whole thing day-by-day, with pictures and even some video). You can access that account at my blogsite: www.cycleamerica2009.blogspot.com/. It's *wonderful* to be back, and I hope to see and hear from you all, soon. Until then:

Cheerios! (crunch, crunch);
~Don

EAS Library: Hours, 3:00pm - 7:00pm every Friday, and immediately following monthly EAS lecture meetings. The library is located on the second floor of the Del-lums Building.

Volunteer librarians are needed to expand library hours, if you'd like to help contact Paul Hoy at (510) 814-8325 or by E-mail at ahoy@aol.com



Eastbay Astronomical Society

At Chabot Space & Science Center
10000 Skyline Boulevard • Oakland, CA 94619

December 2009
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Eastbay Astronomical Society

President: Paul Hoy (510) 814-8325 ahoy@aol.com

Treas: Gerald McKeegan (925) 926-0853 geraldspace@earthlink.net

Secretary: Linda Lazzaretti (510) 633-2488

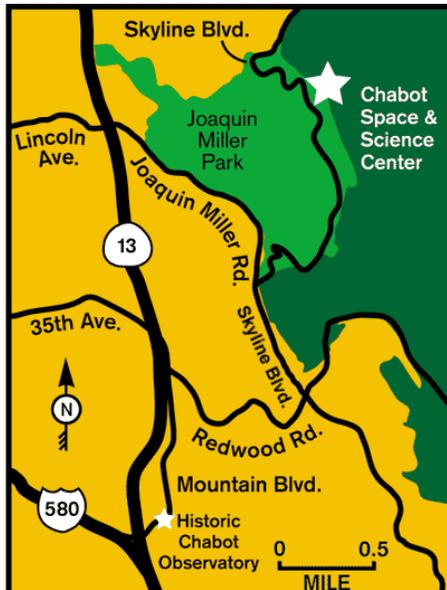
Articles and photos for *The Refractor* are encouraged. Deadline for the Jan. 2010 issue is Dec., 20 2009. Items may be submitted by mail or

E-mail to: Editor - Jim Ferreira, 753 Oriole Avenue, Livermore CA 94551 bakerst@comcast.net (925) 449-0107

Vice President: Alan Fisher

Membership Reg: Bruce Skelly EastbayAstro@gmail.com

Events Coord: Dave Rodrigues (510) 483-9191



FUTURE CONJUNCTIONS

Dec	No EAS General Meeting
	10 Board Meeting, Chabot, Soda Board Rm, 7:30pm
	27 EAS MOVN*, 7pm-10pm, Wightman Plaza
Jan	TBA - EAS General Meeting
	TBA - Board Meeting
	TBA - EAS MOVN

*Always call to confirm

Join the Eastbay Astronomical Society

- Regular, \$24/year
- Family, \$36/year
- Contributing, \$40/year
- Student, \$15/year (digital news-letter, only)
- Sustaining, \$60/year or more

Contact: Gerald McKeegan, EAS Treasurer

Tele: (925) 926-0853 Email: geraldspace@earthlink.net

Mail: 1760 1st Ave, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-2561

Sign up online at <http://www.eastbayastro.org/>

EASTBAY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

New Renewal (Just print this page, fill it out, and mail it in!)

NAME: (please print) _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

DAY PHONE: (____) _____

EVE PHONE: (____) _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: (please print very legibly!) _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

- Regular \$24 Family \$36 Contributing \$40
- Sustaining \$60 or more \$_____ Student \$10 (digital newsletter only)

Optional discounted 12-month magazine subscriptions:

Sky & Telescope \$32.95 Astronomy \$34.00 (Both magazines may only be ordered between the months of July and December) (If you are renewing your S&T club subscription, please use the renewal notice sent to you by S&T.)

Optional, tax deductible donation(s) to any of the projects of the Eastbay Astronomical Society:
Burns Library \$ _____ Betty Neall Youth Award Fund \$ _____ General \$ _____ Other: _____ \$ _____

EAS Lapel Pin \$3.00 +\$1.00 per pin for shipping and handling. # of pins _____ Total Amount for # of pins \$ _____

(Tip: If you buy them at a club meeting or event, you can avoid the S&H fee.)

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Please mail this form and your check or money order payable to: Eastbay Astronomical Society , PO Box 18635, Oakland, CA 94619-0635

For more information, please contact club Treasurer Gerald McKeegan at (925) 926-0853, geraldspace@earthlink.net, or write him at above address.

By default, (if you have an email address) you will be notified by email that the digital (.pdf) version of the club newsletter is ready to download off the club website. If you prefer to get the B&W hard copy, please check the box below:

- I prefer the hard copy mailed to the address entered above.
- Are you interested in volunteering your time/equipment for public stargazing at Chabot?
- Are you interested in doing other volunteer work for Chabot and/or the Eastbay Astronomical Society?

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!