

Re: the impoverished amateur

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In message <qtqei09mgkv0fetttrftg5vddhepgcvhvgr@4ax.com>, Chris L Peterson <clp@alumni.caltech.edu> writes

>On Sat, 21 Aug 2004 15:23:50 GMT, "waitodie" <waitodie@comcast.net> wrote:

>

>>I am retired and am not up to paying 10 to 50,000 for a scope or weuipment.

>>Would it be of any value to set up a yahoo group for amateurs who have the

>>time but not the money so we can share our resources and experience???

>>

>>the poor or other obligations astronmer

>

>What's wrong with this group for that? After all, until fairly recently the

>typical amateur astronomer didn't spend much money on the hobby. Just because

>this group is also a forum for those investing a little more, it

>doesn't exclude

>those who don't. There are many threads here about inexpensive equipment, and

>many threads about observing through the lowliest of scopes. There are people

>here who are geniuses at maximizing the performance of their equipment for

>almost no money at all.

Indeed this newsgroup is all about amateur astronomy. Making things out of discarded scrap or government surplus bits for this purpose is well within the remit. Though some of the ATM list servers may be more help for specific questions about mirror grinding and polishing.

Making a half decent drain pipe telescope from scratch is quite illuminating and need not cost more than \$50 (maybe less).

It is not necessary to spend huge amounts to get started in astronomy. Plenty of scopes are available second hand for reasonable prices (owner gets fed up with cold nights or whatever), and local astronomical societies are often short on active observing members but may be equipment rich.

If your local society has spare gear you may not need to spend anything at all beyond their annual membership fee to get started and have help from experienced observers into the bargain.

Regards,

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Martin Brown