

2013-06-02 1100hrs, CST

To: AAVSO, Keck Observatory

Good Morning, Folks: Possible Nova Observation near Garden Prairie, IL ???

Rev. Gregory Robert Allen Buss, a long-time member of the Stellarvue group in the Yahoo Groups, passed away in March. Big Thanks to another group member here in Illinois, who noticed his absence from the message Que, and was concerned enough to do some subsequent sleuthing, the group was alerted to his passing only yesterday.

I knew him only as Robert, from Spring Valley, IL. His handle was astrogeezzer41@(xxx), but his parishioners referred to him as Father Gregory. For years, I had thought of Bob, and the other extremely helpful members of the Stellarvue group, as kindred spirits. All of us spend much time out there in the clearer, darker nights of the year. Bob lived only 90 minutes away; I had never met him. But, just knowing people like Bob, Denis, Dave, and Augie were out there in spirit, always made my solitary sojourns under the stars seem much more friendly. Their subsequent online observation reports furthered that feeling.

Nevertheless, after reading of his passing, I thought I'd like to again say "Hi" to Bob, up there in the sky. So I went outside to check the weather. We have had many, many cloudy days and nights here in the midwest since January. I considered it a portend when I got to the porch and saw stars overhead. Wow, the clouds were all to the east, so everything from the teapot to the zenith to Cassiopeia was in full, though humid, view.

Its about 120 yards out to the sprawling, open farm fields. While I walked north, out to the deserted road, my eyes were acclimating to the darkness. I noticed I could see all the stars in the bowl of the little dipper. Within 15 minutes, a mag 1 meteor streaked up from the direction of the northwestern horizon with a 5 degree non-persistent tail, and headed off toward Deneb. Just as it crossed under the little dipper, another mag 1 meteor, from the direction of Vega, X'd across its tail and down under the tail of Draco.

Wow, things are looking up... I continue to hold the little dipper at the center of my view, and, just about three minutes later, at 0556:33 UT, ... BLINK ... a star-like, max-mag -4 apparition appears from nothing, flares to maximum, and winks out, just as quickly. It seemed equidistant between Yildun and Epsilon Ursa Min., and lasted only two seconds at most. I was flabbergasted as I checked my watch. As I continued to observe those two stars and the surrounding sky for another 20 minutes, no visual evidence of satellite trails, or airplanes was evident. Thanks, Bob. :)

As Ever, Orin Keplinger E) orink@t6b.com