



Volume 22, Number 7

July 2012

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## President's Corner

By Gordon Hansen

July is shaping up to be a busy month. On Friday, July 13th we opened up the skies for about seventy-five girl scouts at the camping area at Kensington MetoPark. Dennis Salliotte, Bob MacFarland, Art Parent, Tim Campbell, Sandra Macika, Jim Barnes and I had a great time showing off the skies to the girls.

"Wows" and "that looks like a sticker" are always great reactions to hear. A few of the older girls wouldn't call it a night until their scout leaders laid down the law. Maybe we recruited some new astronomers! If you've never participated in one of these outreach events, it's never too late to start. They are very rewarding. See below for your next opportunity.

As the last girls were leaving, Kristen, the scout leader who arranged the event, handed me a check for our participation. I tried to refuse, but, she was insistent. As you know, we don't do these events for any monetary gain. Coincidentally, Tim Dey is working with the Art Department at Lincoln Park Schools on a project to turn the outside walls of the Hector J.

Robinson observatory into an art project. Your board agreed we should pass the \$100 gift we received to the art project to help cover the cost of materials.

We've been invited to join the Warren Astronomical Society's picnic on Saturday, July 21st starting at 4 PM. The picnic will be held at the Stargate Observatory in Wolcott Mill MetroPark. Events continue with another outreach event at the Caroline Kennedy Library in Dearborn Heights on Wednesday, July 25th at 9 PM. A presentation of Astro 101 and viewing are on the agenda for that evening. We then move to Lake Erie Metropark on Friday, July 27th starting at 8 PM. Again Astro 101 and a review of astronomy equipment and viewing are the evening's schedule. We will meet at Three Hermano's at 6 PM for some good food and comradery before the event. The next night, Saturday, July 28th is our monthly Beginner's Night. Squeeze in our regular club meeting on Thursday, the 26th and we've a crowded week.

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# STAR STUFF

July 2012 - Vol. 22 No 7

STAR STUFF is published eleven times each year by:

**FORD AMATEUR ASTRONOMY CLUB**  
P.O. Box 7527  
Dearborn MI 48121-7527

PRESIDENT: Gordon Hansen  
VICE PRESIDENT: Jon Blum  
SECRETARY: Doug Bauer  
TREASURER: Chuck Jones  
WEBMASTER: Greg Ozimek  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Jennifer Zdanowski

#### Club Information:

The Ford Amateur Astronomy Club (FAAC) meets on the fourth Thursday each month, except for the combined November/December meeting on the first Thursday of December - at Henry Ford Community College Administration Services and Conference Center in Dearborn. Refer to our website for a map and directions ([www.fordastronomyclub.com](http://www.fordastronomyclub.com)).

The FAAC observes at Spring Mill Pond within the Island Lake State Recreation Area near Brighton, Michigan. The club maintains an after-hours permit, and observes on Friday and Saturday nights, and nights before holidays, weather permitting. The FAAC also has use a private observing site near Gregory Michigan and lake Erie Metro Park. See the FAAC Yahoo Group\* for more information.

Observing schedules and additional info are available on our website, or via the FAAC Yahoo Group.\* Or call the FAAC Hotline, for info and leave a message, or ask questions: 248-207-2075. or send email inquiries to [fordastronomy@comcast.net](mailto:fordastronomy@comcast.net).

Membership in the FAAC is open to anyone with an interest in amateur astronomy. The FAAC is an affiliate of the Ford Employees Recreation Association (F.E.R.A.). Membership fees:

Annual - New Members: \$30 (\$15 after July 1)  
Annual - Renewal: \$25 (\$30 after January 31)

Membership includes the STAR STUFF newsletter, discounts on magazines, discounts at selected area equipment retailers, and after-hours access to the Island Lake observing site.

#### Astronomy or Sky & Telescope Magazine Discounts

Obtain the required form from the FAAC club treasurer for a \$10 discount. Send the completed form directly to the respective publisher with your subscriptions request and payment. Do not send any money directly to the FAAC for this.

#### Star Stuff Newsletter Submissions

Your submissions to STAR STUFF are welcome! Send your story and/or images to the editor at [jenzdanowski@yahoo.com](mailto:jenzdanowski@yahoo.com). Email text or MS Word is fine. STAR STUFF will usually go to press the weekend prior to each general meeting. Submissions received prior to the 15th can be included in that issue.

\* FAAC Members are welcome to join our Ford Astronomy Club Yahoo!Group. Messages photos, files, online discussions, and more! URL: [groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub).

*This months background photos of the moon Page 1 courtesy of John Kirchhoff. See more of John's photos at:*

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/33926475@N06/with/4311533997/>

## Presidents Corner

(continued from Page 1)

As I write this, we've been going through an unusual hot dry period here in Michigan. My lawn looks like something you'd expect in the southwest. The silver lining has been a bunch of starry nights. Hope you've had a chance to enjoy a few of them!

## Meteors and S'mores at Fort Crescent State Park

by Greg Knekleian, Art Parent

August 11th: The FAAC Astronomy club will have some members go up to the recently designated Dark Sky site in the top of the thumb area. Fort Crescent state park was visited recently by Rick Arzadon who looked over the site and chatted with park rangers who are excited to hear about astronomers arriving and observing.

Art Parent talked with the Recreation programming assistant, a couple of local planetarium presenters from Longway Planetarium and John Shoer. The plan is to go up and observe at this site taking some FAAC members, basically anyone who cares to bring a telescope to observe on Saturday August 11. We are hoping to have solar observing, Astronomy 101 presentation, and the solar system on the string as well as other yet to be planned displays. Rick Arzadon spent a few nights up there observing and reported to us that it was twice as dark as our Richmond observing site. The site will have plenty of park guests, (they are sold out with camping visitors), and they plan on promoting observing meteors that night as well.

The site has a picnic shelter with electricity where an astronomy displays can be projected. The site has large parking lots with plenty of space to unload telescopes and Rick reported that there weren't many mosquitos when he was there. Show and tell about telescopes, solar observing, sky tour with laser pointers, talk about meteors and meteorites.

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## Treasurer's Report

July 8, 2012

By Chuck Jones

### Ford Amateur Astronomy Club Balance Sheet As of July 8, 2012

	Jul 8, 12
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Checking/Savings	
FAAC Savings	
GLAAC	1,942.15
Equipment	1,856.22
FAAC Club Savings	451.08
Scholarship	84.06
FAAC Savings - Other	0.24
<b>Total FAAC Savings</b>	4,333.75
CD 89265268	1,100.38
CD 200599272	1,055.67
Checking	604.26
CD 205196033	500.32
Petty Cash Account	176.33
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	7,770.71
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	7,770.71
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>7,770.71</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
Opening Balance Equity	8,890.38
Retained Earnings	-471.55
Net Income	-648.12
<b>Total Equity</b>	7,770.71
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUI...</b>	<b>7,770.71</b>

## Club Wear

To our "New and Current Members" Our club has "FAAC" Official Club Wear with our Logo Embroidered.

Anyone with an interest or need in FAAC Club Wear, I will be placing an order in the next few months, for more information please call me - Diane at 248 980-7832. The FILES section in the Yahoo group has a form noting each ITEM with PRICES. The listing name - "FAAC Club Wear" - please do not hesitate to call me.

## Meeting Agenda - July 26th

HFCC – Berry Auditorium -Admin. Services & Conference Center [www.fordastronomyclub.com](http://www.fordastronomyclub.com)  
5:30

### Opening/Introduction/Member Observing

#### Main Presentation:

Double Stars Jim Frisbee

#### Tech Talk:

Solar Telescopes Tim Campbell

### Club Projects/Committees/Member Support

- Friday, July 27 - Lake Erie Metropark Star Party
- Spring Mill Pond
- July 28th – Beginner's Night - Island Lake - 7:00 pm
- Saturday, August 25 - FAAC Picnic at Island Lake
- Open Discussion

### Club Business/Secretary/Treasurer/Equipment Reports

## Items For Sale

Orion 3 inch telescope-Orion spaceprobe 3EQ-complete with mount and tripod, finder and eyepieces. This is a reflector for beginners. Never used, like new. in box. Lists for \$150 on Orion website. Asking \$110. If interested please contact Tom Blaszak at [stringfingerer@gmail.com](mailto:stringfingerer@gmail.com).

**MEADE Telescope** and Tripod 6 years old - in excellent shape **LXD 75** - Series Schmidt - Cassegrain 8" f/10 SC-8AT (Super Coated, Autostar Guided) - Focal Length 2000 mm Telescope weight = 24 lbs - with MEADE EMC Super Multi-Coatings and with optional Ultra-High Transmission Coating Tripod weight = 45 lbs - Die cast Aluminum German-Type Equatorial Mount with Variable-Height Field Adjustments Autostar Controller guides to 30,223 objects

Includes a Sun Filter, Overnight Protective Cover, Transportation Containers. Contact phone no. 248-851-5053, e-mail [robertboswell@comcast.net](mailto:robertboswell@comcast.net)

## Astro Imaging SIG

Gordon Hansen

*The May meeting was held at HFCC in the Berry Amphitheater in Dearborn*

All are invited to join us in the Astro Imaging SIG meetings, to share and discuss images, experiences, and techniques.

We always have a good time, with lively discussion, and sharing of valuable information.

Next meeting is **August 9th**. The meeting room location – HFCC Admin. Services and Conference Center (same building), Berry Amphitheater Auditorium.

Topics invited. Pizza served.

## FAAC Events 2012

**July 27 - Lake Erie Metropark Star Party**

**Spring Mill Pond**

**July 28th - Beginner's Night - Island Lake - 7:00 pm**

**August 25 - FAAC Picnic at Island Lake-5 pm**

**Sept 21/22 - Astronomy at the Beach at Kensington MetroPark**

*Background Photo from Lunt Solar Scope Image taken at the Hector J Robinson Observatory, June 28, 2010*

### One FAAC members blog

<http://hjrobservatory.blogspot.com/>

A few updates on the observatory, quick articles and photos. I'll try to improve my writing on this blog. Also, I try to keep daily updates on this blog. - Greg Knekleian, HJRO volunteer.

## Items For Sale

*(continued from page 4)*

- 8 inch Zhumell Dobsonian Telescope
- F/5
- 2 inch Crawford low profile focuser with 1.25 inch adapter.
- 26 mm 2 inch eyepiece and 9 mm 1.25 inch eyepice
- 8 x 50 right angle finderscope
- Laser Collimator
- cooling fan with battery pack
- 2 " and 1.25" eyepiece rack and glow-in-the-dark tape on bearing box.
- Extras Include: Desert Storm Shield, padded carrying case for optical tube, Telrad
- \$300 Firm Call John 248-538-1514 or email to [ka8grh@gmail.com](mailto:ka8grh@gmail.com)

## Meteors and S'mores at Fort Crescent State Park

by Greg Knekleian, Art Parent

*(continued from Page 2)*

Contact Art Parent after the general meeting if you have any ideas for the event or plan on attending.

# FAAC General Meeting Minutes June 28th, 2012

By Doug Bauer Secretary

## Opening:

- The meeting was called to order in the Berry Amphitheater Auditorium of at HFCC at 5:40 PM by FAAC President, Gordon Hansen
- All attendees introduced themselves. There were 39 people present.
- Members contributed their observing experiences.
  - Tim Campbell described viewing the Venus transit from Hawaii
  - Several others reported on their experiences observing the Venus transit
  - John Lines, Doug Bauer, and Bob MacFarland had two outreach events for Detroit School teachers at the Auburn Hills Hawk Woods Nature Center

## What's Up In July:

- John Schroer gave the What's Up in the Night Sky talk. He included:
  - July 4 - Mercury is at its greatest eastern elongation around 9:01 PM
  - July 13 - Mars, Saturn, and the Moon are all close to Spica
  - Jupiter and Venus appear in the early morning sky around 4:00 AM
  - In August there will be a Blue Moon (full moon on Aug 1st and Aug 31st)
- John showed a few videos:
  - A NASA animation of the Moon's Evolution
  - A Moon fly-over
  - Video from the Apollo 11 Moon landing

## Main Program:

John Lines gave a presentation on his trip to Overgaard, Arizona for the Annular Solar Eclipse on May 20, 2012. John had several pictures of the eclipse and of his friend's observatory including a 36 inch Dobsonian scope that his friend has built. They travel to Canyon de Chelly near Chinle, Arizona to set up their equipment for the eclipse. The pictures of the canyon were spectacular. John also showed a video of he and two friends observing the eclipse.

## Tech Talk:

Jon Blum gave a tech talk on his visit to the Beijing, China Observatory built 1442 in the Ming Dynasty. He had pictures of various ornate equipment used at the observatory. As always he had a few humorous slides included in the presentation.

## Business Meeting:

- Secretary's Report was printed in the StarStuff and it was approved.
- Treasurer's Report was printed in the StarStuff and approved as printed.

## Upcoming Project and Events:

- Saturday, July 13 - Outreach event at the Camp Innisfree Girl Scout Camp in Howell
- Saturday, July 21 - Warren Astronomy Society Picnic at Wolcott Mills at 4:00 PM open to all FAAC members
- Wednesday, July 25 - Dearborn Public Library Outreach at the Caroline Kennedy library in Dearborn Heights
- Friday, July 27 - Lake Erie MetroPark Star Party
- Saturday, July 28 - Beginners Night at island Lake
- Saturday, August 25 - FAAC Picnic at Island Lake Spring Mill Pond
- Friday and Saturday, Sept 21/22 - Astronomy at the Beach at Kensington MetroPark

## New Business:

- Tim Dey has setup Lake Erie MetroPark observing agreement with the park management. This allows FAAC Members access to the Marsh Landing Center for after hours observing. You must enter the park before closing time, but can exit at anytime after that.
  - Tim has 12 passes, so if you want to use the park contact Tim for a pass. Also, you need a MetroParks Pass to get into the park.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Thanks to Greg Ozimek for bringing the pizza and to Ellen Duncan for bringing the pop!

# Fourth Annual FAAC Multi-Club Picnic



## Saturday August 25th, 2012

5pm-Late

Island Lake Recreation Area – Spring Mill Pond



State Park Pass Required.  
You may purchase a day  
pass at the gate if you do not  
have one.

Image above: Suat Eman / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Members of the  
following  
Astronomy Clubs  
and their families:

All Ford

Ford Amateur  
Astronomy Club

University Lowbrows

Oakland Astronomy  
Club

Seven Ponds  
Astronomy Club

Warren Astronomical  
Society

SEMSA Soaring Club

Henry Ford  
Community College

Bring your scope  
or binoculars.  
Mini observing  
contest if it is clear



Image above: Jennifer Zdanowski

FAAC will provide hamburgers, hot dogs,  
veggie burgers, soft drinks, plates & utensils

Please bring a dish to pass

salads, snacks, fruit, desserts.....



## HJRO Update

by Greg Knekleian

The observatory was closed for a couple of weeks. I went to an outdoor music festival in Illinois during the fourth of July week. Tim Dey was out of town as well during the same time period. Because the local "key keepers" were away, HJRO remained closed during the early very hot weeks of July. The temperatures were grueling. In Illinois the sky was clear many nights and I was in a dark sky area, but I only had my 10 by 50 binoculars and the temperatures were so hot, that by the time the night rolled around I was too tired to observe. I also kept busy videotaping various bands and that was basically a full time job while I was out there. Closer to home Art Parent found out more information about an Astronomy outing opportunity at Fort Crescent State park. This will be happening August 11 and is discussed in another article on page 2 of this newsletter.

When we were open we've had visitors arrive in small numbers, sometimes one or two visitors a night who came out during the Venus transit. We opened up Friday July 20th a clear night and had four visitors and some FAAC members present. Art Parent, Rick Arzadon and I were at the observatory. One local frequent visitor stopped by briefly to chat and two others arrived to observe. They were able to look at Mars, Saturn, the Ring Nebula, the Dumbbell nebula and M13 before they decided to leave for the evening. One of these visitors has a 12 and 1/2 inch mirror that he is using as the foundation of a dobsonian project he is building. Brian Kutscher couldn't make it out but called in and let us know he was interested in checking out a dark sky site late in the evening. Rick Arzadon met Brian out at a new dark sky location which is in an abandoned home development project, far away from city lights. They observed for a while and took a few test photos.

We also had a couple of Lincoln Park Police officers arrive and look through the telescope. One had visited before and he brought his partner by to have him see the observatory. They were able to look at Saturn, the Ring Nebula and the Dumbbell Nebula through the C14 and also the double cluster through my Vixen binocular telescope outside the observatory. We used more than one eyepiece to give visitors views at different powers and used an O3 filter on the Dumbbell as well.

My new (repurposed) mount for the Vixen binocular telescope is working well. It's an old Vinten 5LF tripod designed for industrial camcorders. This Vinten mount is so smooth and durable that I'm able to mount a Nexstar 4SE piggyback on the binocular telescope (with a temporary mount bracket/ automotive hose clamp and some cardboard). The mount easily handles the weight of both telescopes and gives a super smooth fluid alt azimuth motion. A \$2000 tripod is a little bit of an overkill for \$900 binoculars, but I was fortunate to simply repurpose the mount which I purchased many years ago for a past video business.

Earlier last week I also visited the observatory during a cloudy day and had a visitor stop by who was running track. The visitor noticed the observatory door was open. He stopped by to "see if the observatory was being vandalized". I gave him a quick tour of the observatory and invited him out when we are open. We chatted a little bit about the football field grounds being rebuilt; the stands, lights and scoreboard are being redone. A spreadsheet showing almost \$100,000 in upgrades to the grounds around the observatory. That is apparently a part of a "\$2 million grounds renovation" for the football field and track. HJRO FAAC regulars sometimes sit and speculate how we'd spend that money, if we had it instead to improve the actual observatory.

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