STAR STUFF

The Newsletter of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

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November-December 2008

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… for the Astronomer, 2008!

John Kirchhoff / Dale Ochalek

FAAC member John Kirchhoff, general manager now at the Rider's Hobby in Ypsilanti, at Carpenter and Packard, has some hot new astronomy items this season, for stuffing a stocking, or just to enhance the arsenal …

Orion Telescopes has a new gem – this 190mm "Mak-Newt," available at Rider's, Ypsilanti. Great for both astrophotos and observing, it's a great value too, only $1299. A "flat-field, coma-free optical system optimized for CCD/DSLR cameras," it might be just what you need for the astro-photo bug in the family.

Photos by Dale Ochalek

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What Happened to Comet Holmes?

Dr. Tony Phillips

One year after Comet 17P/Holmes shocked onlookers by exploding in the night sky, researchers are beginning to understand what happened.

"We believe that a cavern full of ice, located as much as 100 meters beneath the crust of the comet's nucleus, underwent a change of phase," says Bill Reach of NASA's Spitzer Science Center at the California Institute of Technology. "Amorphous ice turned into crystalline ice" and, in the transition, released

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STAR STUFF

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FORD AMATEUR ASTRONOMY CLUB
P.O. Box 7527
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PRESIDENT:	Doug Bauer
VICE PRESIDENT:	Gordon Hansen
SECRETARY:	Ken Anderson
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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, Administrative Services and Conference Center in Dearborn. Refer to our website for a map and directions (www.boonhill.net/faac).

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 of the dark skies at Richmond Airport, Unadilla, given prior permission. See the FAAC Yahoo Group* for more information.

Observing schedules and additional information are available on our website (www.boonhill.net/faac), 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.**.

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 Member:	$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 subscription request and payment. Do not send any money directly to the FAAC for this.

***Star Stuff* Newsletter Submissions**

Your submissions to *STAR STUFF* are more than welcome! Send your story and/or images to the editor at **dake00k@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 that weekend can be included in that issue.

* FAAC Members are welcome to join our **FordAstronomyClub** Yahoo! Group. Messages, photos, files, online discussions, and more! URL: **groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub**.

Rules of Thumb – Yahoo Group

President's Corner

Doug Bauer, FAAC President

The FAAC Yahoo Group has been a great facilitator for club communications (at groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub). As with many good things, it can also have a down side. We have experienced some of these this year. So it might be a good time to review the Yahoo Group rules, and make a few suggestions that might improve its usage, stop the verbal sparring, and reduce extraneous e-mail traffic.

Rule No. 1: Astronomy related topics only!

- No politics
- No religious topics
- No personal attacks
- No anything, except astronomy

If someone does post something that you find objectionable, please **do not** post a response back, in this case, as this may just cause more undesirable e-mails. **Do** send a note to our Yahoo administrator, at *fordastronomy@comcast.net*.

Do not REPLY to a post (back to the entire Yahoo Group), when responding to one person ***directly*** (specific requests for information, a link, etc.):

- DO NOT click the REPLY button (this is sent to everyone in the Group), but do use FORWARD.
- Copy the person's individual e-mail address from the original post, then click FORWARD, paste their address into the TO: area, and then write and SEND your reply.
- This will greatly reduce extraneous e-mails.

Use REPLY, if appropriate (or post a new note), only to address the entire Group. For example, to:

- Announce you are going to an observing site
- Ask the group an astronomy-related question
- Ask for volunteers for Outreach events
- Notify club members of club events
- Report who was in attendance observing at our private observing site
- Provide astrophoto, link or news for all to see
- Announce astronomy-related item for sale

By using good judgment and general courtesy, we can continue to enjoy this facility and enhance our knowledge of astronomy, and also improve our communication with each other.

Doug Bauer

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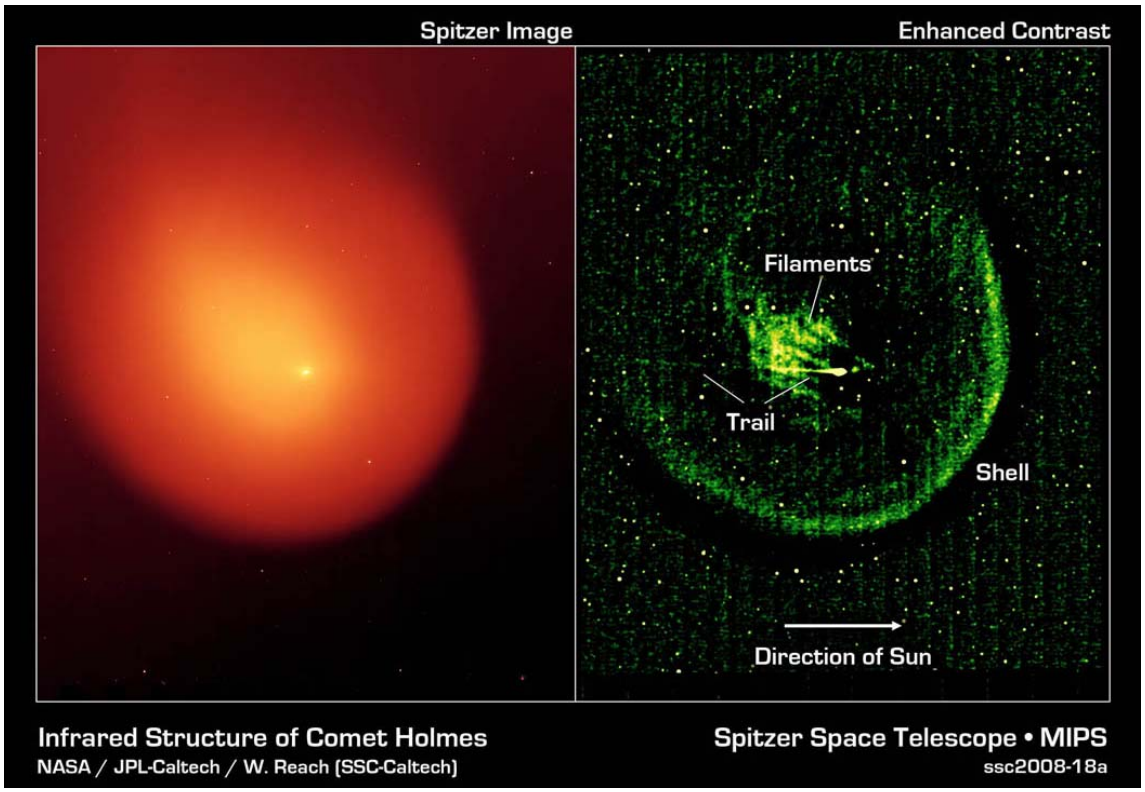
What Happened… *(continued from page 1)*



Comet Holmes as imaged by the multiband imaging photometer (MIPS) on the Spitzer Space Telescope. The enhanced contrast image at the right shows the comet's outer shell and mysterious filaments of dust.

enough heat to cause Holmes to blow its top. Anyone watching the sky in October 2007 will remember how the comet brightened a million-fold to naked-eye visibility. It looked more like a planet than a comet—strangely spherical and utterly lacking a tail. By November 2007, the expanding dust cloud was larger than Jupiter itself, and people noticed it from brightly-lit cities.

The infrared glow of the expanding dust cloud told the investigators how much mass was involved and how fast the material was moving. "The energy of the blast was about 1014 joules and the total mass was of order 1010 kg." Thus Holmes exploded like 24 kilotons of TNT and ejected 10 million metric tons of dust and gas into space.

These astonishing numbers are best explained by a subterranean cavern of phase-changing ice, Reach believes. "The mass and energy are in the right ballpark," he says, and it also explains why Comet Holmes is a "repeat exploder."

Another explosion was observed in 1892. It was a lesser blast than the 2007 event, but enough to attract the attention of American astronomer Edwin Holmes, who discovered the comet when it suddenly brightened. Two explosions (1892, and 2007) would require two caverns. That's no problem because comets are notoriously porous and lumpy. In fact, there are probably more than two caverns, which would mean Comet Holmes is poised to explode again.

When? "The astronomer who can answer that question will be famous!" laughs Vaubaillon.

"No one knows what triggered the phase change," says Reach. He speculates that maybe a comet-quake sent seismic waves echoing through the comet's caverns, compressing the ice and changing its form. Or a meteoroid might have penetrated the comet's crust and set events in motion that way. "It's still a mystery."

But not as much as it used to be.

See more Spitzer images of comets and other heavenly objects at www.spitzer.caltech.edu. Kids and grownups can challenge their spatial reasoning powers by solving Spitzer infrared "Slyder" puzzles at http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/spitzer/slyder.

This article was provided by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

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for the Astronomer…

(continued from page 1)

Some of the suggestions here include several fine refractors, eyepieces, and an Orion Auto-Guider (**NOTE:** prices are approximate, and may vary, depending on packages, and specials)…

Photos by Dale Ochalek

Above: Orion Edge-On™ planetary eyepieces, with flat-field performance, 3, 5, 6, 9, 12.5, and 14.5 mm, each $99.

For telescope and accessory needs, or information contact John at Rider's Hobby Shop – call (734) 971-6116.

Below: Day Star H-Alpha telescope for sun observing. 40 mm, .7 angstrom, $1799

Left: Orion X-Y Guide Star Finder (top left) adjusts field of view (x-y movement) on your guide scope ep, $179.

Orion StarShoot™ AutoGuider (top right), $249.

Meade Deep Sky imager, special just $799 (from $1299).

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for the Astronomer...

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Right: Orion SkyView mount, holds two telescopes, supports up to 50 lbs, alt-az motion, $399 (mount only). Mount shown with Stellarvue ED80 and Orion Starblast 4.5.

Above: Orion Q70 superwide eyepieces (70 degree apparent FOV), 38mm, 26mm, and 32 mm (not shown), each $99.

Below: Stellarvue SV102ED refractor, $1150, and ED80 refractor, $699, case included with each.

Minutes - October Meeting

Ken Anderson

Attendance: 35+

Doug Bauer started the FAAC meeting at 5:30 pm in the HFCC Rosenau Conference room with introductions, then pizza and pop. Greg Ozimek and Sandra Macika were thanked for bringing the food and drinks. Doug reminded everyone that the next meeting will be December 4 in the HFCC Health Building Hackett conference room (NOT the usual HFCC Rosenau conference room)! Guests included Dianna Glass from the Girl Scout Leaders Astronomy Camp, Bill Kandah, and Rosie Blum (Jon's wife). Bob MacFarland and Doug Bauer went to the Fall Star Party in Cadillac, MI, near Boonhill, and observed the meteor showers and moon in a clear sky. Gary Strumolo went to Las Vegas and the light pollution was so bad that even with a clear sky, he could only see the moon and Jupiter. John Schroer was back from his operation, and had Lowell Observatory stuff for club members to pick up. Sandra talked about giving her Lick Observatory presentation to the Warren Astronomical Society. Greg Ozimek noted astronomers were able to predict a three-meter diameter asteroid impact two days before it fell into Africa. Al Bates got a 70mm Williams refractor. George Korody presented an eyepiece that Milton French won at Astronomy at the Beach this year. Jon Blum commented on how much fun the Great Lake Star Gaze was (for more details see club events toward end of these minutes).

Jon Blum gave the "Astronomy Gadgets" main presentation. After bumping into his stuff too many times, Jon said, he put glow tape all over his tables, chairs, and tripods. He even put the stuff on his lens caps to help him find them at night. For more details click on photo luminescent tape at identi-tape.com ($99/roll), or glow products at tapebrothers.com. One can also buy three red blinking lights for $25 at scopestuff.com after clicking on red things.

According to Jon, binocular visibility factor equals magnification times objective diameter. Field of View in degrees can be calculated by dividing the yards at 1000 yards value, by 52.4. The 70mm binoculars let in twice as much light as 50mm. Exit pupils can be measured with an Allen Wrench to block out a star, and is approximately 5mm at old age or 7-8mm for children. Many companies make binoculars, but only astronomical binoculars are multi-coated reducing reflection, such as Orion and Opt found at telescopes.com or optcorp.com. Heavy (>50mm) or high power (>10X) binoculars loose their ability to be hand held, and require a tripod/stand. Binocular mounts from Orion can be found at telescope.com, such as a tripod adapter for $15-$30, or a parallelogram for $150-$300. Sky Window (tricomachine.com/skywindow) has a lock down mirror version for $300, but Jon did not care for this that much since the mirror only showed a small portion of the sky. Jon likes his Stargeezer (geocities.com/lwraif/SimP) lazy Susan chair for $300 assembled (or $120 kit). Astrogizmos sells an aluminum version for $330.

Diehard 12-volt batteries can be purchased from K-Mart of Sears. 4.3 hours = 18 amp-hr / 4.2 amps max. Jon recommends two 18 amp-hrs for $75 to keep everything plugged in - one for his scope, and the other for all the dew heaters. A cigarette-lighter splitter "Vector 3 in 1" can be found at Best Buy. Get timers for charging at Radio Shack (just keep the red tabs to turn off, and throw away the green tabs to turn on). Jim Frisbie uses solar panels to recharge his batteries.

Prevent dew heaters and controllers above specified ambient temperatures can be found at OPT optcop.com or kendrickastro.com/astro/dewremover.html. $395 is for a premium automatic version. $110 buys a manual four-knob dew heater controller (can turn down heat if not dewing to save power). Jon also has a $28 Telrad dew heater, $55 telescope controller heater, and one for his laser pointer. SCT heated dew shields (>$100) can be found at kendrickastro.com/astro/dewcap.html or astrozap.com/pages/dew-heat.htm. Ed Halash uses hand warmers rubber banded to his eyepieces to prevent them from icing up in the winter. Once dew is present, a hair blow drier can remove the dew. A $24 hair drier can be found at scopestuff.com under 12-volt stuff.

Finders include Telrad with 0.5, 2, and 4 degree circles (optcorp.com or andorama.com. So Jon can get his head in position he also uses a 4" riser for the Telrad ($19 from scopestuff.com ATM stuff) A $40 bracket for his laser pointer can be obtained at lumicon.com or greatredspot.com (be aware astro-imagers will ask you to avoid using your laser when they are imaging). $27-215 Red dot, or $49 straight, or $63 Right Angle Correct Image (RACI) finder can be ordered from telescope.com or optcorp.com.

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Meeting Minutes ... *(continued from page 6)*

Jon's personal collection of eyepieces includes 10mm Celestron Axiom LX (82 deg AFOV $179 from OPT), 20mm Pentax XW (70 deg AFOV $359 from OPT), 36mm Meade 4000QX (7- deg AFOV 99 from Adorama.com) and 2x barlow Celestron Ultima ($65 from OPT). Jon notes it is easier to find things, plus you have a benefit of larger area, with a wide field of view. Tele Vue Ethos eyepieces provide the widest 100 deg AFOV but are also the most expensive. TFOV = AFOV/Magnification. Magnification = Telescope focal length (mm) / eyepiece focal length (mm).

Coiled power cords have the advantage of being short but can also be extended (kendrickastro.com/astro/ battery.html). Brother p-touch label maker ($10-$120) can be obtained at Staples, Office Max, or Office Depot. Yellow eyepiece caps (35 different sizes for $38) can be ordered from eyepiececaps.com. A foldable wheeled cart that holds 70 lbs can be found at Staples for $24. $27-$50 Padded cases for fragile components can be found at Orion (telescope.com). Non fragile items can be carried in duffle bags. Books/paper can be carried in canvas bags or backpacks. Diane Worth sells some of these with FAAC logos. Jon uses Plexiglas and/or zip lock bags for papers and magazines to prevent them from getting wet.

To prevent focus knob shaking, Jon uses pipe insulation foam and cable tie straps from Home Depot.

For those who want to mount an elevated pier in their vehicle, see StarChaserz or astrolifts.

Finally Jon wanted to remind everyone that Riders of Ypsilanti offers the Red Card Rewards program (and FAAC's John Kirchhoff). OPT also has a OPT Reward Club with discount prices free for any astronomy club member. Scope Stuff offers free shipping. With all these Astro Gizmos, just remember to leave some money for your telescope!

Binocular Mount" tech talk. He started off with 10 reasons why people get into astronomy. Bob acquired the Tiny Titan binocular bracket kit from Burgess Optical Company, since it holds up to three lbs. more than his 15x70 (or lightweight 20x80) binoculars. He uses a 5-lb. counterweight. The kit was $30 vs. $50 fully assembled. In his haste, Bob split the base using too high a torque setting. Conclusion – kits are not so easy! This system is easy to transport, cheap, and light; although the full length bino system provides more/full range of motion. Bob added a target sight to show (public) where he is aiming. Altitude adjustment is tricky.

Doug next led the business portion. Ken Anderson gave the Secretary's Report, and stated that the September minutes were not completed yet. Steve Flessa gave the treasurer's report: $1660 GLAAC, $2550 Savings + $165 checking (apparel check written) = $2700. $80 cash, $2000 CD, $210 Equipment, $54 scholarship. previously sent a $300 check for the July 12 SESMA/FAAC picnic. Steve was not present to give the Treasurer's Report, but will provide an update in our Star Stuff newsletter. Tonight's collection jars contained $14 for the scholarship fund, and $46 for the FAAC equipment fund. Doug will give the second PO Box key to Ken.

Harold Thomason gave the Equipment Manager's Report and reported almost everything is accounted for. He has not seen the projector since Tony Licata, who was not present tonight, took it to Gladwin for the FAAC Astrophotography SIG's Dark Sky Workshop. Harold needs to know where the equipment is (if it is out) and who has it (or turn it in). FAAC owns a 10x10 ft. canopy, video projector, screen, sound system, bullhorn, sky quality meter, DVD player, coffee brewer, and an 8" dobsonian telescope with solar filter. To sign out FAAC equipment, please refer to the "Process and Rules" found either on our Yahoo website or in July 2007 Star Stuff.

FAAC Officer Elections will be in January 2009. Sandra Macika and John Shroer have volunteered to be on the nomination committee to guarantee they have at least one person running for each office (President, VP, Treasurer, and Secretary). Nominations will also be accepted at the meeting, provided the person is present to accept.

Dave McKearney, the principal of Wyandotte Catholic High School, on 4th Street and Eureka, wishes to start a Student/Junior Astronomy Club, and is looking for assistance.

Ken Anderson, John Schroer, Greg Ozimek, Sandra Macika, Bob MacFarland, Steve Harvath, Eric Rasmussen, and Erik Webster are on the FAAC club telescope committee. On August 28,

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Meeting Minutes … *(continued from page 7)*

FAAC voted overwhelmingly by 33 "for" to 4 "against" proceeding with a large club telescope. They also voted overwhelmingly in favor by 34 "for", 2 "abstained", and 1 "opposed" the telescope specifications of: Mirror diameter 22" to *36" inclusive, and focal ratio f3.5 to f4.5* inclusive, with the asterisk exception being for the folded Newtonian ideal scopes. The FAAC telescope committee selected two telescopes to rally upon for fund raising and donations purposes (although we will most likely buy a less expensive used telescope when we have sufficient funds). The first ideal telescope is a 28" f3.7 Starmaster with 101" eyepiece height, $17,000 new cost, and weighing 175 lbs fully assembled. The second ideal scope is a 40" folded Newtonian 3 mirror system with a maximum eyepiece height of 7 ft, f3.57 focal ratio, 400 lbs est., $38000 retail est. from Webster Telescopes (with club member Eric Webster providing free labor). Our next priority is to select a site, to house/store the telescope plus be the primary observing site, with both Richmond Airfield and University of Michigan Lowbrow Astronomers' site being prime contenders, since the board will not allocate any funds till an approved site is selected. Both sites requested to know more details. The goal is that trained club members would only need to bring eyepieces and key, to open up, and start observing. Non-trained club members would need to link with trained ones to use the scope. Anyone else with experience with a dob 22" or greater, or having people skills getting donations or negotiating land use deals would be greatly appreciated. The large semi-portable/non-permanent/transportable short focal length dobsonian could be relocated for star parties, but will be used mostly visually at the primary site of either Richmond Airfield or the Lowbrows' site. A short focal length would increase safety and reduce the requirements for a tall ladder, at the additional expense of requiring a Tele Vue Paracorr coma corrector. Sandra Macika is scheduling a book gift wrapping event, consisting of two 3-4 person shifts, at Barnes and Nobles this holiday season to kick off the FAAC telescope fund raising effort.

Frank Ancona, the FAAC representative for the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) Committee, says one hour lights out will start at 9 pm March 28, 2009 (IYA 400 years of Galileo's telescope) – get the word out. The last one hour lights/non-essentials out on March 29, 2008, which was called "Earth Hour," showed 50 million people can make a difference!

Tim Dey is evaluating the Lincoln Park School observatory with F8-9 9' (85-98") long 12.5" diameter mirror for restoration. They also have an 8" reflector telescope. Unfortunately due to not being adequately covered, everything had bird droppings on it. Their last observing session was in 2001. Their dome still worked since maintenance consisted of an annual lube. They still have all their eyepieces. The FAAC board approved Tim's evaluating their state of equipment (Gordon Hansen and Dennis Salliotte), and determine what it would take (time- and dollar-wise) to restore their equipment. 1964 German Equatorial 11" mirror needs to be recoated. Volunteers needed to pull mirror and evaluate. Perhaps a corporate sponsor could advertise name on the shed. They also located the 1979 restoration contact. Urban skies make it only good for bright objects. A grant application was mailed out August 1st. OCP educational sales may evaluate a solar scope. Tim reported $15,000 grant was approved on November 14, and is evaluating its details.

The meeting adjourned around 8:30 pm after discussing the business/club events (in chronological order):

Eric Rasmussen may open the U of M- Dearborn Observatory (third floor of UM-D's Science Learning Research Center) Monday December 1 from 6-8 pm for observing Jupiter, Venus, and the Moon; and Thursday January 1, 2009 from 6-8 pm to kick-off the "International Year of Astronomy). Please call the UM-D observatory hotline at 313-583-6566 one hour before, in bad weather, to verify cancellation. Both HFCC and UM-D facilities are about a quarter mile apart, close enough to walk, but most will drive. The 313-583-6566 hotline will be updated 1 hour before event to inform if cancelled. For addition info see Astronomy.umd.umich.edu or call 313-593-5277 during normal business hours.

Eric Rasmussen is looking for FAAC volunteers to run both 8" SCT and the big telescope.

Edison Boat Club Outreach was September 20. Don Klaser reported observing Venus, Jupiter, and M13 until 10:30 pm with good skies and 30-40 guests. Edison Boat Club is located at 100 Lycast

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Meeting Minutes ... *(continued from page 8)*

in Detroit, near Conner and Jefferson. They enjoyed it so much, they invited us back next year!

Great Lake Star Gaze was September 25-28, at River Valley "on the hill" in Gladwin, was put on by the Sunset Astronomical Society with numerous presentations, prizes, and dark skies! Ken Anderson estimated 200 astronomers with telescopes attended, plus up to 5 vendors. They had a large circus tent for presentations and to get out of the sun (or rain). They had presenters from local clubs, plus NASA, and Astronomy magazine. FAAC club members that attended included Doug Bauer, Gordon Hansen, Steve Flessa, Ken Anderson, Bob MacFarland, Bob Fitzgerald, Jon Blum, Dennis Salliotte, Jon Shroer, Jim Frisbie, Sandra Macika, Steve Harvath, Jon Kirchhoff, Tony Licata, Jim Moshek etc. Jim Moshek was the lucky one who won the 13mm Ethos raffle. Sign up for next year!

FAAC Astrophotography SIG's Dark Sky Workshop was September 28 to October 5 at River Valley (immediately following the Great Lakes Star Gaze). Eight club members were pre-registered, but the event was cut short due to bad weather. Sign up for next year!

October 4 was the Last Beginner's Night of the 2008 calendar year and was at both Lake Erie Metropark (Marshlands Museum) and Island Lake State Park (Spring Mill Pond). Some issues were noted at Lake Erie with too low a chaperone ratio of adults/kids. Gordon Hanson is asking those that participated at Lake Erie, if they would like to continue at both sites, or just do Island Lake. Beginner's nights will resume in Spring 2009 on first-quarter moon Saturdays. Bring your telescope/binoculars, or look through others. Events will be posted in the Park Bulletin board, Metropark Quarterly Newsletter, Ford World, and astromichigan.org

Cranbrook Astronomy Lectures kicked off October 17 at 7:30 pm to a sellout with Dr. Paul Goldsmith presenting "Molecular Clouds and Star Formation." Advance reservation is required to get the reduced $8 astronomy club price. Maximum of 200 seats are available. 8 members completed a FAAC post survey. Next presentation – TBD.

On October 24 7:30 pm at the Detroit Science Center, Bob Victor (from Abrahms planetarium) was to give a free 1.5 hour presentation of great things to observe in 2009. If it is clear, they will observe Venus from the roof starting at 7 pm. John Shroer is taking reservations (313-577-8400 ext 447, 448, or 449) from astronomy club members and DSC staff and their guests only. Park on the street or in DIA surface lot (free after 3 pm). Note the DSC lot no longer exists.

Watch the PBS Channel on November 10 for "Journey to Palomar," the history of the 14-ft. diameter Hale telescope.

The SIG meetings are the second Thursday of each month (next one December 11) at 5:30 pm in the HFCC Hackett Room (NOT the normal HFCC's Admin building Rosenau conference room)! Topic – TBD.

Farmington Hills Cub Scouts (one pack) First Presbyterian (11 mile at Farmington Rd.) is Thursday, November 20, 6:30/7:00 pm start. Doug Bauer will present Astronomy 101.

FAAC meetings are every fourth Thursday of each month, with the next one December 4 in the HFCC Health Building Hackett conference room (NOT the normal HFCC Rosenau conference room)! Main Presentation is "Evolution of George Korody's Observing" by George. The Tech Talk will be "Astro Christmas Toys" by John Kirchhoff (aka Santa, or the Enabler). The FAAC Board meeting is the first Thursday of each month (11/6/08, 5 pm) at Dimitri's Restaurant in Dearborn, MI.

The FAAC Library and DVD collection is in HFCC Science Building Room 109. Gary Stahl recommends a courtesy e-mail a day before the meeting. The list of 100+ books and brief descriptions is available at the FAAC Yahoo site; books can be signed out for one month, with extensions allowable. There are still 20 or more books to be catalogued. President Doug Bauer and V.P. Gordon Hansen are backup key holders for returning books.

Stepping Stone School – Farmington December 7 pm, 130+ gifted students (K-8th grade), Astronomy 101, Planet Size and Tape Distance, Telescope Observing. Led by George Korody.

Wyandotte Catholic Outreach – TBD – is starting their own astronomy club, Bob MacFarland coordinating. Dave McKearney, the principal of

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Meeting Minutes ... *(continued from page 9)*

Wyandotte Catholic High School, on 4th Street and Eureka, wishes to start a Student/Junior Astronomy Club, and is looking for assistance.

Dues due by December 31 for next year. Late charge after January 31, 2009. Membership benefits include use of three club observing sites, FAAC message board site, general and SIG meetings, electronic newsletter, camaraderie with fellow astronomers, plus being able to support outreach, beginners nights, star parties, and planetarium shows.

2009 is the International Year of Astronomy (IYA 2009) celebrating 400th year of the (Galileo's) telescope. American Astronomy Society and Astronomical League are celebrating "International Year of the Telescope". All year long, expect speakers. Astronomy Day will be advertised greater, and we may get additional support for our AATB. DSC, Cranbrook, FAAC, and GLAC plan to bring more astronomy to the general public. Set up telescopes in your local community/neighborhood. Eric Rasmussen will be planning events at University of Michigan (Dearborn and Ann Arbor) and HFCC. U of M will have Saturday Morning Talks. John Schroer, the FAAC chairman, passed out several handouts at the board meeting to show national intentions. Plastic replicas of Galileo's telescope with real glass lenses will sell for $10-$11, and you will be able to see Saturn and Jupiter with it. John is pre-ordering 100 of these telescopes for November, and they can be mounted on a camera tripod (making it more stable than Galileo).

The 2009 IYA Activities: January 1, 2009 6-8 pm University of Michigan Dearborn Observatory (see details above), January 10, 2008 Winter Observing (site TBD), March 28, 2009 8:30-9:30 pm World at Night (Shut off your lights and enjoy the Milkyway!), April 2-5, 2009 100 hours of Astronomy day and night.

May 2, 2009 is Astronomy Day.

Hartford Library – Road to Stardom January 5, led by Gordon Hansen.

Florida Key Winter Star Party is January 26.

Astronomy Expo/Swap is March 7, 2009.

FAAC Banquet at Ernesto's $35/person (had same date as SWAP – Banquet date will be changed!).

The 2009 Astronomy calendars, $7, are sold out.

John Schroer hand delivered the October Reflector, to those who previously signed up for the Astronomical League, since it was past their mailing cutoff. Membership benefits can be found in Star Stuff or the club website. Bob Boswell, Bob Clubb, Phil Harris, and Gordon Hanson, please pick up your first reflector from John Schroer. Perhaps some club members may be interested in working on observing certificates.

Seeking 2009 speakers for both FAAC 30-60 minute Main Presentations, and 15-20 minute Tech Talks. Contact Doug Bauer at dougbauer@ comcast.net or call 313-828-7385.

Meeting Agenda - December 4

5:30 pm HFCC –Hackett Conf Room, Health Careers Education Center

(For map see: www.hfcc.edu/contact/campus_maps.pdf)

Opening/Introductions/Observations

- RAS Handbook – Bob FitzGerald
- Calendar Sales – Steve Flessa

Presentation – Evolution of My Observing – George Korody

Tech Talk – Holiday Astro Gear – John Kirchhoff

Club Business Items

- Secretary / Minutes – Ken Anderson
- Treasurer's Report – Steve Flessa
- Equipment Manager's Report – Harold Thomason
- Officer Election Nominations

Club Projects / Committees / Member support

- Stepping Stone School Outreach Farmington (Sat, Dec 13) George Korody
- 2009 IYA – John Schroer
- Astro Imaging SIG – Tony Licata
- Dark Sky Committee – Frank Ancona
- Lincoln Park Observatory Restoration – Tim Dey
- Open Discussion
- Close

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Treasurer's Report

Steve Flessa

Account	9/21/2008 Balance
Bank Accounts	
Checking	$ 1,393.87
Savings	$ 2,472.28
TOTAL Bank Accounts	**$ 3,866.15**
Cash Account	
Cash	$ 158.50
TOTAL Cash Account	**$ 158.50**
Investment Accounts	
CD 1	$ 1,062.60
CD 2	$ 1,022.86
TOTAL Investment Accounts	**$ 2,085.46**
Asset Accounts	
Equipment	$ 772.96
Scholarship	$ 340.05
TOTAL	**$ 1,113.01**
OVERALL TOTAL	**$ 7,223.12**
Memo:	
GLAAC	**$1801.52**

Time to Renew, Members!

Steve Flessa

It's time to renew your membership in FAAC! Send your check in today to FAAC, P.O. Box 7527, Dearborn, Michigan 48121-7527. Please include any updates to your contact information.

Membership includes access to the observing sites at Island Lake Recreation Area, Lake Erie Metro Park, and Richmond Airport.

Discounted subscriptions to *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* magazines. ***AND*** most importantly, the interaction with people who share your love for astronomy.

Renewal fees for 2008 are only $25, and after January 31, $30!

Items for Sale

Coulter 10" Dobsonian telescope. $400.
Contact Bob Stonik, 313-361-4954.

Schmidt-Newtonian 10" – F5.35, 1360 mm focal length with 2" focuser, 60 mm guide scope, Thousand Oaks Full aperture solar filter (Mylar). Cooling fan, extra set of "O" rings, Optron Corrector plate.

Crestliner mount (on wheels) available. Scope made by Nelson Lewis of Detroit Astronomical Society in 1962. Purchased 1981.
Selling telescope for $325.

Mount for $200.
Contact Harold Thomason 313-584-7465

Celestron 6-inch Schmidt-Cass with XLT coatings. The package has a diagonal and a finder. There are no eyepieces. The telescope has been used 3/4 times. Asking is $400 or OBO.

Contact Tom Blaszak, key_string_guy@yahoo.com

Astro Imaging SIG

Tony Licata

Gallery Submissions Requested!

If you have any interesting photos, astronomy related or not, please send them to tglicata@aol.com as JPG attachments.

The SIG gallery of images will be viewed during each SIG meeting. A reminder is posted on our Yahoo site periodically for submissions.

All are invited to join us, share and discuss their images. We always have a good time, with lively discussion.

Next meeting is January 8, HFCC Rosenau CR. Topics invited.

Expo and Swap Meet March 7

Tom Blaszak

Mark your calendars, and plan ahead! The sixth annual FAAC Astronomy Expo and Swap Meet is scheduled for Saturday, March 7, 2009, 9am-4pm, at the familiar Holy Cross Church Gymnasium, 30650 Six Mile, Livonia. Details are not final for the programs, but a full day is planned, according to event chair Tom Blaszak (email: key_string_guy@yahoo.com).

Event seeks early table sales and possible sponsors. See the latest flyer on the FAAC site: http://www.boonhill.net/faac/

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Ford Amateur Astronomy Club
Star Stuff Newsletter
P.O. Box 7527
Dearborn MI 48121-7527

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Holiday Open House
Saturday, December 6!

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Special events all day! Digital Slot Car races or Game Demos, 12-5, Metal Detector Demo12-2, and build plastic model Camaro FREE (first 50 registered kids) 2-4 pm.