STAR STUFF

The Newsletter of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

Volume 19, Number 9 September 2010

In This Issue

The Hunt Is On!

By Carolyn Brinkworth

The world of astronomy was given new direction on August 13, 2010, with the publication of the Astro2010 Decadal Survey. Astro2010 is the latest in a series of surveys produced every 10 years by the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences. This council is a team of senior astronomers who recommend priorities for the most important topics and missions for the next decade.

Up near the top of their list this decade is the search for Earth-like planets around other stars—called "extrasolar planets" or "exoplanets" — which has become one of the hottest topics in astronomy.

The first planet to be found orbiting a star like our Sun was discovered in 1995. The planet, called "51 Peg b," is a "Hot Jupiter." It is about 160 times the mass of Earth and orbits so close to its parent star that its gaseous "surface" is seared by its blazing sun. With no solid surface, and temperatures of about 1000 degrees Celsius (1700 Fahrenheit), there was no chance of finding life on this distant world. Since that discovery, astronomers have been on the hunt for smaller and more Earth-like planets, and today we know of around 470 extrasolar planets, ranging from about 4 times to 8000 times the mass of Earth.

Continued On page 3

Astronomy at the Beach - Sept 10 & 11

President's Corner

(Above: Doug Bauer, Astronomy at the beach)

On Friday, September 10th and Saturday, September 11th the 14th annual Astronomy at the Beach was held at Kensington Metropark. The event is organized by the Great Lakes Association of Astronomy Clubs which includes:

Amateur Astronomers of Jackson
Astronomy Club at Eastern Michigan
Ford Amateur Astronomy Club
Northern Cross Observatory
Oakland Astronomy Club
Seven Ponds Astronomy Club

Continued On page 2

STAR STUFF

September 2010 - Vol. 19 No 9

STAR STUFF is published eleven times each year by:

FORD AMATEUR ASTRONOMY CLUB
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Dearborn MI 48121-7527

PRESIDENT: Doug Bauer
VICE PRESIDENT: Chuck Jones
SECRETARY: Lori Poremsky / Kevin Medon
TREASURER: Gordon Hansen
WEBMASTER: Greg Ozimek
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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.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 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.

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 more than welcome! Send your story and/or images to the editor at pvideo@aol.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 Ford Astronomy Club Yahoo!Group. Messages photos, files, online discussions, and more! URL: 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)*

Warren Astronomical Society
University Lowbrows Astronomers
Sunset Astronomical Society

Vendors, Sponsors, and Club tables were set up in the pavilion, including:

Camera Mart
Great Red Spot
Wayne State University
The Detroit Science Center
The Warren Astronomical Society
Seven Ponds Astronomy Club
Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

There were presentations in the tent on both nights including:

Comet Talk / Comet Making Demonstration
(Bob Hotaling & Mike Broughton)
Basic Equipment Talk
(Dave D'Onofrio)
Our Vanishing Night
(Joseph Bob Victor & Kevin Dehne)
Fire and Ice
(Kevin Dehne & Jeff Conn)
Astronomy 101 & 3D Journey through space
(Gordon Hansen & Dave D'Onofrio)
20 years of the Hubble Space Telescope
(Dr. Brad Whitmore from the Space Telescope Institute)

The Detroit Science Center had their Portable Star Lab setup and it was kept busy both nights

Of course there was the Skytour Scavenger Hunt for the kids.

Friday night was spectacular, with clear skies from 7:00 PM after 1:00 AM. The park estimated 1,500 people were in attendance on Friday

(continued Page 6)

Artist's rendering of hot gas planet HD209458b. Both the Hubble and Spitzer Space Telescopes have detected carbon dioxide, methane, and water vapor—in other words, the basic chemistry for life—in the atmosphere of this planet, although since it is a hot ball of gas, it would be unlikely to harbor life.

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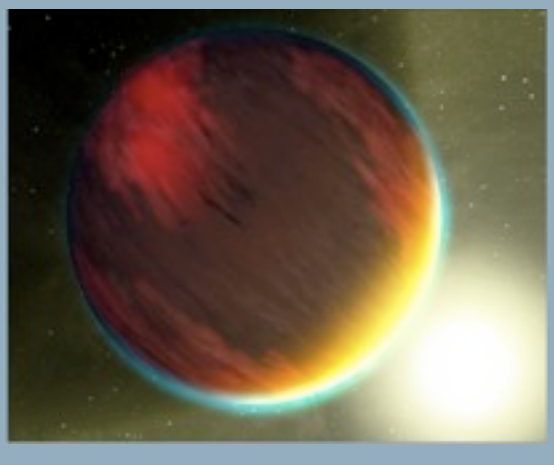

The Hunt Is On!

(continued from Page 1)

This explosion in extrasolar planet discoveries is only set to get bigger, with a NASA mission called Kepler that was launched last year. After staring at a single small patch of sky for 43 days, Kepler has detected the definite signatures of seven new exoplanets, plus 706 "planetary candidates" that are unconfirmed and in need of further investigation. Kepler is likely to revolutionize our understanding of Earth's place in the Universe.

We don't yet have the technology to search for life on exoplanets. However, the infrared Spitzer Space Telescope has detected molecules that are the basic building blocks of life in two exoplanet atmospheres. Most extrasolar planets appear unsuitable for supporting life, but at least two lie within the "habitable zone" of their stars, where conditions are theoretically right for life to gain a foothold.

We are still a long way from detecting life on other worlds, but in the last 20 years, the number of known planets in our Universe has gone from the 8 in our own Solar System to almost 500. It's clear to everyone, including the Astro2010 decadal survey team, that the hunt for exoplanets is only just beginning, and the search for life is finally underway in earnest.

Explore Spitzer's latest findings at http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu. Kids can dream about finding other Earths as they read "Lucy's Planet Hunt" at http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/storybooks/#lucy.

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

Below *Screen Capture From Cable show segment about Astronomy At the Beach. (Larry Halstead explains how the Celestron EQ mount functions.)*

Presidents Corner (continued from page 2)

They were enjoying all that was available. There were lines of people at the telescopes most of the night. They were treated to views of a crescent Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Neptune, and Uranus, along with many deep sky objects including: the Ring Nebula, the Great Cluster in Hercules, the Andromeda Galaxy, Double Stars, the Double Cluster, and many more objects with the accompanying Ooh's and Wow's. I still had people looking through my scope until after midnight. The seeing was very steady and I was able to view Jupiter at over 500X and still see a lot of detail including Ganymede, which was transiting Jupiter.

Saturday began well with presentations for the astronomy clubs at 1:00 PM in the Kensington Nature Center by Dr. Brad Whitmore speaking on how images are obtained and processed from the Hubble Space Telescope. Also, Greg Bragg Vice-President of Sales for Meade gave a presentation on few of Meade's new products. This was followed by a nice dinner at Baker's Restaurant with Dr. Brad Whitmore. Then we returned to Kensington for Saturday night. Unfortunately, it was cloudy and raining Saturday through 11:00 PM, so no scopes were setup other than a few in the pavilion. The number of visitors was estimated at around 400-500. They had a good time at the presentations, visiting the tables, and the Star Lab, which managed to have clear skies all night long. All in all, it was a great weekend. I'd like to give a big "THANK YOU" to all of the people who worked so hard to organize this event, the Kensington Metropark staff, and those who brought telescopes, manned tables, helped as greeters, gave presentations, and did everything else that was needed to put on a terrific event!

I had a fantastic time!

Doug Bauer
DougBauer@Comcast.Net

(Below) *Visitors look through Milton Antonick's large refractor Telescope and other scopes as well at Astronomy At the Beach*

Treasurer's Report
August 5, 2010

By Gordon Hansen

Bank Accounts	
Checking	$155.06
Savings	$961.76
TOTAL Bank Accounts	$1,116.82
Cash Account	
Cash	$103.42
TOTAL Cash Account	$103.42
Investment Accounts	
CD 1	$1,050.16
CD 2	$1,085.98
TOTAL Investment Accounts	$2,136.14
Asset Accounts	
Equipment	$1,857.92
Scholarship	$488.80
TOTAL Asset Accounts	$2,346.72
OVERALL TOTAL	$5,703.10
Memos	
GLAAC	$2,652.46

Meeting Agenda – August 26th

HFCC –Berry Auditorium - Admin. Services & Conference Center

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

5:30 PM

Opening/Introduction/Member Observing

Main presentation:

Fall Highlights in the HFCC Planetarium

Bob Clubb FAAC

Tech Talk:

None this Month

Club Projects/Committees/Member Support

- Astro-Imaging SIG
- Dark Sky Committee

Below *Screen captures from Cable show (Astronomy At the Beach.) Bob Fitzgerald shows his special solar binocular setup (left). Young visitors get ready to enter the Detroit Science Center portable Star Lab*

Astro Imaging SIG

Gordon Hansen

The September meeting was held at HFCC

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 October 14. The meeting room location – HFCC Admin. Services and Conference Center (same building), Berry Amphitheater Auditorium.

Topics invited. Pizza served.

FAAC Events 2010

Kevin Medon and Lori Poremsky

Sept 23 - General Meeting

Oct 7 - 10 Great Lakes Star Gaze.

Oct 14 - Astrophotography SIG

Oct 16 - Beginner's night

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.

Items For Sale

Meade Lightbridge Deluxe 12" – F/5, 1524mm focal length. Purchased new last year. Perfect condition mechanically, optically and cosmetically. Big, clear deep sky views. Built-in battery powered cooling fan, two-speed Crayford focuser (1.25 / 2-inch). Easy to transport, set up collimate and use - smooth as silk. Upgraded with Bob's knobs and heavier collimation springs. Includes shroud, cover, Telrad and secondary mirror heater. Over $1000 invested, will sell for $650.

Contact John Johnson at jjohnsonpub@yahoo.com

or (248) 515-0014.

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

Two Scopes For Sale

Celestron 6" Schmidt Cassegrain w XLT Like new condition. With diagonal and finder.

Tote bag. $325 Retail $699

Meade Lightbridge 10" With std accessories. Used one time, includes transport boxes. Going for $475 Retail $599 + Ship + Tax Need to raise cash for toys.

Tom Blaszak key_string_guy@yahoo.com

Hector J Robinson Observatory

by Greg Knekleian

There was a flurry of activity at the observatory this month. Where do I begin. Tim Dey was back and we did some solar observing. Ed Brzozowski the IT guy from the school met us during one solar observing session and many others got a glimpse through the solar scope. A bunch of visiting soccer players from another school. A local resident who used to look through the old 12 inch Newtonian visited. He said his view of Venus was the first time in his life. I had his contact information in my phone and had met him when Harold did a library presentation at the Lincoln Park library last year. This older resident was still interested in astronomy and spent hours talking and hanging out at the observatory. He also looked through my binocular telescope at some objects that were to low for the C14. He told me he never saw Venus through a telescope and this was his first time seeing Venus in a crescent phase.

We tested the Stellacam a bit and found it works really well with a live monitor.

A clip about the Hector J Robinson Observatory (HJRO) was made for an upcoming Astronomy For Everyone cable show.

We were doing some solar viewing during a Parent Teacher orientation session and many parents and their kids came by to check out the observatory. Many were able to view the sun and the moon. One family arrivied at the observatory and the father looked familiar. Mr. Duchene said, "here comes the mayor". And so the first family of Lincoln Park arrived. Every time the mayor looks through our telescope he remarks that he'd like to buy one. Although the skies were half filled with clouds they were able to look at the moon through the Vixen and C14.

Some core members, Al Bates, George Korody, Mike Rousso, Greg Ozimek, Tim Dey and I scheduled a meeting Friday September 17; to re-seat and tweak of the telescope mount in the observatory. The mount had moved slightly. Arriving there, we discovered there was a home varsity football game on the field, next to the observatory. For much of the game we kept the observatory door closed and didn't have visitors, but then I brought out the binocular telescope and Tim Dey started showing kids, parents and even Lincoln Park Police officers the moon. About 40 or 50 visitors looked through the telescope. Two visitors included a school board member and her husband.

The dome motor seems to be fine for now. I contacted Ashe Dome to ask them how much wind the dome can take for observing? The president of the company responded and requested an updated set of contact information. Ashe Dome has contact information that dates back to 1964.

I videotaped a clip from the observatory, just a short clip to be used for the cable show. A future show will should be taped to focus on the observatory. It will be a remote shoot from the observatory location. **Keeping busy:** I even grabbed my camcorder and took some shots of the Astronomy At The Beach event, to throw together a clip for possible inclusion in the FAAC Cable show. All in all it was a very busy month.

Below *Screen capture from FAAC Cable segment about Astronomy At the Beach. Milton tells us about his latest refractor modification.*

Johannes Kepler, Exoplanets, and NASA's Faux Pax

by Kenneth Paul Dykstra

Johannes Kepler (1571 – 1630) was not a rich man nor lived a life of comfort and prestige - but his life story is a movie producer's dream, an epic drama to be sure. I see the opening scene fading-in from black while the sound of yelling kids swells until you make out a rustling mob of boys kicking a sickly boy huddled up in the mud just outside school. The young Kepler, used to such treatment, knows to protect his vitals while peeking out for a break between their legs to shoot through. The break comes and he scrambles out running home to be welcomed by a rage-filled father stomping out the door and a screaming mother throwing curses at his silhouette dissolving into the morning fog, never to be seen again.

Jumping ahead to his thirties, I see the scene opening with him successfully arguing to the church counsel for the release of his mother accused of witchcraft and to burned at the stake like his grandmother. From here moving ahead again to the death of both his wives and two-thirds of his many children from diseases leaving him gutted to the core. Jump ahead again to his beloved Lutheran Church ex-communicating him while the Catholic Church forces him to flee or die all the while being hailed a prophet by the locals due to his uncannny accuracy with astrological predictions, a practice he abhors, once complaining, "astrology is the ugly step-sister of astronomy", yet finds himself forced to do for the quick cash it brings throughout his life. And all this to serve only as prologue to the infamous working relationship he endured under Tycho Brahe (1546 – 1601).

Brahe and Kepler might as well be 'A' and 'Z' or 'North' and 'South' - polar opposites in nearly every way: the boisterous Brahe and the quiet Kepler, the elitist Brahe and the boy from little means, the Catholic and the Protestant, the Ptolemaic Brahe with the Earth at the center of the Universe and the Copernican Kepler with Earth orbiting the Sun. No matter the topic: Opposites...with but two exceptions - equal life obsessions in understanding the motions of the heavens matched only by their equal desires for immortality in history. A tumultuous working relationship filled with mistrust, fits of rage culminating in the untimely death of Brahe.

Kepler was born to Katherine and Heinrich Kepler on December 27, 1571 in the small town of Weil der Stadt, Wurttemburg (today's Germany). Katherine was heavily involved in witchcraft as was her mother while Heinrich was a mercenary soldier dying somewhere in another country, to this day a mystery. Kepler was close to his mother and being a sickly boy, stayed home reading books instead of playing with other kids. He was picked on for his big head atop a short, wiry frame. Early in his school years he was recognized in the public school for his genius and received a scholarship to the prestigious private all boys private school. He ultimately accomplished degrees in theology, philosophy and math at Tubingen University in 1587 with a much sought after invitation to Seminary in hopes of teaching theology - until life hit, handing him a hard-left turn.

(continued on page 9)

Johannes Kepler, Exoplanets, and NASA's Faux Pax

(continued from Page 10)

His tutor, trusted friend and math mentor at Tubingen, Michael Maestlin, pressured him to accept a post as head Math and Astronomy Instructor at a tiny upstart university in the Austrian Alps of Graz. His hopes of enjoying a life of prestige and position in the large academic city of Tubingen were crushed. While in Graz, Kepler had ample time to study astronomy and math writing his first work on the idea that the Genesis account of Creation could be revealed in the study of the Cosmos titled, Mystery of the Cosmos (1597) using mathematical proofs, specifically Geometry, and mysticism as his mediums of communication. He sent a copy to the yet unknown Galileo Galilei whom dismissed it as lacking proof but was not dismissed by a wealthy Dutch nobleman impressed with Kepler's math: Tycho Brahe.

Kepler was quick to accept Brahe's offer as he and his family had to flee the year before from Graz under threat of death due to unrest between the Catholic and Protestants leaving them homeless. As an assistant, he worked in the newly furnished castle in Prague where Brahe, having himself been exiled from his homeland, carried out his state-of-the-art naked-eye observations meticulously cataloging the motion of the planets, specifically Mars. Brahe demanded precision. Those who failed were scolded or jailed and some tortured. Brahe's Rudolphine Tablets logged the planetary motions to an unprecedented accuracy of 2 arc minutes, though Brahe commonly bragged of an accuracy within 1 arc minute (1/60th of a degree). Even so, it was the most precise measurements of the heavens in the world at the time.

Their relationship from the outset was filled with mistrust on many levels, but mainly, Brahe suspected Kepler of trying to steal his life's work while Kepler suspected Brahe would only use him to make a name for himself. Kepler knew Brahe needed him - and so did Brahe. Brahe needed Kepler to develop the geometrical math models from his data to prove the long held Ptolemaic belief that the Earth was at the center of the Universe. Kepler, however, was an ardent believer in the Copernican model where all the planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Uranus) all orbit the Sun. Kepler confessed in a letter to his closest friend and mentor, Michael Maestlin, that Brahe's unwillingness to give him access to his data and the foolish pursuit of the Ptolemaic model was driving him nearly mad,

Let all keep silence and hark to Tycho who has devoted thirty-five years to his observations. For Tycho alone do I wait; he shall explain to me the order and arrangement of the orbits. Then I hope I shall one day, if God keeps me alive, erect a wonderful edifice. He continues later, "Brahe may discourage me from Copernicus (or even from the five perfect solids) but rather I think about striking Tycho himself with a sword. I think thus about Tycho: he abounds in riches, which like most rich people he does not rightly use. Therefore great effort has to be given that we may wrest his riches away from him. We will have to go begging, of course, so that he may sincerely spread his observations around.

(continued page 10)

Johannes Kepler, Exoplanets, and NASA's Faux Pax

(continued from Page 11)

Without these crucial observations, Kepler would be nothing more than an astrologer and math teacher and long forgotten. Less than two years into their tumultuous working relationship, the healthy Brahe became suddenly ill with abdominal pains and died two days later. Within a year and with the help of Brahe's coveted 20 volumes of planetary data, Kepler discovered the first two laws of planetary motion and published them two years after that, titled: New Astronomy (1609). This book and Brahe's death positioned him as the Imperial Mathematician in Prague and even Galileo sought out advice from him. His third and final law of planetary motion came out nine years later in his series of five books combining astronomy, theology, philosophy, and mysticism titled, Harmonies of the World (1618). It was this third and final law that inspired Sir Isaac Newton, sixty years later, to discover Gravity and establish the law of Gravity.

Upon establishing these laws, filled with emotion and great satisfaction near the end of his life, Kepler wrote:

I dare frankly to confess that I have stolen the golden vessels of the Egyptians to build a tabernacle for my God far from the bounds of Egypt. If you pardon me, I shall rejoice; if you reproach me, I shall endure. The die is cast, and I am writing the book, to be read either now or by posterity, it matters not. It can wait a century for a reader, as God himself has waited six thousand years for a witness.

Kepler knew he had unlocked one of man's great mysteries – planetary motion, making his place in history secure.

TWhether or not Kepler is involved in Brahe's death is still debated to this day. Both in 1901 and again in 2010, Brahe's body has been exhumed and once again awaiting Forensics on Brahe's hair, which showed at the turn of the 20th century high levels of calcium and mercury. Milk was a common medium for poisoning by drink in that era and Kepler had complete access to Brahe's alchemy lab and self-educated in it. It seemed Kepler had the motive and means but one may never really know.

Today, as verified by hundreds of exoplanets discovered, Kepler's three laws have proven accurate – thus the name of NASA's spacecraft to discover other Earths by 2013. Perhaps though, NASA should have named it the Tycho-Kepler Spacecraft…

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FAAC General Meeting Minutes August 26, 2010

By Kevin Medon/Lori Poremsky, Secretary

Attendance: 37+

The meeting was called to order by President Doug Bauer at 5:35 p.m.

Doug Bauer reminded all members that official FAAC name tags are available. If you do not have one, and would like one, please contact Doug Bauer directly.

Members enjoyed pizza while several new members and visitors introduced themselves and were welcomed.

Doug Bauer mentioned that the FAAC does have a mentoring program. If you are interested in learning about a certain area of astronomy or just need some help in getting started, let Doug Bauer know, and he can pair you with a mentor. Also if you are interested in being a mentor, please let Doug Bauer know.

Several members mentioned observing experiences including the Perseids Meteor shower.

Doug Bauer mentioned an outreach program that he and Larry Halstead attended on August 18th in Howell, MI. They had about 3-4 scopes and 100 members of the public who attended.

Doug Bauer mentioned that several members attended the Seven Ponds club event last week.

Several members noted that the sun has been very active as of late. If you have a solar filter, it's good viewing.

Jon Blum and Dave Baranski are considering a viewing session on September 4th at the Richmond Airfield. If you're interested in attending, please contact Jon or Dave directly. Additional notification will come via the Yahoo Group site.

Tim Dey mentioned that the Lincoln Park Hector J. Robinson Observatory was the subject of an update show on "Astronomy for Everyone". Greg Knekleian and Scout Master David Oakley from Troop 1052 joined Tim on the show and provided an update on the Observatory. It will be shown during the month of November on local cable stations. Tim Dey also mentioned that the former Superintendent of Lincoln Park Schools has retired and he has contacted the new Superintendent regarding the Observatory. He is showing excitement about the opportunities, and will hopefully support more activity.

A shout out went to Greg Knekleian for purchasing and replacing the video camera at the HJR Observatory. Thank you!

The main presentation was given by Don Klaser and focused on "The Calendar and Western Culture".

The tech talk was given by Art Parent and focused on "The Making of Dew Heaters".

Club Business

Secretary's Report – Lori Poremsky noted that the membership numbers are as follows:

74 Regular members

82 Lifetime members

7 Astronomical Clubs and Friends

163 Total

Motion was made and seconded to approve the July minutes; approved.

Treasurer's Report – Gordon Hansen noted that the complete Treasurers report is in Star Stuff.

Equipment Managers Report – All equipment is accounted for.

(continued page 12)

FAAC General Meeting Minutes July 22, 2010 (continued from page 13)

Projects/Committees/Events

John Schroer noted that the 14th Annual Astronomy at the Beach will take place this year on September 10th and 11th in Kensington Metro Park at Maple Beach from 6:00 p.m. to midnight. The guest speaker this year will be Dr. Brad Whitmore, Deputy Director of the Space Science Institute. His talk will be titled "The Legacy of the Hubble Space Telescope". There is also lot of other talks scheduled. John is looking for volunteers to act as greeters. The club awning will be set up and greeters will pass out flyers to those attending and share information regarding the events taking place for the evening. As in past years, there will be a talk given at 1:30 in the afternoon on Saturday for those who are volunteering at the event. After the talk, club members go out for dinner (around 3:30) so they can be back in time for evening setup. The event is free, but the Metropark does charge a $5.00 daily permit fee per vehicle if you do not own an annual pass.

Gordon Hansen noted that SIG meetings are taking place the 2nd Thursday of every month in the Berry Auditorium of Henry Ford Community College, located in the Administrative Services and Conference Center. The next meeting is Thursday, September 9th at 5:30 p.m.

The club share

Doug Bauer noted that Steve Murrell of HFCC has invited the club to set up a table during the HFCC Welcome Back Days event. This event is scheduled for September 14, 15 and 16 from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. each day. We can set up a table and telescopes anywhere we want (Steve suggests that we do this somewhere near the fountain/gathering area between the Liberal Arts Building and the Student Pavilion.)

The club is planning on manning the table each day to encourage students to join the HFCC. Any one interested in meeting and greeting students, please join us.

Frank Ancona noted that there was nothing to report on Dark Sky this month.

John Schroer noted that if those signed up for the Astronomical League have not received their summer issue, please contact him. They do offer a 10-15 percent discount on Astronomy items.

HFCC planetarium show will occur every Tuesday evening at 7:30PM from September 21 to December 7, 2010. FAAC's Dennis Salliotte and Bob Clubb will present the in the HFCC Science Building Planetarium (room S-126). Shows are free and first come first serve. Doors open around 7:15PM and close promptly at 7:30PM. Bob Clubb has created a FAAC/HFCC Planetarium webpage. HFCC campus maps can be found at www.hfcc.edu/contact/locations.asp

OPEN DISCUSSION

Jim Frisbee noted that himself, Frank Arcona and Bob Fitzgerald will be leading the nominating committee for this year's Club officers. If you are interested in being on the slate of officers, please see one of them.

John Schroer noted that the Detroit Science Center will be hosting "Observe the Moon Night" on the evening of September 18th. They are invited the public to come on out and look at the moon. If you are interested in participating, please contact John directly.

Tony Lacata mentioned that he will be moderating a session "Evolutionary Science" at the Detroit Science Center. Please see their website for more information.

Doug Bauer noted that Larry Halstead has agreed to take over leadership of our Annual Swap Meet. Doug encourages anyone willing to help to contact Larry directly.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Letters of Thanks

HFCC forwarded these letters to Doug Baur.

Dear Mr. Bauer,

I cannot express my gratitude enough for your granting me the Ford Astronomy Club Scholarship. Sometimes when school gets tough, I wonder how I can do it, but I deeply appreciate my efforts being recognized by such and admirable club. This really has not only brightened my semester with a good start, but it has made me want to work that much harder and push myself to "reach for the stars", because I know I can do it. I greatly appreciate the scholarship since I need all the help I can get with funding my education. So, from the bottom of my heart and with much appreciation, thank you.

Sincerely,
Mika A Byars

Dear Mr. Bauer,

Thank you for your generous support for scholarships at Henry Ford Community College (HFCC). For many students, scholarships provide the financial support they need to complete their studies and fulfill their academic and career pursuits. Although tuition at HFCC is among the lowest in our area, students are still challenged in finding funds for their College expenses and your support can make the difference.

Enclosed is a note(s) from your scholarship recipients(s). I hope that you gain a sense of personal satisfaction in seing the impact you have made by supporting scholarships at HFCC.

Thank you for investing in the present and future success of our students.

Sincerely,
John J. Lewandowski
Executive Director

Jon Blum's granddaughter (right) and her friend enjoyed this year's **Astronomy at the Beach Event.** Their comment, "This is awesome."

All photos of club events in this months newsletter were taken using either a Canon EOS t1i (page 1 and 5) or images from a Sony HD SR-11 Camcorder.

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