



# STAR STUFF

The Newsletter of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

Volume 23, Number 10

October 2013

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## Sidewalk Astronomy

By Greg Knekleian

We can probably reach more people during a typical time of year doing impromptu observing than with planned events. How can that be?

There are at least three kinds of star parties or public outreach, that involve telescopes. There are star parties for the public, where a group of astronomers gather. There are parties that are closed to the public, and there's setting up at a location impromptu, just as a spur of the moment observing. I'm sure many in the club have done this.

This is also perhaps a chance to do planned impromptu sidewalk astronomy with small groups of FAAC members. Observing over lunch or dinner.

The impromptu event/non-event could be planned, a kind of small group observing event. This would allow more observing events to take place, because it would require fewer astronomers. If we planned it carefully it could be a very efficient as a short event. I'd suggest it would be something

that could be lightly manned with ideally four astronomers as the maximum number and perhaps only one or two telescopes. The telescopes would be grab and go scopes, easy for one person to haul in their car and setup quickly. This means small refractors or small reflectors. Maybe 8 inch mirrors or smaller. You could use a larger scope but that might make it less convenient. A small grab and go would be more ideal, because we want a quick setup. You would not need a goto mount, but tracking would be nice.

A small telescope is all that is necessary, something that is geared toward, the moon, any bright planet that was up, the sun for solar observing and only the brightest objects. The reason for these as the targets is you'd be setting up in bright parking lots or locations where people are walking. We could do this almost anywhere, but I'd suggest restaurants. Have four FAAC members eat out, two stay inside while two man telescopes outside. This allows lunch/dinner, discussion and display to up to 100 people outside.

# STAR STUFF

October 2013 - Vol. 23 No 10

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: 313-757-2582. or send email inquiries to [info@fordastronomyclub.com](mailto:info@fordastronomyclub.com).

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: [StarStuff@fordastronomyclub.com](mailto:StarStuff@fordastronomyclub.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/>

# FAAC General Meeting Minutes September 26th, 2013

By Jim Frisbee

## Opening:

The meeting was called to order in the Berry Auditorium at 5:30 pm by President, Gordon H. All attendees introduced themselves. Gordon H. welcomed new members and guests. Members contributed their observing experiences. GLSG and Private experiences were discussed.

## What's Up in September - Gordon Hansen:

Milton F. presented interesting objects for viewing in October.

## Main Program:

Jim K. from the Warren Club presented the McMath Hulbert Observatory Then and Now

## Business Meeting:

- Secretary's Report in Star Stuff - Approved
- Treasurers Report in Star Stuff - Approved
- Astronomy Calendars are available for \$7.50
- Discounted Subscriptions to Astronomy Magazine are available.
- The RASC Handbook can be ordered through Greg O. for \$22
- AATB Volunteers are needed.

## Projects and Events:

- Sept 27,28: Astronomy at the Beach (AATB)
- Oct 5,6: Milford Fall Festival at the Nature Center
- Oct 8: FAAC Board Meeting
- Oct 12: Beginners Night "Eric Skies" at Lake Erie Metropark
- Astro TV Show needs 2014 Dates for their next edition.
- Nominations for the Sirius Award were requested by President Gordon H.

Business meeting was closed at 7:30 pm by President Gordon H.

## Treasurer's Report October 8, 2013

By Chuck Jones

### Ford Amateur Astronomy Club Balance Sheet As of October 8, 2013

Oct 8, 13

#### ASSETS

##### Current Assets

##### Checking/Savings

CD 200599272	1,058.45
CD 205196033	1,003.32
CD 89265268	1,105.33
Checking	790.49

##### FAAC Savings

Equipment	1,661.43
Scholarship	445.83

Total FAAC Savings 2,107.26

Petty Cash Account 149.02

Total Checking/Savings 6,213.87

##### Other Current Assets

GLAAC 4,079.94

Total Other Current Assets 4,079.94

Total Current Assets 10,293.81

**TOTAL ASSETS 10,293.81**

**LIABILITIES & EQUITY 0.00**

### Club Wear

You can order online from LL Bean, using the instructions contained in a file that you can view on our club Yahoo Group website Club Wear file folder at

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub/files/Club%20Ware/>

## Meeting Agenda - October 24th

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

### Opening/Introduction/Member Observing

#### Main Presentation:

Lake Angus Observatory

Jim Shedlowsky

### Club Projects/Committees/Member Support

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

### FAAC Equipment Report 10/10/13

Item	Currently Held By:	Date Last Verified
<b>Telescopes</b>		
4" Dobsonian	George Korody	8/14/13
4 1/2 " Galileo Alt/Az Reflector	James French	6/11/13
8" Orion 8XTi Dobsonian	Matthew Kehoe	7/25/13
4" Donated Reflector in need of repair	George Korody	8/14/13
<b>Presentation Tools</b>		
Projector	Chuck Jones	10/8/13
Projection Screen 8'	Bob MacFarland	5/2/13
Speaker System w/wireless mic	Greg Ozimek	10/8/13
Bullhorn	George Korody	9/19/13
DVD Player	Chuck Jones	10/10/13
Projection Screen 6'	Gordon Hansen	5/2/13
<b>Demonstration Tools</b>		
Weight On Planets Scale	George Korody	8/14/13
Lunar Phase Kit	Bob MacFarland	3/12/13
100 ft Scale Model Solar System Kit	Bob MacFarland	3/12/13
<b>Display Items</b>		
Astronomy Event Sign (3' X 6')	Gordon Hansen	4/10/13

## Astro Imaging SIG

Gordon Hansen

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

Topics invited. Pizza served.

## FAAC Events 2013

Thursday October 24th - General Meeting

Thursday November 14th - SIG Astro Imaging

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.

## Member Photos



Above: Photo taken by Greg Knekleian through Ken Anderson's large Dob. No processing. 20mm Ethos eyepiece in lens discovery.

## FAAC Equipment Report 10/10/13

(continued from Page 4)

PVC Display Board - Folding	Dennis Salliotte	10/10/13
Banner – Large (32" X 16')	Dennis Salliotte	10/10/13
Banner – Medium (24" X 48")	Tim Campbell	10/10/13
Banner – Small (24" X 32")	Bob MacFarland	6/11/13
Tri-Fold Presentation Boards	Don Klaser	3/13/13
Tri-Fold Poster Board (Early Club Photos)	George Korody	8/14/13
<b>Other</b>		
Sky Quality Meter	Syed Saifullah	9/27/13
Canopy (10' X 10')	Greg Ozimek	10/8/13
Equipment Etching Tool	Dennis Salliotte	10/10/13
Pop Cooler	Michael Dolsen	9/26/13



## HJRO Update

by Greg Knekleian

We've had some wonderful nights to observe, fairly warm and clear during the past few weeks. HJRO had a few glitches during the past month. We continue to install and test software. I was doing a test imaging run and used my laptop. Transferring images to HJRO's computer caused a crash. When connecting a NTFS drive (which should work on a Mac and PC), the observatory computer crashed. Tim Campbell and Tim Dey did the software recovery work but they also verified some of the fixes with the school system. Tim Dey, Tim Campbell and George Korody did a drift alignment on the C14, George also insured that the telescopes was collimated properly.

A couple nights, soccer games at the football field delayed opening of HJRO. We had about a half a dozen HFCC/FAAC club members out observing one night early in the month. I've been making some last minute announcements when I could open the observatory because I'm pretty tied up with other things and can't always plan ahead for clear skies. Once or twice a month on average I'll open up really late and perhaps text a few members to let them know I'm out in case they are up early and are in the area and want to observe Jupiter. Jupiter is still a morning object, before 2AM it's fairly low. It's much higher and looks better at 3 or 4AM. I tried to observe Jupiter and take pictures at least three times before the middle of the month.

Tim Campbell wrote the science teachers about possible targets and dates to view the moon or Jupiter as alternate objects during solar viewing. The response was the school is too busy doing certain tests to allow solar viewing for the rest of this month.

Tim Campbell has been donating a few different items that will help us setup and photograph easier with Canon EOS cameras.

We had at least two nights when a half a dozen visitors arrived, usually FAAC members to observe and chat. Half the time HJRO was open this month, Tim Dey and Tim Campbell opened it for technical reasons.

I had a couple of visitors show up who were new, some from the HFCC club and one who called the HJRO info number.

### Lincoln Park Observatory (HJRO)

We may start referring to the observatory more as the Lincoln Park Observatory to let others know where we are located. It's still officially HJRO according to the old 1975 "proclamation" of the school system, but a lot of people don't know what HJRO refers to and the name offers no clue as to it's whereabouts.

Three nights although many of these were unplanned I ended up doing very late observing at HJRO, staying up to see and try to photograph Jupiter. I was going to take a break from observing Friday October 11th, but Dan Barriball mentioned a triple shadow transit of Jupiter would be happening referring to a Sky and Telescope article. I had so much to do I could only rush out 15 minutes before the 12:30 to 1:30am event.



*Jupiter at 625x : 4:30AM 10-10-2013*

*Left to right the moons Io, Ganymede and Jupiter with the shadow from Ganymede on the right side of the planet. (One day before the triple shadow transit.)*

*Photo taken through HJRO's C14 using Canon EOS T1i and Backyard EOS software. Processed in Registax 6 60 of 600 frames.*

Jupiter was still fairly low during the “triple shadow transit” and I could not see the shadows through the Meade refractor or my Vixen refractor. It was too low for the C14 at first, near the end of the first shadow of three, the C14 could view the event, but poor seeing, thermals and atmosphere prevented me from seeing more than the last two shadows on Jupiter at the same time.

I took some AVI files to process them using Backyard EOS and my Canon t1i, but the seeing seemed too poor to get good image results as well.

On Thursday the 10th of October, a few of us hooked up at HJRO. Syed Saifullah, Jessica Johnson and James French arrived to view a dozen or so objects at HJRO. Syed brought and tested his new EQ tracking platform. The platform was custom built for his Teeter dob by Ed Jones. The EQ tracking platform is designed specifically for a certain size and center of gravity dobsonian, but smaller dobsonians should work on it as well. Syed brought out his smaller 8 inch Orion dobsonian and successfully tracked objects with the EQ platform. It worked really well, enough to tempt me into thinking about getting a dobsonian and EQ platform setup like that.

I also travelled briefly out to the Churchill school event in Livonia Friday night. I arrived a bit late and setup my Vixen telescope and simply aimed it at the moon. There were many elementary school children at the event and many parents as well. Tim Dey, Art Parent, Rick Arzadon were there setup with their different telescopes and George Korody had a computer and table setup to show visitors astro-photographs.

One young girl was so excited to look at the moon she returned more than once to look in the telescope. She was so happy she was jumping up and down in excitement. Tim Campbell was giving presentations with his laser pointer and many stood in long lines to look through his 14 inch Meade SCT. Rick Arzadon setup his smaller 10 inch dob and Art Parent had his 10 inch Meade SCT setup.

I spent a little time chatting with people there and a few other telescopes were setup without a clear owner to identify. I don't think they were FAAC members. Parents and students were sitting at times in lawn chairs they brought and many had binoculars with them.

I was unable to make it to the Lake Erie event. I heard that the clouds rolled in after the Astronomy 101 presentation, preventing observing. I was in Livonia at that time at a video shoot and clouds were covering 60 to 70 percent of the sky, moving in from the east.

Well that's about all for this month. I also attended Astronomy At The Beach. That was a lot of fun. I deployed my Ed Jones Solar projector the first day and also setup near Milton Antonick's large 6 inch refractor and lured visitors from his line to my Vixen BT80 binoculars. The next night I did the same, setting up my small telescope near Ken Anderson's large 17.5 inch Discovery setup. Being near a long line with a smaller rig allows one to offer a quick view to those waiting, giving them something to view while they wait.

I enjoyed viewing briefly through Ken's dobsonian near the end of the event and also took a quick look through a 25 inch dobsonian owned by one of the University of Michigan Lowbrows.



*“Mercury light observatory” shadow transit:  
Four astronomers. Syed, Jessica, James and I cast our shadows on HJRO while Jessica looks through Syed's 8 inch Orion dobsonian.*

1. 2. Kensington Metro Park's Astronomy at the beach.
3. George does drift alignment



4. Jessica looks at m42 through Siad's Orion 8 inch dobsonian

- 5,6. Visitors at Churchill Elementary look at the moon.



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