



STAR STUFF

Ford Amateur Astronomy Club Newsletter

Star Stuff

This newsletter is published eleven times per year by:

Ford Amateur Astronomy Club
P.O. Box 7527
Dearborn, MI 48121-7527

Officers

President:	Liam Finn
Vice President:	John McGill
Secretary:	Cheri Grissom
Treasurer:	Mike Bruno

Departments

Webmaster:	Liam Finn
Newsletter:	Tim Campbell
Equipment:	Dennis Salliotte
Speakers:	Sandra Macika

Club Information

The Ford Amateur Astronomy Club meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, except for the combined November/December meeting which meets on the first Thursday of December – at Henry Ford College Administration Services and Conference Center in Dearborn.

President's Corner

by Liam Finn

April 26th Urban Astronomy - Beacon Park Detroit

FIRST Championship is a robotics competition where kids from around the globe compete in various robotics competitions. The goal is to promote STEM education and participation.

We have been asked to do some urban astronomy for the event. We will setup around 7pm in Beacon Park. We are expecting a very high turnout for this event so the more scopes we can get the better.

FIRST Championship will advertise the event extensively so expect it to be busy. We can park on Grand River to offload then they will have parking reserved for us nearby, they will also have security and people there to assist us with managing crowds and lines. It is at the end of the week but the forecast is showing mostly clear skies for now, let's hope it holds

May 13th Beginner's Night - Island Lake

This is our monthly Beginners night. We highly encourage the members, especially the new members, to come join us and experience the night sky with the members and to share with the members of the public our love for the night sky.

Astronomy for Everyone 10th Anniversary

Astronomy For Everyone is a TV show run by the club members and recorded at Wyandotte cable studio. In May episode 120 will be recorded, this is the 10th anniversary show. This show has had amazing following over the 10 years and the following is ever growing. I would like to congratulate the members of the club who have dedicated the last 10 years to making this show a success. For those of you who have not yet seen it,

Club Information

Refer to our website for a map and directions:

www.fordastronomyclub.com

Observing

The FAAC primary observing location is Spring Mill Pond located within the Island Lake State Recreation Area near Brighton, Michigan. The Club maintains an after-hours permit. Club members can contact any club officer for procedures to enter or exit the park when the main gate is locked.

The club also has use of a private observing site near Gregory Michigan. See the FAAC Groups.io Group for more information.

Inquiries can be directed to info@fordastronomyclub.com

Membership

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in amateur astronomy. The FAAC is an affiliate of the Ford Employees Recreation Association (FERA).

Fees

Annual - New Members: \$30
Annual - Renewals: \$25
(\$30 if not renewed by Jan 31)

Benefits

Membership includes the Star

all episodes are on YouTube and can be found on the FAAC website here <http://fordastronomyclub.com/astronomy-for-everyone/> or on YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/c/AstronomyForEveryone>.

It is well worth watching.

FAAC Annual Banquet - May 17th

The 2019 annual club banquet is on Friday May 17th at Tanglewood Golf Course, 22805 Country Club Dr, South Lyon, MI 48178.

You can find more information and the menu on the last page of this edition of StarStuff.

Please *R.S.V.P. and pay* before May 12th. We won't take reservations without payment. We have had people not turn up in the past and the club had to cover the costs.

You can reserve and pay at the club meeting.

Secretary's Report

by Cheri Grissom

March General Meeting Summary

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. All board members present except John McGill. Member and guest introductions were made. Explanation of our mentoring program.

Member Observing Experiences:

As nicer weather is slowly making its way to Michigan, Jim Barnes had a chance to get some sessions in with his 4.7" refractor. Mike Bruno was able to image the ISS transiting the moon. He shared some nice photos through our Groups.io site. George Korody studied and imaged the site of the recent meteor strike on the moon.

Club Equipment:

Liam announced that the club has just purchased a 20" Obsession Dobsonian reflector. This is a high-quality telescope that we were fortunate to be able to acquire for a very fair price from the family of a former club member. The board will accept applications from persons interested in becoming the caretaker. Plans are for this telescope to be

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Stuff newsletter, discounts on magazines, discounts at selected area equipment retailers, and after-hours access to the Island Lake observing site and private observing sites.

Astronomy or Sky & Telescope magazine discounts are available by contacting the FAAC club treasurer treasurer@fordastronomyclub.com for the discount form. The form should be sent to the respective publisher with your subscription request and payment. Do not send money directly to FAAC.

The FAAC has a pool of equipment including telescopes, cameras, and other gear used for outreach. Much of the gear can be borrowed for personal use in the interest of furthering your knowledge and experience in astronomy.

Please see the equipment list for further information.

Club Wear

Club logo-wear (embroidered with club logo) can be ordered directly through LLBeanBusiness.com

See the [groups.io](#) files section for ordering information and instructions on how to request the correct logo.

Communication

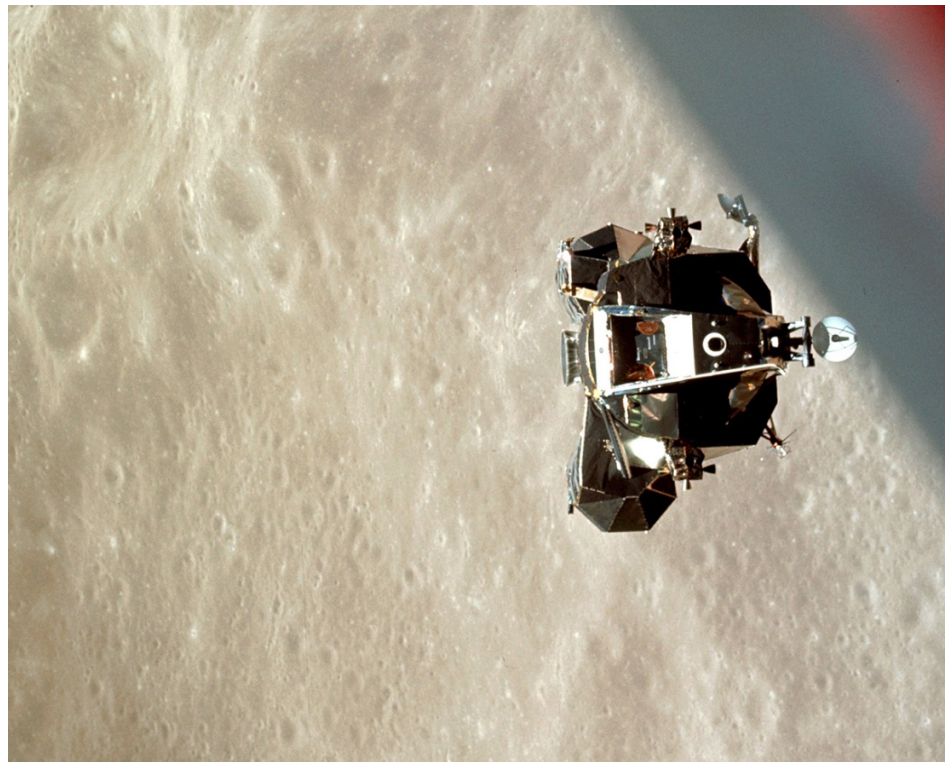
The FAAC uses Groups.io for our email distribution list (both formal and informal discussion.)

Observing nights & locations (scheduled and unscheduled as

Watching the Late Spring Skies

by David Prosper

Late spring brings warmer nights, making it more comfortable to observe a good showing of the Eta Aquarids meteor shower. Skywatchers can also look for the delicate Coma Star Cluster, and spot the Moon on the anniversary of Apollo 10's "test run" prior to the Moon landing in 1969.



A view of Apollo 10's Lunar Module from the Command Module as it returned from maneuvers above the lunar surface. Photo Credit: NASA

Source: <http://bit.ly/apollo10view>

The Eta Aquarids meteor shower should make a good showing this year, peaking the morning of May 6. This meteor shower has an unusual "soft peak," meaning that many meteors can be spotted several days before and after the 6th; many may find it convenient to schedule meteor watching for the weekend, a night or two before the peak. You may be able to spot a couple dozen meteors an hour from areas with clear dark skies. Meteors can appear in any part of the sky and you don't need any special equipment to view them; just find an area away from lights, lie down on a comfy lawn chair or blanket, relax, and patiently look up. These brief bright streaks are caused by Earth moving through the stream of fine dust particles left by the passage of Comet Halley. While we have to wait another 43 years for the famous comet grace our skies once more, we are treated to this beautiful cosmic postcard every year.

weather permits), equipment questions, events, outreaches, etc. are normally discussed via this list.

Join by visiting <https://groups.io/g/FordAstronomyClub> to request membership.

Articles & Submissions

Your submissions to Star Stuff are welcome! Send your story and/or images to the editor at: starstuff@fordastronomyclub.com

Observatory

The FAAC maintains and operates the Hector J Robinson Observatory (HJRO) at Lincoln Park Schools.

The observatory houses a 14" Celestron C14 Schmidt Cassegrain Telescope as well as other instruments and can be used by club members.

The observatory is adjacent to the athletic field situated between the Lincoln Park Middle School and High School buildings near

1701 Champaign Rd.
Lincoln Park, MI 48146

The school system has designated four "key-holders" within the club who have the ability to open the observatory.

Call (313) 444-5850 to learn when the observatory is opening (or request an opening).

While you're up meteor watching, try to find a delightful naked eye star cluster: the Coma Star Cluster (aka Melotte 111) in the small constellation of Coma Berenices. It can be spotted after sunset in the east and for almost the entire night during the month of May. Look for it inside the area of the sky roughly framed between the constellations of Leo, Boötes, and Ursa Major. The cluster's sparkly members are also known as "Berenice's Hair" in honor of Egyptian Queen Berenices II's sacrifice of her lovely tresses. Binoculars will bring out even more stars in this large young cluster.

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Scheduled Club Events

Month	Date	Sunset	Location
April	26th Urban Astronomy	7:00pm	Beacon Park Detroit
May	11th Int'l Astronomy Day	8:43pm	Island Lake Spring Mill Pond
May	17th Annual Club Banquet	6:00pm	Tanglewood Golf Club
June	8th Observing Night	9:07pm	Island Lake Spring Mill Pond
July	6th Observing Night	9:12pm	Island Lake Spring Mill Pond
August	10th FAAC Club Picnic Meteors & S'mores	8:41pm	Island Lake Spring Mill Pond
September	TBD Astronomy at the Beach		Island Lake Kent Lake Beach
October	5th Int'l Astronomy Day	7:08pm	Mayberry State Park?
November	11th Mercury Transit	7:20am-1pm	TBD

Planetarium

FAAC members are volunteer operators for the Hammond Planetarium at Henry Ford College.

Planetarium shows are free and open to the public.

Four seasonal planetarium shows are offered per year with the stars and constellations of the current season as well as a multi-media presentation featuring select planets.

Public planetarium shows are normally offered each Wednesday at 7:30pm and every 2nd Saturday at 3:00pm – however there are some exceptions. Please see the planetarium schedule for specific times. It is posted here:

fordastronomyclub.com/hfc-planetarium

Social Media

The FAAC has several social media accounts. Members are encouraged to join and follow them.

Facebook

facebook.com/FordAstronomyClub

Twitter

twitter.com/Ford_Astro

MeetUp

meetup.com/Ford-Amateur-Astronomy-Club

Upcoming Club Meeting Topics & Speakers

Meeting	Speaker	Topic
May 23rd	Jim Shedlowsky	Arizona - A Great Place for Astronomy
June 26th	Dr. Nour Raoiafi NASA Chief Scientist Parker Solar Probe	Parker Solar Probe
July 25th	Mike O'Dowd	Grumman's Lunar Module and Simulating the first moon landing
August 22nd	Dr. Karen Collins	TESS Mission
September 26th	Jim Shedlowsky	The Evolution of Giant Telescopes
October 24th	Jenny Pon	Space Ghosts

April Talk Details

Soviet Moon Program by Diane Hall

While Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon on July 20, 1969, in a very real sense the USSR had lost the Space Race already, on the day Apollo 8 landed safely after its circumlunar mission. How did the Soviet program fall behind after the pioneering triumphs of Sputnik and Vostok? Stay tuned for tale of decades-old grudges, tragic accidents, space tortoises, and secrecy on 12/27/1968: the Day the USSR Lost the Moon Race.

Bio:

Diane Hall is a past president of both the Warren Astronomical Society and the Great Lakes Association of Astronomy Clubs. She likes binocular observing, globular clusters. She also likes traveling around to pay tribute to big planes, big rockets, and big telescopes, often in the company of her favorite observing partner Jonathan Kade.

Equipment

The FAAC maintain an equipment pool of telescopes, binoculars, cameras, and other equipment used for special events. Much of this equipment is available to members.

Each piece of equipment is either stored by a club volunteer who offers to be the caretaker of the item, or by the person who last borrowed the item.

Most equipment can be borrowed for one-month durations. At the end of the month, the borrower can extend the loan if no other members have requested it.

Some items are reserved for special events use and are not normally available to be borrowed.

If you are interested in borrowing an item, please contact either the current holder of the equipment, or contact the club equipment manager, Dennis Salliotte, at equipment@fordastronomyclub.com

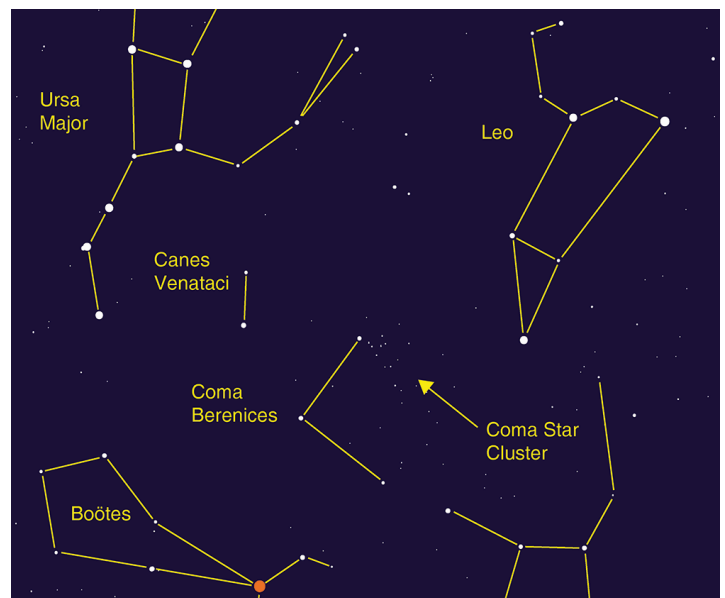
Item	Held by	Item	Held by
Telescopes		Display Items	
TK1 Coronado Personal Solar Telescope (Doublestack) w/Meade Autostar Goto Mount	Jessica Edwards	Astronomy Event Sign (3' x 6')	Gordon Hansen
TK5 4.5" Reflector on Fitz GEM mount	Bob MacFarland	Astronomy Event Signs 18x24" (x8)	Liam Finn
TK6 8" Orion XT8i Dobsonian	Jed & Jacob Datema	PVC Display Board - Folding	Sandra Macika
TK7 TPO 8" f/4 Newtownian Astrograph (OTA Only - no mount)	Gary Gibson	Banner - Small (24" x 32")	George Korody
20" f/5 Obsession Dobsonian	Liam Finn	Banner - Medium (24" x 72")	Sandra Macika
Presentation Tools		Banner - Large (32" x 16')	George Korody
Projector (older)	Jim Frisbie	Tri-Fold Presentation Boards	George Korody
Projector (newer)	Gordon Hansen	Other	
Projection Screen 8'	John McGill	Canopy (10' x 10')	Liam Finn
Projection Screen 6'	Liam Finn	Pop Cooler	Hayden Barrett
Bullhorn	George Korody	TA Sky Quality Meter	Liam Finn
Speaker System w/Wireless Mic	Liam Finn	Demonstration Tools	
DVD Player	Dennis Salliotte	Weigh on Planets Scale	George Korody
Eye Pieces		Lunar Phase Kit	Bob MacFarland
EPK1 Eyepieces, Filters & Accessories	Liam Finn	100' Scale Model Solar System Kit	Bob MacFarland
		NSN Meteorite (Outreach) kit	Sandra Macika

Item	Held by
Imaging Cameras	
C2 Meade Deep Sky Imager Pro III w/Autostar Suite	Gordon Hansen
C6 Canon 60Da Astrophotography DSLR and accessories	Tim Dey
Other Imaging Equipment	
CA1 Rigel Systems Spectrascope	Gordon Hansen
CA2 Celestron 1.25" to T-Adapter (male) #93625	Tim Dey
CA3 Canon EOS Deluxe Astrophoto kit for Canon EOS mount, T-thread adapter and variable 1.25" extender	Tim Dey
CA5 Celestron Canon EOS T-ring adapter #93419	Tim Dey
Special Event Items - Not available for Loan Out	
BK2 Zhumell 25x100 Binoculars, hard case, & Zhumell TRH-16 tripod w/soft fabric bag	Sandar Macika
TAK1 Night Vision Image Intensifier for telescopes (2" barrel size)	George Korody

Spring Skies (cont'd from page 4)

May marks the 50th anniversary of the Lunar Module's test run by the Apollo 10 mission! On May 22, 1969, NASA astronauts Thomas Safford and Eugene Cernan piloted the Lunar Module - nicknamed "Snoopy" - on a test descent towards the lunar surface. Undocking from "Charlie Brown" - the Command Module, piloted by John Young - they descended to 47,400 feet above the surface of the Moon before returning safely to the orbiting Command Module. Their success paved the way for the first humans to land on the Moon later that year with Apollo 11. Look for the Moon on the morning of May 22, before or after dawn, and contemplate what it must have felt like to hover mere miles above the lunar surface. You'll also see the bright giant planets Saturn and Jupiter on either side of the Moon before sunrise. When will humans travel to those distant worlds?

You can catch up on all of NASA's current and future missions at nasa.gov



Try to spot the Coma Star Cluster! Image created with assistance from Stellarium

Secretary's Report (cont'd from page 2)

made available for borrowing, but it is also meant to be used at our outreach events, so anyone who has possession of it at the time of our beginner nights, etc. will be requested to bring it to the event.

What's Up:

Gordon advised that the next opportunity to view the Lunar X will be April 12, at around 11:46 p.m. The Lyrid meteor shower runs generally from April 14 to 30, peaking on April 22. April is a quiet month for planets, with only Mars and Uranus visible but fading in the evenings. The constellation Ursa Major is worth spending some time with, looking for the many deep space objects visible in its vicinity.

Secretary's Report:

Cheri apologized for having to miss the February meeting due to illness, so there was no Secretary's Report in our most recent edition of StarStuff. Lanyards and plastic name badge covers were handed out to new members. Any member who needs one of these, please contact Cheri or simply approach her at a meeting or event. Please note, your actual name badge and membership card will be mailed to you by Doug Bauer, our Membership Chairman.

Club Business/Projects/Committees/Events:

Mike reports our Swap Meet and Conference was a success. Attendance was on par with recent years, though table rentals were slightly down. Liam has requested anyone with ideas or suggestions concerning our club website and social media sites to contact him.

We have several upcoming event dates. SWAN (State-Wide Astronomy Night) is April 12. An observing event at Spiritus Sanctus Academy is the same date. Our first Beginners' Night is April 13. Urban Astronomy at Beacon Park, in Detroit, is April 26.

We need people willing to bring telescopes to all of these events.

Hayden Barrett has announced he will no longer be able to provide the monthly refreshments at our meetings. Suggestions and discussions followed. New member Nickai Gulley very generously offered to take on the task at least temporarily. Any others willing to help are encouraged to step forward.

Main Speaker:

Jerry Dunifer, Professor Emeritus, Wayne State University, Department of Physics and Astronomy, gave an engaging talk entitled, "A Tour of Chile With 'Sky and Telescope' Magazine."

In March of 2017, which is late summer/early fall in the southern hemisphere, Dr. Dunifer and approximately thirty others embarked on a ten-day adventure to Chile, organized by "Sky and Telescope" magazine. Chile is home to a number of major observatories operated by agencies from all over the world. The climate and geography of the country make it an ideal location to study our universe and the night skies. The trip started in the city of Santiago, and the group then proceeded to visit the Cerro Calan, La Silla, Cerro Tololo, Gemini South, and ALMA observatories. In addition to the observatories, there were visits to other interesting attractions, including the highest geyser field in the world, with eighty active geysers at 14,200 feet above sea level; the Valley of the Moon, which is a beautiful area of sand and stone formations; and some nice wineries and restaurants. Dr. Dunifer shared many photos and fascinating stories of the trip, which sounded like a very enjoyable time for an astronomy enthusiast.

March Board Meeting Summary

Our board meeting was held on April 4, 2019. All board members present except John McGill, eight additional members present.

Financial report was provided by Mike Bruno. The profit from our Swap Meet and Conference was down about \$100 this year. We are going to try to have more table rentals next year.

Liam reports our social media presence and website are doing as they should and drawing members to our meetings and attendees to our public events.

Club equipment report was provided by Dennis Salliotte. Gary Gibson was approved to be the new caretaker of the club's TPO 8" Newtonian astrograph.

We have several upcoming outreach events. We are in need of more volunteers to bring telescopes (weather permitting) to these events.

The banquet is all set to go. There was a reminder that attendees must RSVP and pay in advance. Payment will not be accepted at the door.

Our new 20" Obsession Dobsonian telescope is now in club possession. We will need to purchase an appropriate ladder for use with this telescope as the eyepiece can be quite high, depending on where in the sky it is pointing. Once we actually start using this telescope at our outreach events, we will discuss any additional accessories that may be useful, such as a go-to system.

Classifieds

StarStuff will run classified advertisements for club members. Each classified advertisement will be run in up to two consecutive editions of the StarStuff Newsletter. Submit your listing to starstuff@fordastronomyclub.com



FAAC Annual Banquet

Friday May 17, 2019 — 6:00 pm - 11:00 pm

Schedule

6:00 pm Social Hour with Cash Bar
 7:30 pm Dinner
 8:30 pm Keynote Presentation
 Sky Lore with Don Klaser
 9:30 pm Sirius Award — Liam Finn
 9:45 pm Astro Jeopardy — Gordon Hansen
 10:30 pm Door Prizes - Steve Flessa & Sandra Macika

Tanglewood Golf Course
22805 Country Club Dr
South Lyon, MI 48178

**Golf cart will be available to take guests
 to dining area in lieu of stairs.**

Entrée Choices

All plated dinners include tossed salad, hot rolls with butter, soft drinks, coffee & tea.

New York Strip Steak \$45

10 oz. grilled choice New York strip steak
 served with baked potato and fresh vegetable medley

Sautéed Chicken Breast \$35

Sautéed chicken breasts topped with a wild mushroom demi-glace
 served with herb-buttered redskin potatoes and fresh vegetable medley

Char-grilled Atlantic Salmon Filet \$35

6 oz. Atlantic Salmon filet topped with dill Chardonnay cream sauce
 served with herb buttered redskin potatoes and fresh vegetable medley

Special Dietary Menu Options Available Upon Request \$35

Contact John McGill 248 982-8966 jaymcgil19@comcast.net

Included Dessert Selections

New York Cheesecake Plain or topped with raspberry or caramel sauce
 Mixed Berry Parfait Low-fat yogurt with fresh berries and topped with crunchy granola

R.S.V.P. by April By April 25

For more information, contact
 Mike Bruno - 313-730-8752
treasurer@fordastronomyclub.com

Make checks payable to: **FAAC**

Send payment to: Ford Amateur Astronomy Club
 PO Box 7527
 Dearborn, MI 48121-7527