



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

Annual Banquet

This year's Annual club banquet was a lot of fun as always. We had 54 people attend.

The food was great and the company even greater.

I would like to extend special congratulations to Pat Korody who is our winner of the 2019 Sirius Award.



June 8th 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. Come join us and observe through the clubs 20 inch Dob.

June Club Meeting

Our June meeting will be held in the Forfa auditorium as we have Nour Raoiafi, chief scientist for the Parker Solar Probe doing a

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

Webex presentation on the latest and greatest info on the Parker Solar Probe. This is not to be missed as the Parker Solar Probe is a present ongoing mission gathering data today.

Secretary's Report

by Cheri Grissom

April General Meeting Summary

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. All board members present. Member and guest introductions were made. Explanation of our mentoring program, beginner nights, and equipment loaner program.

Member Observing Experiences:

April 12th was a busy night for many of our members who attended the SWAN activities at HFCC and the Michigan Science Center, or the observing event at Spiritus Sanctus Academy. It was a chilly evening, but skies mostly cooperated, and many objects were viewed. Gary Gibson is the new caretaker of the club's 8" astrograph, and he has had the opportunity to use it a few times with his new go-to mount. He reports that it gives great views and he has seen things with it that he has never seen before from his suburban location. Jonathan Kade reported taking a trip to dark skies in the northeast portion of the lower peninsula, where he got some great views. John McGill attended a nighttime rocket launch at Kennedy Space Center recently and will be attending a morning launch this coming Tuesday.

Club Equipment:

For the benefit of several new members and potential new members at our meeting, Dennis Salliotte provided a recap of our equipment loaner program.

What's Up:

Gordon Hansen reminded us the Eta Aquariid Meteor Shower is coming up, with peak expected on May 6th. Right now, Mercury and Mars are our only evening planets, but that will change over the coming months.

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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.)

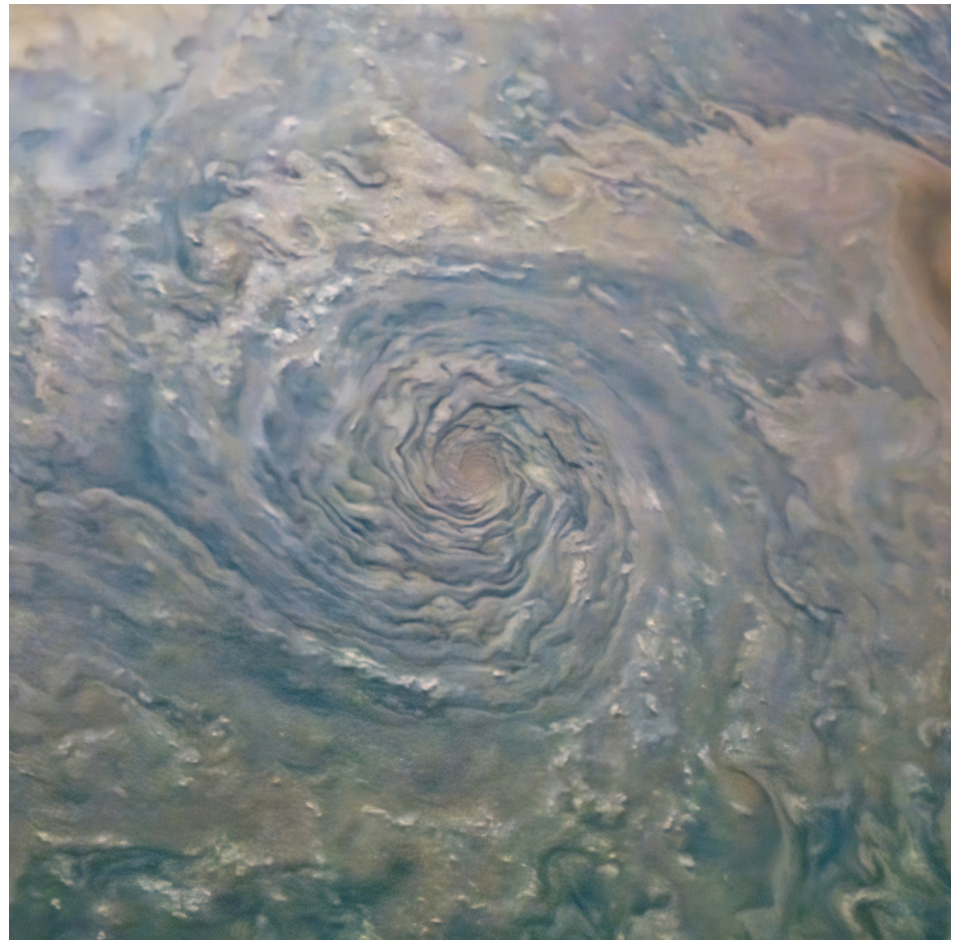
Observing nights & locations (scheduled and unscheduled as

Jupiter Shines in June

by David Prosper

Jupiter stakes its claim as the king of the planets in June, shining bright all night. **Saturn** trails behind Jupiter, and the **Moon** passes by both planets mid-month. **Mercury** puts on its best evening appearance in 2019 late in the month, outshining nearby **Mars** at sunset.

Jupiter is visible almost the entire evening this month. Earth will be between Jupiter and the Sun on June 10, meaning Jupiter is at **opposition**. On that date, Jupiter rises in the east as the Sun sets in the west, remaining visible the entire night. Jupiter will be one of the brightest objects in the night sky, shining at magnitude -2.6. Its four largest moons and cloud bands are easily spotted with even a small telescope.



Caption: A giant storm in Jupiter's north polar region, captured by JunoCam on February 4, 2019. Image processing performed by citizen scientists Gerald Eichstädt and Seán Doran.

Source: bit.ly/JupiterSpiral

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).

What if your sky is cloudy or you don't have a telescope? See far more of Jupiter than we can observe from Earth with NASA's **Juno** mission! Juno has been orbiting Jupiter since 2016, swooping mere thousands of miles above its cloud tops in its extremely elliptical polar orbits, which take the probe over 5 million miles away at its furthest point! These extreme orbits minimize Juno's exposure to Jupiter's powerful radiation as it studies the gas giant's internal structure, especially its intense magnetic fields. Juno's hardy JunoCam instrument takes incredible photos of Jupiter's raging storms during its flybys. All of the images are available to the public, and citizen scientists are doing amazing things with them. You can too! Find out more at bit.ly/JunoCam

Saturn rises about two hours after Jupiter and is visible before midnight. The ringed planet rises earlier each evening as its own opposition approaches in July. The Moon appears near both gas giants mid-month. The Moon's tour begins on June 16 as it approaches Jupiter, and its visit ends on June 19 after swinging past Saturn.

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Scheduled Club Events

Month	Date	Sunset	Location
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 27th	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

May Talk Details

Arizona – A Great Place for Astronomy

This presentation will discuss my experiences and discoveries regarding Astronomy in the state of Arizona, which I have been associated with for nearly 50 years. I will review the basic climatic, topographical, demographic and economic characteristics that rank this state as the foremost in the U.S. in Astronomy. I will then describe the bustling **Professional Astronomy** scene, with the many major academic and research programs at its state universities with connections to NASA, the National Science Foundation, and other national and international organizations. Many of these programs are carried out in the extensive network of world-class observatories, which will also be reviewed. Next, I will review the very active **Amateur Astronomy** community and some of its activities, including the unique “All Arizona Messier Marathon.”

The final part of my presentation will cover a tour of the “**Carris Mirror Lab**,” in Tucson, where the largest telescope mirrors in the world are built, and which is currently intimately involved with the production of the “Giant Magellan Telescope”, with its seven, 27.5-foot diameter mirrors.

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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

May Talk Details (Cont'd from page 5)

I will close with a review of my reasons to consider Arizona as an "Astronomy Destination," followed by my customary musical finale.

Bio:

Jim Shedlowsky, long time member and former WAS treasurer and rockabilly legend, worked for 36 years as a Vehicle Development Engineer/Manager, specializing in Acoustics and Noise & Vibration, retiring in 1999. He graduated from the University of Michigan in 1960 with a degree in Engineering Physics and spent two years as an officer in the U.S. Army in Germany. In his spare time, he wrote and recorded music for Epic and Roulette Records, as one of the

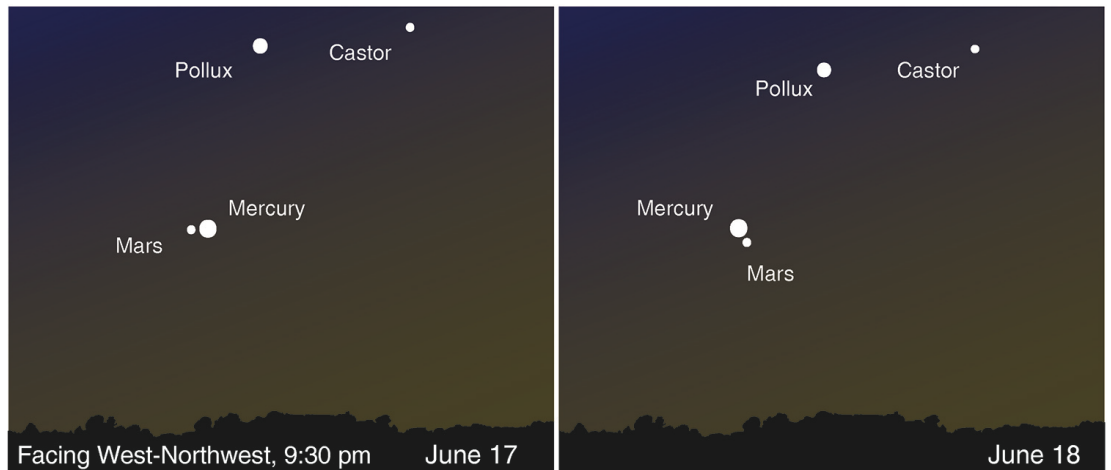
"Skee Brothers" (they were on Dick Clark's "Bandstand" in 1958). Jim's astronomical interests include observation and outreach (he owns several telescopes), but in recent years his passion for astronomical history and technology has become a major factor. He is a member of the McMath-Hulbert Astronomical Society, and has visited a number of major observatories. He thoroughly enjoys the WAS Discussion Group.

He and his wife winter in Mesa, Arizona (a great place for observing), and he participates in activities of the East Valley Astronomy Club. He took part in the "All Arizona Messier Marathon" in March of 2009, earning a certificate for observing 104 Messier Objects in one night.

NASA Article: Jupiter Shines (Cont'd from page 4)

Mercury is back in evening skies and will be highest after sunset on June 23, just two days after the summer solstice! Spot it low in the western horizon, close to the much dimmer and redder **Mars**. This is your best chance this year to spot Mercury in the evening, and nearly your last chance to see Mars, too! The two smallest planets of our solar system pass close to each other the evenings of June 17-18, coming within just $\frac{1}{4}$ degree, or half the width of a full Moon, making for a potentially great landscape photo at twilight.

Discover more about NASA's current and future missions at nasa.gov



Caption: Mars and Mercury after sunset the evenings of June 17-18, 2019. Image created with assistance from Stellarium.

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

Club Business/Projects/Committees/Events:

Cheri reminded new members that they should see her if they need the plastic sleeves and lanyards for their member name tags. Liam asked anyone with suggestions concerning our social media sites and main website to contact him. There is an outreach event at Beacon Park in Detroit tomorrow night. We have seven people who have volunteered to bring telescopes. We can use more! This is expected to be a very big event. Security and parking assistance is being provided by the event sponsor. Last month's Beginners' Night was canceled due to bad weather, so our next one will be May 11th. John reminded everyone tickets are still available for the banquet. Sandra reminded us of the star party planned by the

Farmington Community Stargazers for May 14th. Our club is always welcome to attend and bring telescopes. Liam mentioned that our public television program, "Astronomy For Everyone," is now ten years old, and we have put on 120 episodes. These can be viewed on YouTube.

Main Speaker:

Diane Hall, past president of both the Warren Astronomical Society and the Great Lakes Association of Astronomy Clubs, gave an entertaining and informative presentation on "The Soviet Moon Program." 12/27/1968 could be said to be the day the USSR lost the moon race. That is the day that the successful Apollo 8 mission returned safely to earth. So what happened in the USSR? For a while, the USA and the USSR seemed to have almost parallel plans,

but the reality was very different. Ms. Hall described a complicated story of management issues, personality clashes, design and quality control flaws, political meddling, unexpected tragedies, and lost opportunities. It's interesting to think about how things may have been different if the Soviet space program had started out with and maintained the programs, goals, and discipline necessary for such a venture.

The Westland Library has invited us for an event sometime in August. Exact location and date are not known at this time. More information will follow.

The club will again be making a donation to the HFCC toward a student science/physics scholarship.

April Board Meeting Summary

Our board meeting was held on May, 2019. Liam Finn and John McGill were absent. Mike Bruno and Cheri Grissom were present. As secretary, Cheri presided over the meeting. Six additional members were present.

Financial report was provided by Mike Bruno. We are in good shape going into our banquet.

Club equipment report was provided by Dennis Salliotte. A ladder has been purchased for use with the club's 20" Obsession.

Our next Beginners' Night will be May 11. We're all hoping for clear skies, as last month's event had to be canceled.

We discussed the possible need for projector cables to accommodate certain guest speakers at our monthly meetings who may be using a Mac. This was an issue at our last meeting, and we would like to come up with a way to make sure our speakers have all the equipment they need.

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