



★ STAR STUFF ★

The Newsletter of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

March 2004
Volume 13 Number 3



Editor: Jim Frisbie

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dinner was Well-done!

What a bash! If you missed it - well, I can only say, I hope it was for something worthwhile, because the Annual FAAC Dinner party March 6 was all the rave.

At the annual dinner, we get a nice opportunity to relax, enjoy the rapport, and reflect on and celebrate another year of success in the FAAC, as we recognize and acknowledge the achievements and contributions made by so many of our members. This year's dinner was exceptional. The ambience and evening's repast were exceptional. Service was top notch.

Al Bates' stunning slide show entertained well into the night, as we cited members for their accomplishments through the year, relished a great dinner, and enjoyed an informative presentation by Norbert Vance. After Mr. Vance's speech concluded, he presented the FAAC with a framed certificate of appreciation for our involvement at EMU. Again, more kudos to our wonderful membership!

But what would an FAAC dinner gathering be, without a little squaring off in a rousing game - in this case, Astro Jeopardy. Tables of FAAC members were aligned for the battle, and the categories on the big board were revealed: Watching the Neighbors (planets), Observing Things in General, Messing w/Mr. M (Messier), What's Your Sign, Moon & Missions, On Giant Shoulders, and Astro Potpourri.

Let the game begin! "Let's try 'What's Your Sign' for \$100, Alex - errr, Dale."

As designer and "host" of the game, I found myself wondering, as competition and controversy heated up, if I would last out the evening as President and / or FAAC member. The uproar and din were marked, as the questions got harder and scores (and members?) got higher, though I can gratefully report that, although it seemed dicey for a while, no chairs or food were actually thrown. As it turned out, judging from the buzz afterward, we all had a great time playing the game, and just taking part in the evening itself.

After the game came Mr. Vance's presentation, then George and Pat Korody took us to the end of the evening, handing out the many terrific door prizes they collected and themselves donated. Mr. Vance had even donated some glow-in-the-dark tee-shirts that promote dark sky advantages. Of course, kudos to the organizers, Diane Worth and Jim Frisbie, for finding the beautiful room at Station 885, in Plymouth. Thanks also to presenters Norbert Vance, of Sherzer Observatory and Eastern Michigan University, and the FAAC's Al Bates.

Also thanks to Mike Rousseau and others for searching out and purchasing the new projector, which was just fabulous in its debut. George Korody contacted Barry Craig for a "recycled" screen, which George, and Mike Rousseau refurbished - many thanks to all!

One more note: Funny thing, I noticed, about designing a quiz game - when researching, it is not so difficult to find enough information, enough questions. Indeed, the difficulty can be finding a way to limit the content, from the vast amount and variety of information available, even with the topics "limited" to astronomy. I learned, and/or was reminded of, a lot of astronomy facts, and found the effort engaging and a lot of fun. So, be warned - there is plenty more where that came from!

Dale Ochalek

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

<http://www.boonhill.net/faac>

Submissions to STAR STUFF are welcome Please write to the address above or contact the editor:

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or email: w8tu@comcast.net

Dead line is the 15th of each month of publication.

Officers:

President	Dale Ochalek
Vice President	Don Klaser
Secretary	Bob McFarland
Treasurer	Gordon Hansen

General Meetings:

The Ford Amateur Astronomy Club holds regular general meeting on the fourth Thursday of each month (except the combined November/December meeting held the first Thursday of December) at 5:00 PM at the Ford Motor Credit Building off Mercury Drive near Michigan Ave. in Dearborn.

Observing:

The Ford Amateur Astronomy Club observes at Spring Mill Pond within the Island Lake State Recreation Area near Brighton, Michigan. The club maintains a permit for after-hours access. Weather permitting, the club observes on Friday nights, Saturday nights, and nights before holidays.

Club Information:

Observing schedules and additional Club information is available by calling the Observing Hotline at: (313) 390-5456 or via the Ford Intranet: www.be.ford.com/astro/faac.html or the public Internet: www.boonhill.net/faac.

Club Membership:

Membership in the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club is open to Ford employees and non-employees. Write or call for an application.

Annual - New Member: \$30; Renewal: \$ 25 (before Jan 31 of each year); \$15 for new members after July 1.

Lifetime - \$ 150

Membership includes:

A subscription to the STAR STUFF newsletter and the quarterly newsletter the REFLECTOR published by the Astronomical League.

Discounts on ASTRONOMY and SKY & TELESCOPE magazines, after-hours access to the observing site and discounts at selected area equipment retailers.

Magazine Discounts:

Do not send money to FAAC for SKY & TELESCOPE or ASTRONOMY magazine subscriptions. We have a form that you send in with your subscription directly to the

publisher to receive a \$10 discount. Pick up a form at the next meeting, or contact a club officer.

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FOR SALE: Reduced for Quick Sale - Meade ETX 125 Spotting Scope, RA finder, Dew Shield, 26mm plossl. Like new. \$400 OBO; GOTO Computer. JMI Micromax computer with encoders and with cables. \$275 OBO; People interested may either send an e-Mail to TBLASZAK@ford.com or call 313.323.9842.

FOR SALE: Observing Chairs - \$85

Modified *Denver Observing Chairs*. Solid Oak and Oak veneer plywood. Folds for easy transport. Beats standing all night! Contact Gordon Hansen (Four chairs to sell) (734) 675-6137; ghhansen@comcast.net



FOR SALE: Logitech QuickC am VC, used, reduced from \$45 to \$35, Contact Abhijit, 313.595.5310

For Sale: Nikon Coolpix 995, Battery Charger, Lexar USB enabled 16MB CF Card, Nikon MC-EU1 R remote cord, RS-232 cord, ScopeTronix Digi-T adapter, Targus Bag, Manuals, cables and software \$400.00 Contact Jeff Thrush: jdthrush@wideopenwest.com

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 26TH FAAC GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

By Bob MacFarland

Dale Ochalek opened the meeting at 5:00 pm by introducing the officers. (See page 2 of the newsletter). 36 members and visitors were in attendance. Dale then asked the visitors and new members to identify themselves. These included: Bob Nagy, Lynn Umbarger and Max Davies.

Welcome Gentlemen!

All attendees introduced themselves and those who had significant observing experiences since the last meeting gave short accounts on them. The January meeting minutes were accepted. Gordon Hansen gave the Treasurer's report and reminded everyone that the membership dues were due (\$30 for the year). Some discussion was held over the merits vs. the cost of FAAC continuing their membership in the Astronomical League. Roughly \$300 was in the scholarship fund and two scholarship applications were received for the 2004 award(s) so far (deadline was February 29th). Mike Rousseau reported that the Projector Committee had ordered a unit, which was to be delivered within the next two days. A projection screen and spare projector bulbs were mentioned as the next equipment acquisition targets. Tom Borkowski offered to donate a projection screen. Thank you for your generous offer Tom!

The Astronomical SIG reported that the next meeting is scheduled for March 11th. Jim Frisbie reported on the success of the January Swap Meet (~\$800 profit for the equipment fund). Some discussion followed with respect to a sequel to be held in the Fall. Jim Frisbie and Ed Halash agreed to form a committee to investigate alternative meeting locations and times. Diane Worth invited all to attend the March 6th FAAC Dinner Party. Bob MacFarland reported that the FAAC Board had voted to donate \$50 towards funding the Boonhill.com astronomy site. (Note: The University Lowbrows reported that they are donating \$75 for the cause and donations from other clubs are expected). Mike Rousseau volunteered to investigate/organize a Dark Sky trip to Dick Lawrence's New Mexico property.

Messier Marathons are being held at Lake Hudson (Jackson Astronomy Club) and Clay Kessler's property on March 20th. Bob MacFarland reported out on the May 21/22nd GLAAC event status. The club was invited to support Astronomy Day 4/24 at the Detroit Science Center (DSC) by John Schroer. A follow-up beginner's night is being held at Island Lake that same night. Ryder's Hobby Shops will support. In addition, the DSC is asking FAAC to set up an astronomy display as part of their Mars Quest exhibit (now through May 2nd at the DSC). Bob MacFarland is organizing a Farmington Hills Cub Scout merit badge session in late April or May and will be needed assistants. John Schroer volunteered. Don Klaser organized a basic astronomy presentation at Forest Elementary School in Farmington Hills on the original date of March 9th has been postponed. The details surrounding the June 8th Transit of Venus were discussed.

(See elsewhere in this newsletter for details on all the events noted in these minutes).

Greg Burnett gave a short but informative presentation on the physics of how celestial navigation is used in interplanetary travel. This was followed by Jim Frisbie's excellent narration of his trip to India focusing on the Jantar Martar Observatory, which originated in 1728 by an exceptional astronomically minded Maharaja. Most of the instruments in the collection were made of stone and brass. Some being very large (90ft high) and some of which are still in use today.

TREASURERS REPORT FEBRUARY 26, 2004

By Gordon Hansen

Bank Accounts

Checking	\$	2,078.47
Savings	\$	1,411.52

TOTAL Bank Accounts	\$	3,489.99

Cash Accounts

Cash Account	\$	101.43

TOTAL Cash Accounts	\$	101.43

Asset Accounts

Astronomical League Dues	\$	560.00
FERA Ticket Sales	\$	-
GLAAC	\$	345.00
Projector	\$	7.70
Scholarship	\$	251.13
Swap Meet	\$	-

TOTAL Asset Accounts	\$	1,163.83

OVERALL TOTAL	\$	4,755.25
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DEJÀ VU (A short Story)

By Dean Musgrave, Copyright 2004

Yion clasped paper and a pen in his left hand, carried a computer in his right, and strolled onto the patio.

Sol was setting but outdoors was still warm. His lizard languished in the far corner, absorbing both the heat from the star and the warmth of the patio. It was not really his lizard, but all of the younger scientists called it his because it scurried away when almost anyone else entered the area.

Perhaps his slower, more pensive moves failed to frighten it or, perhaps, after all the years, it recognized him. Who knows what thoughts nest deep in the brain of a lizard? Large, jet black, and muscular, the lizard blended into the black basalt of the patio, looking much like a camouflaged statue.

Most of the planet had once been covered in volcanic lava. A section had been planed perfectly smooth and treated to form the patio. The Institute for Fusion Research stood adjacent; its outer structure an ingenious alloy of aluminum, lithium, and ceramic which glistened in a semi-gloss gray.

The doors and windows of the building clearly defined it as not a natural formation but the rolling curves and the complement of the gray with the stark black of the patio gave it a confident presence. It seemed to proudly state: "I belong here." The architects had done their job well.

Yion, like others of the Malden race, as they called themselves, appeared to be an Earthling's most terrifying nightmare. Standing well over two meters in height with a weight of almost two hundred kilograms and possessing a build akin to a heavyweight boxer, a Malden would be a formidable adversary for any Earthling. The dark gray skin was also quite foreboding.

But there were redeeming features. The wide mouth curled upward slightly at each end, giving the appearance of a permanent smile and the large, round eyes, which moved slowly, seemed to convey a direct link to a highly intelligent and compassionate brain. They were true portals into Malden psychology.

Unless attacked, the Maldens were peaceful and they were blessed, or cursed, depending upon one's point of view, with many of the emotional characteristics of humans. An encounter with one would not be frightening after the great initial shock of their appearance was dealt with.

Yion sat at a table and continue the day's work. From the fusion reactions that powered the Maldens' world to the magic of Sol, thoughts of nuclear fusion rarely left his mind. The problem with fusion was making it happen; slight errors led not to catastrophe but simply to lack of fusion. There was never a shortage of problems: new reactants, new confinement mechanisms, investigations leading to ever smaller complete systems.

A sudden gust of evening wind blew his resting pen almost horizontally to the left. Instantly, Yion's arm shot outward; he expertly caught the pen using both thumbs and both fingers of his left hand. Yion smiled. A million years of

evolution and the innate reflexes still had at least some utility.

As Sol grew dimmer, a brilliant canopy of stars appeared overhead. Hundreds of stars bright enough to cast a shadow joined thousands more, of varying brightness, to fill the sky with uncompromising completeness. The sheer number and intensity of the stars greatly overpowered any ambient light from the Institute and the city nearby. It would never be dark.

For countless generations the Maldens had been captivated by the stars. It had always been obvious that each could be someone else's sun with someone else's planets. The hundreds of piercingly-bright stars and their many thousands of somewhat dimmer companions clearly belonged together and they had long been known simply as The Group.

On a pale blue-white planet over twenty thousand light-years away, The Group had another name: globular cluster M13 in the constellation Hercules.

Tomorrow would bring a new triumph for fusion and the Institute for Fusion Research. For some time, a fusion-powered spaceship had been undergoing testing using remote control for flights to the closest moon. Tomorrow would see the first flight of the ship with a crew of six Maldens.

Generations of Maldens had traveled safely throughout their solar system using a variety of simple rocket propulsion methods. They were well-established as a space-faring race but they were not a *star*-faring race. That circumstance was about to change.

Yion looked to the sky. The Group seemed so near and yet even the closest star was really incredibly far. Soon his son, Boran, would join five others to usher in the era of fusion propulsion with a crew. At last speeds would be obtained that would place the stars of The Group within reach. Ultimately, the fusion drive would let the Maldens burn parsecs of astronomical distance almost as easily as Earthlings burn matches.

Yion concentrated on the star Beta-nur. Its white-yellow hue was beautiful, but it was not prettier than the others. Many years ago, however, a pulsed, parallel-flux laser had beamed it a message. Recently, that message had come back, along with much more information that was not difficult to decode. The Maldens had neighbors.

The stars that had dominated their history were at last theirs. And at least one of them had intelligent life near it.

* * * * *

Sol was white, Sol was red, Sol was green, Sol was blue, Sol was white.

Yion stood outside the Space Flight Center studying Sol. Clearly some students, abetted by some young scientists, had launched large thin-film lens of many colors and then controlled them to drift across Sol for spectacular artificial eclipses. It was a very festive way to usher in a new era. "Neat trick." said his friend Cyar as Yion approached. Cyar and Yion had met in school many years earlier. Cyar was shorter than most Maldens. He walked and talked with an animated style, almost like a large toy. Cyar was assistant manager of the Space Flight Center.

"A bit more sophisticated than the stunts we used to try." said Yion.

"Yes, there will never be a shortage of new ideas, for better or worse."

They looked out at the ship. Designed to both takeoff and land

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horizontally, its polished hull could withstand nearly any temperature. Indeed, once the material had been struck by the neutron hardening process, the shape had better be right because non-damaging changes were essentially impossible. The material was not light but, given the drive power available, the weight was not a significant problem.

“Boran tells me that *Traveler* flies very well, perhaps we should call the crew passengers,” said Yion, “maybe even replace them with robots.”

“He’s right,” replied Cyar. “But we’ll need people on board to make decisions given the distances that we will eventually achieve. You must be very proud of Boran.”

“Well, with nearly half the planet working as astronomers, it’s great to have a son who wants to pilot.”

Yion and Cyar moved into the main control room where three ground-based engineers monitored the flights. So much was automated that some administrators had argued that an even smaller staff would soon be needed.

A large image of the vehicle covered an entire wall with the view from the ship’s cabin spanning an adjacent one. Spaceflight was not a novelty to the Maldens. Even this first crewed-flight of the fusion-powered ship was not widely attended by those not directly involved.

A door opened and Lehandra entered Yion’s gaze. She instantly walked toward him.

“Yion,” she said, “I’m certainly not surprised to see you here. But, you must visit me soon. It’s been too long.”

Lehandra had once worked at the Fusion Research Institute before moving into the field of extrasolar contact. She had first proposed the pulsed, parallel-flux laser as the ideal scheme to contact another star since the laser could be set to span a predetermined planetary range at the star’s distance.

Everyone thought it was a great idea but operating the novel laser at high power seemed too challenging. Lehandra had directed and pushed a team of engineers for years until she had a practical device.

Yion admired her tenacity. They were close, especially in the years after his wife had died unexpectedly.

“You’re right, as usual,” he replied. “I’m off in my own mathematical world and I’ve overlooked too many close friends. Lehandra, I’m sorry. Let’s plan something within an orbit.”

An orbit was shorthand for the time it took the closest moon to orbit the planet. It was not long.

Lehandra acknowledged several greetings from other scientists in the area. The recent return of the signal from Beta-nur had vastly raised her status. She was, however, as unpretentious as ever. Highly intelligent, she knew that the line between failure and fame was often a very thin one.

At last it was time for *Traveler* to depart. They watched intensely as a long streak of blue-white glow trailed the pale green alloy of the hull during climbout.

The ship accelerated toward Sol, now red. Then a particle beam blew a large hole in the red filter and the ship flew right through it.

“Clever, very clever,” said Yion to Lehandra.

“A touch of drama always adds a bit of polish,” she replied.

It was not long until images of the ship in space appeared on the wall, courtesy of the space telescopes. The various images were not simply higher power views from a limited number of instruments but rather separate views from many locations. A world of astronomers needs, and gets, a multitude of telescopes.

Deep within the ship, physics was hard at work. It was just a simple little dance: a heavy hydrogen atom with two mass units mated with an identical one to yield a helium atom with four mass units, minus a trivial shortfall.

But that trivial mass shortfall, when multiplied by the universe’s Ultimate Speed Limit, and yet again, poured forth an incredible bounty of energy. Now that flow of energy was powering the exhaust stream to almost unreal velocities. The rapid departure of the tiny helium atoms easily accelerated the massive spaceship.

Eventually a vivid three-dimensional picture emerged courtesy of an optical interferometer pair of telescopes. Placing such a system in orbit beyond the nearest moon had initially brought cries of “a spectacularly stupid idea” from opponents who easily showed that, even ignoring Sol, the light pressure of The Group would rapidly push them out of alignment.

But, the proponents had contended that they could hold the optical path within a fraction of a wavelength of light even as the telescopes themselves drifted.

So, the optical interferometer scopes had been launched; they had been very successful. More would soon follow. Even today, some astronomers had complained that using the system to make three-dimensional pictures of the ship was wasting valuable observing time.

The ship continued and approached the second moon, holding its acceleration of 1.3 times the planet’s gravity. In a long duration flight, it had been shown that the Malden physiology could adjust to the slightly higher g load if given time to adapt. The arrangement would cut a trip’s travel time significantly.

The three-dimensional image of the ship looked truly artistic. The pale green hue of the hull, lighted by starlight, and the long column of blue-white ionized helium trailing behind it contrasted sharply with the perfect black of space and the brilliant, steady beacons of the stars.

And then it was gone. Not drifted or accelerated out of view but vanished in an incredible flash of violet-white light. *Traveler* had exploded with such intensity that nothing remained. The telescope’s view was now just stars and a very empty, lifeless, space.

The wall which had held the view from the cockpit was covered by only the random noise of a missing signal.

Lehandra moved closer to Yion and grasped his hand with hers; four thumbs and four fingers were intimately locked. It was an ancient Malden ritual, carrying the message: “I am with you physically and I am with your emotions.”

Yion sat down, numb. In a fraction of a second his world had collapsed. No ship, no star travel, and, of course, no son.

After a lengthy pause with repeated attempts at contact, a number of discussion groups began. Yion should have been involved but he just sat.

Lehandra said, “We’ll get through this.” She was about to add the word “again” but then thought better about it.

Many years earlier, Yion’s wife had died of a strange bacterial infection. It was astonishing that a race almost capable of building

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a living creature from scratch could not have defeated such a problem but life always has strange twists and the unknowns are often big surprises.

Lehandra had helped him through those difficult times and she would nurture him again. The loss of a wife and a son, both young, was essentially unprecedented in the Malden's sophisticated world.

The control room was a bizarre combination of data scanning, chaos, mourning, and tumultuous speculation. A totally unexpected event had soiled the logical, refined world of the Maldens.

There was no one currently alive who could remember ever losing a spaceship.

Eventually, Lehandra led Yion on the journey to the Fusion Research Center where he lived in a series of rooms connected to his office.

* * * * *

Yion stepped out onto the patio. Sol was setting. A full day had passed since he had been working peacefully at the table. A day abruptly spoiled by great tragedy. The ship was gone and his son was gone. Lehandra was sleeping in the Visiting Scientists' quarters. Nothing was the same. Nothing, that is, except his lizard.

The lizard rested quietly in its usual corner of the patio, oblivious to recent events. The lizard would never know the pain of seeing a son annihilated in a machine of its own creation.

Every day for countless future generations of lizards would be the same. Then, far in the future, Sol would go supernova and the caress from the heat of the patio would come one last time and grip far too tightly.

Yion reflected upon the state of his world. Intelligent, sentient creatures everywhere in the universe would build transportation systems to explore their region of space. Perfection, however, was as abstract as a perfect sphere or parallel lines. On occasion, things would go wrong. Ships and crews would be lost.

The Maldens could revel in the technology and success that they had. Much like the lizard, they could avoid change.

Or, they could press forward with their quest for the stars and, sooner or later, the twin Gods of Death and Destruction would again descend upon them.

Yion stared at the horizon. Go upward with problems guaranteed, or, hold the present like the lizard. He pondered the options. It was not a difficult choice. Not difficult at all.

BEGINNERS NIGHT 2004

By John Kirchhoff

Our first Beginner's Night for 2004 will be held at Island Lake on Saturday April 24th. The event will start at 7:30 PM and will be at the club's Spring Mill Pond observing site. As in the past, the star gaze will be held cloudy or clear but not

if it is rain (snow)ing.

Beginner's Nights are a great way to introduce newcomers to both the hobby of amateur astronomy and our astronomy club. If you have a friend or coworker that has expressed an interest in either this is the perfect event to take them to. There is always a good variety of equipment to look through and see (from binoculars to mobile observatories) and lots of expert help to answer questions. Newbies to the hobby are encouraged to bring their new equipment and club members will be happy to assist in explaining the set up and use.

This first Beginner's Night promises to be a special one, as it is being held as the "night cap" to our National Astronomy Day festivities. Club members present during the day at the Detroit Science Center and at Cranbrook will have handed out flyers directing newcomers to the park that night. If Mother Nature cooperates we can expect to welcome a number of new astronomy enthusiasts to our club and the hobby. It's been a long winter, time to break out the gear....see you on the 24th.

ASTRONOMY 101 HEADS TO FOREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By Don Klaser

Although the date has changed to Thursday, April 1, FAAC will be taking our show on the road to Forest Elementary school in Farmington Hills. Our presentation last year was a big hit with both students and their parents, and we're expecting another great turnout this year. The program will begin at 6:00 p.m. with indoor projects & displays, and John Schroer will be bringing the portable planetarium from the DSC. Afterwards, conditions permitting, we will set-up for an observing session. To get to the school, take I-696 to the Orchard Lake Rd. exit, go north to 13 Mile Rd. (about 1 mile), turn left, to Farmington Rd., turn right (north), to the second street - Old Timber - turn left. Follow the street through the subdivision; continue past the stop sign and the school will be on your left. The parking lot is just past the building, and we'll be using the doors between the 2 wings of the school. Call me at 586-596-9510 to let me know if you can join us !

ENSIGN PLANETARIUM PRESENTS

Submitted by Bob Fitzgerald

- April 28: The Earth – Sun Connection

- May 19: Special Guest Star, Kristina Nyland

All shows start @ 7 pm.

1501 Beach – Daly, Dearborn Heights, MI 48217,
313)274-3711

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ASTRONOMICAL IMAGING S.I.G.

By George Korody

The next meeting of the Astronomical Imaging S.I.G. is scheduled for Thursday, April 8. Please note that a new meeting location has been provided in Livonia. We will meet at 5:00 PM in the vacant storefront next to Kroger in the Rider's Hobby Shop shopping center on the south side of 5 Mile Road just east of Merriman Road. For any additional directions call Rider's Hobby Shop at (734) 425-9720. John Kirchhoff will lead the main topic of discussion on WEB cam video imaging and related image processing techniques.

DESERT SUNSET STAR PARTY - MAY 13-16,

The 2004 Desert Sunset Star Party will be held at the Caballo Loco Ranch, about 11.5 miles south of Three Points, AZ, on Rt. 286, and then east for 8 miles. This RV ranch is in a secluded area of Arizona with dark skies. The telescopes of Kitt Peak are in clear view to the west. The DSSP begins on Thursday night and runs through Saturday night. We will have a speaker on both Friday and Saturday evenings along with door prize giveaways. Registration information will be posted on the DSSP website -

<http://chartmarker.tripod.com/sunset.htm>

NEW MEMBER WELCOME !

FAAC Welcomes:

Tom	Borkowski
Max	Davis
Bill	Flores
Garnet	McKeon
Jeff	McKinney
Robert	Nagy

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR FAAC MEMBERSHIP!

By Gordon Hansen

Its not too late to renew your membership and continue to enjoy the benefits of Club membership

- Access to Island Lake observing area
- Discounts to *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* magazines
- And best of all . . . sharing your love of astronomy with other club members.

Renewals for 2004 \$ 30

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Life Membership\$150

Send your renewal fees to

FAAC

P.O. Box 7527

Dearborn, MI 48121-7527

Please include any updates to your address, phone number, email, etc.

March 25, 2004

General Membership Meeting

5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Agenda

- Introductions	Dale Ochelak	15 min
- Reports: Treasurer's Secretary's	Gordon Hansen Don Klaser	10 min
- Old/New Business	Dale Ochalek	20 min
- Upcoming Events	Dale Ochalek	30 min
- Technical Discussion	Lynn Umbarger	15 min
- Winter Star Party	Korody / Bates	30 min

FAAC CALENDAR

Activity	Date	Time
- General Meeting	Mar 25	5 pm
- Board Meeting	Apr 8	5 pm
- General Meeting	Apr 22	5 pm
- Beginners Night	Apr 24	6 pm
- Board Meeting	May 13	5 pm
- Beginners Night	May 15	6 pm
- GLACC Star Party	May 21,22	
- General Meeting	May 27	5 pm
- Board Meeting	Jun 10	5 pm
- General Meeting	Jun 24	5 pm
- Beginners Night	Jun 26	6 pm

T-SHIRT INVENTORY REDUCTION!

The Club has a large supply of T-Shirts from this year's and previous Island Lake Star Parties. Now is your chance to get yours at special prices! 2003 Shirts – Now only \$10, Sizes Available: XXL, XL, L, S

Past Year's Shirts – 2 for \$5.00 !!, Sizes: XXL, XL, L, M, S

For pickup at the next Club Meeting: email you order to ghansen@comcast.net or mail your order including a check for payment to: FAAC, P.O.Box 7527, Dearborn, MI 48183

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**Ford Amateur Astronomy Club
Star Stuff Newsletter
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**Sixth Annual Spring
Open House**

Saturday March 27th 10am to 8pm

Hands on demos and clinics all day long!

Great savings throughout the store!