STAR STUFF

The Newsletter of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

May 2002
Volume 11 Number 5

FERA
Ford Employees
Recreation Association

Editor: Jim Frisbie

In This Issue:

STAR STUFF is a monthly publication of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club, an affiliate club of the Ford Employee Recreation Association.

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:

Jim Frisbie
via tele #: 734-453-1422
or email: w8tu@peoplepc.com

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

Officers:

President	Don Nakic
Vice President	Ken Anderson
Secretary	Don Klaser
Treasurer	Mike Bruno

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 Family Service and Learning Center, 18501 Rotunda, Dearborn, MI 48124.

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: $25; Renewal: $ 20 (before Jan 31 of each year)
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.

SWAP & SHOP

For Sale: Used Meade LX200 8" f/10 SCT w/ base & wedge, 1 year old, $1,850. Contact John @ Riders Hobby Livonia: 734-425-9720

For Sale: Meade ETX125EC, 1 yr old, deluxe tripod, dew shield, hard case, 26mm plossl eyepiece, $ 1,150 obo. Contact: Tom Ellison, @ 248-549-7675

For Sale: Meade 203SC/300, 8" f/10 SCT with GEM. Very little use, perfect shape. Contact: Paul Chaveriat @ 734-721-3346

For Sale: Celestron CG4, equatorial mount & RA motor. Like-new/excellent condition. Asking $150. Also, Celestron Ultima, 5mm eyepiece, 1 ¼", asking $30. Contact: Thomas Blaszak @ Ofc: 313.323.9842 After hours: 313.277.3365

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To: w8tu@peoplepc.com

Jim, I would like to say that I appreciate getting the newsletter and all the work you put into getting it together. Thanks

Russell Craig

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 25, 2002 FAAC GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

by Don Klaser

The meeting was called to order by President Don at 5:00pm. New members introduced themselves and then the floor was opened up to anyone who had something to share. 32 members were present. Greg Burnett informed the membership that our 10th Anniversary is coming in June; several ideas were tossed out as how best to celebrate the event. A motion was made and seconded to hold our celebration at the Summer Solstice Party at Doug Bock's house. The motion passed. Mike Bruno gave the treasurer's report. Don Klaser asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes of March's meeting. There were none and it was moved and seconded to approve the minutes. President Don announced that starting next month the meetings will be held at the Family Learning Center on Rotunda Drive. Dale Ochalek has volunteered to be the membership chairman. Bob MacFarland gave an update report on the upcoming Astronomy on the Beach at Kensington Metropark sponsored by GLAAC on May 17& 18. Greg Burnett gave a technical talk on why glass bends light. Todd Slisher from the Detroit Science Center thanked the Club for it's participation at the DSC on April 20th for Astronomy Day. Clay Kessler gave a presentation on Film Based Astrophotography. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10pm.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Don Nakic

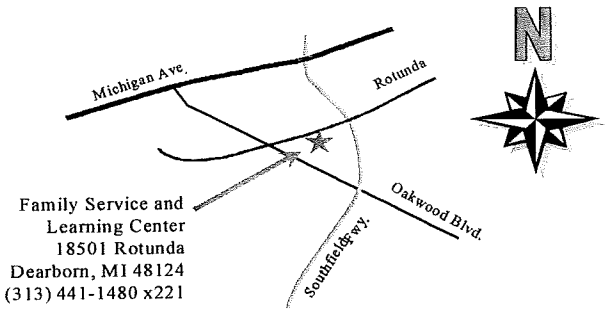
Last week I was out in the backyard with my telescope and CCD camera to take some images of deep sky objects. Galaxies are one my favorite subjects to image. I'm just simply fascinated by the various galactic shapes, sizes, and orientations relative to us. I can't help but wonder how many solar systems are contained within the spiral arms that are brewing with life forms. A part of me also wonders if the life forms are looking back at us.

I'm sure everyone has a favorite part of astronomy that they cling to either out of sheer curiosity or admiration for the subject's beauty. Robert Burnham Jr. describes the appeal of astronomy as both, "intellectual and aesthetic; it combines the thrill of exploration and discovery, the fun of sight-seeing, and the sheer pleasure of firsthand acquaintance with incredibly wonderful and beautiful things." In the last General Meeting Clay Kessler gave a presentation on Film Based Astrophotography. In addition to the vast amount of technical knowledge on film photography, he provided a majestic journey through an assortment of star clusters, nebula clouds, and colorful auroras. Clay showed that you don't need expensive equipment to capture the universe's beauty. There are so many aspects to astronomy for one to pursue. One can study the planets, moon, sun, stars (variable, binary, and clusters), comets, nebulas, galaxies, constellations, and its history to name a few. There are numerous books and web sites to aid you in your conquest.

As with everything, I find it interesting to hear someone's approach to learning astronomy firsthand. I find it gives me added encouragement, and insight, into my own pursuits. After all, we all share the same admiration of the universe. I encourage all club members to share their favorite part of astronomy with the club. You never know, you may inspire someone to pursue his or her passion for astronomy even further. For me, Clay has now inspired me to capture more of the sky around the galaxies … anyone have a wide angle lens adapter for my CCD camera?

FAAC General Meeting Location Change !

Effective May 23rd, FAAC General Meetings will be held at The Family Service and Learning Center located on Rotunda. Below is the address and map to the facilities.



NORTH STAR

By Greg Burnett

EDITORS NOTE: The following article written by Greg Burnett is a dual account of our "Guide Star -Polaris". The normal text portion is a scientific and historical description of Polaris, while the italicized portion is a classical nautical tale. I think we have a budding author in our Club.

Polaris (Right Ascension $2^h\ 31^m\ 50.4^s$ Declination $+89°$ 15' 51" Epoch 2000.0)

Twelve days out of Northumberland, the schooner Evangelyn was bound for the colonies. Among the lucky few finding passage to the New World, Peter had eagerly

accepted a "passenger as crew" arrangement with the Captain. But when he came on deck to take his watch this night the sea was rising, and he pondered the wisdom of his decision. He usually found great pleasure in standing watch at night, when he could see the stars, but tonight the ship made way through the menacing gloom with only the storm jibs set.

Polaris is a super-giant star of luminosity class Ib, spectral type F8, considerably larger and somewhat hotter than our Sun. Its visual magnitude is 2.02, slightly variable until very recently, and its B-V color index is 0.60. Polaris has an absolute magnitude of -4.6. Its distance is estimated to be about 360 light-years, and it has a radial velocity of 17 km/sec in approach. Polaris exhibits an annual proper motion of $+0.232^{s}$ in right ascension and -0.01" in declination.

By midnight Peter could barely stand on deck. The helmsman battled gallantly to keep the bow turned into the cresting sea. Rapiers of lightning froze mountainous waves of electric blue Atlantic brine as they broke over the rail, and St. Elmo's Fire crawled about the tops of the rigging. Though his watch was over, he could not abandon the deck and go below. He would meet the schooner's fate topside with the other seamen.

Polaris is an oft-neglected double star, having a bluish 9th magnitude secondary at a separation of 18.4 arc-seconds. Sky Catalog 2000.0 lists two additional minor companions, of magnitudes 12.0 and 13.0. In 1929 the primary was found also to be a spectroscopic double, with a period of about 30.5 years. Polaris is a fine visual double for small telescopes, but it receives comparatively little attention from amateur observers, possibly because the star is regarded more as a celestial signpost rather than a worthy observing target.

At half past all canvas was down and the helm was lashed. On orders from the captain, cargo was being brought from below and thrown overboard. Men with pumps and buckets were waging war to keep the sea out of the belly of the ship. Peter held fast to a port side mainstay and wondered how long the vessel could stay afloat. A seaman carrying a wooden crate came up through the companionway and staggered toward the rail where Peter clung. The ship lurched to starboard and a huge wave came up over the side. It caught the man from behind, slamming him onto the deck. As he fell, he hurled the crate forward, taking Peter hard on the shoulder. The thundering water was upon him an instant later. He lost his grip on the stay and went over the rail into the sea.

In the mid-19th century Polaris was observed to be slightly variable, and in 1913 it was shown to be a type-I or "classical" Cepheid variable. At that time it's amplitude of variation was just over 0.1 magnitude, with a period slightly under 4 days. Very recent observations show that it's pulsation amplitude has gradually decreased over the years, reaching zero in 1994. "Constant as the Northern Star" has now taken on a more literal meaning.

There followed what seemed an eternity of violent surging and heaving, clutching some fortuitous flotsam, striving only to take a breath of air from time to time and nothing more. At length Peter fell behind the storm as the turbulent sea trailed after the tempest, leaving calmer water in its wake. He regained himself a bit to find he was embracing a floating box, perhaps the very one that had squired him into the brine. His courage was spent, and the water was cold. Its chill was draining the last dregs of strength from his numb body. He gazed up, and between breaking clouds he could see his beloved stars.

Polaris, a.k.a. the Pole Star, is also known by a number of scientific designations: Its Bayer identification is "Alpha Ursae Minoris," and it was assigned the number 1 by Flamsteed. It appears in other catalogs variously as "ADS 1477" (R.G. Aitken's New General Catalog of Double Stars, 1932), "HD 8890" (Henry Draper Catalog, Harvard), SAO 308 (Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory Star Catalog, 1966), and "Σ 93" (F.G. Wilhelm Struve's Dorpat Catalog of Double Stars, 1827).

Time was suspended. Now the chilling water had turned to glass. Starlight poured down from the blazing heavens and reflected off the water. Sky and sea became inseparable. Peter's solitude was absolute. Had the Evangelyn survived? He couldn't know. His entire world was now his cold, stiffening body, his floating crate, and the stars. The sky was alive with the light of a thousand suns, but Peter fixed on only one. He had no skills in navigation, but anyone going to sea knew of it... the one beacon that shone above all others, a lighthouse in the sky. He rejoiced at the sight of it. The North Star! It would be his guide and protector.

Polaris has not always been the pole star. At the dawn of recorded history, Beta Ursae Minoris (Kochab) was actually a bit closer to the celestial pole than Polaris. Kochab and Polaris are mentioned in at least one ancient text as "the guardians of the pole," thus granting Kochab at least equal status. The position of the celestial pole with respect to the stars changes continuously due the 25,800-year precession cycle of the Earth's axis. When the pyramids of Egypt were being built, Alpha Draconis (Thuban) was the pole star. At present, the true position of the pole is displaced from Polaris slightly less than one degree in the direction of Eta Ursae Majoris (Benetnasch), the last star in the handle of the big dipper.

Harlan's words came ringing in his head. "If ye find yerself in the briny, lad, the monsters nay will et ya! Put the pole star o'er your right shoulder and you'll make Nantucket in a fortnight...Har-ha-arrr!" Peter scoffed at

the old salt's mocking words. Land was a hundred, a thousand, too many miles away, a distant dream. But the stars were here, with him, just barely out of reach. Harlan's image faded. The North Star beckoned to him, a warm hearth in the night. Peter let the comforting light from the star enfold his weary soul.

Polaris has long held an important position in the affairs of Mankind. Its importance to navigators of classical times is the stuff of legend. The very notion of celestial navigation sprang from the pole star, and began the slow evolution of our understanding of the movements of the heavens. Dating from even earlier periods, perhaps as much as 3000 years ago, great monuments in Southeast Asia, India, and elsewhere are believed to symbolize the "Cosmic Mountain" or the "Axis of the World." Ancient texts associated with them refer repeatedly to the pole star as the "pinnacle of the mountain" or the "hub of the universe." The Chinese of about the same time fashioned intricately carved rings of jade, called "hsun-chi," with notches around the edge corresponding to the locations of several nearby stars. By sighting through the central hole of the ring, the exact celestial pole could be located.

His hands slipped down a bit on the sides of his soggy crate. The North Star blazed dispassionately overhead, eternal, transcendent. Peter thought of his lady... was she someplace warm? Could she guess his fate? Could she also see the stars? Their lives seemed mere momentary flickers lost in the blazing radiance of the Universe. The cold sea had at last overcome him. With the timeless light of his North Star in his eyes, Peter's grip on the wet wood relaxed, and he slipped into the sea...

For modern observers, Polaris remains an interesting astronomical object. In addition to its duplicity noted earlier, it is the gemstone in an asterism called the "engagement ring" formed by several nearby 7th and 8th magnitude stars. On the next clear night, go out and look at the North Star. Admire it with respect, for it is very, very old, and it has many stories to tell.

THE SKY SHARED

by Tom Trusock - ttrusock@hatchet.badaxe.k12.mi.us

EDITORS NOTE: Bob MacFarland submitted this article to Star Stuff and obtained permissioin for it's use from the author.

It's a little amazing how things happen sometimes. Sometimes the best memories start off in the smallest ways. I am Director of IT for a public school system, but more importantly; I teach. I have for years. I don't have many classes anymore. Actually I only have time for one HS computer science class, but that class is one of the reasons that I stay in education. The chance to work with children, with young minds that want to learn is extremely rewarding.

I remember it was after class, and a student came up to me asking if I had seen that new "comet thingie". As I replied that yes, I had, another approached and indicated that he had used his dad's binoculars to see it. Hearing this (and seeing a crowd begin to develop) a third and fourth dropped in to see what we were discussing. After talking about the comet for a short while one of the students turned to me asking if I had a telescope. "Well yes, actually I have a couple." - "What does it look like through the scope?"

Rarely does opportunity knock so loudly.

After a bit of discussion, we decided that maybe the best thing to do would be for anyone interested to get together that weekend on one students farm, assuming that was alright. He agreed to check with his parents and let me know the next day. As it turned out, it was OK, and they were happy to help out. One or two had department store scopes they wanted to bring, a couple binoculars - but mostly they just wanted to see the comet through a what they considered "a real" telescope. We agreed to meet around sunset Friday night.

As their parents came to drop them off in the back 40, they came with high-beams on and radios blaring. Kids climbed out of cars, and the adults unloaded snacks. There was a palpable excitement in the air. Some of the parents stayed for a little while, but not long. Some of the kids were old enough to drive themselves, and parked off to the side. The first thing we did was set up the equipment. It was pretty easy. There wasn't much. A few scopes (mostly mine) and a binocular or two, but they all brought their minds, and a (growing) fascination with the universe. Those would prove to be the most important things they could possibly bring.

Of course everybody wanted to see the comet. That was a pretty big hit. We used binoculars and a couple of small scopes to view the comet and tail, and a larger 8" to examine the nucleus. General consensus was that the best views of the comet were through the lower power / rich field instruments. I think this surprised many of them. They thought that the bigger the scope the better the view. They found that things aren't always like you expect them to be. Contrary to how most Americans live their life, size isn't everything. After everybody had a turn with the comet, they started wondering what else was out there. I don't recall exactly what we looked at (and I am sure that they don't either). Saturn and Jupiter undoubtedly, the Pleiades for sure, the Andromeda Galaxy and more were probably on the list. I probably pointed out a few of the brighter constellations. We didn't hunt faint fuzzies and there were no 13th mag galaxies on the schedule that

night. Most people aren't really thrilled by the sight of an extremely dim bit of cotton. We pretty much stuck to the bright stuff. While I don't remember exactly what we saw, I do think its safe to say that none of us were taking notes. We weren't concerned with the science, facts or figures. It really didn't even matter if we were using our eyes, binoculars or a telescope. The only thing that I am sure about was that we all had a really good time. After a while I stopped trying to watch the stars. I stepped back and watched them. Anyone who has ever been a parent can tell you that watching a someone enjoy themselves is a reward in and of itself. In a short while, they had figured out how to work the scopes and change eyepieces. The binoculars and smaller scopes got swapped around a fair bit. One kid latched on to the 8" and the star charts for the evening and spent the night hunting Messiers (with a little help). Several of them spent the night running from scope to scope to binocular after cries of - "WHOAH - look at this!" Finally, most of them stopped wondering what they had found with the telescopes or binoculars and simply sat back scanning the heavens.

When they left, the mood was a little different than when they arrived. I heard kids scolding their parents for pulling in with their high beams on and "ruining" everybody's night vision. If the radios blared on the way out, I don't remember it. What I do remember was the happy looks on their faces. Seeing the universe like this tends to change you in ways that astronomers know well, but most of us (I anyway) have taken for granted for far too long a time. I heard a few requests for scopes or binoculars, and a few (very unnecessary) thanks.

It didn't take much. I can't even really say that I started it. I did however, take advantage of it. For a while that night, we did something that few people have done. We saw a comet that had not been seen for hundreds of years, starlight that was thousands of years old, and other worlds in our little corner of the galaxy. For a night, I think it really came home to these kids just exactly where our spot in creation sits. It's a pretty big universe out there. That we are here and able to appreciate it makes it all the more special. I think that night helped them to realize that. I do know that it gave me some very fond memories. I hope it did the same for them.

When it gets down to it kids, they really are pretty easy to please. They don't ask much. Like everybody else, they really only want three things; a little of your time, your respect, and an acknowledgement. If you have a chance to share the sky with children - little ones, teens or even grownup kids, just remember that and you will do fine. Show them what they want to see.

As time goes by, maybe some of you who were there will find this and read it. Maybe you will have a scope of your own, maybe binoculars. Some may have nothing but your eyes. Some will have children, some won't. Some of you won't have looked at the night sky in years. Maybe this will make you go out and stare at the night sky just one more time. If you remember that night, if you remember it fondly - I would only ask this; Take advantage of your opportunities and pass it on when you have the chance.

And finally, thank you.

Tom is the Director of Technology for Bad Axe Public Schools in Michigan's thumb and loves working with children of all ages. His wife finds this fitting, as he is just a big kid himself. He won't admit to much, but certainly will admit to eagerly awaiting the chance to share the universe with his 11 month old daughter.

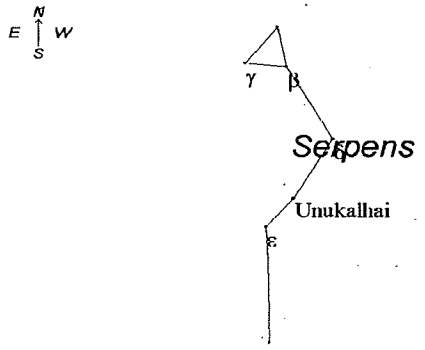
CONSTELLATIONS FOR THE BEGINNER

May — Serpens

by Janice A. Kessler

Facing south, the constellation of Serpens can be seen high overhead. Its bright stars are:

Unukalhai or α Serpentis: Magnitude 2.65
β Serpentis: Magnitude 3.67
γ Serpentis: Magnitude 3.85
ε Serpentis: Magnitude 3.71
δ Serpentis: Magnitude 3.80



All maps and facts are courtesy of Chris Marriott and SkyMap Pro 4.0.

All maps were designed to be viewed from Southeastern Michigan at Midnight around the 15th of each month. If you are at another location or viewing at another time, you may not be able to see this constellation.

FAAC
May 23, 2002
General Membership Meeting
5:00 pm to 6:25 pm
Agenda

- Introductions	Don Nakic	20 min
- Reports: Treasurer's Secretary's	Mike Bruno Don Klaser	5 min
- Old/New Business	Don Nakic	5 min
- Upcoming Events	Don Nakic	5 min
- Technical Discussion	Don Nakic	15 min
- New Equipment Review	John Kirchhoff	35 min

ASTRONOMICAL CALENDAR 2002

May

May 19	First Quarter 3:42 pm Moon near Regulus (dusk)
May 22	Moon near Spica (22 & 23 dusk)
May 26	Full Moon 7:51 am *(Flower Moon)* Moon near Antares (10 pm)

June

All times are Eastern Standard Time or Eastern Daylight Saving Time, whichever applies.

June 1	The two brightest planets -- Venus and Jupiter -- 2.5° apart. Look low in W at dusk for planet pair with Pollux and Castor, the Gemini Twins, above them.
June 2	Last Quarter 8:05 pm
June 3	Venus passes closest to Jupiter today. Pair 1.7° apart, with dim Mars 13° to their lower right. Use binoculars to spot Mars. For rest of month, Venus and Jupiter pull apart rapidly. Venus continues to climb higher away from sunset glow, but Jupiter sinks toward it. By month's end, Jupiter is lost in sunset glow.
June 10	New Moon 7:46 pm Annular Solar Eclipse. Path of Annularity over Pacific Ocean.
June 12	Moon near Jupiter (dusk)
June 13	Moon near Venus (dusk)
June 15	Moon near Regulus (dusk)
June 17	First Quarter 8:29 pm
June 19	Moon near Spica (dusk)
June 21	Solstice 9:24 am
June 22	Moon near Antares (dusk)
June 24	Full Moon 5:42 pm *(Strawberry Moon)*

This information was obtained from the
Henry J. Buhl, Jr. Planetarium in Pittsburgh, PA.

CLUB CALENDAR

Activity	Date	Time	Contact
- General Meeting	May 23	5pm	
- FAAC Board Mtg	June 13	5pm	
- 10 yr FAAC Anniv.	June 15	-	
- General Meeting	June 27	5pm	
- FAAC Board Mtg	July 11	5pm	
- General Meeting	July 25	5pm	
- FAAC Board Mtg	Aug 8	5pm	
- General Meeting	Aug 22	5pm	
- FAAC Board Mtg	Sep 12	5pm	
- Island Lake Star Party	Sep 14	-	-
- GLACC Star Party	-	-	-
- General Meeting	Sep 26	5pm	
- FAAC Board Mtg	Oct 10	5pm	
- General Meeting	Oct 24	5pm	
- FAAC Board Mtg	Nov 14	5pm	
- General Meeting	Dec 5	5pm	
- Lake Erie Ice Days	-	-	-

JOB POSTING
The New Detroit Science Center

Have you have an interest in Astronomy? How would you like to expand that interest, and share that knowledge with others? With the proper desire and qualifications, you could do just that here at The New Detroit Science Center. We are seeking a talented, responsible and motivated individual to fill the part-time position of Planetarium Presenter. If you are computer literate, and have experience in public speaking and the ability to work independently, we want you! Knowledge in Astronomy is a plus. Please send an e-mail of interest and an application or resume to hr@sciencedetroit.org. For questions, please contact Tslisher@sciencedetroit.org.

Position Description

Planetarium Presenter
Department: Theaters/Planetarium
Reports to: Director of Theaters

General Description
The mission of the Detroit Science Center is to inspire Detroit area children and their families to discover and appreciate science, technology and engineering. In order to facilitate that goal the Digital Dome Planetarium is seeking a talented, responsible, and motivated individual to serve as a Planetarium Presenter to help facilitate bringing astronomy and other science content to our visitors.

Position Summary
The Planetarium Presenter works for the Director of Theaters and with other Planetarium Staff in presenting both live and automated programs in the Digital Dome Planetarium. In addition the Presenter works with the planetarium ushers and the front desk staff to facilitate the smooth entry and exit of Planetarium visitors.

Background and Qualifications
* High School Diploma or equivalent required
* Some college coursework preferred.
* Experience in public speaking required.
* Knowledge of Astronomy and star positions/constellations preferred.
* Computer proficiency/literacy required.
* Strong customer service skills required.
* Ability to work independently required.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities
* Job duties involve both weekday and some weekend work, occasional evening hours for special events may be required.
* Presenting of both live and automated Planetarium shows which include audience interaction and participation.
* Proper setup, operation, and shutdown of Planetarium automation and Digistar Equipment.
* Working with front desk and usher staff members to facilitate visitor entry and exit into the Planetarium facility and maintaining cleanliness of the Planetarium theater.
* Recording number of visitors from ticket counts.
* Assisting Planetarium staff with special events and creation of programs.
* Perform other related duties as required.

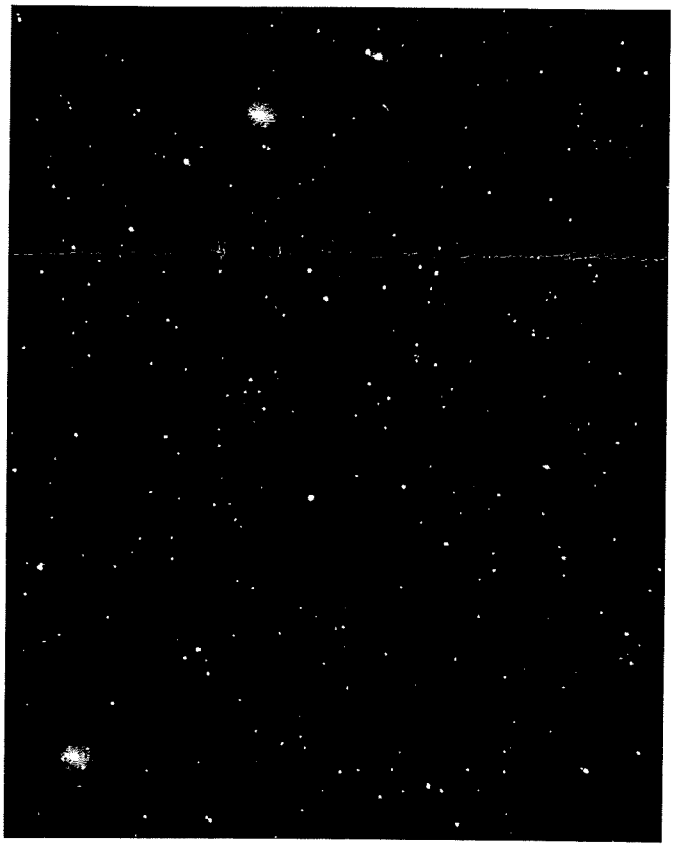
NAME THAT CONSTELLATION!

Can you name this Constellation?

What are the seven stars in the primary asterism?

What are their magnitudes?

Any double stars?



Winner will be announced in next month's edition of Star Stuff.

The Ford Amateur Astronomy Club
Presents:

THE TENTH ANNUAL

ISLAND LAKE STAR PARTY

Island Lake State Recreation Area
Brighton, Michigan

Saturday September 14th 2002
6 PM – ??

This event will be held rain or shine – cloudy or clear!!

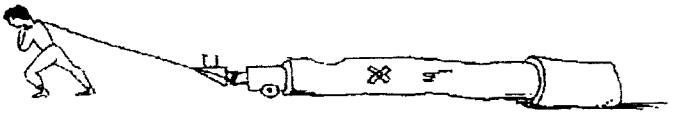
Our Sponsors:

RIDER'S HOBBY SHOPS
THE BETTER HOBBY PEOPLE

Discovery STORE

Event Listing:

- **Telescopes of all kinds** – these are available to look at and look through . Have questions? Just ask!
- **Presentations and Demonstrations by local Technical Experts**. These are designed to answer your questions about equipment and observing techniques and help you to get the most from your telescope.
- **Astronomical Equipment** – educational material, books and star charts will be on display and made available by our sponsors.
- **PRIZES!!!** - There will be door prize drawings for telescopes and other items.
- **Observing Tour for Children** – Kids who register will be given an observing list. Marked telescopes will be on the field for the challenge. A certificate of achievement, and a gift from the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club, will be awarded to all who complete the observing list!



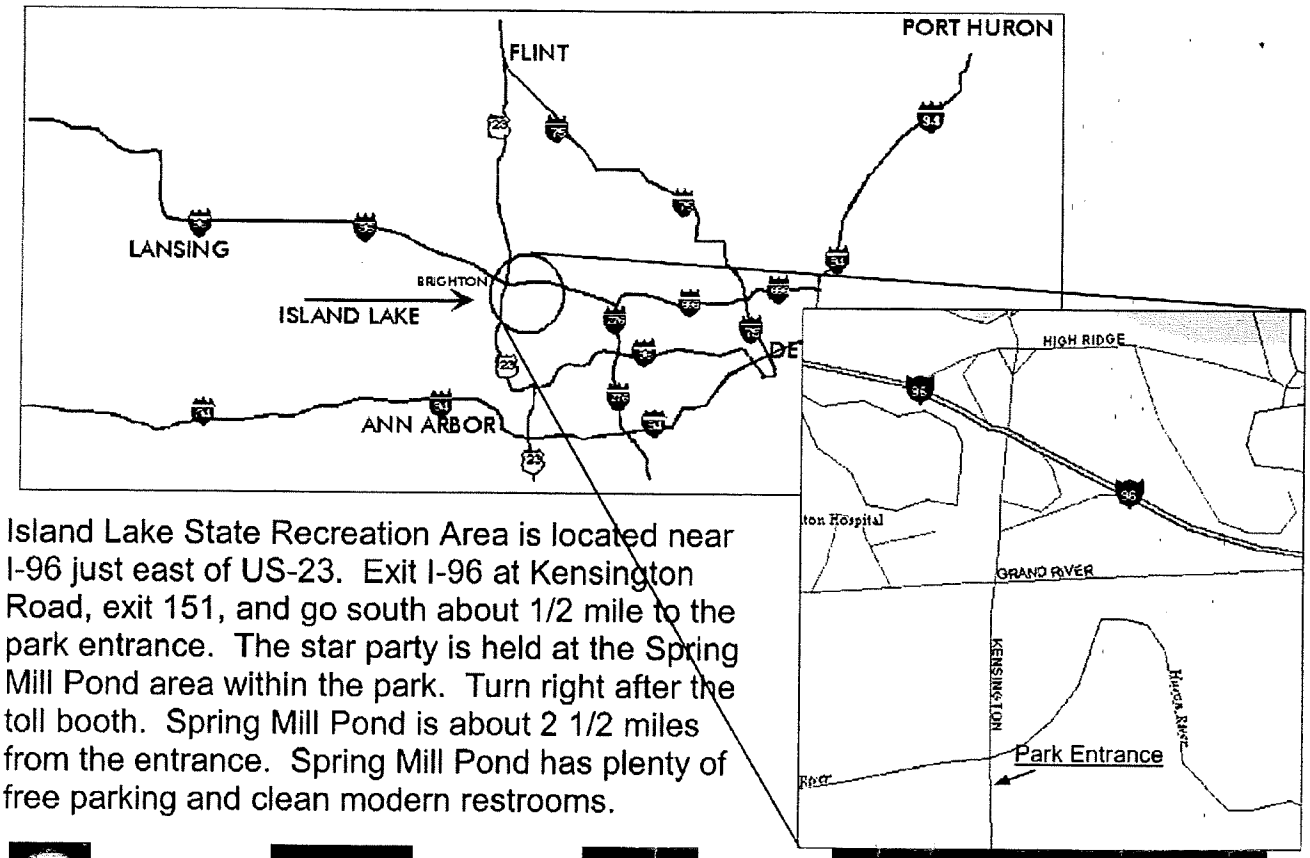
Your Telescope is Welcome!!

If you have questions about your equipment this is the perfect opportunity to get the helpful advice you need. Limited AC power and plenty of space is available. Please arrive before dark to allow for set-up time.

No telescope? No Problem! There will be lots to look through – just bring your curiosity!

Admission is Free* and Children are Welcome!

* You need a State Park Vehicle Permit if you don't have one – a daily permit is $4.00

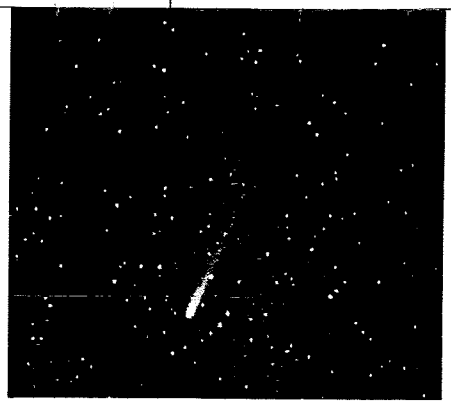


Island Lake State Recreation Area is located near I-96 just east of US-23. Exit I-96 at Kensington Road, exit 151, and go south about 1/2 mile to the park entrance. The star party is held at the Spring Mill Pond area within the park. Turn right after the toll booth. Spring Mill Pond is about 2 1/2 miles from the entrance. Spring Mill Pond has plenty of free parking and clean modern restrooms.



Please Remember – Clear Autumn nights can get very cool. Bring warm clothes. And don't forget the State "Bird" - bring mosquito repellant.

It is polite to cover your flashlight with a red filter so as to avoid spoiling anyone's night vision.



Comet Ikeya-Zhang - By Clayton Kessler

Ford Employees Recreation Association

The Island Lake Star Party is an ideal outing for Scout Troops and Class Trips. We strive to provide an atmosphere where presentations are educational and FUN. Don't forget – Spring Mill Pond is our regular observing site. Members are there most clear Friday and Saturday evenings. Call our Observing Hotline at (313) 390-5456 to confirm an observing weekend and join us! Check out our Web site at http://www.boonhill.net/faac/. E-mail faac1992@hotmail.com

CCD Image of Saturn by George Korody, CCD Image of Jupiter by Doug Bock, Northern Cross Observatory

THE NEW Science CENTER

DIGITAL DOME PLANETARIUM

April 24, 2002

Don Nakic, President
The Ford Amateur Astronomy Club
P.O.Box7527
Dearborn, Michigan 48121-7527

Dear Don:

Thank you for your part in making the New Detroit Science Center's first **International Astronomy Day** a great success. More than 1,800 visitors visited the Center on Saturday, April 20th, an increase of 700 more visitors over the Science Center's average on Saturdays in April. More than 600 of our visitors attended our new Planetarium show "Hubble, Images of the Infinite," and many of our visitors viewed the Sun and Venus through binoculars and telescopes for the first time, thanks to your organization's efforts.

In addition, the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club assisted many of our visitors by answering questions about binoculars, telescopes, and exploring the night sky. The Staff of the Digital Dome Planetarium handles questions about astronomy as a hobby on a daily basis. However, the impressive display of equipment, demonstrations of solar telescopic viewing, and the ability to talk to amateur astronomers gave our guests a rare opportunity to express their interest and curiosity that comes with the observance of **International Astronomy Day**.

The Staff of the New Detroit Science Center wish to take this opportunity to thank every member of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club for their efforts during Astronomy Day 2002, and we hope that this past Saturday is the first event of a long-term association between the Science Center and the F.A.A.C. It is hoped that such a relationship can be established for the benefit of both organizations.

Don, please communicate this letter to the membership of the F.A.A.C., and give them our gratitude, appreciation, and thanks for their efforts.

Sincerely,

Shawn Kahle
President & CEO
The New Detroit Science Center

Todd K. Slisher
Director of Theaters

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