



# STAR STUFF

The Newsletter of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

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May 2008

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## Astronomy Day - May 10 at DSC



(Photo by Dale Ochalek)

*The Detroit Science Center hosted Astronomy Day, and also debuted "Bad Astronomy" by Phil Plait. Meanwhile, Don Klaser (above), and other FAAC members came with scopes... (See page 7)*

## Annual Special Recognition Award

### President's Corner

Doug Bauer, FAAC President

Last year we had a number of club members request that we (the Board) give special recognition to other club members who have gone "above and beyond" in their efforts for the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club since its creation. After some discussion, the Board decided that we would create a special annual award to honor one club member each year. The award will be a special plaque and will be presented to the Club Member deemed to be the most

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# STAR STUFF

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**STAR STUFF** is published eleven times each year by the

**FORD AMATEUR ASTRONOMY CLUB**  
P.O. Box 7527  
Dearborn MI 48121-7527

PRESIDENT:	Doug Bauer
VICE PRESIDENT:	Gordon Hansen
SECRETARY:	Ken Anderson
TREASURER:	Steve Flessa
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	Dale Ochalek

## Club Information:

The Ford Amateur Astronomy Club (FAAC) meets on the fourth Thursday each month, except for the combined November/December meeting on the first Thursday of December – at Henry Ford Community College, Administrative Services and Conference Center in Dearborn. Refer to our website for a map and directions ([www.boonhill.net/faac](http://www.boonhill.net/faac)).

The FAAC observes at Spring Mill Pond within the Island Lake State Recreation Area near Brighton, Michigan. The club maintains an after-hours permit, and observes on Friday and Saturday nights, and nights before holidays, weather permitting. The FAAC also has use Richmond Airport, Unadilla, given prior permission, and Lake Erie MetroPark. See the FAAC Yahoo Group\* for more information.

Observing schedules and additional info are available on our website, or via the FAAC Yahoo Group.\* Or call the **FAAC Hotline**, for info, and leave a message, or ask questions: **248-207-2075**. Or send email inquiries to [fordastronomy@comcast.net](mailto:fordastronomy@comcast.net).

Membership in the FAAC is open to anyone with an interest in amateur astronomy. The FAAC is an affiliate of the Ford Employees Recreation Association (F.E.R.A.). Membership fees:

Annual – New Member:	\$30	(\$15 after July 1)
Annual – Renewal:	\$25	(\$30 after January 31)

Membership includes the **STAR STUFF** newsletter, discounts on magazines, discounts at selected area equipment retailers, and after-hours access to the Island Lake observing site.

## Astronomy or Sky & Telescope Magazine Discounts

Obtain the required form from the FAAC club treasurer for a \$10 discount. Send the completed form directly to the respective publisher with your subscription request and payment. Do not send any money directly to the FAAC for this.

## Star Stuff Newsletter Submissions

Your submissions to **STAR STUFF** are more than welcome! Send your story and/or images to the editor at [dake00k@yahoo.com](mailto:dake00k@yahoo.com). Email text or MS Word is fine. **STAR STUFF** will usually go to press the weekend prior to each general meeting. Submissions received prior to that weekend can be included in that issue.

\* FAAC Members are welcome to join our **FordAstronomyClub** Yahoo! Group. Messages, photos, files, online discussions, and more! URL: [groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub).

## President's Corner... (continued from page 1)

deserving by the Board, based on submissions from the general members.

Club members may nominate individuals by sending their nomination to the Club President (me) giving the name of the individual and the reason that the nominee deserves special recognition. Nominations will be collected throughout the year. In January, the Board will review the nominees and select the one that they believe to be the most deserving. A plaque will be created and presented at the annual banquet and/or at the following General Meeting. If there are no nominees in a given year, there will be no plaque given out. However, there will be periodic reminders before December to remind people of the award. Active Board members are ineligible.

The Board thought that by selecting only one person per year, the award would be more distinctive. We realize there are many people who deserve to be recognized for their efforts and we plan to continue to acknowledge other individuals for their efforts with recognition certificates and a big "thank you." We need your help in creating a name for this award. Please submit any suggested names to me. One that has already been received is, "The Sirius Award – recognizing the brightest star in the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club."

Send your ideas to [DougBauer@comcast.net](mailto:DougBauer@comcast.net), or submit in person at a club meeting or event.



## Ozone, the Greenhouse Gas

We all know that ozone in the stratosphere blocks harmful ultraviolet sunlight, and perhaps some people know that ozone at the Earth's surface is itself harmful, damaging people's lungs and contributing to smog.

But did you know that ozone also acts as a potent greenhouse gas? At middle altitudes between the ground and the stratosphere, ozone captures heat much as carbon dioxide does. In fact, pound for pound, ozone is about 3000 times stronger as a greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub>. So even though there's much less ozone at middle altitudes than CO<sub>2</sub>, it still packs a considerable punch. Ozone traps up

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## Ozone ... (from page 2)

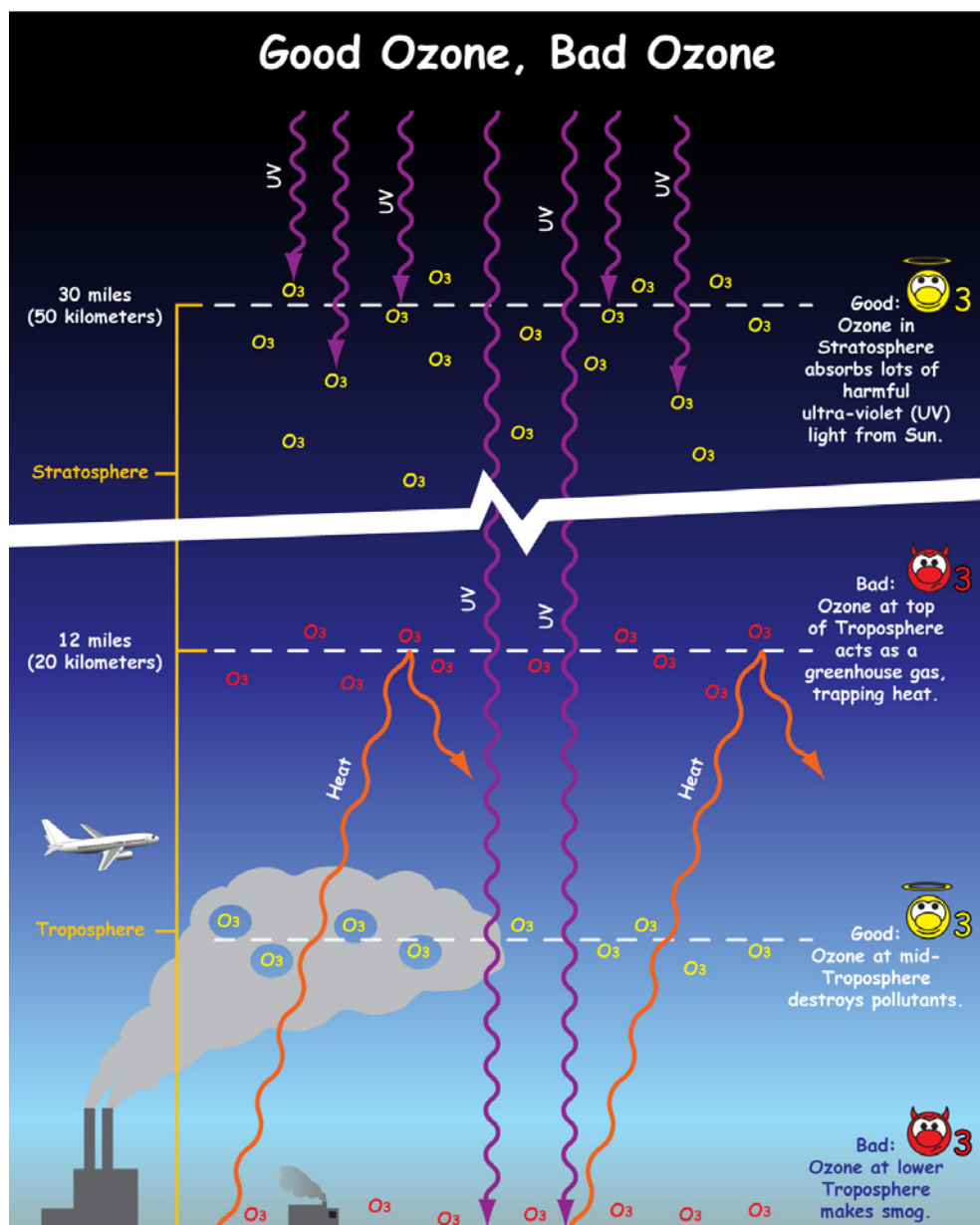
to one-third as much heat as the better known culprit in climate change. Scientists now have an unprecedented view of this mid-altitude ozone thanks to an instrument on NASA's Aura satellite, Tropospheric Emission Spectrometer— "TES" for short.

Most satellites can measure only the total amount of ozone in a vertical column of air. They can't distinguish between helpful ozone in the stratosphere, harmful ozone at the ground, and heat-trapping ozone in between. By looking sideways toward Earth's horizon, a few satellites have managed to probe the vertical distribution of ozone, but only to the bottom of the stratosphere.

Unlike the others, TES can measure the distribution of ozone all the way down to the heat-trapping middle altitudes. "We see vertical information in ozone that nobody else has measured before from space," says Annmarie Eldering, Deputy Principal Investigator for TES.

The global perspective offered by an orbiting satellite is especially important for ozone. Ozone is highly reactive. It is constantly being created and destroyed by photochemical reactions in the atmosphere and by lightning. So its concentration varies from region to region, from season to season, and as the wind blows.

Data from TES show that ozone's heat-trapping effect is greatest in the spring, when intensifying sunlight and warming temperatures fuel the reactions that generate ozone. Most of ozone's contribution to the greenhouse effect occurs within 45 degrees latitude from the equator. Increasing industrialization, particularly in the developing world, could lead to an increase in mid-altitude ozone, Eldering says. Cars and coal-fired power plants release air pollutants that later react to produce more ozone.



*Ozone behaves differently at different altitudes in the atmosphere. High in the stratosphere and at mid-troposphere it has positive effects on life at the surface. At the top of the troposphere ozone is a greenhouse gas and at the surface it makes smog.*

"There's concern that overall background levels are slowly increasing over time," Eldering says. TES will continue to monitor these trends, she says, keeping a careful eye on ozone, the greenhouse gas.

Learn more about TES and the science of ozone at [tes.jpl.nasa.gov/](http://tes.jpl.nasa.gov/). Kids can get a great introduction to good ozone and bad ozone at [spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/tes/gases](http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/tes/gases).

*This article was provided by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.*



## April 24 Meeting Minutes

Sandra J. Macika for Ken Anderson

Attendance: 36

Doug Bauer started the FAAC meeting at 5:15 pm in the HFCC Rossenau conference room with introductions, and pizza and pop.

Doug Bauer reports that club badges will be created for FAAC members. He passed out a form for each member to indicate how their first name should appear on their badge. There is no charge for the first badge; replacement badges are \$5.

Doug Bauer passed out Certificates of Appreciation to members who were not present at the Annual Banquet. Recipients: Bob MacFarland, Tim Dey, Tony Licata, Harold Thomason, and Diane Worth.

**Member Observing Experiences** – Sandra J. Macika talked about observing at Fish Lake in Lapeer, MI. Sandra and Greg Ozimek both talked about entertaining the public at the U of M Dearborn Observatory with Eric Rasmussen. Jon Blum and guest Stephen Uitti talked about observing at Richmond Air Field. Jon also brought an interesting article about John Kirchhoff printed in the 3/30/08 edition of the Detroit Free Press. Tim Dey and Frank Ancona shared their observing experiences.

### Main Presentation: "Meteor Study for NASA in California" by Sandra J. Macika

Sandra volunteered with Dr. Peter Jenniskens of the Carl Sagan Center at the SETI Institute at NASA/Ames Research Center Moffett Field, CA from 1997 to 2001. She explained how NASA uses Limiting Magnitude charts to judge the dark sky conditions during meteor studies, and how the Little Dipper can also be used to judge limiting magnitude. She told how NASA volunteers collect meteor data using 1) still photographs with 10 minute exposures, 2) visual observers recording data on charts, and 3) airborne movie recordings.

Dr. Peter uses visual data collected at multiple locations to determine the trajectory and origin of meteors. He uses a fan blade that spins above the still cameras making the meteors appear as dashed lines to determine the speed of meteors. Sandra shared her exciting experiences studying the Leonid Storms of 1998 and 1999.

Dr. Peter has made a number of interesting discoveries using the collected meteor data

including 1) detection of the signature of organic matter in the wake of meteors as a potential precursor to origin-of-life chemistry, and 2) discovery of parent body of the Quadrantid shower: minor planet 2003 EH1.

**Tech Talk:** "Field of View or There's no such thing as too many telescopes" was delivered by Tony Licata. Tony showed photographs of his current and past telescopes and his remote computer control station which is set up in his home for cold weather imaging. He showed his C11, R200 8" reflector, C8, WO Megrez 110 refractor, and GSO 800mm FL reflector. He uses his G11 mount for all scopes. Screen captures from "The Sky" showed the image size of each telescope including his guide scope. He uses one camera for planets and another for other imaging. FAAC members and guests exclaimed in awe as Tony displayed gorgeous photographs taken with each of his telescopes. Tony's favorite scope is his GSO 800mm FL reflector, which is significantly less expensive than the R200 8" reflector that he sold.

### Treasurer's Report, Steve Flessa

- Accounts: \$7,507 (\$100 cash + \$4,303 liquid accounts + \$2,063 long term CD investments + \$1,041 Equipment / Scholarship funds). FAAC banquet costs have been subtracted. \$2,016 held for GLAAC.
- Swap Meet: Receipts \$1,379, Expenses \$692, Profit \$687. 126 Admissions & 17 of 24 tables sold.
- Meeting Food Fund: A \$2 donation does not cover the costs. Members should donate \$3.

### Equipment Manager's Report, Harold Thomason

– The Dearborn City Council approved Harold's request to set up his telescope on Michigan Ave. He extended an invitation to come share his views.

### Astro-Imaging SIG, Tony Licata – Next meeting Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Tony asked for volunteers to do presentations, and he invited all members to submit photographs, astronomy related or not, to be reviewed at the meeting. Photographs should be less than 1200 pixels and jpeg format, if possible.

**Astronomical League, John Schroer** – FAAC has agreed to pay \$10 to list the club. Each FAAC member who wishes to join must pay an additional \$7.50. Submit your name to John

*...continued on page 5*

## Minutes ... (from page 4)

Schroer and the \$7.50 fee to the treasurer on or before the May 2008 FAAC club meeting.

**Dark Sky** – Greg Ozimek reported that he is still working on resolving the bright/blinding streetlight at Ford UAW legal on Oakland between Ford and Michigan Ave.

### Club Telescope Committee, Greg Ozimek

- Greg brought up some concerns such as 1) security / possible vandalism or theft, and 2) cleaning and maintenance of the building, restroom facilities, and grounds.
- Sandra J. Macika is conducting a search for possible existing observatories or observatory buildings. Tim Dey mentioned that he has affiliation with a Lincoln Park 12" telescope and observatory that is not in use. He will investigate the possibility of FAAC using the facility in addition to, or until the club has a site of its own. Please report any other suggestions of existing observatories or observatory buildings regardless of their current condition or state of repair to the committee.
- Committee Members: Ken Anderson, John Schroer, Greg Ozimek, Sandra J. Macika, Bob MacFarland, Steve Harvath, Erik Webster and Doug Bock.

### Henry Ford Community College (HFCC) / Univ of Michigan-Dearborn (UM-D), Greg Ozimek

- Every Tuesday evening at 7:30 pm from March 25 to June 17, FAAC members present the new "Spring Sky" show in the HFCC Science Building Planetarium (room S-126). Shows are free and first-come, first-served. Doors open around 7:15pm and close promptly at 7:30 pm.
- Eric Rasmussen will open the UM-D Observatory (3rd floor of UM-D's Science Learning Research Center) on some Tuesday's after the HFCC planetarium show. The next sessions are scheduled for April 29th (8:30-10 pm), May 10th (10-11:30 pm) and June 20th (10:30-midnight). Please call the UM-D observatory hotline at 313-583-6566 one hour before to confirm. Get UM-D campus maps at [www.umd.umich.edu/maps\\_directions/FAAC](http://www.umd.umich.edu/maps_directions/FAAC).
- FAAC members are invited to volunteer to bring binoculars to entertain the public after the shows.

### Astronomy Day – Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>

- Detroit Science Center (DSC) activities are Solar Observing, a photo contest for deep sky & lunar/planetary, and a presentation by Dr. Phil Plait. Contact John Schroer to volunteer. No background check is required. Dr. Plait is also presenting at the Cranbrook Institute on Friday, May 9th. Admission is \$10, but FAAC members pay \$8. Check [www.badastronomy.com](http://www.badastronomy.com) for information.
- Island Lake Observing hosted by John Kirchhoff
- Lake Erie Observing hosted by Gordon Hansen
- Kensington Observing hosted by George Korody
- Michigan Ave. Observing hosted by Harold Thomason

### FAAC Outreach at Barth Elementary Science Week – Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup>

4-10pm at Barth Elementary School (near Romulus), with Astronomy 101, DSC Star Lab, and observing (200 participants estimated). Contact Doug Bauer to volunteer.

### FAAC Outreach at Innisfree Girl Scout Camp in Howell, MI – Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>

7-11pm at Innisfree Girl Scout Camp in Howell, MI. Contact Doug Bauer to volunteer.

**FAAC Outreach at Proud Lake** – This June 7<sup>th</sup> event has been postponed. New date TBD.

**Garfield Elementary, Livonia** expressed interest in an Outreach Program for some time in the future.

### Dark Sky Workshop – September 29 to October 5

River Valley in Gladwin (immediately following the star gaze, so we can keep equipment set up!). A flyer will be available with details as the date approaches. Contact Tony Licata for more information.

**FAAC Apparel** – Diane Worth will host a fashion show of new FAAC Apparel with new prices at the May 2008 FAAC meeting. One member asked if a lightweight FAAC T-Shirt could be added to the line.

**FAAC Library, Garry Stahl** – Garry suggested that the Library could use some star chart books for members to borrow, and asked for suggestions of which books might be obtained.

## Meeting Agenda - May 22

**5:30 pm HFCC - Rosenau CR - Admin. Services & Conference Center**

(For map see:

[http://www.hfcc.edu/contact/campus\\_maps.pdf](http://www.hfcc.edu/contact/campus_maps.pdf))

### Opening/Introduction/Member Observing

**Presentation: SLOOH Remote Observatory in Canary Islands** – Mark Deprest – Low Brows AC

**Tech Talk: Public Access TV Interview of club members** – Doug Bauer

### ClubBusiness/Secretary/Treasurer/Equipment Club Projects/Committees/Member Support

- **Astro-Imaging SIG**
- **Astronomical League Membership**
- **Dark Sky**
- **Club Telescope Committee**
- **Proud Lake Earth Day Event (postponed)**
- **Innisfree Girl Scout Camp – Howell – Saturday, June 7th, 7:00 – 11:00 pm**
- **Open Discussion**

## Treasurer's Report

Steve Flessa

Account	4/21/2008 Balance
<b>Bank Accounts</b>	
Checking	\$984.79
Savings	\$3,318.23
<b>TOTAL Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$4,303.02</b>
<b>Cash Accounts</b>	
Cash Account	\$100.00
<b>TOTAL Cash Accounts</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Investment Accounts</b>	
Certificates of Deposit	\$2,063.44
<b>Asset Accounts</b>	
Equipment	\$498.96
Scholarship	\$542.05
<b>TOTAL Asset Accounts</b>	<b>\$1,041.01</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,507.47</b>
<b>Memo:</b>	
GLAAC	\$2,015.62

## Astro Imaging SIG

Tony Licata

Gallery Submissions Requested!

If you have any interesting photos, astronomy related or not, please send them to [tglicata@aol.com](mailto:tglicata@aol.com) as JPG attachments.

The SIG gallery of images will be viewed during each SIG meeting. A reminder will be posted periodically on the Yahoo group for gallery submissions.

All are invited to join us, share and discuss their images. We always have a good time, with lively discussion.

The next meeting of the Astro Imaging SIG will be Thursday, June 5th, 2008, 5:30 pm at Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, in the Administrative Services & Conference Bldg. (same as the FAAC General Meeting).

Mark your calendars! The Dark Sky Workshop 2008 is scheduled for Monday Sep 29th through Oct. 5th, at River Valley RV Camp, in Gladwin, MI. A flier and sign up sheet will be forthcoming.

## Items for Sale

**Schmidt-Newtonian 10"** – F5.35, 1360 mm focal length with 2" focuser, 60 mm guide scope, Thousand Oaks Full aperture solar filter (Mylar). Cooling fan, extra set of "O" rings, Optron Corrector plate. Crestliner mount (on wheels) available. Scope made by Nelson Lewis of Detroit Astronomical Society in 1962. Purchased 1981. Selling telescope for \$325. Mount for \$200.

Contact Harold Thomason 313-584-7465

**Coulter 10" Dobsonian** telescope. \$400.  
Contact Bob Stonik, 313-361-4954

**VIXEN R130sf Newtonian 130mm** telescope on a Vixen Porta Mount, \$350. Includes an eyepiece and a Red Dot Finder. The scope diameter is 130mm (5"), the focal length is about 1050 mm. Porta Mount itself lists for \$399.

There is no case or bag for the legs. Just a great deal on a good scope and a great mount.

Contact Tom Blaszk, [key\\_string\\_guy@yahoo.com](mailto:key_string_guy@yahoo.com)



## FAAC Events 2007

Bob MacFarland

- June**      **3, 10, 17** – “Spring Sky” Planetarium shows, 7:30 pm. Free. HFCC Science Building Planetarium (room S-126). Seating is first-come, first-served.
- 7** – Beginners' Night, Island Lake Recreation Area, Lake Erie MetroPark
- 7** – Outreach at Innisfree Girl Scout Camp in Howell, MI
- July**        **12** – Beginners' Night, Island Lake Recreation Area, Lake Erie MetroPark
- August**     **9** – Beginners' Night, Island Lake Recreation Area, Lake Erie MetroPark
- September** **5-6** – Astronomy on the Beach – GLAAC, Kensington Park
- 25-28** – Great Lakes Star Gaze, Gladwin
- 29-Oct. 4** – Astro-Imaging Workshop, Gladwin
- October**    **4** – Beginner's Night - Island Lake, Lake Erie MetroPark



*FAAC contingent with scopes, information.*

## Astronomy Day May 10 - DSC

Photos by Dale Ochalek

The Detroit Science Center hosted on Astronomy Day. The FAAC contingent was armed with scopes for day-time viewing – with Gordon Hansen tracking Venus, Don Klaser and Doug Bauer, the sun, and Sandra Macika offering the moon.



*Gordon Hansen hunts an elusive daytime Venus.*



*Don Klaser, Greg Ozimek, and Doug Bauer chat.*



*Sandra Macika offers moon viewing.*

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



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## HOBBY SHOPS

<b>Store Hours:</b> M-F 10am-7pm SAT 10am-6pm SUN Noon-5pm	<b>Gen. Manager:</b> John Kirchhoff <b>Email:</b> livonia@riders.com <b>http://www.riders.com</b>	30991 Five Mile Road Livonia MI 48154 Tele: (734) 425-9720 FAX: (734) 425-2029
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**New from NEAF!**

**Daystar Solar Telescopes and Filters**

*including the new*

**SolaRedi Stellarvue**

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