



★ STAR STUFF ★

The Newsletter of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

**November 2000
Volume 9 Number 8**



Editor: Michael J. Bruno

^^-- STAR STUFF has a New Editor --^^

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STAR STUFF Editorial

By Michael J. Bruno, Editor

Star Stuff has a new editor for now and I am it, my name is Mike Bruno. For those of you who do not know me, I am also the FAAC Treasurer and have been running the Hotline for the past few months. John Kmiecik has moved on to bigger and better things, mainly High School Life, and needed someone to take over this responsibility for the Club. I would like to thank John for his effort in putting out the newsletter this past year and service to the Club for volunteering for this job.

As I sit here and write this message I know this newsletter will be a challenge to produce each month. I am going to rely on all the members of this Club to give me a hand by contributing an article whenever they can. I would like to find if all possible, an assistant and contributing editors. If there is a topic they may interest you, it could be included monthly, semi, etc... as a Department in the newsletter.

For example Dan Kmiecik will be sending articles in to the Department he created titled "ClubspOt" which brings attention to all the different certificates that can be obtained through the Astronomical League. Articles may be short to long, all will get published from a paragraph to a short story. Articles may be submitted at anytime and will get published in the next possible newsletter.

Any ideas and help that can be offered will make the newsletter each month that much better. Let me know what you would like to see or hear about in our newsletter even if an article is not in your future.

Some ideas for articles to be submitted:

- **Book reviews**
Have you read anything of interest and would like to share your thoughts with the Club?
- **Equipment reviews**
Now everyone should be able to write a paragraph on this. What new or old equipment or accessories have you bought, borrowed or used? Tell us what you think in an article.
- **Topics of Interest**
There are no boundaries here. What have you heard lately, what is your passion in this hobby, what brought you into astronomy? We all have our own unique perspective.
- **Astronomy and the Internet**
Seen any cool webpages? What are some of your favorite bookmarks? Read anything interesting in the newsgroups?
- **Any other idea "here"**
You fill in the blanks and let us know.

To submit an article or idea, contact me. If you have e-mail send in most any electronic format to brunomj@mindspring.com. You may also mail any article to the Post Office Box or call the Hotline and I will get back with you. II

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>

Your submissions to STAR STUFF are welcome. Please write to the address above or contact the editor:

Michael J. Bruno
brunomj@mindspring.com

Officers:

President	Dan Kmiecik
Vice President	Don Thompson
Secretary	Mike Kruskie
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 in conference room 1491 in the Ford Credit building in Dearborn, Michigan

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.

Hotline:

Observing schedules and additional Club information is available by calling the Observing Hotline at: (313) 390-5456.

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

Lifetime - \$ 100

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.

Membership Dues Are Now Due

By Michael J. Bruno, Treasurer

It is that time of the year again! The 2001 Membership dues are now due for all members that have annual memberships. The dues remain at \$20 a year and if you would like to upgrade to a lifetime membership it is \$100.

Your dues payment should be sent to: P.O. Box 7527 Dearborn, MI 48121 and make your check payable to the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club. You may also pay your dues at the next general meeting to be held on December 7, 2000. Your payment is due by January 31, 2001 to remain an active member with all benefits of the Club. If received after that date you will need to rejoin at the new member rate of \$25.

If you have any questions as to your membership status, please get a hold of Mike Bruno through e-mail or by leaving a message on the Hotline. Π

Check your Label

If your STAR STUFF mailing label is incorrect or if you have a change of address, let us know. Π

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. Π

Welcome Wagon

Star Stuff would like to welcome all the following new Club members. We hope you will enjoy your pursuit of amateur astronomy with us. Clear Skies!

Milton Antonick, Royal Oak
Greg Weyeneth, Dearborn
Robert C. Clubb Jr., Centerline
Grant Compton, Livonia
David Williamson, Dearborn Hts.
Howard Berlin, Southfield
Lawrence Perry, Redford
Michael Rousseau, Plymouth
Gabriel Hayes, Detroit
Ray Rauen, Redford
Darrel Dullack, South Lyon
Bruce & Diane Palansky, Westland
Lou Decillis, Waterford
Thomas A. Jatkowski, Howell
Mike Boehk, Canton
Raymond Weitzman, W. Bloomfield Π

E-Mail List Service

As previously announced in the last newsletter, all announcements from Club officers and e-mail between FAAC members will be handled by our new e-mail list service. You must subscribe to this to receive any future electronic correspondence.

To subscribe: send an e-mail message to majordomo@www.boonhill.net and in the body of the message type: subscribe faac. Once subscribed you can send your notes to: faac@www.boonhill.net. Everyone on the FAAC e-mail list will receive your message. If you have any questions contact an officer. II

Eighth Annual Island Lake STAR PARTY

By George Korody

FAAC's Eighth Annual Island Lake Star Party was held on Saturday, October 7. In spite of unseasonably cold weather with some rain, sleet, and snow 500-600 heavily bundled attendees showed up to talk, watch, learn, and share astronomy experiences. Rider's Hobby Shops and the Discovery Channel Store who co-sponsored the event, as well as FAAC, set up tables and displayed products for sale in a large tent that kept cold winds at bay.

Attendees brought quite a few telescopes, but other than occasional early evening glimpses of the moon the sky was clouded out. The fragrance of cooking hot dogs and other vending items drifted through the pavilion area as large crowds watched and listened to the presentations of the evening. After the presentations some drawing prizes were distributed to lucky ticket holders.

As was done last year, arrangements were made with Heavner's Canoe Rental who had drivers and vans ready to handle parking overflow from the pavilion area lot. The pavilion lot was nearly full for much of the evening, but additional parking was not needed as the cold forced some to leave early, making space for new arrivals.

All-in-all most people stated they had a great time in spite of the bad weather. It seems that adversity makes for memorable experiences. Many will still remember the star party impacted by hurricane Fran a number of years ago.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended and those who worked diligently to make this a successful event. We would especially like to thank those who participated in the presentations and our gracious co-sponsors Rider's Hobby Shops and the Discovery Channel Store. II

Astro FAAC's

From: <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/dayfacts/archives/>
and George Korody

Have you come across any Space or Astronomy related Facts you would like to share with the club, submit them to this Department!

Since STS-1, the space shuttle has traveled more than 555 million kilometers (345 million miles), not including the distance Discovery traveled during STS-92. The shuttle has completed more than 13,500 orbits of Earth during its 20 years of operation.

The shuttle fleet - Columbia, Challenger, Discovery, Atlantis and Endeavour - has spent a total of 2 years, 336 days, 14 hours, 47 minutes and 59 seconds in space, not including the duration of STS-92.

If it costs one cent to ride a thousand miles, a trip around the world would cost twenty-five cents; to the moon, two dollars and thirty-eight cents; to the sun, only nine hundred and thirty dollars; but a trip to the nearest star would cost two hundred and sixty million dollars! Amazing!! II

NASA Notes

By David Williamson - DaveWilli@mediaone.net
From: <http://spaceflightnow.com> and
<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov>

This new feature will bring you information on upcoming Space Shuttle and International Space Station launches, with a summary of each.

Date: Nov. 16 time TBA

Vehicle: Soyuz-U

Site: Baikonur Cosmodrome, Kazakhstan

Payload/Mission: Second Progress cargo delivery ship to the International Space Station.

Date: Nov 30 21:05 EST

Vehicle: Shuttle Endeavour

Site: Kennedy Space Center, Florida

Duration: 9 days, 20 hours, 41 minutes

Crew: Commander Brent Jett, Pilot Michael Bloomfield, Mission Specialist Joseph Tanner, Mission Specialist Carlos Noriega, Mission Specialist Marc Garneau, CSA

Mission/Payload: STS-97 The first mission to visit the station after the arrival of its first resident crew. Space Shuttle Endeavour and its five-member crew will deliver the P6 Integrated Truss Segment, which includes the first U.S. solar arrays and a power distribution system. Endeavour's robotic arm will be used and two space walks will be conducted to install the P6 on to the station's Z1 Truss. The solar arrays will be the largest ever to fly in space. Also, the crew will relocate the S-Band Antenna Support Assembly from the Z1 to the P6, which will make the S-band

system operational. Another payload for STS-97 is an IMAX Cargo Bay Camera-3D. It will be used to record activities of the mission. II

the clubspOt

By Daniel J. Kmiecik

The Astronomical League observing clubs offer encouragement and certificates of accomplishment for demonstrating observing skills with a variety of instruments and objects. These include the Messier Club, Binocular Messier Club and the Herschel 400 Club, the Deep Sky Binocular Club, the Southern Skies Binocular Club, the Meteor Club, the Double Star Club, and the newly formed Lunar Club.

The FAAC is affiliated with the Astronomical League. When you have completed the requirements for any Observing Club, turn your notebook into Dan Kmiecik. Dan will be sure the appropriate FAAC expert examines your notes and send the necessary form to the Astronomical League.

The Binocular Messier Club

The Binocular Messier Club is for beginning observers as well as experienced amateurs. Beginning observers will find that it doesn't take an expensive telescope but only a simple pair of binoculars, no matter what size, cost or condition, to do serious astronomy. On the other hand, experienced amateurs, even though they may already have the A.L.'s telescopic Messier and Herschel certificates, will enjoy the new perspective binocular observing gives them as they pull back from an object and observe the area around that object as well as the object itself. Seeing the object and its relationship to the sky around it will put that object in its proper context in the sky.

To qualify for the A.L.'s Binocular Messier Certificate, you need only be a member of the Astronomical League, through either an affiliated society or as a member-at-large, and observe 50 or more Messier objects using only binoculars. Any 50 of the 110 recognized Messier objects may be observed. Any pair of binoculars may be used, but those with objectives between 20MM and 80MM in diameter are recommended.

Recommended objects for 7x35, 7x50, and 10x50 binoculars:

I. Easy Messier Objects:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 52, 55, 67, 92, 93, 103
Total = 42.

II. Tougher Messier Objects:

14, 19, 28, 30, 33, 40, 49, 53, 62, 63, 64, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 94
Total = 18.

III. Challenge Messier Objects:

1, 9, 26, 32, 51, 54, 56, 65, 66, 68, 71, 75, 97, 101, 104, 106

Total = 16.

Grand Total = 76.

Recommended objects for 11x80 binoculars or larger:

I. Easy Messier Objects:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 52, 53, 55, 62, 67, 71, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 92, 93, 94, 103.
Total = 58.

II. Tougher Messier Objects:

1, 9, 33, 49, 51, 54, 56, 60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 75, 77, 83, 87, 97, 101, 102, 104, 106.

Total = 23.

III. Challenge Messier Objects:

20, 58, 59, 69, 70, 72, 84, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 95, 96, 99, 100, 105, 107, 108, 109, 110.

Total = 21.

Grand Total = 102.

Announcements

Club Officer Nominations!

Another year is quickly passing by. A great way to get involved with the Club and share your ideas to help make it better is by becoming an officer.

From now until the day of the election, nominations for Club Officers will be accepted. Nominations can be made by selecting an office and then submit your name or the name of the person you would like to nominate. Then mail your nomination to P.O. Box 7527 Dearborn, MI 48121 or send through e-mail to faac1992@hotmail.com.

Nominations will also be taken at the December 7 general meeting and the general meeting the day of the election. The Election will take place at the general meeting January 25, 2001.

Note: The ballots will be sent to Florida to make sure the are counted right. <g>

Entertainment books

Through FERA, Entertainment books for \$40 and Gold C books for \$10 are now available. Proceeds on the books help support our Club. Contact Dan Kmiecik at faac1992@hotmail.com or a club officer.

Star Party

The Hudson Mills Metropark star party sponsored by the University Lobrow Astronomers is Thursday night Nov 16. Its being billed as a star party and maybe we will see a few Leonid Meteors and Fireballs. Recall last year fireballs preceded the main Leonid meteor event. The event will be announced on

channel 4, so there may be quite a few attending. The park can accommodate 20,000 and is a very good dark site. Bringing telescopes will be greatly appreciated.

Its a good idea to setup before its dark, and the park will stay open until 2 AM. The gate vehicle entrance fee is \$2 unless you have an annual pass, then its free.

The location is on North Territorial Road about 1/3 mile East of Dexter-Pinckney Rd.

Peach Mountain will be available for observing the meteors after 2 AM. II

Advertisements

Place an Ad with Star Stuff!

If you have something to sell or are looking for something to buy, how about giving a fellow member the opportunity to buy or sell it before you post it on "Astromart" Best of all it is Free!! II

Next General Meeting

The next meeting of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club will be held on **Thursday, December 7**, at 5:00pm in conference room 1491 in the Ford Credit building in Dearborn.

The program for the meeting has not yet been determined, but as always, pizza and pop will be provided.

The Ford Credit building is the low building immediately northeast of (but not attached to) Ford World Headquarters. The building is secured with a card entry system. The easiest way to enter for meetings is to park in the lot east of the building and enter thru the lower east or lower northeast doors. At 5:00p no one seems to have much trouble entering, because many people are leaving about that time. At the lower east door there is a manned security desk. Identify yourself, and say you are attending a Ford club meeting, and the guard will admit you. The meeting room is on the lower floor, on the east side of the building, about mid-way along the north-south corridor. Usually, signs will be posted to direct you to the room. II

2000/01 Ford Amateur Astronomy Club Calendar of Events and Activities

Nov 16	Hudson Mills Metropark star party
Nov 25	NCO Star Party at Doug Bock's Lake Hudson Dark Sky Stargaze
Dec 7	FAAC Joint November/December General Membership Meeting
Dec 23	Lake Hudson Dark Sky Stargaze
Dec 25	Christmas Day Partial Solar Eclipse
Jan 25	General Membership Meeting and Club Election

Check for updates:

on the FAAC hotline (313) 390-5456

Ford Intranet: www.be.ford.com/astro/faac.html

or the Internet: www.boonhill.net/faac

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