



# STAR STUFF

The Newsletter of the Ford Amateur Astronomy Club

Volume 19, Number 7

July 2010

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## The Sun Can Still Remind Us Who's Boss

By Dr. Tony Phillips

Grab your cell phone and take a good long look. It's indispensable, right? It tells time, surfs the web, keeps track of your appointments and, by the way, also makes phone calls. Modern people can hardly live without one.

One good solar flare could knock it all out.

"In the 21st century, we're increasingly dependent on technology," points out Tom Bogdan, director of NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center in Boulder, Colorado. "This makes solar activity an important part of our daily lives."

Indeed, bad space weather can knock out power systems, telecommunications, financial and emergency services—basically, anything that needs electronics to work. That's why NOAA is building a new fleet of "space weather stations," the GOES-R satellites.

"GOES-R will bring our existing fleet of weather satellites into the 21st century," says Bogdan. "They're designed to monitor not only Earth weather, but space weather as well."

*Continued On page 2*

## Reserving FAAC Equipment

### President's Corner

FAAC has many pieces of equipment that can be used for FAAC related activities these include:

- LCD Projector
- Projection Screen
- DVD Player
- Club Telescope
- Sky Quality Meter
- Club Banners
- Astronomy Event Sign
- Bullhorn
- Sound System
- Solar System relative distances
- 100 foot tape
- 3D Solar System Model
- Presentation Board
- Canopy
- Moon Phases Demonstration

*(continued page 3)*

# STAR STUFF

June 2010 - Vol. 19 No 6

STAR STUFF is published eleven times each year by:

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

PRESIDENT: Doug Bauer  
VICE PRESIDENT: Chuck Jones  
SECRETARY: Lori Poremsky / Kevin Medon  
TREASURER: Gordon Hansen  
WEBMASTER: Greg Ozimek  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Greg Knekleian

## 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 Administration 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 a private observing site near Gregory Michigan and Lake Erie Metro Park. 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 Members: \$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 subscriptions 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 [pvideo@aol.com](mailto:pvideo@aol.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 Ford Astronomy Club Yahoo!Group. Messages photos, files, online discussions, and more! URL: [groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FordAstronomyClub).

*This months background photos of the moon Page 1 courtesy of John Kirchhoff. See more of John's photos at:*

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/33926475@N06/with/4311533997/>

## Presidents Corner *(continued from Page 1)*

Here is the procedure for reserving this equipment, if you need it:

The FAAC has presentation equipment, including projector, screen, and sound system, available for use by FAAC members for your FAAC educational outreach needs! Member Diane Worth is our Equipment Manager. We have a Database in the Yahoo Group that allows you to find the current location and reserve equipment for specific dates. If you don't have access to the Yahoo Group, contact Diane c/o FAAC (or call 248-980-7832 or e-mail: [dianewsky-night@yahoo.com](mailto:dianewsky-night@yahoo.com)) to reserve the equipment.

### Process for Reserving Equipment

1. Sign onto the FAAC Yahoo Group
2. Select the Database section on the left
3. Open the FAAC Equipment Reservations database
4. Scroll to the equipment you want to reserve
5. Add a record for the Equipment and Date range you are reserving it for

The record must include:

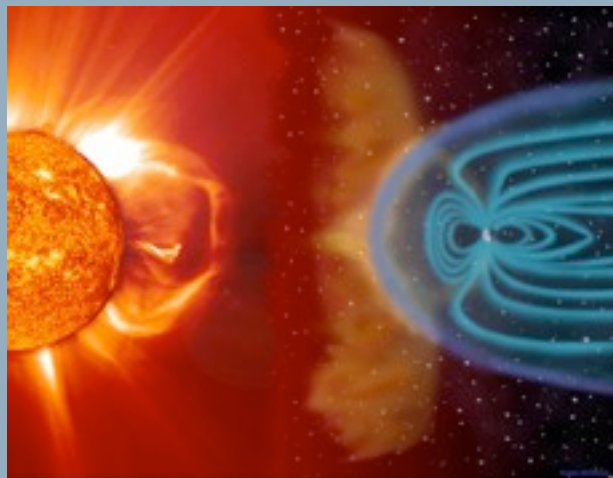
- Equipment name
- Reservation Begin Date
- Reservation End Date
- Person Reserving Equipment (your name)
- Person's Phone Number
- Person's e-mail (if you have one)

6. Contact the person identified as having the equipment before your reservation and arrange for transfer of possession.

7. If you have the equipment and will not be available to pass the equipment on to the next reservation date (due to out of town business, vacation, etc.), **contact another club member to keep the equipment and enter a new record in the database**

*(continued on page 4)*

*In spite of Earth's protective magnetosphere, solar storms can wreak havoc with Earth satellites and other expensive electronics on the ground.*



## The Sun Can Still Remind Us Who's Boss

*(continued from Page 1)*

NOAA's existing fleet of Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites (GOES) already includes some space weather capabilities: solar ultraviolet and X-ray telescopes, a magnetometer and energetic particle sensors. GOES-R will improve upon these instruments and add important new sensors to the mix.

One of Bogdan's favorites is a particle detector named "MPS-Low," which specializes in sensing low-energy (30 eV – 30 keV) particles from the sun.

Who cares about low-energy particles? It turns out they can be as troublesome as their high-energy counterparts. Protons and other atomic nuclei accelerated to the highest energies by solar flares can penetrate a satellite's exterior surface, causing all kinds of problems when they reach internal electronics. Low-energy particles, particularly electrons, can't penetrate so deeply. Instead, they do their damage on the outside.

As Bogdan explains, "Low-energy particles can build up on the surfaces of spacecraft, creating a mist of charge. As voltages increase, sparks and arcs can zap electronics—or emit

radio pulses that can be misinterpreted by onboard computers as a command."

The Galaxy 15 communications satellite stopped working during a solar wind storm in April 2010, and many researchers believe low-energy particles are to blame. GOES-R will be able to monitor this population of particles and alert operators when it's time to shut down sensitive systems.

"This is something new GOES-R will do for us," says Bogdan.

The GOES-R magnetometer is also a step ahead. It will sample our planet's magnetic field four times faster than its predecessors, sensing vibrations that previous GOES satellites might have missed. Among other things, this will help forecasters anticipate the buildup of geomagnetic storms.

And then there are the pictures. GOES-R will beam back striking images of the sun at X-ray and extreme UV wavelengths. These are parts of the electromagnetic spectrum where solar flares and other eruptions make themselves known with bright flashes of high-energy radiation.

*(continued on Page 4)*

## The Sun Can Still Remind Us Who's Boss

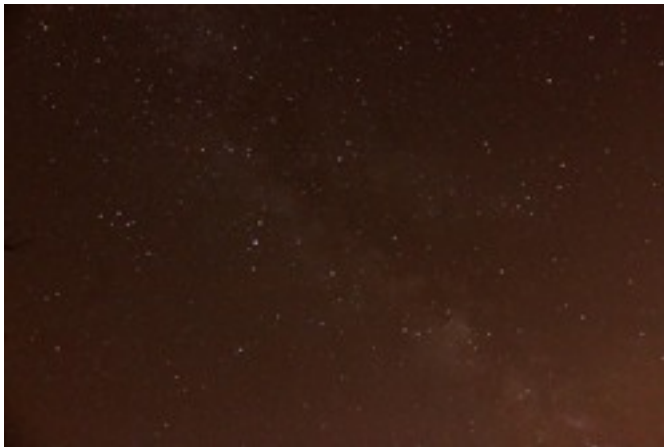
(continued from Page 3)

GOES-R will pinpoint the flashes and identify their sources, allowing forecasters to quickly assess whether or not Earth is in the "line of fire."

They might also be able to answer the question, Is my cell phone about to stop working?

The first GOES-R satellite is scheduled for launch in 2015. Check [www.goes-r.gov](http://www.goes-r.gov) for updates. Space weather comes down to Earth in the clear and fun explanation for young people on Scijinks, <http://scijinks.gov/space-weather-and-us>.

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



**Milky Way Was Visible to the naked eye (Lake Erie Metro Park, July 17 2010).**

*Canon t1i, 3200 ISO, 30 second exposure. Unguided photo. Minor photo adjustments.*

*Note this photo may be too dark in the "printed" version and may look better in the online/PDF version.*

## Reserving FAAC Equipment

(continued from page 2)

8. If you decide not to use the equipment after reserving and have not picked up the equipment, please be courteous and delete the reservation record
9. Once equipment has been transferred to a new person the record for the prior person can be deleted

### Rules for Equipment Use

1. Equipment priority will be given to FAAC sponsored activities.
2. Equipment may only be reserved by active FAAC members.
3. The equipment must be signed out through the Yahoo Group Equipment Database.
4. Store equipment securely while not in use.
5. Handle and use equipment so as not to cause damage (outside the normal wear and tear).
6. Make sure those operating the equipment will use it properly (always ask for help if needed).
7. Report any problems with the equipment to the EM within 24 hours.
8. Work with the EM and others needing the equipment to find a way to get the equipment to the next person on the reservation list.

Doug Bauer  
DougBauer@Comcast.Net



## Lake Erie Beginner Night

by Greg Knekleian

Last minute newsletter updates are a challenge to write. (while in zombie mode.)

My plan was to show some of the Class of 1979 reunion the moon or sun with solar viewing at the observatory during the day, but that didn't work out. I stopped by briefly in the middle of a bunch of last minute errands and heard a few funny stories and left. I dropped off one FAAC card to one former classmate. He seemed to be interested in visiting the observatory. I wrote my observing blog address on it: [HJROBSERVATORY.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://HJROBSERVATORY.BLOGSPOT.COM)

Leaving the reunion, I drove out to Lake Erie. I wanted to meet Gordon Hanson and pick up a DVD demo video he recently received and get a quick copy of it.

The storms clouds moved to Canada. My car was loaded with my iPad and other toys. Gordon Hanson and Dennis Salliotte were already setting up, I arrived late. I had a thought while driving there: I'll only be there for an hour or so, take some photos, then jet out to the Island Lake site to observe there. (Greg Ozimek suggested I might try to do both events, maybe I could.) I put out a quick blog on the iPhone that I was going to be at Lake Erie Metro Park and not at the observatory. The skies cleared, nice seeing as flashes of lightening were lighting up the sky over Canada.

One of the beginners (Sean) had his telescope setup already. An Orion 10 inch telescope he recently purchased. The sky was looking good and I immediately setup the little Vixen BT-80MA Binocular telescope to get a look at the moon. The moon was amazing, through the Vixen. My camera tripod wasn't the ideal mount for the binocular telescope. The skies

nice and dark compared to what I'm used to looking at in Lincoln Park. I was excited and really in a talkative mood. I was chatting about equipment and fell into my familiar Apple iPad demo mode for 20 minutes. (*Perhaps to talkative?*)

Gordon and Dennis were sharing various facts about the sky with visitors. A green laser pointer was pointing out objects of interest. We were attacked by mosquitos, but they were much less ferocious last month bug attack. (*Fewer bug bites this month.*)



**Sean standing near Gordon's rig at Lake Erie**

*Sean brought a very nice 10 inch Orion Dob with him. It gave some nice views.*

*We saw the Ring Nebula among other sites through his DOB and some of the other scopes there.*

Everyone present, both guys and gals seemed very interested in Astronomy. I loaned a few extra eyepieces to Sean so he could see the effects of different eyepieces on the view with his new 10 inch Newtonian.

The push to setup in the Orion would guide him to objects after a two star alignment. Gordon showed him how to collimate the Newtonian, aiming at it Polaris.

Dan Barriball arrived as at Lake Erie and we told Sean and others about the Lincoln Park observatory. The viewing was so nice, we decided to stop by the observatory and show it off to Sean if he wanted an early morning tour. (*We'll be finished by 3AM, my mind reasoned.*) Needless to say our (*Astronomy addiction support*) group in the observatory had a good time. I rolled out of the observatory at about 4:30AM. (*I'm hoping to have a even better therapy session next time.*)

## Treasurer's Report

### July 1, 2010

By Gordon Hansen

<b>Bank Accounts</b>	
Checking	\$285.90
Savings	\$1,896.87
<b>TOTAL Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$2,182.77</b>
<b>Cash Account</b>	
Cash	\$100.18
<b>TOTAL Cash Account</b>	<b>\$100.18</b>
<b>Investment Accounts</b>	
CD 1	\$1,048.55
CD 2	\$1,082.22
<b>TOTAL Investment Accounts</b>	<b>\$2,130.77</b>
<b>Asset Accounts</b>	
Equipment	\$1,765.92
Scholarship	\$422.80
<b>TOTAL Asset Accounts</b>	<b>\$2,188.72</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,602.44</b>
Memos	
GLAAC	\$2,596.64
<b>Total All Accounts</b>	<b>9,599.08</b>

#### Quick FAAC News tidbit:

*John Kirchhoff formerly of Rider's Hobby Shop by now will be on the road with a new career as an open road truck driver. He'll be looking up from time to time from dark skies, all over the country. We wish him the best. Still a FAAC member, He may create some kind of Astronomy on the road blog later as well.*

## Meeting Agenda - July 22th

### HFCC –Berry Auditorium - Admin. Services & Conference Center

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

5:30 PM

### Opening/Introduction/Member Observing

**Main presentation:** Jim Frisbie

Member Comments on Personal Experiences:

How did you get into Astronomy?

What do you want to learn about?

### Tech Talk:

Celestron Factory Tour

Jon Blum

• FAAC Multi-Club Picnic at Island Lake - Sat. August 7 - 5:00 PM

\* Starry, Starry Night - Time TBA.

Location: Humbug Marsh Unit, Trenton, Michigan. Saturday, August 14th

\* Astronomy at the Beach - Friday and Saturday, Sept 10, 11 - 6pm - Midnight.

• Astro-Imaging SIG

• Dark Sky Committee

### Club Business/Secretary/Treasurer/Equipment Report

### Club Projects/Committees/Member Support



Editor's new Vixen Binocular Telescope, see article on "Finding My Ideal Telescope" for more details

## FAAC General Meeting Minutes June 24, 2010

By Lori Poremsky / Kevin Medon

Attendance: 33+

The meeting was called to order by President Doug Bauer at 5:30 p.m.

Members enjoyed pizza while several new members and visitors introduced themselves and were welcomed. Doug Bauer reminded all members that official FAAC name tags are available. If you do not have one, and would like one, please contact Doug Bauer directly.

Several members mentioned observing experiences including an observing session by Milton French where he was able to see 6 planets in 7 hours. Gordon Hansen noted that the second Beginners night of the season was a success. Seven-eight members of the public were available to view through the scopes. It was a nice clear evening.

Some viewing was also done at Crosswinds Marsh in Huron Township. This viewing area is located west of I-275 off of Will Carleton Road.

Ken Anderson reported that those at Island Lake on Beginners night stayed until about midnight observing.

Doug Bauer mentioned that the FAAC does have a mentoring program. If you are interested in learning about a certain area of astronomy or just need some help in getting started, let Doug Bauer know, and he can pair you with a mentor. Also if you are interested in being a mentor, please let Doug Bauer know.

The main presentation was given by Dave Wright and focused on Dark Matter and Dark Energy – what the universe is made up of.

Today's tech talk was given by Ben Cline and centered around the Yahoo Group and features that are available to club members. The

presentation consisted partly of a presentation and live demo.

### Club Business

**Secretary's Report** – Lori Poremsky noted that we have two new members this month.

68 Regular  
82 Lifetime Members  
7 Astronomical Clubs & Friends  
157 Total

Members who have not yet paid their dues will be removed from the membership list and no longer have club privileges. Motion & second to accept the May minutes; approved.

**Treasurer's Report** – Gordon Hansen noted the complete Treasurers report is in Star Stuff. He also noted that those interested in joining or renewing to the Astronomical League should pay their dues soon. Dues are \$7.50 per year and are due in July. Gordon Hansen is collecting the dues and they will be submitted as a group to the Astronomical League.

Greg Ozimek extended kudos to Greg Knekleian, our new editor for Star Stuff, on a job well done!

**Equipment Managers Report** – Diane Worth noted that all equipment is accounted for. Diane also suggested that a future presentation might be the database portion of the Yahoo Group, showing members how to reserve and checkout equipment.

### Projects/Committees/Events

Doug Bauer, on behalf of John Schroer, noted that Solar Observing will be going on Saturday and Sunday, June 26 and 27, at the Grand Opening of the Detroit Children's Museum (of the Detroit Science Center) from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Members are welcome to participate.

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## FAAC General Meeting Minutes

(continued from page 7)

So far Art Parent and Ken Anderson will be attending. The Museum is located at 6134 Second Avenue in Detroit.

Doug Bauer shared that there will be a public outreach event on Saturday, August 14, at the Humbug Marsh Unit in Trenton, Michigan. The theme is Starry, Starry Night. The time is to be determined. All members are encouraged to participate. The Humbug site is run by the US Forestry Service. Free star programs will be offered and numerous telescopes will be set up to view planets, star clusters and galaxies. It should reach 100- 150 people. The Humbug Marsh is a 5,400 acre site on the Detroit River. Beginner's night for the evening of August 14th has been cancelled at Lake Erie Metropark due to this event. The two sites are very close in proximity.

Doug Bauer noted that the FAAC Multiclub Picnic will be held at Island Lake State Park on Saturday, August 7th. Doug Bauer is extending invitations to other club members. The club will be providing hotdogs, hamburgers and veggie burgers as well as pop and chips. Club members are asked to bring a dish to pass. There will be an ice pool there to keep salads cold. Observing will take place after the picnic. The club will also be hosting a Team Summer Sky Challenge event during the observing hours. Details can be found on the back of the FAAC General Meeting agenda for June 24th as well as on the Yahoo site. Start Time: about 5:00 pm.

The FAAC has been invited to Meadow Brook to host observing sessions before and after a concert. Dates suggested are Friday, July 23rd and Saturday July, 31st. It was decided that Friday, July 23rd would be the better of the two options. Club members participating will meet

for dinner at 4:30 pm and then over to Meadow Brook for set up at 6:00 pm. Participating so far are Doug & DeeAnn Bauer, Don & Jan Klaser, Vijay and his wife, Gordon & Susan Hansen, and Bob & Holly MacFarland.

Gordon Hansen noted that SIG meetings are taking place the 2nd Thursday of every month in the Berry Auditorium of Henry Ford Community College, located in the Administrative Services and Conference Center. The next meeting is Thursday, July 8th.

Frank Ancona noted that both Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo are looking at alternative light in favor of a Dark Sky. They are discussing a dawn to dusk lighting with the Astronomical League.

Doug Bauer noted that Mohamed Mroue has been working on FAAC flyers for distribution at FAAC Beginner's nights as a class project. Mohamed passed some samples out and asked for feedback.

### Open Discussion

Jim Frisbie noted that if anyone has any ideas for a tech talk, please contact Frank Ancona or himself. Suggestions were made. One was the proper way to clean eyepieces. Another was to invite Astronomy instructors or professors to present.

It was noted that the Lincoln Park Observatory will be open for viewing during the Downriver Dream Cruise event from noon to 5:00 pm. The Observatory is located at Lincoln Park High School and is only a couple of block from Fort Street where the cruise will be held.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

A few members stayed after the meeting to view the latest episode of "Astronomy for Everyone" titled "Summer Constellations".



## Astro Imaging SIG

Gordon Hansen

*The June meeting was held at HFCC*

All are invited to join us in the Astro Imaging SIG meetings, to share and discuss images, experiences, and techniques.

We always have a good time, with lively discussion, and sharing of valuable information.

Next meeting is August 12. The meeting room location – HFCC Admin. Services and Conference Center (same building), Berry Amphitheater Auditorium.

Topics invited. Pizza served.

## FAAC Events 2010

Kevin Medon and Lori Poremsky

**July 22 - FAAC General Meeting**

**August 7, 2010 - Multi Club Picnic Island Lake**

**August 14 - Beginner's night Island Lake, and Starry Starry Night Humbug Marsh Unit, Trenton Michigan.**

**Sept 10,11 - Astronomy At The Beach 6PM to Midnight.**

*Background Photo from Lunt Solar Scope Image taken at the Hector J Robinson Observatory, June 28, 2010*

## One FAAC members blog

<http://hjrobservatory.blogspot.com/>

A few updates on the observatory, quick articles and photos. I'll try to improve my writing on this blog. Also, I try to keep daily updates on this blog.

## Items For Sale

Meade Lightbridge Deluxe 12" – F/5, 1524mm focal length. Purchased new last year. Perfect condition mechanically, optically and cosmetically. Big, clear deep sky views. Built-in battery powered cooling fan, two-speed Crayford focuser (1.25 / 2-inch). Easy to transport, set up collimate and use - smooth as silk. Upgraded with Bob's knobs and heavier collimation springs. Includes shroud, cover, Telrad and secondary mirror heater. Over \$1000 invested, will sell for \$650.



Contact John Johnson at [jjohnsonpub@yahoo.com](mailto:jjohnsonpub@yahoo.com)

or (248) 515-0014.

MEADE Telescope and Tripod 6 years old - in excellent shape LXD 75 - Series Schmidt - Cassegrain 8" f/10 SC-8AT (Super Coated, Autostar Guided) - Focal Length 2000 mm Telescope weight = 24 lbs - with MEADE EMC Super Multi-Coatings and with optional Ultra-High Transmission Coating Tripod weight = 45 lbs - Die cast Aluminum German-Type Equatorial Mount with Variable-Height Field Adjustments Autostar Controller guides to 30,223 objects

Includes a Sun Filter, Overnight Protective Cover, Transportation Containers. Contact phone no. 248-851-5053, e-mail [robertboswell@comcast.net](mailto:robertboswell@comcast.net)

## Hector J Robinson Observatory

by Greg Knekleian

Early July, Tim Dey was in town and we did some solar viewing. Tim also stopped by a few nights to check out the evening views.

When visitors arrived it was fun to just sit back and listen to Tim's astronomy narration and presentation. We had enough visitors to keep us busy and I gave Tim a tour of a few iPad Apps right at the observatory.

Different members and visitors dropped by through the month. The new shelving unit in the observatory seems to work out well. One night I had my large Newtonian setup outside and was showing visitors Jupiter as FAAC member Brian Kutchner was doing a little astrophotography with the C-14 inside.

*Continued on Page 9*

## Hector J Robinson Observatory (continued)

Saturn and Mars are setting earlier and earlier in the night sky. Sometimes we have visitors fairly late, even at 2AM, a good time to see Jupiter through the C-14 as Jupiter is rising at about 12:00AM now.

The company who imported StellaCam 3 cameras is out of business, they are passing the distribution and sales of that camera to a gentleman who did cooling modifications for the Stellacam. He lives in Washington State. This will cause a few weeks in delay before we get a replacement camera. Mr. Lee mentioned some customers have been waiting since December 2009 for their Stellacams.

I opened the observatory for solar viewing during the Downriver dream cruise. I think I should have used better sign placement and put out announcements earlier. We only had one visitor, who was a previous visitor. I enjoyed viewing the sun through the Lunt solar scope while waiting for visitors. I'll try to plan the opening and sign placement better for the next cruise.

I took some photos of the old blue tube 8" F5 Newtonian and took an iphone photo of the moon through it. Took the 8 inch mirror and mirror cell to George Korody's house along with a second 8" mirror I bought at the FAAC swap meet for a little mirror testing. George showed me some old mirrors and blanks he has as well. One spherical mirror he showed me hadn't been on the test bench for 20 years. It was interesting to see a mirror test, and it brought back old memories of looking at the mirrors on a test bench. The last time I saw a mirror test was in 1977, when I was in the school astronomy club.



### **The telescope reunion**

*Blue Tube F5 8 inch Newtonian built in 1977 and my 4.25 inch F4 Newtonian also built in 1977.*

### **Saturn Shootout (below)**

*Preparing the 10 inch Newtonian for a Saturn Shootout with the C-14*

*(This night, the C-14 won.)*

*Photos by Newsletter editor, Canon t1i.)*



**BLUE TUBE IN OBSERVATORY:** I'm trying to figure out if I should consider re-polishing the mirror and creating some kind of truss dob or something with that mirror for the school system; to have some kind of additional scope for activities there. I have mixed feelings about this, because it's relatively easy to throw together a telescope. The blue tube has some very minor (forgotten) history and perhaps it would be a better project to delay in case we have a new school club. I'm not rushing toward anything, with that mirror yet, and it likely will need to be re-polished to remove any etching. The tests showed a good figure, but not perfect, it was under-corrected. I'm focusing on small personal telescope purchases to augment the viewing options there.

## Finding my “ideal” Telescope

by Greg Knekleian (becoming a gadget nut)

I’ve been in a (limited) buying frenzy, at least in my mind, looking for potential telescopes to quickly haul out to the observatory as additional telescopes. I have a small Nexstar 4SE, an old F4 4.25 inch homebuilt in need of a better mount and spider, and a cheap 4 inch rich field Bushnell Astroscan like clone. I have a large 10 inch F5.35 Newtonian that I found here in the classifieds.

I’ve been focusing on small telescopes. One night, Jupiter was low in the sky. (Conditions were far from ideal.) I showed a couple of late night visitors the view of Jupiter, through the large 10 inch Newtonian and then through the little Nexstar 4SE.

Because they have almost the same focal length a 25mm eyepiece makes the image of Jupiter appear roughly the same size in both my large Newtonian and the little Nexstar 4SE. (*Power = Telescope focal length divided by eyepiece focal length.*) Some new star gazing visitors remarked the little Celestron offered just as pleasing a view. (Meaning as high powered.) They missed some features of the 10 inch, but the little scope performed well. Small telescopes seem to augment the observatory very well. Sometimes I show visitors objects through a little scope outside then taking them inside to look through the C-14. It gives a nice added “wow” effect. I want to focus on augmenting the views that the large C-14 can give.

(see back page for photo comparison.)

### ANOTHER SMALL ADDITION

I just bought another telescope that I’ve been thinking about getting the last couple months. A Vixen BT-80M-A at Riders. It’s a pretty nice scope for the price. It’s a binocular telescope. It’s not an APO, but it can even be used to show the difference between an APO (the Meade in the observatory) vs Achromatic views it has for visitor demos.

## FIRST LIGHT - LOOKING UNTIL I DROP

After spending most of the night at George Korody’s house, I drove home. Looking up Jupiter seemed to be calling my name. Once home I spent 90 minutes just looking at Jupiter through the little scope. With the stock Orthoscopic eyepieces the views are pretty amazing. I found the Televue Plossl eyepieces offer far superior views over the Vixen eyepieces. These are still a far cry from super-wide eyepieces, like Ethos or Naglers.

I seemed to be glued to the eyepieces until 7AM. Finally when I almost fell asleep and off the observing chair, I decided to put everything away and get some rest. Now I dream about bigger binocular telescopes. I’ll likely keep the little Vixen, at least for a couple of months.

My previous telescopes have been “used purchases”. For those of you new to the hobby, great deals can be found on used telescopes. Ask other club members and you’ll get lots of interesting advice. (Many recommend [www.astromart.com](http://www.astromart.com))

**A few questions** I recently asked other FAAC members:

Will I be happy with an Achromat?

What do you think of (fill in the blank) on Astromart?

Do you like your binoviewer? (most say yes.)

Would a Takahashi CN212 8 inch F4 in Newtonian configuration be much better for photography than a Astrotech 8 inch Newtonian F4? (Yes, the “Tak” is better.)

How much would it cost to get two hydrogen alpha filter setups for a binocular telescope? (Answer, a LOT.)

Should I buy a solar scope instead of a scope for night use?

## FAAC Multi-Club Picnic

**When:**

**Saturday, August 7, 2010**

**5:00 PM - late**

**Where:**

**Island Lake Recreation Area – Spring Mill Pond**

**Who:**

**All AAC, Oakland, Seven Ponds, Lowbrows, and Warren Astronomy Club members**

**What:**

**All club members and their families**

**Bring a dish to pass**

**No Alcohol (it is a State Park)**

**Club will provide:**

- **Hamburgers, Hotdogs, Veggie Burgers and Condiments**
- **Pop/Water**
- **Plates, Napkins, Utensils**
- **Mini-observing contest (if it is clear)**

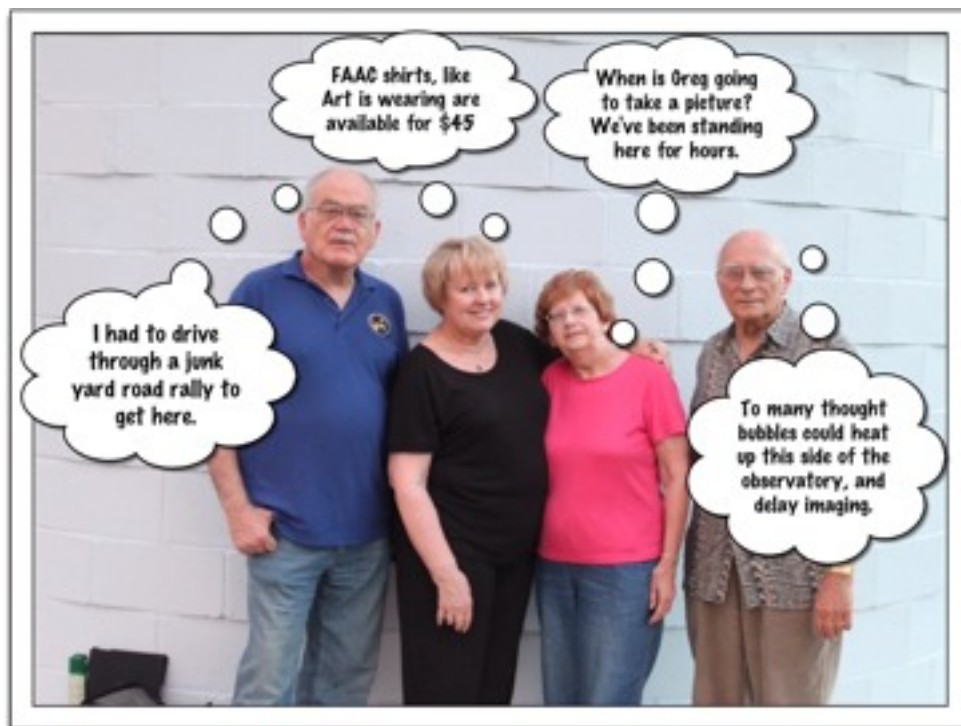
**A State Park permit will be needed to get into the park, if you don't have one you can purchase a day permit at the gate.**

## Amateur Astronomers - Strange Folks

by George Korody

You have to admit that as amateur astronomers we do many things that "normal people" might consider a little bit out of the ordinary. Of course we know these things are perfectly normal given our objectives, but it might be difficult to convince everyone else. The following are some of the things we do that others might find strange. I only take credit for a few of these. I'm sure you can add some of your own.

1. Stare at the same objects night after night, year after year, that haven't changed in thousands of years and probably won't for thousands more.
2. Set the alarm clock for 3 AM, then get up and go outside in the dead of winter clad only in your PJ's, while you look up at the open sky. (Aren't coyotes known for doing this?)
3. Curse (openly) at a beautiful full moon.
4. Stay awake all night and sleep during the daytime, because you want to.
5. Drive hundreds of miles, make that thousands of miles, to do item #4 above.
6. Survive for long periods of time on pop, cookies, and Rolled Gold pretzel sticks.
7. Shovel the snow from the observing pad before you shovel out the driveway.
8. Leave your spouse at home because the right front passenger seat is needed for transporting observing equipment.
9. Locate a one-stop shop that does not sell household furnishings, for disposing of disposable income (and everything is on sale).
10. You fall and break your Nagler. (Good news: Then the alarm clock goes off.)
11. Have difficulty in finding a white light flashlight around the house.
12. Own stock in Rayovac, Duracell, and Eveready, all at the same time.
13. Complain about light pollution from fireflies.
14. Buy mosquito repellent in bulk at Walmart.



Standing next to Hector J Robinson Observatory (left to right): Art Parent, Diane Worth, Pat and George Korody

(Photo, courtesy editor's Canon t1i, comedy thought bubbles added using "Pow Strip Designer" - a \$3 iphone program/app.)



# From The FAAC Yahoo Group - Observer's Log Post

Ken Anderson observer's Post

## Ken Anderson Observing Island Lake Beginner's Night Sat July 17th, 2010:

I would estimate 25 astronomers with telescopes or binoculars were set up, plus up to 50 guests. I set up near Bob MacFarland, Doug Bauer, and John Kirchoff. Too many others to mention ;)

After reading S&T I had my heart set on finding the line of 4 planets just after sunset, and did it with my binos starting with

7x32UW 14 deg TFOV (first to see Mercury, Saturn/Mars/Venus all in same FOV, Moon);

2.3x40 28 deg TFOV (Saturn/Mars/Venus and Venus/Mercury in Two FOVs, Moon);

15x63 3.7 deg TFOV (able to see Mercury through trees when other binos couldn't, Venus, Mars, Saturn, & Moon);

9x63 5.0 deg TFOV (Venus, Mars/Saturn, & Moon, Note Mercury had already set);

80mm (Double-Double only two not 4 stars)

Since I started off attempting to find some "Multiple DSO Telrad Vol III Summer by J. Bielaga" objects for the first time I used the 100 deg TFOV 2011 and 10mm eyepieces in my 17.5" dob for almost all of the rest of the evening:

Aquila (NGC6755/6756)

Hercules (M13/NGC6207, Abel 2151(just looked like stars not galaxies?))

Cygnus (C33(NGC6992/6995), C34(NGC6960) but didn't look for 52 Cygni in same FOV, C20(NGC7000) but knew I wasn't going to see Pelican Neb).

Sagittarius (M8/NGC6530)

Ursa Major (M51(NGC 5194/5195), M97 but forgot to search for M108?))

Plus other single objects by request:

Sagittarius (M17, M24, M18, M20)

Scorpio (M4), Scutum (M11), Ursa Major (M101/M102)

Lyra (M57), Vulpecula (M27)

Cygnis (Unsure if I saw C15(NGC 6826) blinking planetary)

I did use all 3 filters (OIII, Ultrablock, Skyglow) plus no filter on all emission and planetary nebulas.

Forgot to look at Jupiter and any of the planets through my telescope - A first???

## --- Tuesday July 6th, 2010 New Smnrya Beach, Florida

Using S&T "Binocular Highlights" Chap 3 Summer as a template with both 25x100 3.5 TFOV and 15x63 3.7 TFOV binos I observed many for the first time (July 7th 9PM-2AM):

Hercules (M13, M92);

Scorpio (rho, nu, M4, M6, M7, M80, C76(NGC6231)/Cr316/HT79(ngc6242), NGC6322, C78(NGC6541), C81(NGC6352));

Sagittarius (M8/M20/M21, M22/M28, M24/NGC6603, M17/M18, M16, and M22; but could not see B86/NGC6520);

Scutum (M11);

Corona Australis (C68(NGC6729)/NGC6723);

Cygnus (Omicron, Alberio, M39, M29, but could not see B168 nor C33/34); Lyra (M57, alpha/eta/zeta); Sagita (M71);

Vulpecula (M27, HT97(Cr339 Coathanger));

Aquila (Could not see Barnard's "E");

Serpens Cauda (HT93(IC4756), HT92(NGC6633));

Ophiuchus (HT83(IC4665), M10/M12); Jupiter & 3 moons.

Before leaving I panned the milky way from Scorpio to Cassiopeia with 9x63 5.p TFOV and 2.3x40 28 deg TFOV binos seeing M6/M7, M8, M24, M17, M11, M39, and even stopped at C20(NGC7000) thinking I saw something there during the sweep (but not able to confirm when stationary?). I also looked for C33/C34 but couldn't see these in any binoculars.

Ken A.

## --- Tuesday July 6th, 2010 New Smnrya Beach, Florida

Although I was tired, sky was exceptionally clear, and Sagittarius and Scorpio were up so I took out my 25x100 3.5 TFOV binos and observed:

Scorpio (M4, M6, M7, C76(NGC6231));

Sagittarius (M8, M20/M21, M24/NGC6603, M18, M17, and M22.

**Yesterday, Monday July 5th 2010** from 3-6AM sunrise, I looked for comet McNaught and didn't find it to the west, which was the only clear part of the sky. But I did observe with 9x63 5.0 deg TFOV and 25x100 3.5 TFOV binos: Taurus (M45, C41(Mel 25 Hyades)), Perseus (HT14(Mel 20 Perseus A), Stock 24 (Pazmino's Cluster), and Kembles Cascade (9X63 only), (but not Double Cluster which was in the clouds), Cynus (m39). Aurigra was rising when I left at Sunrise.

**Sunday July 4TH** Used my 2.3X40 28 TFOV and 8X340UW 9.4 TFOV to enjoy the fireworks!

**Saturday July 3rd** to west in clouds looked at M45, and another object which I cant remember.

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



**This months Newsletter will be mailed in envelopes.**

(This means we can put extra graphics on the back cover and it will not *confuse* the post office.)

**QUICK TOPIC -- A rare case when small is just as good: Viewing Jupiter in marginal sky conditions.**

**Two Scopes - Same Power?** The following is an example of two very different telescopes with roughly the same focal length.

A 25mm or any eyepiece would give basically the same “power” or size object when looking at it. The larger mirror of course brings in more light and can reveal fainter objects, that the little scope can’t show. In theory it can provide more detail as well with good skies. In urban Lincoln Park, this might be fairly rare nights. For junky sky condition nights, the little scope will perform as well for planets much of the time and is easier to setup. (One night in early July we had both scopes out and were looking at Jupiter.)

In marginal skies like those one recent night in Lincoln Park, *with heat thermals some humidity and a low target*, Jupiter looked as good in the small telescope as in the larger one. Smaller mirrors or lenses are affected less by *bad sky conditions*. So in this “one example” the small Nexstar telescope performed as well as the big Newtonian, **but only with a large bright object like** “Jupiter” and a moderate powered eyepiece.

The bigger telescope  $1358/25\text{mm} = 54$  power. (5x per inch.)

The smaller telescope  $1325/25\text{mm} = 53$  power. (12x per inch)

