



Astronomy Club of Tulsa

OBSERVER

October 2005

<http://www.AstroTulsa.com>

ACT, Inc. has been meeting continuously since 1937 and was incorporated in 1986. It is a nonprofit; tax deductible organization dedicated to promoting, to the public, the art of viewing and the scientific aspect of astronomy.

What

The Astronomy Club of Tulsa Meeting

When

14 October 2005 at 7:30 P.M.

Where

Room M1 inside Keplinger Hall, the Science & Engineering Building at TU. Enter the parking lot on the East Side of Keplinger Hall from Harvard and 5th Street. This will take you directly toward the staircase to enter the building. Room M1 is the first room on the left.



President's Message

Craig Davis

Wouldn't you know it, the weather had hit us once again? Seems as if it's been lying in wait for our club star party now doesn't it? Two months running so far but although it hasn't been the best we might just luck out over the next few months and the skies will be clear as a bell.

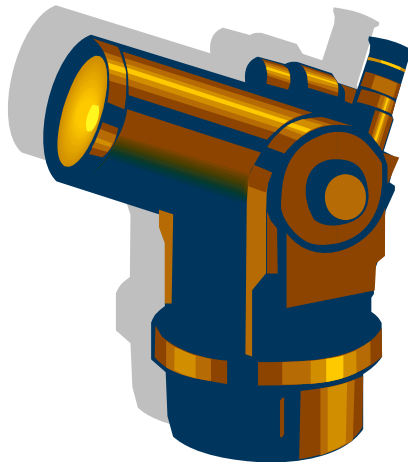
There were many of our club members that had made their way out to the Okie-Tex star party this past week. Without a doubt there are some magnificent dark skies out there and even more so the endless number of crystal clear views that it had supplied! Needless to say there will be plenty of good stories available from all of the club members who attended over the months to come. It will be fun to hear many of the stories about all of the good things that went on as well as the little pesky problems that may have cropped up here and there. It's difficult to say exactly how many people were in attendance but from what is common, at least three hundred if not more. Steve Chapman had sent back some pictures of the Okie-Tex grounds. Yes, plenty of people that attended and what surprised me was how so similar to Chaco Canyon, New Mexico it appeared. Great! I personally know Chaco Canyon skies so with no hesitation at all Okie-Tex skies would make the time and distance well worth it. The darker the better for sure!

We have a very important issue, club business, to both address and attend to at the upcoming club meeting. This will involve a full club vote that is necessary to be held seeking the approval by all club members in allowing board members and specific personnel the right to purchase a new telescope for our observatory. I strongly advise all of you to read over the specifics concerning this vote in the segment that John Land has submitted for this newsletter. Many of you that had attended the last club meeting are fully aware of what the main intent and purpose of this is all about. Even so, the rest of the club members have the right and must be brought up to speed on exactly what will be needed to be carried out. Obviously all of you will be more than willing to approve and or vote "yes" on this but again, please read over the specifics and envision what improvements this will allow the club to obtain. I'm most certainly confident in saying that with club approval it will lead to a wonderful end result for all.

Within a fairly short time we will be holding a public observing event for MARS! With Mars coming into opposition once again it will provide wonderful views of its rusty colored surface and white polar cap to not only us but via the public observing event - MARS WATCH II - for everyone in the local area. This will be held on November 11th & 12th at Mohawk Park. Working in conjunction with the Oxley Nature Center the same location where the first Mars Watch was held will be used once again for its ease of public access and the very wide open polo field for the observing area. One final planning meeting will be held soon for this public event and all of the last minute details will be worked out. It would be wonderful to have as many members volunteer to attend this event to show the general public not only how marvelous MARS will look but also so many of the other wonders that are above us. Hopefully we will have as large an attendance by the general public this time as we did before. That puts it in the range of three to four thousand, if not more. Keep your fingers crossed on that, I'm sure we will!

Clear Skies to all,

Craig D. Davis
President



YOUR VOTE NEEDED

At the October 14 meeting members will have an opportunity to cast their vote concerning replacing the existing telescope at the RMCC observatory. The existing telescope is a 16 inch f 6 Newtonian reflector built in the 1950's. that was donated to the club by one of our members. It was refurbished and installed at the observatory in 1992. Although an excellent instrument for visual observing its age and design make it awkward to use for viewing many targets.

Objects near the zenith require the user to climb a 10 to 12 foot ladder and many objects near the horizon are difficult to view because of odd tube rotation angles. The handmade mechanical drive requires resetting for each target and is not accurate enough for any kind of imaging.

Club members have suggested for several years that we look for a better design that will better fit our needs. There have even been some excellent pre-owned instruments for sale over the Internet and private channels that would have been outstanding instruments for the club to acquire. However without prior approval of the membership the board has not been able to make an offer to purchase these instruments.

Below is the official text of the proposal with *some text added for clarification* to more novice members.

Abstract

Given the continuing optical and mechanical deterioration of the club's 16" Newtonian reflector, and in accordance with the clubs bylaws, the *Astronomy Club of Tulsa board* has decided to approach the membership to ask for funds to replace the current telescope.

Mission

Since the primary purpose of the club telescope is for public viewing, the board wishes to look for a *new design* of instrument with the following goals in mind:

1. Rear mounted viewing position to eliminate climbing tall ladders.
2. Reduced weight for easier handling and increased stability
3. Computerized control and tracking for ease in object location.
4. Modern design and production for availability of accessories.

Proposal

The board is proposing a **14-inch or larger telescope with electronically control GoTo mount** and periodic drive error correction for *improved tracking of objects needed for imaging*. Also if funding permits, a CCD imaging camera

will be considered as part of the package. The new instrument will be mounted on the existing pier in an alto-azimuth configuration to simplify construction, stability and reduce cost. *This type of mount will make public viewing much easier and safer.* The current telescope will be removed and offered for sale.

Funding

The board is seeking approval from the membership to spend up to \$10,000 of the clubs holdings to acquire a telescope conforming to the above specifications. This will still leave sufficient funds in club accounts for continued normal club operations.

Membership input on choosing a telescope is welcomed, however the final type, make, model of telescope, mounting and accessories will be at the sole discretion of the board. *Thorough discussion and a vote of the board members will be made before an instrument is purchased.*

It is the intention of the board to purchase a new or pre-owned instrument through personal contacts or reputable Internet sources in order to maximize our investment. To accomplish this the Board of the Astronomy Club of Tulsa is asking for Membership permission to spend up to \$10,000 to purchase an instrument meeting the specifications above. *This will allow the board to act quickly should a high quality instrument is offered for sale.*

A written ballot vote will be taken at the Oct 14 meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting you may mail, call or email your vote to President Craig Davis. 252-1781 email sirian@cox.net

Note: At October 14 meeting the discussion should be limited to the approval or disapproval of the concept of the vote. We do not want to bore or drive off guests and novice members with long drawn out discussions over details of one brand or telescope design verse another. The board and other club members have already spent many hours researching and discussing ideas. If you want to participate in those discussions stay after the meeting or go to I-Hop with the late night bunch. We had several people leave our last meeting because two or three dominated the meeting with such discussions prior to the pre-announced meeting topic that the guests and members had come to hear.

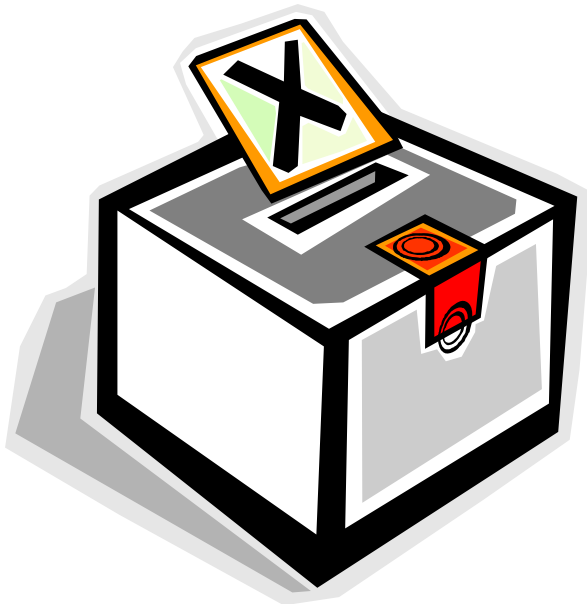
Thanks for you cooperation on this matter. John Land

Treasurer's Report

	Club Assets	
Checking Account	\$ 1,160	
Savings account	\$ 2,389	
Mutual funds investments	\$ 12,388	as of 8/31/05
		(\$ 8,100 is in easily liquidated funds)
Total Club Assets	\$ 15,937	

Several members have expressed a desire to participate in this project. A fund will be established to accept **Tax deductible donations** to the club from the membership to be used toward the telescope purchase. Checks will need to be made separately of other club business to Astronomy Club of Tulsa with a subject line of "**New Telescope Fund**". It is hoped that the club membership will donate \$ 3,000 or more to this fund and thus save the use of club reserve funds that may be used for future improvements at the observatory. This is our club project for our member's enjoyment. Seeking outside donations greatly complicates the matter with all sorts of legal entanglements and such sponsors always have their own restrictions how their donations are used.

Treasurer - John Land



EVENTS AT RMCC OBSERVATORY:

OCT

15 Sat 6:30 PM Girl Scouts (30)

19 Wed 6:00 PM Bartlesville church youth group (25)

28 Fri 6:00 PM Club Star party, members and guests

29 Sat 6:00 PM Backup for star party if cancelled on Friday

NOV

4 Fri 6:00 PM Club Star party, members and guests

5 Sat 6:00 PM Backup for star party if cancelled on Friday

19 Sat 5:30 PM Scout troops (35)

EVENTS AWAY FROM OBSERVATORY

OCT

14 Fri 7:30 PM General Meeting at TU, Keplinger Hall

20 Thur 8:00 PM Presidential Lecture at TU, Allen Chapman Activity Center

21 Fri 6:00 PM Holland Hall School (50)

NOV

11 Fri and 12 Sat 6:00-10:00 PM, Mars Watch II, Mohawk Park

18 Fri 7:30 PM General Meeting at TU, Keplinger Hall

We are always looking for volunteers to help at our group events. If you would like to volunteer to help at one of these events, please let me know at least a week in advance. We are happy to have help from anyone who wants to help, no matter what your experience level is.

Tim Davis
VP, ACT
dtimothy14@cox.net
918-665-8134





Presidential Lecture - Lawrence M. Krauss

Einstein's Biggest Blunder: A Cosmic Mystery Story

20 October 2005, 8:00 PM

The Great Hall, Allen Chapman Activity Center

(Book signing will follow lecture.)

Lawrence M. Krauss, the Ambrose Swasey Professor of Physics, is professor of astronomy and chair of the Department of Physics at Case Western Reserve University. His wide research interests touch on the early universe, dark matter, general relativity and neutrino astrophysics. Included among the many awards he has received is the Julius Edgar Lilienfeld Prize of the American Physical Society, presented for his "...outstanding contributions to the understanding of the early universe, and extraordinary achievement in communicating the essence of physical science to the general public."

A fellow of the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Krauss is the author of more than 200 scientific publications as well as several popular books including *The Physics of Star Trek*, a national best-seller. His book, *Atom: An Odyssey from the Big Bang to Life on Earth... and Beyond*, is being made into a five-part television series for Public Television. He also published a new text, *Introductory Physics*, for non-science majors.

In addition to writing, lecturing and teaching, Krauss is a regular contributor to various magazines and newspapers (including the *New York Times*) and serves on several museum advisory boards.

For more information, please call 918-631-2554.

Astronomy Club of Tulsa membership (\$35/year) includes membership in the Astronomical League and subscription to ACT's "Observer" and AL's "Reflector". "Astronomy" (\$34/year) and "Sky and Telescope" (\$33/year) are also available through the club. For more information contact John Land at 918.357.1759. Permission is hereby granted to reprint from this publication provided credit is given to the original author and the Astronomy Club of Tulsa Observer is identified as the source.

OFFICERS

President:

Craig Davis
918.252.1781

Vice-President:

Tim Davis
918.665.8134

Treasure:

John Land
918.357.1759

Secretary:

Teresa Kincannon
918.637.1477

BOARD MEMBERS AT

LARGE

Steve Chapman
Rod Gallagher
Rocky Keys
Dan Lamoreaux
Tom McDonough
Jim Miller
David Stine

APPOINTED STAFF

RMCC Observatory Director:

Tim Davis—665.8134

RMCC Facility Manager:

Craig Davis—252-1781

Membership Chairman:

John Land—357-1759

Observing Chairman:

David Stine—834-1310

New Members:

Denny Mishler—274-4772

Newsletter Editor:

Richie Shroff—835-3565

Webmaster:

Tom McDonough—665-1853

Astronomy Club of Tulsa

918.688.MARS (6277)

<http://www.AstroTulsa.com>

ASTRONOMY CLUB OF TULSA
P.O. BOX 470611
TULSA OK 74147-0611