



Astronomy Club of Tulsa

# OBSERVER

February 2006

<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

10 February 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

**Tim Davis**

As we move into the second month of the year, plans are being finalized for getting the new telescope mounted in the observatory. First, the existing 16" scope will be taken down and stored at the observatory temporarily until it is decided what we will do with it. A number of options will be considered for this, but the final decision will not be made until after we have the new scope up and running. Second, before the new scope is mounted and while the dome is empty, some much needed repairs will be made to the dome, such as sealing up some leaks, replacing cables and pulleys, and just getting the dome itself into good condition. Then, the new scope will be brought in and mounted. A weatherproof enclosure is being planned to protect the scope against the harsh weather conditions that it will have to endure throughout the year.

While it may seem that it is taking a long time to get this new scope installed, please remember that we are all volunteering our own time to the various club business and activities that we do. And finding a time to work on this that everyone involved can agree on can sometimes be difficult, as everyone must balance work, family and free time against the club duties and projects. So please bear with us as we work to get this project completed, we are as anxious as everyone else to see the new telescope installed.

During the last board meeting, it was decided that it would be acceptable to allow a limited

form of advertising in the newsletter. There are some club members that are involved in astronomy related businesses, so we feel it would be OK to allow them to advertise their businesses to the other club members. The ads would only be allowed under the following conditions: only ads by club members, only ads for an astronomy related business, ads must be no larger than 3 column inches, club member placing ad is responsible for all artwork and design, ad must be black and white print compatible, and there will be no charge for the ad (since we are a non-profit organization). On a related note, we have always accepted classified ads for astronomy gear from members. So if you have a scope or some other astro gear you want to sell, you can always try placing an ad in the newsletter to see if some other club member might want it. Submissions for either type of ad should be made to the newsletter editor, Richie Shroff, by the end of the month to be included in the next month's newsletter.

February's Astronomical highlights:

Orion! Orion! Orion! One of the most gorgeous sights in the night sky is in full glory all month long. Don't miss a chance to see the great Orion Nebula, it's worth a look over and over again, and is always beautiful no

matter how many times you have seen it before.

Saturn! Saturn! Saturn! Certainly the most beautiful planet to see is also in a prime viewing position this month after just passing through opposition at the end of January. The planet that hooked many of us on astronomy after seeing it for the first time in a telescope, including yours truly, is a magnificent sight this month. Mercury will be an evening planet during the second half of the month. It reaches greatest elongation on the 23rd.

Venus is dazzling in the morning before sunrise all month, reaching a peak brightness of -4.6 for much of the month.

Feb 5, First Quarter Moon

Feb 12, Full Moon

Feb 21, Last quarter Moon

Feb 27, New Moon

Please join us at our next meeting on February 10th, 7:30 PM at Keplinger Hall on the TU campus. And join us at our next Star Party at the observatory on February 24th.

## Lands Tidbits

By John Land

**Welcome Recent New Members:** Bo Henry, Ben Michael, Angela Nicoletti, Michael Hair

**DON'T LET YOUR MEMBERSHIP or Subscriptions LAPSE !!**

Check your MAILING LABEL for membership expiration date.

Those receiving Email should get a reminder when your membership is up for renewal or you may contact John Land. You may also renew magazine subscriptions through the club for substantial discounts.

**GUEST SIGN IN SECTION** on the Website is already bringing the club new contacts for potential new members.

**Changing EMAIL** - When you change your email or mailing address be sure to send me the new information so I can update the club records. You can use the Join feature on the club web page to make changes.

### **Club Memberships and Renewals:**

Adults - \$ 35 per year includes Astronomical League Membership

Students \$ 15 without League membership.

Students \$ 20 with League membership.

\* Student shall be defined as a person 25 or younger actively taking courses at a college or trade school or persons still in High school or below.

\* Adult Students over 25 may join at the student rate for one year if enrolled in an Astronomy course in an area college.

We now have an automated on line registration form on the website for new AND renewal memberships plus magazine subscriptions. You simply type in your information and hit send to submit the information. <http://www.astrotulsa.com/Club/join.asp> You can then print a copy of the form and mail in your check.

**Astronomy Club of Tulsa  
25209 E 62nd St  
Broken Arrow, OK 74014**

**Magazine Subscriptions:** If your magazines are coming up for renewal, try to save the mailing label or renewal form you get in the mail. Do NOT mail renewals back to the magazine!

To get the club discount you must go through

the club group rate.

**Astronomy** is \$ 34 for 1 year or \$ 60 for 2 years. [www.astronomy.com](http://www.astronomy.com)

**Sky & Telescope** is \$33 / yr [www.skyandtelescope.com](http://www.skyandtelescope.com) Sky and Telescope also offers a 10% discount on their products.

**NIGHT SKY** is \$18 / yr A exciting new bi-monthly magazine for beginning or casual astronomers. <http://nightskymag.com/>

### **Address Corrections- Email changes - Questions:**

You may forward questions to the club call our message line at 918-688-MARS ( 6277 ) or go to the club website and Fill out an online form or just click on John Land and send an email. Please leave a clear subject line and message with your name, phone number, your question - along with address or email

Family science night Thursday Feb 9th 7:00 PM

Broken Arrow Schools are hosting two scientist from the Sagan Center the week of Feb 3 to 10th

A family science night titled "Building a Permanent Human Presence in Space" will be held Thursday Feb 9th at Haskell Middle school located at 81st and Lynn Lane. Dr. Harri Vanhala and Mr. Ken Pulkkinen will be the featured scientist.

Getting ready for Summer Star parties. We are already receiving information about summer astronomy events.

This year the MidStates regional convention will be in St. Louis. A date has not been announced yet but they are generally in Mid-June. [www.MSRAL.org](http://www.MSRAL.org)

The club received flyers for the 13th Annual Nebraska Star party the week of July 23 to 28th. This star party is held at a Nebraska State Park and features boating, fishing and other activities during the day. Plenty of things for the family to enjoy while the astronomers sleep in and prepare for the next nights observing. Details at <http://www.nebraskastarparty.org/>

### **WHEN DID YOU JOIN the TULSA ASTRONOMY CLUB?**

I'm still hoping to hear from more of you about when you became active in the Astronomy club of Tulsa. We were privileged to have Reggie Kikugawa at our January meeting. Reggie was one of the early founders of the club and has been associated with the club since 1954! Email me and let me know when you joined the Astronomy Club of Tulsa. Go to the club page <http://www.astrotulsa.com/Club/club.asp> and click on John Land. Then type in your name and when you joined. Include any club offices you may have held and when you served.

### **A Million bits of Stardust**

NASA is looking for volunteers to help with the search for Stardust. We were all thrilled to see that the NASA Stardust mission to a

comet Wild 2 returned safely to Earth earlier this month. Estimates suggest that they may have capture a million tiny grains of comet dust. Even more importantly they may also have captured a few dozen grains of high speed cosmic dust originating from beyond the solar system. Now comes the tedious task of searching through slice after slice of the samples to identify each particle. Even if a researcher could identify one particle a minute it would take 2 years nonstop to observe a million particles.

Volunteers to help with the search for Stardust. "Space Sciences Laboratory have created a "virtual microscope" that will allow anyone with an Internet connection to scan some of the 1.5 million pictures of the aerogel for tracks left by speeding dust. Each picture will cover an area smaller than a grain of salt." Volunteers who identify important particles will even be noted for their contributions!

Details are available at [http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2006/01/10\\_dust.shtml](http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2006/01/10_dust.shtml)

Speaking of Volunteers. Congratulations to club member Brad Young for being noted for his contributions to the occultation of asteroid 71 Niobe and its possible small satellite. Brad is noted on page 61 of the March 2006 Sky & Telescope. An occultation of Mars moon Deimos is passing over northeastern Oklahoma Feb 21, 2006

# **WWW.ASTROTULSA.COM**

## **Astronomy Club Schedule of Events**

### **EVENTS AT RMCC OBSERVATORY:**

#### **FEB**

- 4 Sat 6:00 PM Scouts, Pack 290 (25)
- 11 Fri 6:00 PM Scout Troop 945 (25)
- 24 Fri 6:00 PM Club Star party, members and guests
- 25 Sat 6:00 PM Backup for star party if cancelled on Friday

#### **MARCH**

- 3 Fri 6:00 PM Cub Scout Pack 67, part one (50)
- 4 Sat 6:00 PM Cub Scout Pack 67, part two (50)
- 11 Sat 6:00 PM Okmulgee Home School (20)
- 31 Fri 6:30 PM Club Star party, members and guests
- Apr 1 Sat 6:30 PM Backup for star party if cancelled on Friday

#### **APRIL**

- 7 Fri 7:30 PM Boy Scout troop (25)
- 28 Fri 7:30 PM Club Star party, members and guests
- 29 Sat 7:30 PM Backup for star party if cancelled on Friday

### **EVENTS AWAY FROM OBSERVATORY**

#### **FEB**

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

#### **MARCH**

- 10 Fri 7:30 PM General Meeting at TU, Keplinger Hall
- 10 Fri 6:30-8:30 PM Girl Scout Science event at Anderson Elem School (100+) (Contact Tony White if you want to help with this)

#### **APRIL**

- 14 Fri 7:30 PM General Meeting at TU, Keplinger Hall
- 28 Fri 8:00 PM to dawn? Boy Scouts overnight at Zink Ranch (100) (Contact Tony White if you want to help with this)

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  
President, ACT  
dtimothy14@cox.net  
918-665-8134

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:**

Tim Davis  
918.665.8134

**Vice-President:**

Jerry Mullennix  
918.712.9776

**Treasure:**

John Land  
918.357.1759

**Secretary:**

Teresa Kincannon  
918.637.1477

### **BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE**

Steve Chapman  
Craig Davis  
Rod Gallagher  
Tamara Green  
Dan Lamoreaux  
Jim Miller  
Denny Mishler  
Tony White

### **APPOINTED STAFF**

**RMCC Observatory Director:**

Tim Davis—918.665.8134

**RMCC Facility Manager:**

Craig Davis—918.252.1781

**Membership Chairman:**

John Land—918.357.1759

**Observing Chairman:**

David Stine—918.834.1310

**New Members:**

Denny Mishler—918.274.4772

**Newsletter Editor:**

Richie Shroff—918.835.3565

**Webmaster:**

Tom McDonough—918.665.1853

### **Astronomy Club of Tulsa**

918.688.MARS (6277)

<http://www.AstroTulsa.com>

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