



Astronomy Club of Tulsa

OBSERVER

January 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

13 January 2006 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 begin this New Year, we have many things to look forward to. First and foremost is the installation of our new telescope for the observatory. We were able to find a very nice telescope nearby that will be a very capable instrument to upgrade the observatory. It is a Meade 14" RCX400. See the news section of our website www.astrotulsa.com for more information and details about the new telescope. The committee to oversee the installation has now been formed and is looking at the best way to get the new scope up and running. Rod Gallagher is the committee chairman. They should have a plan put together very soon. We are also considering some ideas for some modernization of the observatory, to go along with the added capabilities of the new telescope. We will keep you informed on the progress of this project.

Our parent organization, The Astronomical League, has added three new lists to their observing programs. They are the Planetary Nebula Club, the Open Cluster Club and the Lunar II Club. Each should present a challenge to all who undertake them, as well as showcasing some of the sky's many beautiful objects. If you have never done one of the Astro League's lists, you might consider trying one. They will give you a goal to work for, as well as sharpening your observing skills, and will show you many interesting objects that you may not have seen before. For more details on the new observing lists and all the other programs, see the Astronomical League's website at <http://www.astroleague.org>.

Congratulations to Brad Young and David Stine who have recently completed some of the Astronomical League's observing lists. David completed the 24 hour Meteor Observer, and Brad completed the Earth-Orbiting Satellite program. Brad is one of our club's three Master Observers, (KC Lobrecht and Gary Buckmaster are the other two) and has completed so many of the League's lists, I think even he has lost count. It is rumored that the League created those three new lists just to keep Brad busy!

Astronomical highlights for January include:
 Jan 4, Earth at perihelion, closest point to Sun, 91.4 million miles.
 Jan 3-4, Quadrantid meteor shower
 Jan 6, First quarter Moon
 Jan 13, Venus at inferior conjunction, after

gracing the evening sky for so long this past year, Venus now passes between us and the Sun and becomes a morning planet for a good part of this year.

Jan 14, Full Moon

Jan 22, Last Quarter Moon

Jan 26, Mercury at superior conjunction

Jan 27, Saturn at opposition

Jan 29, New Moon

Please join us at our general meeting at Keplinger Hall on the TU campus on Jan 13 for an evening of new astronomy gear. Pete Krone of Astronomics will be joining us again to show us some of the new products that have recently been introduced. He should have some very interesting items to show us.

2006 SCHEDULE OF EVENINGS

Jan 13, 2006, TU meeting

Jan 27, Star party

Feb 10, TU meeting

Feb 24, Star party

Mar 10, TU meeting

Mar 31, Star party

Apr 14, TU meeting

Apr 28, Star party

May 12, TU meeting

May 26, Star party

June 23, Star party

July 21, Star party

Aug 25, Star party

Sep 8, TU meeting

Sep 15, Star party

Oct 6, TU meeting

Oct 20, Star party

Nov 3, Dinner meeting

Nov 17, Star party

Dec 1, TU meeting

Dec 15, Star party

WHEN DID YOU JOIN the TULSA ASTRONOMY CLUB?

By John Land

Over Christmas break I was cleaning up the club membership records and began to reminisce about my early days in astronomy. We had 50 new members join in 2005 and already a couple of new ones have come in for 2006. However just about that many have moved or not renewed their membership. I got to wondering how many of us are still in the club from the 70's or before. I recognize about a dozen names that were already in the club when I joined in the spring of 1977. Our editor Richie Shroff has probably been the longest continuous member of the club. If you remember what year you first joined the club call me or email me and I will put it into our data base.

Journey into Starlight

My personal journey into starlight began when I was a child. I had a Sunday School teacher who had a "big" homemade refractor. I vaguely remember seeing something in Orion and something about 3 stars. The space age was just beginning in the late 50's and early 60's. My Mom and my favorite past-time were to go out and look at THE satellite. Its name was Echo I - a giant 10 story tall foil balloon that could bounce radio signals to Europe for a few brief moments each orbit. President Eisenhower sent the first message. When I was 13, I got a Sears 50 mm refractor for Christmas but it had one of those "soda straw" high power eyepieces and you couldn't see much but the moon. I got some books from the local library and tired to learn astronomy on my own. Living in a small town west of Woodward OK the skies were dark but there wasn't much information about astronomy. I continued to tinker with space, astronomy, rockets and

such but work and college soon placed their demands on my time.

During Spring break of 1976 I had somehow dusted off the old 50mm refractor and was visiting some friends in central Oklahoma. There at sunset were three stars in a row low in the west. That vague memory from childhood was jogged and I began looking at them. The first two stars weren't much to look at. BUT THAT LAST ONE! Amazing! It was oval shaped like a round ball with ears. It took me a bit to realize it was Saturn but once I realized "I HAD DISCOVERED SATURN". I was hooked. Saturn was just leaving Gemini and lined up with Castor and Pollux. I went back to my teaching post in Okemah and started showing all my students my discovery. The math teacher loaned me a nice 60mm refractor with an equatorial mount but no instructions. I spend six months using it with the polar axis pointing straight up.

My mother-in-law lived in Tulsa and found out there was an astronomy club in Tulsa. I called a man named Nick Pottorf and he invited me to come to a meeting. My first meeting was April or May of 1977 - they had just discovered rings around Uranus. In June they were having a star party at a lake west of town. About 2 AM in the morning Graham Kendal told me to scan the Milky Way with the 60 mm refractor. I was going along and ran into this little cluster of stars. WOW that's neat! What is it? A couple of high school kids were still there and had some star maps. One of them, Tom McDonough, told me it was M 11. Eleven? How many more are there? I found out there were 110 of them. Well I had to see all of them! Where

are they? Can I see them? Then they told me there was an observing certificate for observing all of them. I bought a Norton's Star atlas and went home to see them all. I soon discovered that the 60 mm wasn't up to seeing all of them even in the dark skies of Okemah. I ordered a 6 inch Edmund Scientific reflector which is still my primary observing instrument.

Trips to Tulsa for the monthly Astronomy club meetings became a regular on our schedule. I got to go to the club meetings and my wife had a nice visit with her mother. The club was meeting in a sound studio on Columbia owned by Art Sweeny. I meet people like Richie Shroff, Judy & Bob Leiser, Reggie Kikugawa, Phil Davis and a feisty lady named K.C. Nick Pottorf and Louis Desjardin were my mentors. Louis was amazing. His eyesight was failing but he could tell you exactly how to find Neptune in binoculars even though he could not see it himself. He did all the calculations by hand

and drew custom-made star maps for the club. Nick was the most amazing optician and craftsman I have ever known. Some members in the club may still own some of his hand ground mirrors that he regularly made for the club.

Well Saturn has made a one full lap around the sun since my early days in astronomy. Saturn has just left Gemini and moved into Cancer. So now I sometimes tell people I've been an astronomer for one year - ONE SATURN year! If the Lord grants me life and eyesight I may make another Saturn year but the memories of this first one will last me a lifetime.

John Land

Maybe some of you would like to share your personal journey into starlight. If so, write it up and send it into our editor Richie Shroff. RichieS@tisi.com

Lands Tidbits

By John Land

Welcome Recent New Members: Elaine Perkins, Robert Wiebusch, Tobias Moum and The Robert Raush family.

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.

ON LINE 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

Sky & Telescope is \$33 / yr 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



EVENTS AT RMCC OBSERVATORY:

JAN

- 27 Fri 5:30 PM Club Star party, members and guests
- 28 Sat 5:30 PM Backup for star party if cancelled on Friday

FEB

- 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

EVENTS AWAY FROM OBSERVATORY

JAN

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

FEB

- 10 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
President, ACT
dtimothy14@cox.net
918-665-8134



Astronomy Club of Tulsa

Membership Application/Renewal Form

PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____ Phone: (918) _____ - _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip _____ / _____ OK _____ / _____

E-mail address - print clearly _____

Check Lines below : For faster economical delivery you are notified by email when the Club newsletter is posted on the web. Email saves the club mailing expenses. Of course if you do not have email we can mail you a copy of the monthly newsletter.

New Membership Renewal Membership

Adult Membership (\$35) includes Astronomical League membership.

See <http://astroleague.org/> for benefits of being a League Member.

Student Member (\$20)* includes Astronomical League membership.

Student Member only(\$15)* - without League membership.

* Student - Persons 25 or younger actively taking courses at college, trade school, high school, or below.

* Adult Student - Persons over 25 may join at the student rate for one year if enrolled in an astronomy course at an area college.

Check Lines below for YES

I would prefer to receive E-mail notification when club newsletter is posted to the web.

Notice of club events and newsletters are usually sent by email.

This helps assure you will be informed of late breaking news.

I choose to receive my newsletter by E-mail ONLY instead of postal mail.

Check here if you also require a postal copy of the monthly newsletter.

Note: Using email newsletter saves the club about \$5 per year

Magazine subscriptions: Magazine rates may change. Prices available with membership only.

Sky & Telescope Subscription (\$33) / year _____ Renewal Include Subscription Number. Also includes 10% discount on most Sky & Telescope products.

Astronomy Subscription (\$ 34) / year (\$ 60) / two years _____ Renewal Include Subscription Number.

NightSky for 6 issues for \$18 see www.NightSkymag.com Issues come out bi-Monthly This is an excellent choice for the novice astronomer and youth just starting out in astronomy.

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

Or go to the club website and fill out an online form or just click on John Land and send an email.

How did you hear of the Astronomy Club of Tulsa? _____

How long have you been interested or active in astronomy? _____

Do you have a telescope? _____ Type _____

What astronomy club activities would you like to participate in?

Have you been a member of other astronomy clubs? _____

Where / when _____

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.

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Steve Chapman
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Rod Gallagher
Tamara Green
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Jim Miller
Denny Mishler
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APPOINTED STAFF

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Astronomy Club of Tulsa
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<http://www.AstroTulsa.com>

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