

**Fort Bend Astronomy Club
General Meeting
February 18th, 2011**

Commenced at 7:04pm

Welcome to visitors and new members
4 visitors/new members to the meeting

Introduction of the officers

Business Meeting:

ED Committee:

- Dome is pretty much complete
- Some shelving left to do and a cabinet
- Dome looks great so come and see it!
- Would like to see a minimum of two volunteers to man the ED on Saturday nights, preferably three volunteers

A-Team:

No report

A.O.W.:

- Five events scheduled for the month of February
- One was canceled because of whether
 - Light pollution at the museum was considerable, but the brighter objects were plain to see

Treasury Report

- 2900.64 in checking
- 2160.53 in C.D.
- All those interested in getting on netslyder please email Bill Jacobus

Promotions:

- Trying to get the club viewing nights going again to get out there and take advantage of the resources of the George Observatory
- The last event went okay but improvements could be made for the next one
- should next event be a Thursday, Friday or Sunday--looking for input from the FBAC members
 - Friday night was preferred by the membership in attendance
 - Promotions committee will let membership know of the possible dates

Netslyder is the primary source of communication for the club members, all those interested in using please pay attention to guidelines for use

Speakers Committee:

- Looking for assistance for Justin McCollum in finding speakers for the group...any volunteers?
- Patty Tristan expressed an interest, will get information from several members for contacts in finding speakers

FBAC Observing clubs

Announcement by Tony Weise

- Volunteer t-shirt can be earned by AOW or George observatory service as a volunteer.
- Both Jim Jackson and Paul Noll have earned t-shirts

Announcement: Texas star party deposit is due to the ranch by March 1st

Break at 7:20 for 15 minutes

Meeting Resumed at 19:33pm

Novice Presentation: The Earth as Observing Platform by Don d'Entremont

- The astronomical coordinate systems are oriented by the Earth as the center, or the observer at the center on the Earth
 - Showed examples of the Earth, Moon and Sun using classroom props and illustrated lunar & solar eclipses, as well as sunrise and sunset
 - Explained the seasons and the pole star as seen from our local position on the Earth
 - Explained the precession of the Earth's axis
 - Explanation of the orbit of the solar system about the galaxy, the milky way.
 - system located in the orion arm of the galaxy, located about two thirds of the way out from the center (in the suburbs)
 - The Milky way itself is moving very quickly toward a super-cluster of galaxies
 - What does all this motion do to our coordinate system?
 - not all that much really, only if you want to hit a comet with a spacecraft at very high velocity with extreme accuracy
 - The moon is 1/400 the size of the sun and 1/400 the distance of the sun and this allows for the curious phenomena of the total solar eclipse
 - A solar eclipse is really an occultation of the Sun, which casts a large shadow upon the Earth, dubbed totality
- Talk ended at 8:00pm

Break until 8:15pm

Meeting resumed

Main Presentation: The Astronomer Tycho Brahe by Aaron Clevenson

- The life of Brahe:
 - Born in Denmark and had a twin that died
 - Went to University at the age of 12
 - Saw lunar eclipse at the age of 13 which may have ignited his life long interest in astronomy
 - At age 16 he began to log his observations & began using astronomical tools at the age of 17
 - Lost his nose in a sword fight with his cousin at the age of 19
- Held a geocentric view of the Universe
- Observed a supernova early in his career; located in Cassiopeia
- Built first observatory, Uraniborg by 1580
 - fabricated his own instruments and directed a considerable research to conduct serious data acquisition detailing the location of celestial objects
- He published several works concerning both celestial mechanics and the details of his instrumentation
- Began building a larger and more robust observatory that was next to Uraniborg named Stjerneborg
 - the buildings were set underground to improve the stability of the structure
- His model of the Universe was very much a compromise between a solid geocentric and a heliocentric universe, where the Sun orbited the Earth and everything else orbited the Sun
- Due to political changes, the last observation took place at Uraniborg on March 15th of 1597
- Went to Prague in 1599 and employed by the emperor
 - was a renowned astrologer in his court
 - it was here that Kepler became his assistant in the year 1600
- Tycho Brahe died in 1601 and is said to have left his data to Kepler, though the Brahe family disputed that

Presentation Ended at 8:49pm
Q&A from the general assembly

Five minute break at 8:53

Meeting resumed

Door prizes

Get together at 59 diner after the meeting, all are welcome

30 people in attendance

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm

