

Minutes - Fort Bend Astronomy Club Meeting – March 28, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Keith Rivich presented the novice program “Eyepiece Basics” after which a 10-minute break was called by President, Leonard Ferguson.

After the break, the main presentation “The Changing Faces of Our Sun” was by Dr. Holly Gilbert of Rice University’s Solar Group. Cynthia Gustava introduced Dr. Gilbert and provided a brief biography. The presentation started at approximately 7:53 p.m.

- The presentation was very interesting and had lots of slides and short videos, including a 3D video, complete with 3D glasses.
- There was a Q&A session.
- Presentation finished at 8:57 p.m.
- Leonard Ferguson presented Dr. Gilbert with an FBAC t-shirt in appreciation of her great talk.

Another 10 minute break was announced. The FBAC library was available at the meeting for members to check out books. The poster board was up at the front of the room showing all of the FBAC loaner scopes available to club members.

The business meeting was started by Leonard Ferguson at 9:08 p.m.

- Dennis Borgman, chairman of the ED committee, gave an update on the East Dome telescope repair and replacement work. He accessed the internet and showed photos on his site of the work being done to install the new drive system. Conduit for the new system has been installed under the floor. One of the pc’s had a hard drive failure. The ED committee will have a backup procedure in place to handle computerized movement of the telescope if the pc crashes again. The backup will be a handheld device called Argo Navis. Dennis also spoke about the new system being simple to use.
- Leonard Pattillo spoke at 9:17 p.m. about the Astronomy on Wheels (AOW) program. Leonard described the recent (3-27-08) AOW at Jane Long Elementary for their 5th grade science class. Two upcoming AOW’s are:
 - 4-10-08: Visual only at 7:30 p.m. at Seven Lakes High School in Katy.
 - June or July: Date is still to be set for the Exxon-Mobil Bernard Harris Summer Camp for children at University of Houston campus.
- Steve Goldberg provided an update on this year’s Texas Star Party, being held the week of June 1. He had a checklist available of items to bring to TSP.
- Steve Goldberg announced that the March 29 HAS picnic and star party would probably be cancelled due to bad weather.
- DJ McCracken, Treasurer, spoke at 9:24 p.m. He provided the Treasurer’s report and advised that he now has the club shirts and astronomy calendars that are available for purchase.
- Leonard Ferguson pointed out that the April George Observatory sign-up sheet was available at the front desk. Cynthia Gustava mentioned that ED volunteers were still needed for Saturday night, March 29.

- Leonard Ferguson announced that Patty Tristan has been submitting news clips to generate public interest in the George Observatory.
- Tracy Knauss is planning our FBAC Christmas party already.

The Astro Quiz was started at 9:28 by Leonard Ferguson.

- Dennis Borgman made the first attempt at answering the questions.
- James Wooten made the second attempt.
- Jim Ellis answered correctly with Omicron 2 Eridani b (or 40 Eridani b).

Next question for April meeting is on radio sources: What is 60cm flux density of Cygnus A?

The FBAC observing clubs were discussed.

Door prizes given out: Patterns in the Sky (book won by Leonard Pattillo), two astronomy calendars, two FBAC stickers (one was won by Dr. Holly Gilbert), a map of the moon, and two very large (wall-sized) pictures printed by Roland of HCC. Dennis won the spiral galaxy picture and the Helix Nebula was won by another member.

Leonard explained that Tuesday night get-togethers are at Denny's. Everyone welcome.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:39 p.m., with invite to 59 Diner afterwards.