



The Fremont Peak **OBSERVER**

Promoting public education in Astronomy

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President's Message

Remember that little box on the membership application that said, "Do you want to be in the FPOA Directory?" For literally years we have been promising to distribute a directory to the FPOA membership (if you checked "No" your name will not appear in the directory). Well, at long last, I am happy to say that the official 1990 edition of the FPOA Membership Directory is included in this quarter's *Observer*. As usual, errors and corrections should be sent to the Executive Secretary, Ranger Rick Morales. If you decide you don't wish to be in the Directory in the future, please let Rick know that as well.

As mentioned in the December *Observer*, April 28th is the day the FPOA will celebrate Astronomy Day. We plan on putting on a "really big show" at the Peak. Association member John Briggs will be giving an entertaining talk on the Venezuelan Mountaintop Observatory. Refreshments will also be provided.

Have you been thinking about subscribing to Astronomy magazine, or any of its sister publications put out by Kalmbach Publishing? The FPOA has special subscription flyers (available March 24th at the Observatory) that give the FPOA a credit for each new subscription received. A rather painless way for us to raise funds!

And speaking of funds, our h-alpha fund now contains \$1,300.00. This is over half way to

our goal of \$2,400.00. This money will be used to give the FPOA a solar observing capability. (*Donations can be made directly to this fund, by the way*).

On a different note, it's not too early to think about becoming politically involved in the FPOA. Our annual election will be held August 18th this year. All you need to do is show up to a Board Meeting and introduce yourself. Our Board Meetings are open to the membership, and are normally held in the Observatory Meeting Room. See the Calendar for dates and times.

-Frank Dibbell



Fluorite Fever

Have you been infected with Fluorite Fever? Several members of the FPOA own fluorite refractors and have confessed, albeit anonymously, to exhibiting the symptoms of this malady. This "public service" message is provided for your benefit; beware the warning signs of Fluorite Fever:

WARNING SIGN NO. 1: *A friend or associate gets one.* You develop a passing interest in something you once associated with department store telescope buyers: spendthrifts and rookie amateurs with money to burn. You find yourself saying things like: "Kevin has this new fluorite, says it's revolutionized his observing for life!"

WARNING SIGN NO. 2: *You begin to subscribe to obscure publications with names like Deep Sky Diving, Dobsonian Quarterly, Better Homes and Observatories, Sky & Smog, in which articles are few and advertisements are many. You find yourself reading these magazines during meals, at church, while entertaining important guests and during the birth of your first child. You bore your friends with exclamations of "Wow! Look at this great article on differential atmospheric refraction!"*

WARNING SIGN NO. 3: *Unpredictable behavior towards the makers and owners of those "other" refractor telescopes. You begin to cast scornful looks at owners of triplet refractors at star parties. You engage in long distance telephone arguments about the virtues of fluorite with the makers of SureFire refractors. "What fools these mortals be" you muse, "The fluorite is clearly a superior instrument; there is absolutely no truth to the rumor that the fluorite objective will melt in heavy dewing..."*

WARNING SIGN NO. 4: *Gradual but noticeably perceptible shift in linguistic orientation. You find yourself able to speak only in product names and numbers. "Tonight we have the FC-125 on the Parsec-12, mated to a DDC and an NGC-MAX. The Quintuple Turret Revolver is supporting the HI-Or 2.8mm and HI-Or 4mm multi-coated, high eyepoint eyepieces... . Yep, that'll do it."*

WARNING SIGN NO. 5: *Creative budget strategy. Your hand calculator has gone through several sets of batteries from constant use. "Hmmm, if I sell the C8, C14, the Questar, the Porsche, take out a second mortgage and fast for seven days out of each month, I can afford the new Takahashi FC-160 f/11!"*

WARNING SIGN NO. 6: *Increasing withdrawal and isolation from others. Your absence from club meetings and star parties has become increasingly noticeable. You refuse to answer the phone or return calls; you've become a real astro-snob.*

WARNING SIGN NO. 7: *Lust for a second fluorite. "But I need a 6-inch fluorite to take to the '91 eclipse!" (Refer also to warning signs 1 through 6).*

WARNING SIGN NO. 8: *Frustration and Rejection. Also, the inability to cope with the fact that Jack can take a 10-cent piece of cardboard, make a 5-inch aperture stop for his home-built 17-inch Newtonian, and equal the resolution and color-free performance of an \$8,000.00 5-inch fluorite refractor!*

-John Gleason

(Ed Note: I am always looking for contributions from the FPOA membership for publication. If you have something, don't be shy! Send it in and we'll publish it!)



FPOA Calendar of Events

- Mar 24** FPOA Board Meeting
- Apr 21** FPOA Board Meeting
- Apr 28** Astronomy Day Program
- May 19** FPOA Board Meeting
Public Program
- Jun 2** Public Program

NOTE: Board meetings are open to the membership, and begin at 3PM in the Observatory Meeting Room.

If you want to lend a hand for a public program, call Rick Morales at 408-623-4255.

From The Log...

June 25

Opened observatory at dusk. I can't believe it! The weather is warm: 66 degrees F., no wind, and some fog covering Salinas Valley. Looks like it will be a pleasant night for a change. It's about time we get some decent observing weather. I hope the rest of the summer and fall are this good. Observed M80, M83, Abell 51, Abell 65, NGC4244, 4631 and companion, M51, M97, M57 (central star bright). Tried for Abell 66 and 71 but no luck. Viewed M1 and 78, plus lots of little faint galaxies, go out of your way to observe NGC6888, 7008, and all of the Veil complex, at medium to high power and an O III filter they are indescribable, so much structure in the Veil, filaments going through the field every which way. Haunting how this supernova remnant shows so much detail. Drive does seem to drift a little. Obtained some decent views of Saturn by closing three shutters on the primary (Encke's Division clear!). Mimas and Enceladus were visible. Neptune and Triton were great. What a pretty aqua blue-tortoise color to the planet. Closed at 2AM.

-Robert Toebe

Scope News

We are targeting March 24th as the date for re-installing the 30-inch mirror. As you may or may not know, the mirror was suffering from a degree of astigmatism due to inadequate support provided by the old cell. Kevin has constructed a new cell which should provide much better support. This new cell required a six-inch hole to be cut out from the center of the mirror. The mirror was successfully cored, the new cell has been built, and the mirror is now undergoing testing in its new support. A new secondary mirror support has been built, too.

Additionally, we have shaft encoders for the 30-inch. Once brackets have been built, they can be installed on the axes of the scope. Right now, we are looking for a donation of an "AT-clone", a 286-based computer that we can adapt to the scope to run a star chart program. If anyone out there has any contacts...



Moved Recently...?

Let us know your new address. Send in a change of address form (available at your local post office), or call Rick Morales and give him the information over the phone.

FPOA Officers and Directors

President	Frank Dibbell	(408) 974-7319
Vice Pres.	Dave Ambrose	(408) 449-1778
Exec. Secry	Rick Morales	(408) 623-4255
Treasurer	Denni Medlock	(415) 654-6796

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The *Fremont Peak Observer* is published quarterly, and is the official publication of the Fremont Peak Observatory Association. The Association is a tax-exempt, not for profit organization dedicated to providing public education and interpretive services in Astronomy using the resources available at Fremont Peak State Park.

Basic membership in the Association is \$10.00 per year, plus a one-time \$10.00 initiation fee. Membership runs for the calendar year; there is no pro-rationing of dues. For more information, write to:

Fremont Peak Observatory
PO Box 1110
San Juan Bautista, CA 95045

1990 FPOA Membership Directory

Ambrose, David & Mary	354 Block Ave	Salinas	CA	93906	408-449-1778
Anderson, Wayne	924 Q Street	Rio Linda	CA	95673	916-991-6042
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Zintsmaster, Logan R.	450 Spring Hill Drive	Morgan Hill	CA	95037	408-779-6689