



My View...

By Laura Clark

I got my first telescope five years ago, when I was in fifth grade. It was a 3.5-inch refractor, and though I didn't exactly know what I was doing, I managed to get some good views through it the first time it brought it outside. Although I've been interested in astronomy since I was in Kindergarten, this was the first time I'd really done anything about it, besides pretending I lived on the moon. Later that year I attended a lecture given by Sally Ride and got to meet her, and I knew I wanted to be just like her.

When I learned about FPOA, I first wanted to join because it would allow me to use my telescope up at Fremont Peak, which was very convenient. Then I learned about the programs and lectures offered, and my mom and I attended several.

Looking through the Challenger was my favorite part--you can see plenty of great pictures of the night sky and various celestial objects, but actually seeing those images through a telescope is so much more meaningful. This Spring I will take the class at the observatory so that I can learn to operate the Challenger.

I hope that by being part of FPOA I can get some of the experience I need to really explore astronomy and astrophysics as my future career.

Ed note: *Laura Clark is a high school student at Pacific Collegiate School in Santa Cruz. The FPOA encourages articles from students. If you wish to submit an article for publication, simply email it to fpoa@sbcglobal.net, along with your name and the school you attend.*

Whats This...?

(See page 3)



FPOA Programs: 2006

Note: please check <http://www.fpoa.net/schedule-2006.html> for changes to events and schedules

Saturday Evening Programs

March:	25th
April:	1st, 22nd, 29th
May:	6th, 20th, 27th
June:	3rd, 17th, 24th
July:	1st, 22nd, 29th
August:	19th, 26th
September:	16th, 23rd, 30th
October:	14th, 21st, 28th

The observatory is open to the public on these evenings

Solar Programs

May:	6th
June:	3rd
July:	1st
August:	19th
September:	16th
October:	14th

Solar observing is offered at the Observatory during the afternoon on these dates.

Board Meetings

March:	25th	FPOA Observatory
April:	29th	FPOA Observatory
May:	27th	FPOA Observatory
June:	24th	FPOA Observatory
July:	29th	FPOA Observatory
August:	26th	FPOA Observatory
September:	23rd	FPOA Observatory
October:	21st	FPOA Observatory
November:	18th	FPOA Observatory

Special Events

August:	26th	20th Annual Star-B-Q
September:	23rd	Rob Toebe Night

Work Parties

April:	29th	Spring Cleaning!
August:	19th	Prep for Star-B-Q
October:	21st	Post Season Maint.

Presidents Message

By Pat Donnelly

2006 is here, and the time for celebration is about to begin. 2006 marks the 20th anniversary of the FPOA. It really doesn't seem that long. To celebrate the anniversary, the FPOA will be having a special Star-B-Que on August 26, of this year. This Star-B-Que will be big and hopefully, it will be a memorable event for all. Look for special food to be provided, special prizes for the raffle, and a fairly famous guest speaker.

In addition to this event, the FPOA will begin the public programs on Saturday, March 25. We can always use volunteers, who wish to run the telescope or give the talk. I plan to do the solar programs this year, now that Jack Murphy has moved on. I would like to thank Jack for doing the solar programs all of these years. It can be quite intense sitting in the Sun at the peak for hours. Finally, if anyone has any ideas on how to enhance or improve our public programs, I would like to hear from you. We always appreciate input from the membership on how to improve our programs.

A special note is in order for 2006. On Wednesday, November 8, 2006, there will be a Transit of Mercury visible from the West Coast. In fact, the entire event is here from about 1:00 PM to about 4:30 PM local time. The FPOA is planning on conducting an observing session with Hartnell College at the college. If you would like to participate in this event, please let someone on the FPOA Board know. I suspect that others may want to be at the Peak for the event. I believe there will be someone at the observatory also.

During January of this year the 30" mirror in the Challenger Telescope was removed, in order to be recoated. I would like to thank all of the members, who helped remove and reinstall the mirror. I was tasked with taking the mirror to Mission Viejo in Orange County to get the mirror recoated. The mirror made the trip successfully even though I had to drive through some falling snow up on Tejon Pass.

Since this is February, there are three (3) usual astronomical activities I do each year that are interesting and do not require lots of equipment. The first activity is to search for Geostationary Satellites. These satellites can be found in a band around the celestial sphere at -5.7° Declination. In February and March you should be able to see these satellites in Leo, Sextans, and Virgo. They are especially bright this time of the year, and they can reach magnitude +2 for several minutes. The other two activities are to be able to see Canopus and Omega Centauri from the observatory. Canopus is much more difficult to see since it is only about 1° above the horizon, as seen from the observatory and visible for only about 30 – 40 minutes. However, it is fairly easy to find Canopus, because it is almost directly below Sirius. Omega Centauri is higher in the sky and slightly to the east of Spica in Right Ascension. Thus, you can find Omega Centauri much below and a little to the east of Spica. When you are at the observatory, try to find the objects.

By the way it looks like Delta Scorpio is brightening again. Delta can be checked each morning before sunrise with the naked eye!

BOARD CHANGES...

By Pat Donnelly

There have been some major changes in the FPOA Board of Directors within the last few months. In addition to the loss of Jack Murphy and Denni Medlock from the Board of Directors, Marko Sillanpaa has accepted a position in Florida, and Donn Mukensable will be moving to Hawaii. At the last board meeting on Saturday, January 28, 2006, Denni was elected as a Director Emeritus of the FPOA. This means that FPOA has two (2) Director Emeriti, Kevin Medlock and Denni Medlock. Marko Sillanpaa has resigned from the board, and Donn Mukensable has agreed to remain on the board for now. Dave Samuels has agreed to take Denni's place on the Board. Because of the loss of Marko and the potential loss of Donn, the FPOA Board is looking for 1 or 2 new FPOA members to complete the terms of Marko and possibly Donn. If you are interested in being on the FPOA Board, you can contact any board member or just attend a board meeting. The schedule, time, and location of the remaining board meetings for 2006 are provided on the FPOA Web Site. I would like to close by expressing my appreciation to all of these board members for their service and continued interest in the FPOA. Their presence will be missed.

Newsletter Available via Email!

Did you know that you can receive the *FPOA Observer* via email?

There are distinct advantages to doing so...

1. You will receive it early
2. You will receive the color version (yes it is produced in color!)
3. You will save the Association postage and materials expense

If you wish to receive the Observer via email, please send an email to fpoa@sbcglobal.net stating this fact. If we are able to reduce costs enough, we may be able to increase publication to 6 times a year from 4 times a year.

Have a picture or an article you would like published? Please submit them to fpoa@sbcglobal.net.

ATTENTION!!!

I am assembling a special CD-ROM (hopefully) in time for our 20th Anniversary. One of the items I am including is a copy of all our old newsletters. Alas, I am missing some old issues. If you have Vol 7 #4; Vol 8 #1,2,4; Vol 9 #3; Vol 10 #1; Vol 15 #3; Vol 17 #3; Vol 18 #3; Vol 19 #4; and Vol 20 #3 I would love to hear from you!

Please email me at fpoa@sbcglobal.net.

Whats This...? (from page 1)

By Ron Dammann

The Challenger 30" mirror is in the process of being coated by L & L Optical <http://www.llopt.com/index.html> in Mission Viejo, Ca. with a new Enhanced Aluminum coating. This coating has a 96 percent reflectance over the visible wavelengths. It should be re-installed in March in time for the first Public Program, March 25th. The mirror was removed by a group of dedicated FPOA members, who braved the snow on the weekend of Feb. 18th at the Peak. Thanks to members Donn Mukensnoble, Pat Donnelly, Rick and Tony Morales, Dave Samuels, Steve, Kim and Zackery Loos, David Baumgartner, Peter Dammann, Loren Dynneson, , Denni and Kevin Medlock and Doug Brown.

(Picture on page 1: Ron Dammann and Doug Brown posing by the mirror after reinstallation)



Above: Ron Dammann, right, and Doug Brown, left, removing the protective cover from the mirror.



Above: The intrepid crew of mirror removers/installers posing by the Challenger 30-inch Scope: kneeling in front from left to right: Pat Donnelly, and Doug Brown. Standing in the back from left to right: Ron Dammann, Steve Loos, and Dave Samuels.

Notes From the Board Meeting

The FPOA is looking for a couple of members to assume Board positions to finish the terms of our departing Board members. Denni Medlock is retiring and leaving the area, and Marko Sillanpaa is relocating to Florida. If you are interested and qualify to hold a position, please email our President Pat Donnelly at kungfugina@aol.com for more information.

Denni Medlock as agreed to begin writing a column for the Newsletter (hopefully we'll get an article for the next edition!)

Former Board Member Jack Murphy and Charlie Carlson both send greetings to the FPOA. Jack recently moved to Kingman, Arizona, where he says the skies are really dark! Charlie moved many years ago to Boise, Idaho, and built his own little observatory.



Fremont Peak Observatory Association Officers and Directors - 2006

President	Pat Donnelly	408-778-2741 kungfugina@aol.com
Vice President	Doug Brown	408-223-0615 dnabrown@ix.netcom.com
Secretary	Marko Sillanpaa	925-735-0603 marko@godiving.com
Treasurer	Rick Morales	831-623-4081 rickmorales@charter.net
Directors	Donn Mukensnoble	925-462-4602 dmuk@sbcglobal.net
	Loren Dynneson	831-636-3062 dynneson@hollinet.com
	Dave Samuels	samuels_david@emc.com
	Steve Loos	831-636-8815 sloos@garlic.com
Dir. of Instruments	Ron Dammann	408-255-1863 ron.dammann@lmco.com
Newsletter Editor	Frank Dibbell	916-933-2414 fpoa@sbcglobal.net
Director Emeritus	Kevin Medlock	510-339-9224 epoch@majornet.com

The **Fremont Peak Observer** is published four times a year (Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall). Articles from members are encouraged, and should be emailed to fpoa@sbcglobal.net. Articles should be either in plain text or MS Word format. Deadlines are Feb 1, May 1, Aug 1 and Nov 1 respectively. The Observatory's phone number is 831-623-2465.

FPOA on the internet

Website: www.fpoa.net
Reservations/Events: members.fpoa.net/ical.html
Members Only Page: members.fpoa.net
Members email/list signup:
fpoa.net/mailman/listinfo/fpoa-members

For Observatory scheduling and access, email schedule@fpoa.net