



## President's Message—20 Years!

*By Patrick Donnelly*

As I write these words, I am sitting at the table in the Meeting/Lecture Room in the observatory. It is very quiet here with only the sound of Mozart's Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra in A major to break the silence. As I sat there, I was trying to remember what the meeting room looked like about 20 years ago, when I first got here. There was no stairs up to the Observing Room. Carter Roberts and Don Stone had not built them as yet. I walked into the room, and Charlie Carlson asked if I had ever painted anything. I did reply "yes." Before I knew it, I was putting mud on the ceiling and getting it all over myself too. As I remember, it was snowing outside as I did the work.

My how things have changed. Our Meeting Room has carpeting and lots of exquisite pictures of the night sky due to the efforts of John Gleason and Robert Hoyle. We have a state of the art computer projector for the programs and lots of extra telescopes here. I really don't think we can get another telescope in this room. There are new computers everywhere around here thanks to Dave Samuels and Rob Hawley. Finally, my Geotron has a good home rather than in its box up in the rafters of my garage. If any of you need a place to "escape to" for few hours or a day, the observatory is a great place to go, even if you are not planning on doing any observing.

I am pleased to report that the FPOA and the observatory are now part of the general astronomy course at both Hartnell College and the Monterey Peninsula College. A field trip to the observatory for observing and gathering data is now part of the required work for these courses. Moreover, every Friday night in April and May has been reserved for a special program. Schools and scout groups are coming here in large numbers. The FPOA is having a very positive impact on the communities around the observatory.

Remember Saturday, August 26, is our big 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Star-B-Que. Be sure to sign up as indicated elsewhere in this newsletter.

*(continued on page 2...)*

### STAR-B-Q AUGUST 26!!!

Be sure to attend our 20th Anniversary Celebration. RSVP to [fpoa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpoa@sbcglobal.net) with number of attendees and the dish you will be bringing for the potluck. As always, the FPOA will provide the meat and condiments—we rely on our members to bring the salads and desserts!

## FPOA Programs: 2006

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

### Saturday Evening Programs

<b>June:</b>	3rd, 17th, 24th
<b>July:</b>	1st, 22nd, 29th
<b>August:</b>	19th, 26th
<b>September:</b>	16th, 23rd, 30th
<b>October:</b>	14th, 21st, 28th

*The observatory is open to the public on these evenings*

### Solar Programs

<b>July:</b>	1st
<b>August:</b>	19th
<b>September:</b>	16th
<b>October:</b>	14th

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

### Board Meetings

<b>June:</b>	24th	FPOA Observatory
<b>July:</b>	29th	FPOA Observatory
<b>August:</b>	26th	FPOA Observatory
<b>September:</b>	23rd	FPOA Observatory
<b>October:</b>	21st	FPOA Observatory
<b>November:</b>	18th	FPOA Observatory

### Special Events

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

### Work Parties

<b>August:</b>	19th	Prep for Star-B-Q
<b>October:</b>	21st	Post Season Maint.

## President's Message... (from page 1)

Last week an individual I met in Morgan Hill was complaining that the space program has gotten muddled in politics, and that we are not doing enough space science anymore. I couldn't disagree more. Here is my list from memory (the second thing to go on my body) as to what we are doing in space science today:

- The Hubble Space Telescope is still observing the heavens
- The Spitzer Infrared Telescope is doing its job
- The GALEX Ultraviolet Telescope continues its work
- Space probes are on their way to both Mercury and Pluto
- There are two (2) rovers still crawling around Martian surface, and there are now three (3) orbiters above them circling Mars
- Cassini is operating in orbit around Saturn
- The Voyager and Pioneer probes are heading for interstellar space
- The Ulysses probe continues its work in polar orbit around the sun
- Recent achievements include the impact on a comet, landing on Titan, and returning cometary material to earth

## Hartnell Students Pilot Challenger

Don't be surprised if the next public program you attend is presented by an engineering student from Hartnell College in Salinas. FPOA is piloting a new program in collaboration with Andy Newton, Director of Hartnell's Planetarium and a long-standing FPOA member, to train half-a-dozen students to assist in conducting public programs. The board has already reviewed applications from a number of interns and conducted training sessions on operation of the Challenger telescope, interpretation of the night sky for the public, and public presentations.

After becoming an observer-class FPOA member and completing training, each student will develop an individual program plan to help with up to 6 public programs. They will then develop public presentations or plans for public program observing sessions, which will be reviewed by Hartnell faculty and an FPOA board member before the public program. A board member will assist the students with the actual program delivery. For more information, please contact Andy Newton or Doug Brown.



The Pleiades open star cluster is considered by many to be the most stunningly beautiful cluster of bright stars in the heavens. Brighter portions of the blue reflection nebula, called the Merope nebula, is visible through binoculars under excellent sky conditions. Photo by Philip Terzian., FPOA Member

### Fremont Peak Observatory Association

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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](mailto: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](http://www.fpoa.net)  
**Reservations/Events:** [members.fpoa.net/ical.html](http://members.fpoa.net/ical.html)  
**Members Only Page:** [members.fpoa.net](http://members.fpoa.net)  
**Members email/list signup:**  
[fpoa.net/mailman/listinfo/fpoa-members](http://fpoa.net/mailman/listinfo/fpoa-members)

For Observatory scheduling and access, email [schedule@fpoa.net](mailto:schedule@fpoa.net)

## 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](mailto: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. (Note—if you received this Newsletter via email, thank you for signing up!)

**Have a picture or an article you would like published? Please submit them to**  
**[fpoa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpoa@sbcglobal.net)**

## The Peak at Full Moon

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*By Patrick Donnelly*

On Friday, May 12, 2006, I gave a special program to the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from the International School of Monterey. This school is located in Seaside, California. This was the second part of a school/observatory program I conducted for this class. About 35 students and 15 adults visited the peak. Although the evening started out quite cloudy, by 10:30 PM PDT the clouds were gone. The kids got to see Saturn, the Moon, Jupiter, and Mars.

By 11:00 PM the group had departed. I found myself alone in the observatory and probably alone in the park. My intent was to try to find Mimas next to Saturn's rings. Instead, I just sat at the top of the ladder for about a half an hour. This night was the full Moon night. In fact, the moment of Full Moon was at 11:51 PM (just past local midnight). It was both amazing and eerie how bright the surrounding area was. The houses down in the valley to the Southeast were plainly visible, and the trees on the slope just to the south of the observatory were also visible. Most of us try to stay away from the peak on the Full Moon. However, I'm not sure this is such a good thing. By staying away on the full moon night, we miss a very unusual time at the peak. No doubt, I plan to return some full moon night in the near future.

## The Peak in Winter

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*By Mark Levine*

An old Chinese Proverb tells us that a picture is worth one thousand words. With that in mind, here is a photo of the Observatory taken after the big "Winter Storm".



## A Few Reminders from the Editor...

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Please plan on attending our 20th Anniversary Celebration on August 26th!!!. As in the past, the FPOA will supply the charcoal and fire, the meat, the buns, the condiments and the drinks (sorry, soft only!). We rely on our members to bring the "side dishes" - those mouth watering culinary delights: the desserts and salads. We will be holding, as in past years, trivia contest, best dessert contest, and the ever popular raffle.

But did you know, that technically, the Star-B-Q being held on August 26th is really the 21st Annual Star-B-Q and not the 20th Annual Star-B-Q? While it is in fact the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the FPOA, the first annual Star-B-Q was held on August 30th, 1986. (We called it the First Annual, not the Zeroeth Annual...). The Second Annual was held in 1987, Third Annual in 1988, etc. So for that reason, while the Association celebrates its 20th Birthday, we are really holding the 21st Star-B-Q!

Some other little known Star-B-Q facts: In 1995, we celebrated the 10th Annual Star-B-Q, as we did in 1996! We had two 10th Annual Star-B-Q's in a row. The following year, 1997, we celebrated the 6th Annual Star-B-Q. By 1998 we were back on schedule, celebrating our 13th Annual Star-B-Q. This is probably way more information on Star-B-Q history than you ever wanted to know, but it is entirely possible this information pops up on a future Trivia Quiz, and wouldn't you want to be prepared?

On another note, fully one third of the membership receives their Newsletter via email, which is wonderful! Given the production cost of mailing a newsletter (paper, copy expense, envelopes, and postage) is about 75 cents per Newsletter, this amounts to an annual savings of over \$150.00. Looked at another way, this is \$150.00 that can be put toward equipment or public program improvement. My goal for the rest of this year is to increase Newsletter distribution by email from 35% to 50%. To sign up for email distribution, let me know via email at [fpoa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpoa@sbcglobal.net) (note, if you received this Newsletter by email, you are already signed up!).

And finally, I am putting together an FPOA "Commemorative" CD-ROM. On this CD will be .pdf copies of all our newsletters, History of the FPOA, bios on the founding members, anecdotes and stories regarding construction, and a photographic history. Presently I am gathering all old editions of our Newsletter as well as pictures and stories. Currently I have all old Newsletter copies except for the following: 1988 Issue 1, 1991 Issues 3 and 4, 1994 Issue 1, 1995 Issues 3 and 4, 2000 Issue 1, 2002 Issue 4, 2003 Issue 3, and 2005 Issue 2. If you have a copy of one of these (and you are willing to send me a copy of it!) please get in touch via [fpoa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpoa@sbcglobal.net). The CD-ROM will not be available alas in time for the Star-B-Q, but I will be taking "pre-orders" and will mail it to people as soon as it is ready. Suggested price is \$10.00. After subtracting production costs the remainder will be donated to the FPOA.

*-Frank Dibbell, Editor*