



From the President

By President Rick Morales

Picking up where I left off some months ago, the building of the Fremont Peak Observatory was what I like to remember as a labor of love. It began with "The First and Only, Once In a Lifetime, Telescope Sale" that brought in enough money to begin purchasing material for construction of the observatory. Dozens of telescopes and related equipment were donated to FPOA by Celestron executives who handed the keys to a van loaded with the equipment to Kevin Medlock and told him to take the equipment and sell it as seed money for the proposed construction of the observatory. The Celestron executives told Kevin and Denni that they had heard of the upcoming observatory venture and they wanted to help with the project. Kevin drove the van up from Southern California and left the stuff at the Peak and returned the van to the Celestron executives, who asked him to wait while they loaded the van with more equipment to donate to our cause. What a great surprise!

Morgan Smith, a Berkeley architect and a friend of the Medlocks, designed the Observatory. I believe he did the work pro bono. We had received a metal dome that John Stewart had acquired and hauled to the Peak where it was stashed behind the maintenance building. It was stored there for a long time until we came to the decision that the construction costs to build a structure that would support the dome would be too costly. We were offered and accepted Morgan's design with the roll off roof and that's when everything began to roll (pun intended).

Morgan's plans were approved by the Park Department's architect who, by the way, happened to be an amateur astronomer. We received a memo from the Architect's office that read simply, "Build it."

We began construction by examining the site and, using the architect's transit, we laid out the location of the observatory that would best serve our goal of making it easy to build and getting a good view of the southern sky.

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FPOA Programs 2012

Saturday Evening Programs

Oct 13, 20

Solar Programs

Oct 13

Board Meetings

Oct, 13, Nov 10

Please check <http://www.fpoa.net/schedule.html> for changes or updates to this schedule.

FPOA Board Election Results

By Ron Dammann

Election of three FPOA Board members occurred at the General Meeting / Star-B-Que on August 18th. Two incumbent Board Members were re-elected, Dave Samuels and Loren Dynneson, and a new Board member, Michael Connally, was elected filling the position of Rick Morales who is retiring from the Board at the end of the year.



Board Members (L to R) Dave Samuels, Chris Angelos, Michael Connally, Rob Hawley, Ron Dammann, Rick Morales, John Parker, Doug Brown and Loren Dynneson.

Star-B-Que 2012

By Ron Dammann

Thanks to all our members who made the 2012 Star-B-Que a rousing success! A lot of work is needed behind the scenes and pre Star-B-Que to bring everything together. Since the FPOA Board is greatly involved in planning and operation of the SBQ, a large Thanks to them. Also, FPOA's great sponsors of raffle prizes, Sam Sweiss of Scope City in San Francisco and John Parker of Orion Telescopes deserve a great "Thank You". If your looking for anything astronomy related, please call or stop in to see if they can help and don't forget to mention that you're a FPOA or Bay Area astronomy club member.

The Astro Gastro contest had interesting desserts like the Venus Transit cookies, Mars Curiosity and the Supernova Cake by Mike Connally and his daughter, Katie, was a hit.



**Astronomical Gastronomical Contest
Entry**

DO NOT EAT!! (yet)

DO NOT TOUCH!!

**Supernova Cake. Minimum safe:
distance 50 ly.**

**(Caution: Watch out for secondary
particle shower / wave.)**

**"If you can see the flash, your too close.
Worse still if you can hear the bang."**

**Additional Caution: Watch out for
Neutron Star or Black Hole created in
collapse.**



John Parker and Sam Sweiss

And as long as I'm thanking people, Loren Dynneson and all the members and volunteers who helped with the barbecue and cleanup afterwards deserve a "Great Job" thanks. The food was delicious and everyone came way with a full stomach ready for a night of great observing.



Loren adding his "Secret Sauce"



First crack (left of center) appearing due to cake core instability. Core sugar burning has ceased and core collapse and rebound (caused by bicycle inner tube inflation) has started. Surrounding observers were protected from cake explosion by Transparent Aluminum shield (inverted plastic container).



Remnants of Supernova Cake

Our Kid's Corner this year was handled by the FPOA/Hartnell Interns Jose Lopez (right) and Jared Wolfe (left). Not shown Tyler Hooks, Cameron Schaefer, Ricky Maciel and Coordinator Lukas Bonick.



The Raffle was conducted by Sam Sweiss and John Parker and fun and prizes was had by all.



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Access to the site was easy for hauling material and equipment as well. We hired a fellow with an auger to dig holes for the piers that would support the building and the telescope. We couldn't have done it without the auger because the ground was full of rocks of all sizes and if we had used a posthole digger we might still be digging. The day that the holes were to be filled with rebar and concrete was overcast and rainy. When the concrete truck and pumper arrived the rain increased to storm conditions. Work continued thru the storm and there are some great photos of that memorable March Spring day.

As summer drew near, the activity on the hill above the shop was something. There were always 20 people or more doing whatever work that had to be done. Kids were up at the site, too, and we had some of them doing the work as well. It seemed that everyone found something to do that furthered the process of construction in one way or another. I think it was the greatest summer I ever experienced. By the end of summer the construction was complete, the roll off roof was finished, the wood shingles were nailed to the exterior walls, wiring was run for power throughout the building by Kevin's dad and a group of others, insulation and sheetrock were hung on interior walls, the big glass windows were set in the northwest corner of the building. By fall of that year, the interior walls were taped, mudded and painted, carpet was laid down and it's the same carpet we see today in the Lecture Room, windows were glazed, doors were hung, lights installed, switches and outlets installed, all that stuff. It was a great year.

First light for the Challenger telescope was sometime in the fall. October?!? The first people to look through the eyepiece of the Challenger were, of course, Kevin and Denni Medlock. They locked themselves' inside the observatory and the very first views of the night sky through the Challenger Telescope at Fremont Peak. We, all, stood outside waiting for our opportunity to see light through the Challenger. It came an hour or so after the Medlocks had their first views. Since then, thousands of people from all over the world have had the opportunity to look through the eyepiece and see the beauty and wonder of the night sky.

It was a great summer! And it has been a great experience for us all through these many years.

Clear skies,
Rick

Brian Day of NASA Ames gave a interesting presentation on "The Atmosphere of the Moon" as the Sun was setting.



And as the sky darkened, we prepared for a long night of observing....



2013 Membership Renewal

Renewals are easy. You can use the forms on the membership page <http://www.fpoa.net/membership.html> to pay with either PayPal or via a credit card. For those preferring paper you can just send a check (that has your current correct address) to : FPOA Membership, c/o Rob Hawley, 1233 Hillcrest Dr, San Jose CA 95120

If you email has changed then please be sure to include that in either the PayPal payment as a comment or a note with your check.

EMAIL DELIVERY OF THE OBSERVER

Dear FPOA Members,
We have been delivering the Observer via email for the past several issues. This obviously saves the Association postal expenses, and assures the quickest delivery to you. However, several of you no longer have valid email addresses, due to ISP changes, moves, etc. If you would like to continue to receive, or begin to receive, notification of the Observer via email, please send your current email address to membership at fpoa.net

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The Fremont Peak Observer is published four times a year (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall). Articles from members are encouraged and should be emailed to ron.dammann at lmco.com. Articles should be in plain text or MS Word format. Deadlines are Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1 and Nov 1, respectively.

FPOA on the Internet

- Phone Number:** 831-623-2465
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