**Coming Up At The Observatory....**

- FOTO Member’s Meeting Apr 4  7:30p
- Stonelick Stargazing Apr 6  dusk
- FOTO Kids & Teens Apr 12  7p
- Astronomy Thursday Apr 11  8p
- Astronomy Friday Apr 12  8p
- History Tours Apr 14  1-4p
- A2Z+ Member’s Class meeting NO April
- First Light Night  Apr 14  8-10p
- Stargazing 101* Apr 16  8p
- Mysteries of the Universe* Apr 17  7p
- Astronomy Thursday Apr 18  8p
- Astronomy Friday Apr 19  8p
- Late Night @ the COC Apr 19  10:30p
- National Astronomy Day Apr 20  8p
- Behind the Scenes* Apr 22  7p
- Astronomy Thursday Apr 25  8p
- Astronomy Friday Apr 26  8p
- History Tours Apr 28  1-4p

**Save these May Dates**

- FOTO Member’s Meeting May 2  7:30p
- FOTO Kids & Teens May 3  8p
- Late Night @ the COC May 4  10:30p
- A2Z+ Member’s Class May 5  7-9p
- Astronomy on Your PC* May 7  8p
- Museum Day @ Fountain Sq May 15  Noon
- UC Communiversity

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**The Word**

*By Basil Rowe*

What’s involved in producing the monthly FOTO newsletter? That’s a good question. The short answer is "probably too much". It is for this reason the FOTO Board is recommending changing the bylaws as a first step to simplifying the newsletter production process.

As many are aware FOTO has two monthly newsletters (electronic and print) with very similar, but different content. Also, one of my goals as President is to streamline FOTO's operation.

Solving the problem of two newsletters will take several steps and some time. Our problem is not uncommon for clubs, many of which have simply required an additional charge for members that want a printed newsletter, which is one option being considered by the Board. However we also certainly don't want to lose members or make it difficult for members to be connected to FOTO. If we were to charge extra for a print newsletter with the same content as the e-newsletter, our Treasurer estimates it would cost $20-25/yr for those that want a print version (just to cover printing and postage, not including the extra time needed to collate, fold, label, and mail - by our Treasurer).

The Board is in agreement the first step to solving this problem is to make some small changes to the bylaws by removing references to the "print" or "postal" newsletter. These changes are detailed later in this newsletter. Please look at them and let me or a trustee know of any questions or solutions. Thank you.

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**Did You Know....**

Most stars like the Sun actually behave more erratically than our sun. More than half of sun-like stars either have cycles that are slowly increasing or decreasing in how active they are over time instead of remaining steady, or they're completely irregular. We don't really know why.
**FOTO's April Meeting**

*By Dave McBride*

Thursday, April 4th, 7:30 pm

In the night sky, the expanses of space between the stars of the Milky Way appear to be empty. In fact this space is occupied by a very thin gas that is mostly hydrogen and has mere traces of other elements such as oxygen, carbon, and nitrogen. The gas is also dusty; it contains grains of dust that, like an interstellar fog, impede one's view of the stars. This gas is not evenly spread out in space, but is clumpy. Although on average there is approximately one hydrogen atom for every cubic centimeter of interstellar space, a clump may be one thousand or more times as dense as a comparable volume of average density. Astronomers have been finding that these denser regions contain a great variety of molecules; many different "molecular species" have been identified in the interstellar medium.

Join us on Thursday, April 4th, at 7:30 pm to hear Greg Huber give us an explanation of the formation and types of molecules between the stars in his presentation "Interstellar Chemistry - The Chemistry Between the Stars." Greg has been a long time FOTO member, getting his start in 1996 with a small group of devoted members. He was nominated to be FOTO President by Paul Nohr later that year, and served as our president until 2004.

Our May program will be presented on May 2nd by Dean Regas speaking to us about the many astronomy conspiracy theories and doomsday predictions with his presentation "I Want to Believe: Returning to an Age of Reason." Dean is the Outreach Astronomer at the Cincinnati Observatory.

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**March FOTO Meeting Highlights**

*By Michelle Gainey*

**Speaker:** Tom Field gave a webinar: "You Can Almost Touch the Stars". This entertaining lecture on spectroscopy covered some of the history of the science of spectroscopy and explained how spectroscopic techniques can be used to deduce the chemical composition, temperature, distance, and motion of distant astronomical objects. Mr. Field’s e-mail address: tom@rspec-astro.com; also his webpage: www.rspec-astro.com, which provides some information about spectroscopy, and also promotes his software package which won the Sky&Telescope “Hot Product 2012” award and other spectroscopy equipment. **ScopeOut Committee:** Dale Zoller

is the chair of this committee and needs volunteers to help with planning and running the event. Contact Dale if you would like to participate. ScopeOut will be held on 9/14/13.

**Name Badges:** Jim Groen has made arrangements for engraved wooden badges, attached by magnet, made by Woodcraft for $4 apiece. He took orders from members. If you would like to order a name badge, look for an announcement in this newsletter for instructions.

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**April FOTO Planning Meeting**

*By Basil Rowe*

The next FOTO Planning Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 18, 2013 at 6 pm at the Observatory. The meeting generally lasts a couple hours. The planning meetings are open to all FOTO members. We encourage your participation in the discussion of future FOTO activities.

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This column ran about four years ago but it is worth repeating. I want to review how you can observe the sun safely with your telescope.

The most economical and safest way to get started in direct solar observing is with a front mounted solar filter. By this I mean a solar filter mounted directly in front of your telescope. This can be done easily on either refractors or reflectors. To use a front mounted solar filter, all you need to do is remove the telescope’s dust cover and replace it with the solar filter. The filter is mounted in a cell that fits snugly on the telescope tube.

Now here are some thoughts about solar filters. Standard or polarized sunglasses are not solar filters. They are not safe to look directly at the sun. To be totally safe, the filter must transmit only 1/1,000th of 1% (Optical Density 5) of direct sunlight. A filter of this density can be used for both visual and photographic use. Filters are available in both glass and Baader Turbo Film. Both offer excellent views. Both can be damaged if handled or stored improperly. Always inspect the filter before using it on the telescope by looking through the filter at a bright light. If you see any pinholes or scratches, replace the filter. Remember don’t commit Eye Suicide.

Here are some sources for purchasing solar filters.

- Astro-Physics, Inc.
- Thousand Oaks Optical
- Orion Telescopes and Binoculars
- Kendrick Astro Instruments

These and other vendors offer solar filters that can be purchased online.
First Light Night

168 Years of Astronomy at the Cincinnati Observatory
Sunday, April 14th
8-10 pm

By Craig Niemi

On April 14, 1845, in the gray of a lingering twilight, Observatory founder Ormsby MacKnight Mitchel took his first look through the Great Cincinnati Telescope, the 3rd largest in the World. He saw the Moon, "her mountain heights, her rocky precipices and her dells", Jupiter, "globe of surpassing splendor", the Saturnian system, "the mind over whelmed in wonder and astonishment."

An unknown poet at the Cincinnati Enquirer wrote to commemorate the event: "The Spy Glass out on the hill Is now entirely finished; The distance twixt us and the moon Is sensibly diminished. When Mitchel looks, it comes so near. He sees the hill and trees Which most conclusively doth prove That 'tis not made of cheese."

Learn the fascinating story of the people who made Cincinnati the "Birthplace of American Astronomy". Tours and Viewing (weather permitting)
No reservations are needed. All ages welcome.
Cost: $7 per person. Free for Observatory members.

For further information or to make reservations, please call 513-321-5186.

Spring Grove Docents Visit the Observatory

By Craig Niemi

Spring Grove Cemetery ca 1845

Saturday March 6th Phil Nuxhall and about a dozen of the tour docents from Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum visited the Observatory for a history tour. While the weather did not cooperate for viewing they were treated to a tour and insights into our stories by John and Valerie.

The Observatory and Spring Grove were both conceived in the 1840’s when Cincinnati was undergoing a cultural resurgence. Many of the principals were involved in both organizations. When you tour the lower, older section of Spring Grove, you’ll find many of the individuals and families that were instrumental in the creation of the Observatory. Through their legacy many of those Cincinnati families are still supporting the Observatory today.

Phil sent me a long list of programs he thought you’d be interested in. Be sure to check www.springgrove.org for more details.

Did You Know….

Our Sun’s gravity is 28 times what we experience on Earth.
Craig’s Corner

By Craig Niemi

On Sunday April 14th we celebrate First Light Night.

In 1845 Ormsby MacKnight Mitchel took the first look through our great refractor. 168 years later you can learn the fascinating story of the people who made Cincinnati the "Birthplace of American Astronomy" and take a look through the same telescope.

A couple of months back we put out a call for volunteers to help meet the ever increasing demand for programs. I’d like to thank those who have offered to help!

Dean and Leo could use additional help with several programs including the Late Nights, student field trips to the COC, off-site stargazes, and scout tour and viewings.

If you’re new to these types of programming Dean, Leo and John are certainly willing and available to help get you started.

For our more experienced presenters Leo and Dean can guide you in preparing or modifying your existing presentations to serve specific groups. Please feel free to contact them.

Be sure to check the online calendar for more details on First Light Night and other upcoming events.

Hope to see you on the 14th!

National Astronomy Day

Saturday, April 20th
8-10 pm

Every spring the Astronomical League sponsors observatories, planetariums, museums and astronomical societies to celebrate astronomy with free programs.

Check our web calendar for updates on other astro-programs near you.

Welcome
New & Renewing Members!

Lina Alkamhawi
Kevin Bellhorst
Marian and Richard Billings
Tom Busemeyer
Peggy Bustamante
George and Linda Callard
Michael and Minnie Clements
Heather Cole
Patrick Crowley
Eugene and Eileen Drust
Raynor Duncombe
Olivia and Joan Erhardt
Lisa and Michael Gray
Jonathan Harris
Jack Hazen
Catherine Helmick
John Hill
Jeff Howe
Jeff and Reda Hutton
Mitchell Katz and Casey Frazee
Linda King
Jonathan Kramer
Randy Krueger
Alexander Lukashevich
Jean Mathet
Martha Melanson
Sarah & Larry Merck
David & Kani Meyer
Steve Molter
Betty Moscove
Manjil Neupane
Timothy O’Connor

Mars’ Mt. Sharp

NASA released a high-resolution shot of the dark dunes and layered rock at the base of Mars' Mount Sharp, Curiosity's eventual destination. The image looks south-southwest from the rover's landing site. The top ridge of the distant mountain is about 10 miles from the rover.

Kristen Perkins
Larry J. Powell
Sheryl Sheldon
David Shirey
Connie and Jack Sullivan
Jim Sweeney
Stephen Timmons
Michael Perry and Ellen Wagner
Michelle White
Gary L. Wilkins
Murray and Amy Wilson
Gary Wulfeck
Sharon Young
Everett and Margie Yowell
Did You See Comet Pan-STARRS?

By Steve Rismiller

Comet PanSTARRS is a new comet that entered into the Northern Hemisphere on March 7, 2013. It was to be visible low in the western sky just after sunset. On March 12th, it passed to the left of the moon and made for a spectacular photo opportunity to get the comet and the moon with earthshine in a single shot. Every day the comet moved further to the north while hugging the western horizon. Unfortunately, here in Southwestern Ohio, we had clouds on the horizon every night after sunset making it impossible to spot the comet.

Then on March 22nd, the skies cleared. Sue and I headed to Stonelick Lake State Park and set our telescopes and cameras up in the parking lot overlooking the beach. By 8:35pm we spotted the comet while taking pictures. Then we found the comet in binoculars and telescopes. It is not a bright comet and was not seen with the unaided eye. Even in binoculars the comet was faint and the tail very diffuse. The photo in this article was taken with a Canon T4i, 300mm zoom lens at f/5.6, ISO 1600 and a 4 second exposure. The moon was taken with the same system for comparison size.

I did learn a lesson while taking these images. I focused the camera lens using the moon as the source. Then I moved the camera to the horizon to image the comet. The zoom moved with the assistance of gravity causing the focus to change just a little on the comet shot. I was unaware of the change until I got home and looked at the images on the computer. So from now on, I will use some tape to keep the zoom and focus from changing.

Comet Pan-STARRS will continue to move northward and get dimmer in the upcoming weeks. I hope that comet Ison will be better in November.

Late Night at the Observatory

Friday, April 19th & Saturday, May 4th
10:30 pm-12:00 am

Looking for a unique night out? Come see what the Observatory is like after hours. You’ll get to use the oldest big telescope in the U.S. to view astronomical objects that are not visible until late at night (weather permitting). These programs are recommended for adults only.

If the weather does not permit viewing, we’ll have fun with some of the crazy science experiments and “adult” constellation mythology stories that we can’t share with family audiences.

Admission is $10 per person. The late nights sell out early. To make reservations please call 513-321-5186.

Is Life Possible On Exomoons?

Astronomers have their fingers crossed that within the haul of data collected by NASA’s Kepler mission hides the signatures of the very first exomoons.

The discovery of alien moons will open up an exciting new frontier in the continuing hunt for habitable worlds outside the solar system. With the confirmation of exomoons likely right around the corner, researchers have begun addressing the unique and un-Earthly factors that might affect their habitability.

Because exomoons orbit a larger planetary body, they have an additional set of constraints on their potential livability than exoplanets themselves. Most of all, gravitationally induced tidal heating by a host planet can dramatically impact a moon’s climate. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/08/alien-moons-life-habitable-edge_n_2829575.html?utm_hp_ref=science

ScopeOut 2013 Planning Meeting

By Dale Zoller

We will have our next ScopeOut 2013 planning meeting on Wednesday, April 10 at 6:30pm at the Observatory. Anyone interested in helping with the planning of the various ScopeOut activities is invited to attend. ScopeOut 2013 will be held on Saturday, September 14, 2013.
The Taft Museum of Art

By Craig Niemi

Another Cincinnati institution with a connection to the first observatory atop Mt. Adams.

For over 75 years, the Taft Museum of Art has inspired visitors with its extraordinary collections (from Rembrandt, Hals, Sargent, Whistler, and more) and compelling exhibitions.

Jean Graves, Assistant Curator for Docent & School Services, is currently secretary of MHSoFGC and brings a wealth of museum skills and docent training expertise to the group.

www.taftmuseum.orgMHSoFGC

A coalition of small museums, historical sites (including the Observatory) and societies in the Greater Cincinnati region. The organizations represented share the unique and fascinating history of our region. Through exhibits, programs, tours, lectures, and more, these sites offer a unique perspective on our past.

www.historicgreatercincinnati.org

Beginner’s Stargaze

Saturday, May 25th 8-10 pm

By Craig Niemi

Calling all beginning stargazers!

Want some hands-on practice using a portable telescope? Join us for an outdoor stargaze on the Observatory’s grounds. You can bring your own telescope if you have one… or, “rent” one of ours for the evening! A brief presentation will introduce you to the basics of how to use a telescope, and the best targets to look for in the sky that night. Simple star charts will be provided. The rest of the evening will be spent outside viewing (weather permitting). You’re in charge of your own telescope – or bring a friend and share – but staff and volunteers will be available to help as needed!

Reservations are required. Please call 513-321-5186 to sign up.

Admission - $7 / person

Telescope Rental - $10 but Free for Members

Binocular Rental - $5 per binocular

A2Z+ Astronomy for Members

Sunday, May 5th
7-9 pm

A2Z+ will not meet in April. Come to First Light Night instead! The class will next meet on Sunday May 5th rather than on the 12th which is Mother’s Day.

FOTO member and UC Astronomer Dave Bosse presents an in-depth look at a variety of astronomical topics.

It’s ideal for high school ages and higher. Free for members!

SpaceFest Volunteers Needed

By Dale Zoller

SpaceFest at the Air Force Museum

The National Museum of the United States Air Force in Dayton, Ohio will hold its annual SpaceFest on Saturday, May 4th. We could use one or two more volunteers to work an exhibit table for the Observatory from 9am-5pm. This would allow the volunteers to work “shifts” and have some free time to view the other exhibits. A special thank you goes out to Scott and Michelle Gainey and Rick Hunter for volunteering to do solar viewing on the museum grounds during the day.

This is a great opportunity to promote the Observatory. As an added bonus, you get to display the new vertical banner! If you can help, please see me at the April FOTO meeting, or email me at dale.zoller@fuse.net.

Sand Dunes on Mars

This color enhanced photo is about 1 km across.

Did You Know….

Europa’s ocean is estimated at 60 to 90 miles deep, but the ice on top is only about 100 feet thick.

Did You Know….

The Big Bang wasn’t an explosion of matter into empty space….it was the rapid expansion of space itself.
History of the Observatory
2nd & 4th Sundays 1-4 pm

By Craig Niemi
From the 1846 Observatory publication “Sidereal Messenger”

Contributors to the original Observatory in Mt. Adams
Mrs. Donaldson $25
Dr. Pierson $25
Ruffus Hodges $25
Dr. Paul Knowlton $20
Isac Burton $20
Griffin Taylor $200
Nathaniel G. Pendleton $100
Nathaniel Wright $10
James Ferguson $100
The Ladies Soiree $500

The Ladies Soirée was the major donor to the original Observatory

Our talented museum interpreters weave a fascinating story of the Cincinnati Observatory’s rich history and the unique cast of characters that made Cincinnati the Birthplace of American Astronomy.

This is an ideal opportunity for our astronomy program volunteers to learn more about the Observatory and incorporate its history into your programming.

No reservations are needed, except for groups. See the web calendar for any holiday updates.

NASA Conquers Curiosity Computer Concerns
Sidelined by computer glitches since late February, NASA’s Curiosity rover is on track to resume research on Mars after exiting a science-halting safe mode.

http://spaceflightnow.com/mars/msl/130319safemode/

Professional Development Workshops

By Dean Regas

Summer Workshops
In partnership with Xavier University, the Cincinnati Observatory will host two graduate-level courses this summer. Both classes may be taken for 1-3 credit hours at $410/credit hour (a greatly-reduced off-campus rate) or for non-credit at $100. All classes will be held at the Cincinnati Observatory and include use of the historic telescopes.

Astronomy and the Nature of Science
EDXC 534 W1A 53438 (credit) or EDXC 534 N1D 53439 (non-credit)
M-F June 10-14, 6-11pm
Course Description: There is no one, “Scientific Method.” The focus of this workshop is to develop science literacy among both teachers and students through astronomy and space science activities and lessons as well as explore the many avenues scientists take to make discoveries. The sessions will be a mixture of lecture on astronomy content, observational field experience, and reflection on the nature and practices of science.

Cross-Curricular Science
Topics
EDXC 533 W1A 53520 (credit) or EDXC 533 N1D 53576 (non-credit)
M-F July 15-19, 6-11pm
Course Description: The focus of this workshop is to assist teachers in using astronomy as a vehicle for teaching math, history/social studies, language arts, and fine arts. The sessions will be a mixture of lecture, hands-on activities, small-group discussion and collaboration, and astronomy field experi-

FOTO Kids and FOTO Teens

By Dean Regas

Our next meeting will be Friday, April 5, at 8 pm at the Cincinnati Observatory. Dean and Leo will be off that night but long-time presenter and FOTO Kids founder Chuck Strubbe will be leading the groups with help from other volunteers. If it’s clear outside we’ll be looking for Jupiter and the Orion Nebula again as well as some of the stars of spring. If you have any questions, please contact Dean at dean@cincinnatiobservatory.org

1a Supernova Remnant
The Westwood School Galileoscope Project

By Dale Zoller

After the January FOTO meeting, I was talking with Observatory outreach educator Leo Sack about some of his new projects. One project he mentioned was working with a 5th grade science class at Westwood School. This caught my attention because I attended Westwood Elementary in the mid 1960’s – and I have always considered it my favorite school. The first words out of my mouth were “Do you need an assistant?”

The project involved providing each student with a “Galileoscope” telescope – a simple, 2-inch refracting telescope (plastic, but with surprisingly good optics) – and a tripod. The telescopes and tripods were purchased through a $5,000 grant from the Albers Foundation. The choice of Westwood School as a pilot school for the project was prompted by the participation of science teacher Melissa Fugett (assisted by Louie Ratterman) in the 2012 class of the Observatory’s Future Galileos Starry Messenger Project.

The students were not just handed a telescope. A Galileoscope’s main tube, lens and eyepieces all need to be assembled. The first visit to the school involved helping the students build their telescopes. Due to their enthusiasm, assisting forty-four fifth graders assemble telescopes can only be described as controlled chaos. The eyepieces were the most difficult part as there are two very tiny pieces for each lens that must be carefully held together (no fingerprints!) and placed into the eyepiece assembly. But by the end of the day, each student had a working telescope.

On the second visit we brought the tripods. Once all the telescopes were mounted, we took them outside and practiced aiming and focusing using the buildings in the neighborhood as targets. We were fortunate to have the moon visible in the afternoon sky, and the students got their first view of the moon through a telescope. The weather didn’t cooperate on our third visit, so we took the telescopes and tripods out to the hallway and practiced aiming at pictures of the Moon, Saturn and Jupiter that we taped to the door frames at each end of the floor. On our final visit Leo demonstrated how to use a star chart and introduced them to “Stellarium” astronomy software. As this project was designed to be a hands-on learning experience for the students, each student received a “workbook” that Leo created. They were required to do observations of the Moon (drawing the phases and craters), Jupiter (marking the positions of its moons over several nights), the Orion nebula and the Pleiades star cluster.

The final part of the project was a visit to the Observatory by the students and their parents on February 22nd. About 20 of the students were able to attend, and the weather actually cooperated with warmer temperatures and a mostly clear sky in the evening. After a short session in the classroom, the students took their telescopes outside to do some observations with their parents. We then had a “graduation” ceremony with certificates and prizes for the students. The evening ended with a viewing of Jupiter through the Mitchel telescope.

The Galileoscope project was a great success. A special thank you goes out to Westwood School principal Monica Battle for her support and encouragement. The parents also deserve credit for their support in helping the students complete their observation workbooks. We hope the success of this pilot project will lead to extending the program to additional schools in the future.

From a personal perspective, I really enjoyed working with the students, teachers and staff at Westwood School. The students’ curiosity seems boundless, and trying to answer all their questions was challenging. I was also impressed with the enthusiasm of the teachers and how much they care about their students. I look forward to assisting with other science related programs in the future.

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FOTO Board Members & Date Term Expires

President: Basil Rowe / Oct. 2013
Vice President: Tiffany Groen / Oct. 2013
Secretary: Michelle Lierl Gainey / Oct. 2013
Treasurer: JoAnne Pedersen / Oct. 2013
FOTO/COC Representative: Scott Gainey / May 2013
Trustee: Dave Bosse / Oct. 2013
Trustee: John Blasing / Oct. 2013
Snoozing Sun Should Wake Up This Year

The sun should roar back to life sometime in 2013, producing its second activity peak in the last two years, scientists say.

Our star has been surprisingly quiet since unleashing a flurry of flares and other eruptions toward the end of 2011. But this lull is likely the trough between two peaks that together constitute "solar maximum" for the sun's current 11-year activity cycle, researchers say. "If you look back in history, many of the previous solar cycles don't have one hump, one maximum, but in fact have two," solar physicist C. Alex Young, of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., said today (March 22) during a NASA webcast called "Solar MAX Storm Warning: Effects on the Solar System."

"That's what we think is going to happen," Young added. "So we've reached one of those humps, and we think that eventually activity will pick back up and we'll see another hump — a double-humped solar maximum."

Before the twin peaks scenario began to gain adherents, many researchers had predicted that solar maximum for the current cycle, known as Solar Cycle 24, would come this May. But given how quiet the sun is at the moment, the second hump will likely occur later than that, and it could last into 2014, scientists have said.

Saying the sun is quiet right now, however, does not mean that it's lifeless. Indeed, our star blasted out a huge cloud of superheated plasma known as a coronal mass ejection (CME) on March 15.

This CME delivered a glancing blow to Earth two days later, sparking a mild geomagnetic storm that had no serious effects. Powerful CMEs that hit Earth squarely can spawn serious such storms, temporarily knocking out power grids, GPS signals and radio communications.

But CME effects aren't all negative. They can also supercharge Earth's auroras, also known as the northern and southern lights, giving skywatchers around the world a treat.


Signs of Possible Water on Mars at Newton Crater

Did You Know....

Earth's axis is tilted about 23.4 degrees from vertical, meaning sunlight reaches every surface, even the north and south poles, for at least part of the year. The Moon meanwhile, is tilted just 1.6 degrees, nearly perpendicular to the direction of the Sun's light. This means that there are some deep craters near the Moon's poles that haven't seen the sun for over two billion years.
Proposed Changes to FOTO Bylaws

By Michelle Lierl Gainey

The FOTO Board proposes making changes to the Bylaws to address two issues:

1. The increasing difficulties and cost associated with producing two newsletters (electronic and print).

2. A standing committee (membership) that has had no recent activity.

These two proposed changes will be discussed and voted upon at the May 2, 2013 FOTO meeting.

Page 2, Privileges of Membership
A member in good standing is entitled to:
Current wording: Receive the e-mail or postal monthly newsletter;
Proposed wording: Receive the monthly newsletter.

Page 6, Treasurer, paragraph 4
Current wording: The Treasurer shall have authority to pay for the regular operating expenses incurred by FOTO, including but not limited to postage and expenses for the monthly newsletter, refreshments for the monthly meeting …
Proposed wording: The Treasurer shall have authority to pay for the regular operating expenses incurred by FOTO, including but not limited to expenses for the monthly newsletter, refreshments for the monthly meeting, …

Page 11, paragraph 1
Current wording: The Nominating Committee shall issue a call for nominees in the September electronic and postal monthly newsletters and shall list its slate of candidates in the October electronic and postal monthly newsletters.
Proposed wording: The Nominating Committee shall issue a call for nominees in the September monthly newsletter and shall list its slate of candidates in the October monthly newsletter.

Page 12, Article 11
Current wording: “Appropriate Notice” of any meetings conducted by or on behalf of FOTO, shall be via FOTO’s electronic and postal monthly newsletters, telephone, fax, e-mail or postal mail to each eligible voting member of such meeting, …

Issue 2: The Membership Committee

The purpose of this change is to eliminate the requirement that FOTO maintain a Membership Committee. The current version of the Bylaws includes the following section on committees (page 11):

Standing Committees

FOTO shall maintain the following standing committees:
Finance Committee
FOTO KIDS
Hospitality Committee
Library Committee
Membership Committee
Newsletter Committee
Program Committee
Scope-Out Committee
Stonelick Dark Sky Site Committee
Telescope Lending Committee

All of these committees have been actively functioning, except for the Membership Committee. This committee was not intended to recruit or retain members; it was intended to “enhance the experience of the membership”. A precise role has never been defined, no one has volunteered to head the committee, and no members have volunteered to participate on this committee. Thus, due to lack of a defined mission and lack of interest, it is proposed that this committee be eliminated from the Bylaws requirements.