



## Twenty Years!!!

### Milestone Anniversary Approaches...

Back in 1984, a group of local amateur astronomers banded together to form the Fremont Peak Observatory Association. A year and a half later, in August 1986, the Observatory was completed and opened to the public. This coming August marks the FPOA's 20th year in providing public astronomical programs and interpretive services to the visitors of Fremont Peak State Park.

This coming years Star-B-Q, to be held on August 26th, should be very special. As details of the festivities become known, they will be published in the Newsletter.

One of the things I am doing for the 20th Anniversary is compiling a scrapbook of the construction effort that can be placed on CD-ROM. To this end, if you have any interesting memories, photographs, and anecdotes you would like to share, please email them to me at [fpoa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpoa@sbcglobal.net).

### 2006 Officers Elected

Congratulations to Pat Donnelly, who will retain his position as FPOA President, Doug Brown, who will retain his position as V.P., and Rick Morales, who continues as Secretary.

Marko Sillanpaa, a newly elected Director, will be this years Treasurer, replacing the retiring Denni Medlock. Kevin and Denni will be retiring this coming year and will be leaving the local area, though will remain in California! The Board and the Association thanks Denni for years of excellent work as its Treasurer—you 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](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.

### FPOA Programs: 2006

(subject to approval at Feb 2006 Board Meeting)

#### Saturday Evening Programs

<b>March:</b>	25th
<b>April:</b>	1st, 22nd, 29th
<b>May:</b>	6th, 20th, 27th
<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>May:</b>	6th
<b>June:</b>	3rd
<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 after noon on these dates.

#### Board Meetings

<b>January:</b>	28th	(Hartnell College)
<b>February:</b>	25th	FPOA Observatory
<b>March:</b>	25th	FPOA Observatory
<b>April:</b>	29th	FPOA Observatory
<b>May:</b>	27th	FPOA Observatory
<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>April:</b>	29th	Spring Cleaning!
<b>August:</b>	19th	Prep for Star-B-Q
<b>October:</b>	21st	Post Season Maint.

Note: Any member can volunteer to help!

Since those days the FPOA has become a real force in the Monterey Bay and the far South San Francisco Bay areas. We have conducted over 20 public programs every year since then. We have been part of the effort to establish a dark sky ordinance for San Benito County, the FPOA gives talks to college students taking beginning astronomy courses, and the FPOA and its observatory are now listed as a place of interest in the AAA Travel Guide.

Our public programs are very popular with the public with the meeting room overflowing with people on most public program nights. I note that six (6) public program presentations, this year, were given twice in the same evening, in order to accommodate all of the visitors. The FPOA also conducts quite a few special programs on non-public program nights for various scout, church, and school groups. We have added, almost all by contributions, quite a few telescopes and other items to the observatory. Finally, we are the location of choice for many special astronomical events. There were quite a few observers and visitors at the observatory the night of the deep impact on Comet Tempel 1. I look forward to many more successful years for the FPOA.

Speaking of success, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary party for the FPOA will be held at our 2006 Star-B-Que on August 26. This will be a major milestone for us, and hopefully, it will be big celebration. At this time, I would like to hear from any of you that have an idea or two for special events at this party. Perhaps, we can round up or persuade some of the really old timers like Charlie Carlson and Carter Roberts to attend.

On October 1, 2005, the FPOA had its fall work party. I would personally like to thank all of those, who worked so hard to complete our list of items for the work party. Thanks go out to the DPR too, for their loaning to us their weed whacking equipment and use of their shop. Also, while I'm at it, special thanks go out to Steve Loos for renting a push type weed whacker for the party. It was instrumental in clearing the areas near the pads.

Now that the public programs are ending, it is time for me to begin my fall observing of variable stars. Variable Stars are very important in astronomy, since they can be used to measure distances to other galaxies or determine the masses of stars. Fall is an especially good time to check on variable stars, because there is something of a lull in other types of objects to observe.

More importantly, all of the prototypes of the major classes of variable stars are visible in the evenings in the fall. Both Beta Lyrae and Algol, which are eclipsing variables, are visible in the northwest and northeast respectively.

as desired. As a final note on this topic you may also want to observe Mu Cephei. Mu Cephei, called "Herschel's Garnet Star" is a true irregular variable. It varies between magnitude 3.6 and 5.1, as it desires. Since the star is circumpolar, you can monitor it on clear night. You should find its brightness changes to be quite unpredictable and its very red color always interesting.

## Newsletter Trivia "Contest"

How well-versed are you on all things "Newsletter"? Here is a handy little quiz to test your knowledge of things about the Newsletter, most of which you probably don't even care to know!

1. In what year was the first Newsletter published?
2. How many different Newsletter editors have there been since the Newsletter began publication, and who are/were they?
3. Who designed the FPOA logo (which is thankfully back) on the masthead of the Newsletter?
4. When did this Logo make its first appearance (Year and issue number)
5. What is significant about the newsletters publishes in the year 1995?

Send your answers to [fpoa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpoa@sbcglobal.net). There are no prizes of course, but the "winner" will be recognized at the Annual Star-B-Q!

## Annual Dues are Due!

Have a picture or an article you would like published? Please submit them to

[fpoa@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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 All issues; Vol 10 #1; Vol 15 #3; Vol 17 #3; Vol 18 #3; Vol 19 #4; ad Vol 20 #3 I would love to hear from you! Please email me at [fpoa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpoa@sbcglobal.net).

## FPOA In The News

By Pat Donnelly

Thanks to the efforts of Paul Bradshaw the Fremont Peak Observatory and the Fremont Peak Observatory Association (FPOA) have been included in an article in Astronomy Magazine. On Page 91 of the November 2005 issue of the magazine there is a nice write up of the observatory and the activities of the FPOA.

The article also describes our history, the observatory layout, and our outreach programs. There is only one error in the article - the article says that our observatory is in southern California. Also, note that the picture of our observatory shows the old shutters rather than the new sliding door and the non-improved areas around the observatory. This is a good article, and it gives the FPOA some national exposure.

## California's First Astronomical Observatory

By Ken Frank, Vice President, AANC

On Saturday, January 21, 2006 you have the opportunity to participate in the unveiling ceremony of the State Historical Marker for the first astronomical observatory in California. This is in the town of Volcano, in the dark skies of the Sierra foothills!

In cooperation with Amador County, Mount Diablo Astronomical Society member Marshal F. Merriam has been organizing the effort to have the monument erected in the correct location in Volcano. This ceremony is the culmination of that effort. The program begins at 10 am at the Volcano Town Hall. You'll have the opportunity to meet family descendants of George Maderia, the man who built the observatory in 1860, and learn about the life and history of this miner turned astronomer.

For more details and to secure a lunch reservation, please contact Marshal at [mferriam@yahoo.com](mailto:mferriam@yahoo.com) or 925-778-7496.

This effort is supported by two AANC Member clubs: the Stockton Astronomical Society and Sacramento Valley Amateur Astronomers.

Also as a note Marshal was awarded this years prestigious AANC Special Award at the AANC-CON 2005 held at the Randall Museum on August 27th for his exhaustive work on this project.

## Fremont Peak State Park Winter Closure

This is the second year that Fremont Peak State Park will be closed to wintertime camping and nighttime activities from December through February for the general Public. The park will be open during the daytime hours from 8 am to sunset.

FPOA members with the Observer Class membership can continue to use the FPOA Premises for nighttime observing by making a reservation for telescope pad or observatory usage. Check the website for information about reservations procedures or call Ron Dammann at (650)424-2390 (day) or (408) 255-163 evenings.

### Fremont Peak Observatory Association Officers and Directors - 2006

<b>President</b>	<b>Pat Donnelly</b>	408-778-2741 <a href="mailto:kungfugina@aol.com">kungfugina@aol.com</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Doug Brown</b>	408-223-0615 <a href="mailto:dnabrown@ix.netcom.com">dnabrown@ix.netcom.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Marko Sillanpaa</b>	925-735-0603 <a href="mailto:marko@godiving.com">marko@godiving.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Rick Morales</b>	831-623-4081 <a href="mailto:rickmorales@charter.net">rickmorales@charter.net</a>
<b>Directors</b>	<b>Donn Mukensnoble</b>	925-462-4602 <a href="mailto:dmuk@sbcglobal.net">dmuk@sbcglobal.net</a>
	<b>Loren Dynneson</b>	831-636-3062 <a href="mailto:dynneson@hollinet.com">dynneson@hollinet.com</a>
	<b>Jack Murphy</b>	831-636-2772 <a href="mailto:jsmurphy@sbcglobal.net">jsmurphy@sbcglobal.net</a>
	<b>Steve Loos</b>	831-636-8815 <a href="mailto:sloos@garlic.com">sloos@garlic.com</a>
<b>Dir. of Instruments</b>	<b>Ron Dammann</b>	408-255-1863 <a href="mailto:ron.dammann@imco.com">ron.dammann@imco.com</a>
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	<b>Frank Dibbell</b>	916-933-2414 <a href="mailto:fpoa@sbcglobal.net">fpoa@sbcglobal.net</a>
<b>Director Emeritus</b>	<b>Kevin Medlock</b>	510-339-9224 <a href="mailto:epoch@major.net">epoch@major.net</a>

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](mailto:fpoa.net/mailman/listinfo/fpoa-members)

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

Merry Christmas  
Joyous New Year  
To All