



Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society

AUGUST 2011

The next meeting of the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society will be August 8. The meeting starts at 7:00pm at the Highland Road Park Observatory.

Hi Everyone,

Hopefully you are all having a great summer. It was great to see many of you out at LIGO for last month's outing. BRAS had about 40 people in attendance and we were joined by 9 members of the Pontchartrain Astronomy Society. Everyone outdid themselves with the food offerings, too! Rain a little later on made it a bit chaotic to try to go from building to building for the tour, but over all I would say it was a fun and successful outing. Thanks again to all who came out.

Program: *Understanding the Electromagnetic Spectrum*

This month we are back into our regularly scheduled meeting place and time. We will be hosting Kirk Aymond from PAS. (Rescheduled from this past February.) Kirk is the current 1st Vice President of the Pontchartrain Astronomy Society and has been a member for 12 years. His educational background includes many disciplines of science (i.e. Electrical Engineering at UNO, Environmental Management at LSU, etc.) and he has taught a class on Astronomy at UNO as part of the continuing education college curriculum.

His presentation is entitled "Understanding the Electromagnetic Spectrum." It sounds like it will be a very interesting talk so I hope you all can make it out to give a good welcome to our PAS neighbor.

As always, please pass the word around to your friends, neighbors and co-workers. Our meetings are always open to the public and we would love to add some more members.

Ben Toman
BRAS VP

(ED. Note – Ben has been doing a great job providing excellent programs at club meetings. Please support his hard work by planning to attend our meetings (The second Monday of each month.) If you know of a contact for a program, or would like to do a presentation yourself please contact Ben Toman at tomanben@gmail.com. – Craig)

THIRTY YEARS AND COUNTING!

1981 to 2011
Baton Rouge Astronomical Society

Presidents Message

We have made it through another summer with good success. Although we normally do not have meetings during the dog days, we changed this year and had a good June meeting at the LASC Planetarium and a visit and tour of the LIGO facility in Livingston Parish in July. Now we are off and running for another school year and looking forward to newer and better things.

In a world where we have just put a scientific satellite into orbit around the asteroid Vesta, have concluded a successful lifetime for the shuttle program and are looking forward to a fly-by of Pluto, we must admit that we are living in the most technological time in the history of the world. Maybe Galileo was far reaching in 1610 when he first turned the telescope toward the sky, there is nothing that any of the astronomers of prior centuries could have done to top our current successes. I will concede, as Newton so aptly put it over 300 years ago, that we can only see great things because we are standing on the shoulders of great people from the past. I would love to be able to talk to Galileo about the current stage of development but I am sure that he would be totally baffled by it all, even as I continue to be baffled over my iPhone.

Newsletter Editor

We have had the great services of Craig Brenden for a number of years as the newsletter editor. I want to personally thank Craig for his tireless effort in putting out a good newsletter over the years and would like to see him continue in that job. However, his father in Seattle has been in ill health and Craig has been required to spend a lot of time there. Thus, BRAS is in need of a replacement newsletter editor. The pay is just as high as the compensation for your president so you cannot expect to prosper financially but it is a totally rewarding task that we need to have filled. If you are interested, please let me or Ben Toman know and we can get you set up to begin with the issue next month.

Dues Payment Plan

We had announced a couple of meetings ago that we would like to change our membership dues billing schedule from one that is based on the month that each member joined to a billing on the calendar year. The annual dues will remain at the low price of only \$20 per year. For members joining during a year in the future, their dues would be the full year's dues of \$20 if joining during the first quarter, \$15 if joining during the second quarter, \$10 if joining in the third quarter and a mere \$5 if joining during the 4th quarter. For those joining in the fourth quarter, the plan would be that they would pay for that quarter plus the next full year upon joining to save having to account for a small payment of only \$5. I hope to present this proposal to the membership at the August meeting to be voted on.


Marvin E Owen, President, BRAS



