

Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society

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November 2012

Table of Contents

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	2
NOTES FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT	3
OUTREACH.....	4
MESSAGE FROM THE HRPO	5
TREASURER'S NOTES	6
PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES	7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi Everyone,

Wow! What a great meeting we had last month. Another big thank you to Dr. Keith Comeaux for sharing his Curiosity mission experiences with us. And I don't know what the record for attendance is for a club meeting, but I'd be willing to bet we broke it. We had about 80 people in attendance, many of them first time visitors.

Well, now we are coming back in to the winter months and the clocks have turned back giving us night time skies even earlier. With the weather cooling off and the bugs starting to let up, I hope you'll all be able to go out and enjoy the views of our winter night sky. Jupiter is blazing bright in the East right now and is steadily climbing higher. I also hope we have a lot of members making the short trek up to the Deep South Regional Star Gaze to help celebrate its 30th year. The skies are nice and dark up there at the Feliciana Retreat Center so if you do make the trip, you won't be disappointed.

As I mentioned before, we had almost 80 people at our last meeting and it was great to see a full house. Wouldn't it be great to have that many people at every meeting? I'm sure there are still a lot of people in the Baton Rouge area that have a great interest in astronomy, but don't even know we exist. That's why I'm always asking for you to tell everyone about our meetings and invite them to come on out if they are at all interested. And how about you? Are you happy with your level of involvement in the club? If you would like to become more involved, i.e., volunteering, running for an officer position, attending informal stargazing get-togethers with other club members; all you need to do is let us know. You can come talk to me or any other officer at a meeting, or just send me an email anytime. Remember, this is your club and we want you to get the most out of it that you can.

On a final note, we will be voting again for officers at the December meeting. If you would be interested in running for an officer position, please let us know by the November meeting. (Monday, November 12th.) We will field nominations at the November meeting and vote at the final meeting of the year in December.

Please come join us for our November meeting and go ahead and bring a friend or relative along that may be interested in what we do. Hope to see you out there.

Clear Skies,
Ben Toman
BRAS President
tomanben@gmail.com

NOTES FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

The topic for the next BRAS meeting will be on Comet C/2012 S1 ISON. Comet ISON will be a bright late 2013 comet that may well turn out to be a "once in a lifetime" event. Some have predicted it could become as bright as the Moon after perihelion. Or it could disintegrate. At its closest approach, it will be less than one astronomical unit from the earth. That's about half the distance from us to the Sun. Fantastic for us if it survives perihelion.

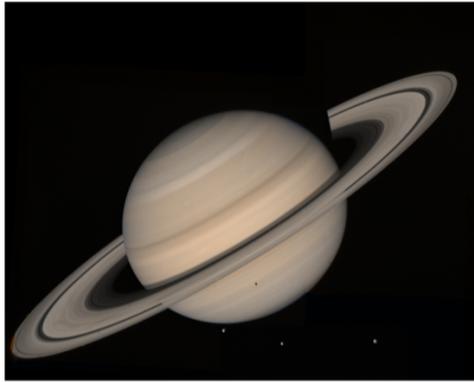
Our November meeting will be on the 12th, at 7 PM at the Observatory. That will be the Monday after the Deep South Regional Stargaze. Please bring pictures, videos, and your memories of the event to share with the group.

Merrill Hess
BRAS Vice President

OUTREACH

The Sidewalk Astronomy program is going to happen again this year. The flier shows the dates and location for this year's events. Let us know if you'd like to help out, and swing by during the events to see how enthralled the public gets when looking at Jupiter.

SIDEWALK ASTRONOMY



Come see the moon, planets, binary stars, galaxies, and more, all for free!



All events start at 7PM

October 25th	CC's on Perkins
November 20th	CC's on Jefferson
December 18th	CC's on Perkins
January 22nd	CC's on Jefferson
February 19th	CC's on Perkins
March 19th	CC's on Jefferson

In the event of a rainy or cloudy night, we will automatically postpone the event to the following Tuesday. If that night is also rainy or cloudy, that event will be cancelled.

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MESSAGE FROM THE HRPO

CONSTRUCTION ON HRPO GROUNDS

All sides of the main building now have new siding. BREC's Maintenance Department has painted the siding, window grills and doors in various shades of brown.

FRIDAY NIGHT LECTURE SERIES

all start at 7:30pm

2 November: "Quasars—Fireworks of the Universe"

9 November: "Buying Your First Telescope"

16 November: *no lecture*

23 November: *HRPO closed*

30 November: "Asteroids!"

HRPO 15th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Saturday, 17 November from 5pm to 8pm

This will be a brief commemoration of all the wonderful events, asteroid discoveries, staff and volunteers throughout HRPO's history. If any BRAS members want to contribute stories or pictures, please do so. I'll also be sending out an alert via email. *Drinks and refreshments; dress casual.*

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS: ON SITE

*Saturday, 24 November from 6pm to 10pm. *Two additional volunteers in addition to regular BRAS compliment.* Evening Sky Viewing Plus. Marshmallow roast, demo and clock tables; setup and takedown. Easy; training provided.

TREASURER'S NOTES

The end of the year is fast approaching, and so is the time to renew your membership in BRAS! Don't miss out on all the fun – feel free to renew your membership at any time. Everyone's membership will be up for renewal on January 1st, 2013. Why not beat the holiday rush and renew today? Costs are still the same, and individual memberships are \$20.

Last month, I mentioned that you can get a discount on Astronomy magazine. If anyone has a renewal coming up, let me know. I can renew club members at the discounted rate at any time.

The rates are:

1 year for \$34.00

2 years for \$60.00

Drop me a line if you'd like to renew.

Geoff Michelli
BRAS Treasurer

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Merrill Hess talked about the recent parachute jump from 120,000 feet by Felix Baumgartner.

Keith Comeaux, a scientist from Jet Propulsion Laboratories, gave a talk on the Mars Science Laboratory lander, Curiosity, and brought members and guests up to date on the mission. Afterwards, he answered questions from the audience.

Meeting was adjourned.