

Presidents Message

By Dan Tibbets

Well, I can't say that I've taken over the world yet, but at least I've managed to avoid being taken over myself, at least not yet... not quite, I just need to keep a lookout for those pods!

Speaking of being taken over, the club members can take over the Tombaugh telescope for varied photographic uses as the NASA sponsored FAST obligation is now expired, freeing up the telescope for more spontaneous use. If you are interested in becoming a Tombaugh expert, it's use is encouraged. If you are not already expert, there are several of us available to guide you through the few steps needed to utilize the scope, mainly dealing with operation of the roll off roof and the software. If you have little interest in directly using the scope, you can still ask for a picture of your favorite deep sky object. And, if you want to discover new minor planets, you can still do that. Lets see, there have been over 450 asteroids (and comet) discovered at Farpoint. Hmm... maybe I can take over one of these less prestigious worlds.

And, the Kessler bldg now has electricity thanks to the heroic efforts of Brad Hutton and others. The 14 inch Meade telescope is up and running for either visual or photographic use.

Moving a little further outward, the constellations are waiting to be mastered also. This endeavor is being undertaken by Brian Martin, but he is willing to share them with you, so don't miss out on his descriptions at the meetings and the observations on club and open house weekends.

At some point I hope that we can have a workshop on astrophotography with both point and shoot digital cameras, and DSLR cameras. Heck, even film photography (though I have no experience with that). Dr David Kolb's presentation this May , may inspire some to pursue work with cheap, but potentially powerful web cam imaging. If anyone is interested in a group gathering to pursue any of this, please let me know.

This coming June meeting will be our last at Pizza hut, at least for a while. Starting in July, we will be meeting at the Topeka Public Library at 7 pm. Note that the meeting time will be a half hour later then the Pizza Hut meetings. The library sitting will allow us to have better facilities and also be more exposed to the curious and uninitiated. But, no pizza - drat!

And finally, this June Janelle plans to give a talk about the really big worlds, mostly that one with a 'big' ring. Hmm.. I wonder if I could take that world over? If only I had a place to stand...

Dan Tibbets