

Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society

www.brastro.org

December 2011

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When Cinderella went to the fantasy Ball, she had a great time. However, the stroke of midnight came for her just as it is coming to the current term of president. Just as Cinderella, I have had a great time being your Vice-President under Don Weinell for one year and your President for the last two years. I could not have asked for a better group of members to have served.

During my administration, I have attempted to do things that would benefit the membership and to get the membership more involved. Some of the ways has been:

1. I suggested that the shakers and movers of the club have a meeting the week before each club meeting to discuss club business, to see what direction the club should be headed, to see what new and better activities we could introduce to the club, etc. We normally met to eat in the evening a week before each club meeting. We often had from 4-8 members meeting to discuss the club's activities and for good astronomy fellowship. I believe these meetings have allowed the club's monthly meetings to move more quickly because it has eliminated the need for mundane discussions.
2. I had gotten interested in the CCD camera system a couple of years ago and began to hassle Greg Guzik about putting on a class for BRAS members to learn how to use the camera. That class was held last year, it had 5 participants and it turned out to be very good. Most of us learned something but Ben Toman was the star of the class and he has continued to use the CCD camera and take some good images. Thanks to Greg and Rob Hynes for teaching that class to us.
3. Although the old-timers have not liked to introduce themselves at the beginning of each meeting since everyone should know them, we have been introducing the members each month so that the visitors and new members will know who the current members are. I think the old timers should be proud to introduce themselves and to make themselves available to the new members as a way to help them get into the club activities. Recently, we began using name tags for the same reason and I think it is helpful to new people. I encourage the present members to go out of their way to introduce themselves to the new members and visitors. It will help ensure solid growth and stability for BRAS.
4. I have encouraged participation in the Astronomy League's "clubs" whereby members can undertake an activity, learn more about astronomy and get a certificate of recognition for it. Several members have pursued these certificates and I must commend Trevor McGuire for leading the pack with the most certificates yet. Congratulations Trevor.
5. We have encouraged outreach activities and I am proud to say that Trevor led the way to establishing a monthly telescope viewing sessions for the public at a Starbucks Coffee and a Best Buy store. However, We need to have more members involved in the outreach activity.

6. Although we lost Craig Brenden as the newsletter editor, we have a good replacement in the way of Geoff Michelli. As you can see from the last few newsletters, Geoff is off and running.

Thanks for two years of sheer fun and enjoyment.

-MARVIN E OWEN
Outgoing President
BRAS

NOTES FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Hi Everyone,

It seems like I never really got used to writing 2011 and soon it will be 2012, the end of our 30th year as a club and the beginning of the next 30 years. I hope you'll all be able to join us for our next meeting, **Monday, December 12th at 7PM at the Highland Road Park Observatory**. As always, this is our holiday celebratory meeting and we'll be feasting and making merry with our friends and fellow club members. BRAS will provide a main dish as well as beverages, plates, forks, spoons, knives, cups and napkins. Everyone else is encouraged to bring a dish to pass (although it is not required.) My wonderful wife (and fellow club member), Ashley, has offered to play the harp once again to provide some musical cheer for the occasion.

We will also be electing new officers for 2012. We currently have nominations for each position, but if anyone else is interested, it isn't too late to throw your name into the hat.

This should be a fun time for everyone and a great time to socialize with our fellow club members and visiting friends and to reminisce about the past 30 years of the club. I intend to have a short presentation on our club's 30 years. (Although, at this point it is going to be very LAST 3 YEARS heavy due to the apparent lack of pictures from the previous 27 haha.) Once again, I hope you'll all be able to join us for the evening as we intend to have a lot of fun and get the next 30 years started off on the right foot!

See you soon!
-Ben Toman
BRAS Vice President

OUTREACH

Trevor McGuire has worked out a plan of outreach with CC's Coffee on Jefferson Highway and Best Buy on Millerville Road where we can have telescopes setup at these two locations. We may need some volunteers to operate a scope or talk to the public at these various times so if you are available and interested in having a good time, talk to Trevor or let me know and we will try to fit you in.

SIDEWALK ASTRONOMY

Come see the wonders of the night sky for free!



All events start at sundown

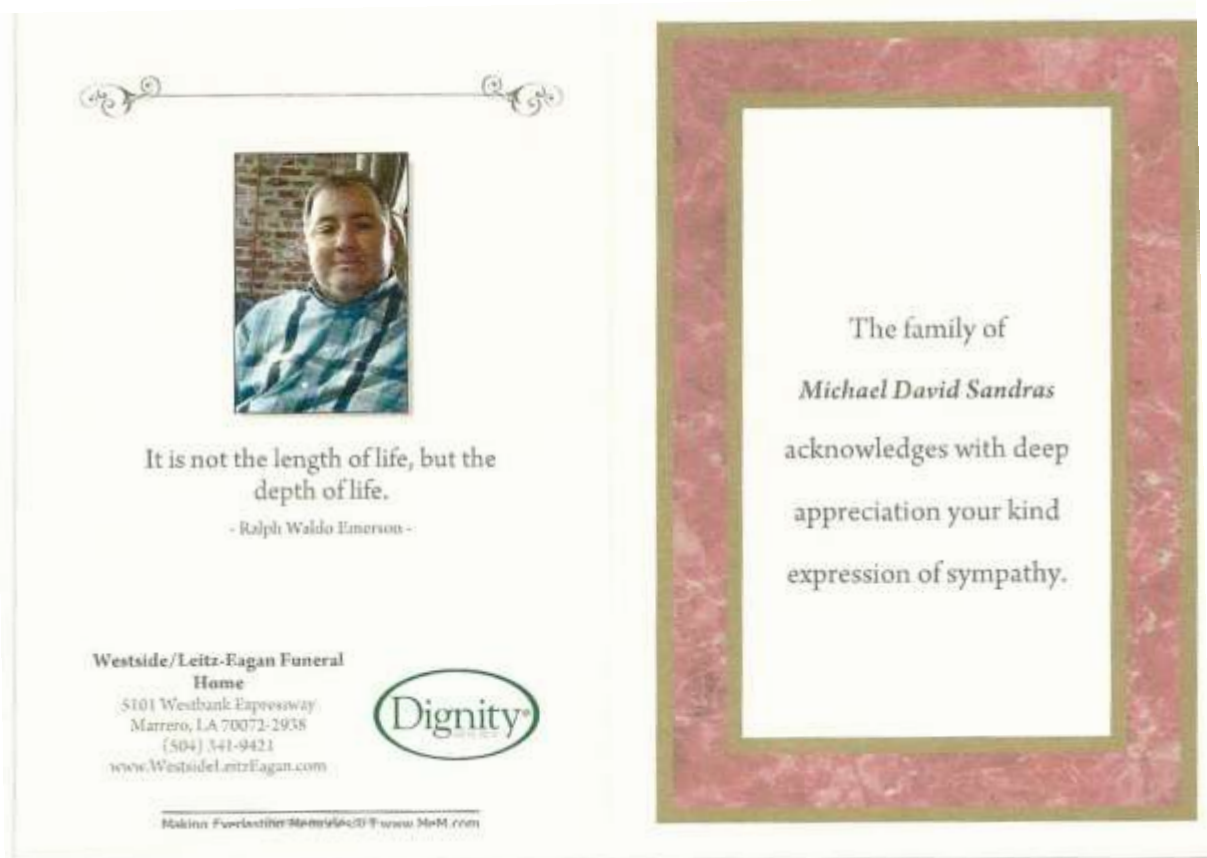
October 4th	CC's on Jefferson
November 1st	Millerville Best Buy
December 6th	CC's on Jefferson
January 31st	Millerville Best Buy
February 28th	CC's on Jefferson
March 27th	Millerville Best Buy

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The event on October 4th had a good turnout. 35 people got to look at the moon, Jupiter and Alberio. The November event was an even bigger success with almost 100 people coming by to look through the scopes that were set up. Unfortunately, the weather was uncooperative for the December 6th event, so it got moved to the 7th.

REMEMBERING MIKE SANDRAS

As we announced in a prior month, Mike Sandras of Ponchartrain Astronomy Society passed away this fall. BRAS sent an arrangement of flowers to his funeral and his wife, Carrie, sent us a card of appreciation. Here it is for the membership.



A funeral home card for Michael David Sandras. The card is white with a decorative border. On the left side, there is a small portrait of a man in a blue and white plaid shirt. Below the portrait is a quote: "It is not the length of life, but the depth of life. - Ralph Waldo Emerson -". At the bottom left, the funeral home's name and contact information are listed: "Westside/Leitz-Egan Funeral Home, 5101 Westbank Expressway, Marrero, LA 70072-2938, (504) 341-9421, www.WestsideLeitzEgan.com". To the right of the contact information is the "Dignity" logo. On the right side of the card, there is a large rectangular area with a red and gold marbled border containing the text: "The family of Michael David Sandras acknowledges with deep appreciation your kind expression of sympathy."

It is not the length of life, but the depth of life.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson -

Westside/Leitz-Egan Funeral Home
5101 Westbank Expressway
Marrero, LA 70072-2938
(504) 341-9421
www.WestsideLeitzEgan.com

Dignity

The family of
Michael David Sandras
acknowledges with deep
appreciation your kind
expression of sympathy.

BRAS members,
Thank you for the
beautiful arrangement
and for sharing the
love of astronomy with
Mike. He truly loved
sharing his interest
with others.

Sincerely,
Carrie

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

- Introductions. Two new members, Tray Anding and Rob Bourgeois, were introduced.
- It was announced that the harpist who played for the Christmas party last year will perform again this year.
- Merrill Hess said that the club is looking for ideas and sponsors for prizes the club could raffle off at the next stargaze. He suggested contacting Orion Telescopes about becoming a sponsor. Some ideas for prizes included binoculars and a beginning stargazers kit.
- Wally mentioned that Brooks Fontenot would like some help setting up her new Meade telescope system. He said the 2012 calendars from Astronomy Magazine are in and will be on sale for \$10 each.
- Merrill Hess said that the club is looking for ideas and sponsors for prizes to be raffled off at the next stargaze. Some ideas for prizes included binoculars and a beginning stargazers kit. He suggested contacting Orion Telescopes about becoming a sponsor.
- Ben Toman will donate a Celestron tabletop First Scope to be raffled off at the 30th anniversary meeting.
- Trevor McGuire received two certificates for meteor observing and one for observing sunspots. Chris Kersey also received a certificate.
- Nominations for officers were taken. These included:
 - Ben Toman for president
 - Merrill Hess for vice-president
 - Bob Sinitere for treasurer
 - Rory Bentley and Charles Edwards for secretary.
- Brad Schafer announced he will be going to Sweden on December 5th to participate in the Nobel Prize ceremonies.
- Ben said that Gregg Cobb, a former BRAS member, now living on St. Croix in the Carribean, would like some help in organizing an astronomy club there.
- Trevor described some of his experiences while attending the Deep South Regional Stargaze in October.
- Chris Kersey mentioned there might be a public service award to be given to BRAS by the mayor. He said his proposal for shielding lighting fixtures will be reviewed by a city-parish commission. Also due to his efforts, the film "The City Dark", on the subject of light pollution, will be shown at the Independence Park theater on January 7th, 2012.
- Ben would like to make up a slide show of past BRAS events, and asked for member contributions of pictures, stories, etc.

-Charles Edwards

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings fellow BRAS members,

I recently spoke with the BRAS treasurer, Bob Sinitiere. He's been the treasurer for longer than anyone can remember, and I thought he could use a break from those duties. I offered to run for treasurer, and Bob would be more than happy to let someone else handle that position for a while.

Since I'm the newsletter editor, I figured I'd throw my name in the hat for treasurer.

Vote for me and give Bob a well-deserved break!

Thanks,

-Geoff Michelli

TREASURER'S REPORT

There is a new schedule for membership dues. Starting in 2012, all memberships will be for the calendar year and will be renewed at the end of the year.

The following memberships are expiring before the end of 2011, and should be renewed by paying \$5.00 for the remaining quarter of 2011, as well as the dues for 2012. This is a total of \$25.00. Once this is paid, your membership will be paid up through the end of 2012.

Member	Expiration Date	Member	Expiration Date
Cody Arceneaux	January 2012	Corey Luth	October 2011
Elaine Agamy	January 2012	Howard Marrs	January 2012
Art Barrios	November 2011	John Nagle	January 2012
Rodney Bell	January 2012	Art Newman	January 2012
Rory Bentley	January 2012	Marvin Owen	January 2012
Peggy Bohn	January 2012	Wallace Pursell	January 2012
Donald Brocksmith	January 2012	Stewart Reed	January 2012
Mark Canatella	January 2012	Peggy Reilly	January 2012
Kirk Carbo	January 2012	Steven Richard	January 2012
Murali Chakravarathi	November 2011	J.A. Rummmler	January 2012
Dwight Davis, DDS	January 2012	Michael Russo	August 2011
Charles Edwards	January 2012	Norm Ryan	January 2012
Harold Fozzard	January 2012	Mohammed Syed	September 2011
Maurice Franks	January 2012	Forrest Smith	January 2012
Charles Genovese	January 2012	Ben Toman	September 2011
Jonathan Glover	January 2012	Stephen Turri	November 2011
Amy Gravois	January 2012	Connor Walls	November 2011
Tyler Guidry	October 2011	Isaac O'Neal	January 2012
Hansel Harlan	November 2011		
Merrill Hess	January 2012		
Mark Hughes	July 2011		
Kevin Hunter	January 2012		
Prasad Kalghati	September 2011		
Joe Longuepee	January 2012		

If your dues date appears to be incorrect, please email Bob at bobstar9@bellsouth.net. Or phone 225-266-9515 and leave a message.

In addition, if you currently receive the newsletter via USPS and would prefer to receive via email, please notify Bob, and send an email to Geoff Michelli at gmichelli@gmail.com

Treasurer's Report
From Jan 1, 2011 through Oct. 31, 2011

Beginning balance - 1/1/11	\$4,591.00
Income - 1/1/11-10/31/11	
Dues	\$1,440.00
Donations (raffles, etc)	\$411.00
H.G.S.P.	\$100.00
Calendar sales	\$230.00
Astr. Mag club subs	\$162.00
Total income - 1/1/11 – 10/31/11	\$2,343.00
Balance before expenses	\$6,934.00
Expenses - 1/1/11-10/31/11	
Insurance	\$334.00
IDS Dues	\$150.00
LIGO BBQ	\$277.00
Guest Speaker Dinner	\$26.00
HGSP	\$180.00
Sec State Fee (Corp)	\$5.00
Stamps	\$256.00
Astr. Calendars (2012)	\$130.00
Shelving (BRAS Room)	\$171.00
Astr. League Dues	\$385.00
Toner / Copy / Paper	\$204.00
Kalmbach Publish Astr.	\$162.00
Pughs Florist (M. Sandras)	\$103.00
Total expenses	\$2,383.00
Ending treasury balance on 10/31/11	\$4,551.00

(all figures rounded to nearest dollar)

-Bob Sinitiere
BRAS Treasurer

BATON ROUGE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



You can pay your membership dues at our next meeting or send your dues to:

Baton Rouge Astronomical Society, Inc.
c/o Bob Sinitiere, Treasurer
14558 Cottinham Ct.
Baton Rouge, LA 70817-3543

If you have questions about dues or receiving your newsletter, call Bob at (225) 755-2079 or send an email to bobstar9@bellsouth.net

For new members joining, the amount is pro-rated for the initial year based on which quarter the membership begins. The rates are reflected below.			Membership renewals are \$20, and are due in January of each year.
Jan - Mar	\$20.00	\$ _____	Date _____
Apr - Jun	\$15.00		Name _____
Jul - Sep	\$10.00		Address _____
Oct - Dec	\$5.00		_____
Each Additional Family Member	\$5.00	\$ _____	Phone Home _____
Student Membership (through age 17)	\$10.00	\$ _____	Cell _____
Donation* toward club building fund or (specify)		\$ _____	Work _____
			Email _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED		\$ _____	

The Society's newsletter Night Visions is sent via email.

If you prefer to receive the newsletter via mail, please check this box

PLEASE CHECK THAT YOUR ADDRESS AND E-MAIL ARE CURRENT AND CORRECT

Meetings are usually held the second Monday of each month at 7PM, except for June and July. Most meetings are held at the Highland Road Park Observatory

* All donations to the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society, Inc. are tax-deductible under IRS section 501(c)(3) & (a)(1) and also 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

The Baton Rouge Astronomical Society, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation chartered under the laws of the State of Louisiana