ASTRONOMY CLUB 89 Yrs OF TULSA

OBSERVER

November 2026

Bringing Stars to the eyes of Tulsa since 1937

Editor – John Land





Bubble Nebula, NGC 7635 along with M52 open cluster

Don Bradford made this image with his Apertura 75Q refractor and a ZWO ASI1294MM monochrome camera. Taked at the recent Okie-Tex star party on October 10, 11, 12. He took 5 min. exposures each of Ha and Oiii narrow band filters along with Forty separate images with R, G and B filters at 60 second exposures each. The color image of which was processed for the stars only (to facilitate the color in stars) and combined with the final Ha and Oiii color image.

1 Bubble Nebula & M 52 – by Don Bradford
2 Upcoming Meeting and Observing events
3 *President's Message* by Jonathan Fussell
4 New 17" Dome Telescope & Observatory updates
5 New 2026–27 Officers and Board Members
6 Astronomy in November Skies
7 *Okie-Tex Star Party Report*
10 *My First Okie-Tex on the "Dark Side"* by Brad Young
12 Treasurer and New member report – by Cathy Grounds
13 Map Links to *Where We Meet* * Choice of TWO Routes to the Observatory
14 Club Officers & Board Contacts information

Friday Oct 23 – 7:00 PM – doors open at 6:30
TULSA ASTRONOMY CLUB meeting NEW location 3624 N 74th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74115
Tulsa Air and Space Museum in the James E. Bertelsmeyer Planetarium





It's easy to locate on the north side of the airport 3624 N 74th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74115
The entrance is a bit east of the entrance to the Tulsa Zoo

Stargazing Nights and Observatory Nights
Come enjoy an evening of star gazing at our observatory located in dark rural skies SW of Tulsa
Details, Times and Direction Maps are posted on our Website https://www.astrotulsa.com/events

Saturday Nov 7 – 6:00 PM Annual member's banquet
- Oklahoma Joes 6175 E 61st St Preregistration due Oct 31

Guest and member Observatory nights



SATURDAY Dec 5 - - 4:30 PM CST Guest & Members Night

Astronomy Club Members Nights

Our members are invited to come work on their observing goals, do some Astro imaging and share ideas.

Friday Nov 6 - 4:45 PM CST Members Observatory Night
Saturday Dec 12 - 4:30 PM CST Members Observatory Night
If a Friday event must be cancelled due to weather, we will try on Saturday 30 minutes before sunset -
Always check the website for event updates
Check out our website Events Section for these and future events

Hunter Park Friday Nov 13 5:00 to 9:00 PM CST
5804 E 91st St, Tulsa Back of West end of Park
You are welcome to bring your own scope as well.

Follow Us on Social Media
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/AstronomyClubofTulsa
Instagram https://www.instagram.com/stories/tulsa.astronomyclub/
Website https://www.astrotulsa.com/



"Salutations, members near and far !

With October officially wrapping up, I hope you're representing us well this Halloween by handing out king-sized candy bars! As we begin putting a bow on the year, I hope you've already RSVP'd for our annual club dinner on November 7th. It's going to be a wonderful evening of food, fellowship, and reflection as we look back on the past year and just how far the Astronomy Club of Tulsa has come.
And speaking of milestones, it's with great pleasure that I can officially announce that the PlaneWave 17-inch telescope is now in our possession!

First and foremost, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the Gallagher family. Thank you for trusting the Astronomy Club of Tulsa with Rod's equipment and giving us the opportunity to continue his legacy. Astronomy has always been about more than the instruments we use to observe the universe; it's about the people who share our curiosity, the knowledge we pass along, and the communities we build along the way. We hope this telescope will serve as a fitting tribute to Rod and provide countless opportunities for our members and the Tulsa community for years to come.

I also want to thank everyone who voted in favor of this acquisition, contributed financially, or helped make this opportunity possible. The support we've seen from our members has been truly encouraging. This is more than a new telescope. It's an investment in our club's future, opening the door to new observing opportunities, astrophotography, member training, and potentially even research projects down the road.

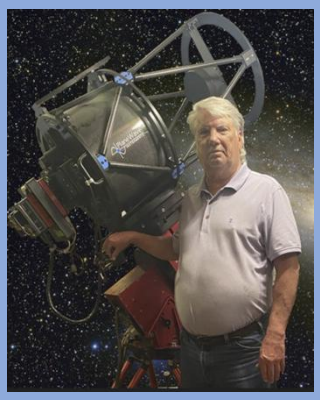
Of course, acquiring the telescope is only the beginning. There's still plenty of work ahead as we prepare the observatory, integrate the equipment, and bring the system online. We'll be taking our time to do things right, and I look forward to sharing updates as we make progress. This is a major step forward, but the real excitement lies in what we'll be able to accomplish together once everything is ready.

As we approach the end of the year, I hope you'll take a moment to appreciate everything our club has accomplished. From expanding our community outreach to improving our observatory and investing in our future, we're building something that will last well beyond any one of us. With our 90th anniversary on the horizon, there's never been a better time to be part of the Astronomy Club of Tulsa.
Thank you for being part of this journey. I look forward to seeing many of you at the annual dinner, and as always, I'll see you under the stars!

Clear Skies !
Keep looking up, keep wondering, and I'll see you under the stars.

President Jonathan Fussell,

Astronomy Club of Tulsa -
"Bringing Stars to the Eyes of Tulsa since 1937"



The purchase of a 17" PlaneWave CDK17 Telescope was strongly approved by email vote 70 of our membership in Sept 2026 from the estate of a former member of our club – Rod Gallagher. Skip Whitehurst and a team of volunteers picked up the mount and scope during the week of Oct 23rd. It is currently safely stored awaiting preparation to mounting it in our observatory.





Observatory Updates



Peggy Walker and Kit Bratt have done a beautiful job of repainting the upper gate to the observing grounds.

Kit cleaned sanded and repainted the bars and Peggy has used her artistic talents to make an appealing space themed background and lettering.



The new owner of the building to our east has removed our east fence and gates, which were about 10 feet onto his property. He is also making a large doorway with a plan to use the building for storage. Our board is still in discussion with him about use of the parking and alternative plans for new fencing. Until we have a decisive plan we are limiting the guest nights to 80 people. Our members will likely also have to be flexible about parking and setting up scopes on guest nights

Our New Officers & Board for 2026-2027



Jonathan Fussel
President



Cathy Grounds
Treasurer



Don Bradford
Board



Scott Bratt
Board
Website & Facebook
Manager



Amanda Bustos
Board



Jerry Cassity
Board



Richard Foster
Board



Bryan Kyle
Board



Jack Reeder
Board



Skip Whitehurst
Board



Jame Taggart
Board
Observatory
Manager



John Land
Board
Newsletter
Editor

Clickable Hyperlink Images

CHECK OUT OUR NEW SELECTION OF ONLINE SKY LINKS ABOVE

Astronomy Calendar 2026: All Major Celestial Events of the Year
Explore a Month-by-Month listing of Celestial Events – Many have links to Details or Videos
Daily Moon Guide | Observe – Moon: NASA Science

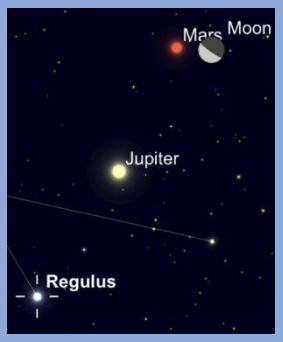
GOT A NEW TELESCOPE? Here are some sites to help you get started with your telescope.

Getting Started with Your New Telescope
https://skyandtelescope.org/astronomy-news/getting-started-with-your-new-telescope-2/

Astronomy for Beginners | Night Sky Facts, FAQs & Resources
https://skyandtelescope.org/astronomy-information/

What to Know Before Buying a Telescope **A collection of Interactive Sky Watching Tools**

Explore Astronomical League has a wide variety of Observing Certificate Programs



NOVEMBER - Moon Phases - -
3rd Q Sun Nov 1 - New Mon Nov 9 - 1st Q Tues Nov 17 - Full Tues Nov 24
Lunar conjunctions – Evening Saturn Fri Nov 20 - both Saturn and Neptune are in western Pisces. Neptune is about 7 degrees west of Saturn and can be seen in a small telescope but use 100X or so to see its pale bluish disc.
Before Dawn Mon Nov 2 - Close grouping of Moon, Mars & Jupiter within 5 degrees. They should all fit nicely in a binocular view. Best 4:45 to 5:45 CST The Moon rejoins the pair again on Monday Nov 30



Mercury and Venus will reemerge in the morning sky by mid-month.
Mercury has its best morning elongation Fri Nov 20 with a 19 deg separation from the Sun
That same weekend Venus passes near the star Spica in Virgo
Be sure to observe Venus's thin crescent shape.



Mars passes a bit over 1 degree from Jupiter on the mornings of Nov 16 and 17 The pair should fit nicely in a wide field eyepiece

URANUS resides nestled between the star clusters of Taurus. It rises about 9:00 PM mid-month and reaches opposition on Nov 25. At 5.7 mag it can be seen in binoculars, but a low power telescope will reveal its pale green color.

Try in-the-sky.org for finder charts of the planets.



The Leonid Meteor shower in the predawn hours of Nov 17th
However, due to the Full Moon only the brightest meteors will likely be visible. But make your calendars the years near 2032 when Earth will once again pass through a dense region of the stream. Observers in 1966 and 1999 saw up to 10,000 during its amazing outbursts

Okie-Tex Star Party 2026

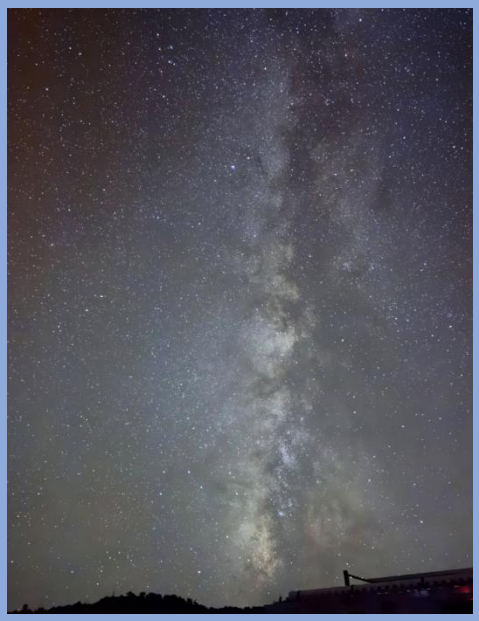
By John Land and others



Once again astronomy enthusiasts gathered under pristine dark skies for the 43rd annual Okie-Tex Star Party at the far western tip of the Oklahoma panhandle. The event is held on an about 30-acre valley nestled between two mesas at a church sponsored Camp Billy Joe. A few people stay in the camp's rustic bunk houses but most either set up tents or bring an RV. This year's registration count showed about 360 people from all over the USA plus some other nations.

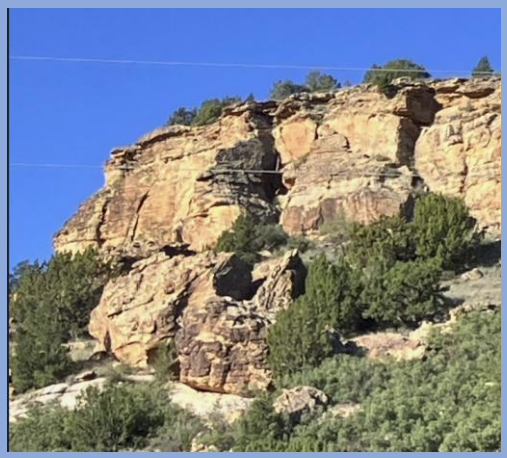


No image can begin to convey the starry dome you can see in all directions. The Milky Way stretches from the SW where Sagittarius and Scorpius are setting then arcs overhead to the NE through Cassiopea into Perseus and on toward the horizon. As the night progresses it can be seen extending through Auriga and on toward Gemini and Orion as they rise after midnight.



The first night I strolled along the road with some fellow astronomers from New Jersey. Each of us pointing deep sky object visible to the naked eye. The double cluster stood out prominently. Both M 31 and M 33 were visible. The evening Zodiacal Light could be seen as a bright region adjoining the Milky Way on its right. Saturn, having just passed opposition, marked the way to reveal the elusive Gegenschein oval. This is a brighter oval shaped region along the Zodiac directly opposite the Sun where the billions of bits of dust and rock orbiting the sun act like tiny "Full Moons" I was pleased to visually see Pluto again through a 20" f 4.2 dob scope set up near me. It had been a favorite challenge **planet** when it was near perihelion in the late 1990's that I sought out with the club's old 16" F 6 scope. (*Before it was demoted*)

Seventeen members of our Tulsa club attended this year. We also were pleased to reunite with three former long-time members who had moved to other regions; Robbin & Rosilind Jones and Tom McDonough. This year our Tulsa group was scattered about in several places instead of along the former "Tulsa Strip" so we didn't get a group photo this year.





Okie-Tex Memories by Scott Bratt



Kit and I arrived on Friday afternoon and got setup near some friends of ours on the east side of campground. We settled in and got the telescopes all setup, made the rounds to see who all was at the event, said our hellos and waited for dark. Friday night turned out to be one of those rare and exceptionally clear and stable viewing nights of the entire event. I was getting tired from the long day of driving and by about 1:00 AM was thinking about heading to bed and decided to take one last look at Saturn, which was high in the sky by that time and was rewarded with the absolute best view of the planet I have ever seen visually. Even with high magnification up to 400x in the 8" SCT Saturn was sharp and stable with lots of details. Before calling it a night I looked at Uranus and Neptune with the best views I have ever experienced. The rest of the week was still great except for one night when it clouded up and gave us some light rain.



We did have several of the remaining nights with clear skies, but winds made it difficult to get good images for the astrophotography folks. One night in particular, I tried to image with the Seestar S50 and was dropping more frames that saving because of the wind, so I called it an early evening and went to bed.

Attendance was down slightly, I suspect the committee was expecting it to be off a bit due to the scheduling conflicts with some other star parties in the region. I did not have the official numbers, but I heard somewhere that it was just under 360 registered guests this year, down about 25% from the previous year.

The scheduled programs were all good and well presented with a couple of club members giving presentations, Peggy Walker and Brad Young both gave presentations to the attendees. Some of the programs of interest were about capturing rare and special events from national parks, how to use your cellphone for astrophotography, spectroscopy, smart telescopes along with the newest models just announced, and a few others that I did not attend. There were also two scheduled swap meet segments that took place, the first one on Tuesday was very well attended and lots of money changed hands. By the time the second swap meet took place it had turned colder and there were only a handful of people that showed up.



Kit with the new SeeStar Mascot

The cold front came through on Wednesday night after the light rain and dropped the temperatures down into the low to mid 40's by Thursday morning with comfortable afternoon temps but some brisk winds. Friday morning was a few degrees cooler down into the upper 30's with some frost, and by Saturday morning when we packed up it was in the mid 20's with heavy frost. By Thursday afternoon several of the attendees had packed up and headed home.

On prize drawing nights there were some great prizes with some members' names called but they had already left. By Friday night's drawings the common theme was "MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN". I was lucky enough to win a nice necklace that was made from a meteorite, and Brad Young also won a prize as well. This year's grand prize was a Celestron 4SE.

After being home for a few days, I was reflecting on my week at Okie-TEX and already missing those dark skies and looking for an excuse to load up and head back out for a few more days. With all the cloud cover here in our part of the state this week I wish I could have stayed longer. Will we go again next year? **Absolutely ! !** It's always a crap shoot with the weather but this year it was mostly great weather, though a bit cool by the end of the week for the tent campers.

More Okie-Tex Photos *(sorry I can't fully attribute who shared each of them)*



Jerry Cassity



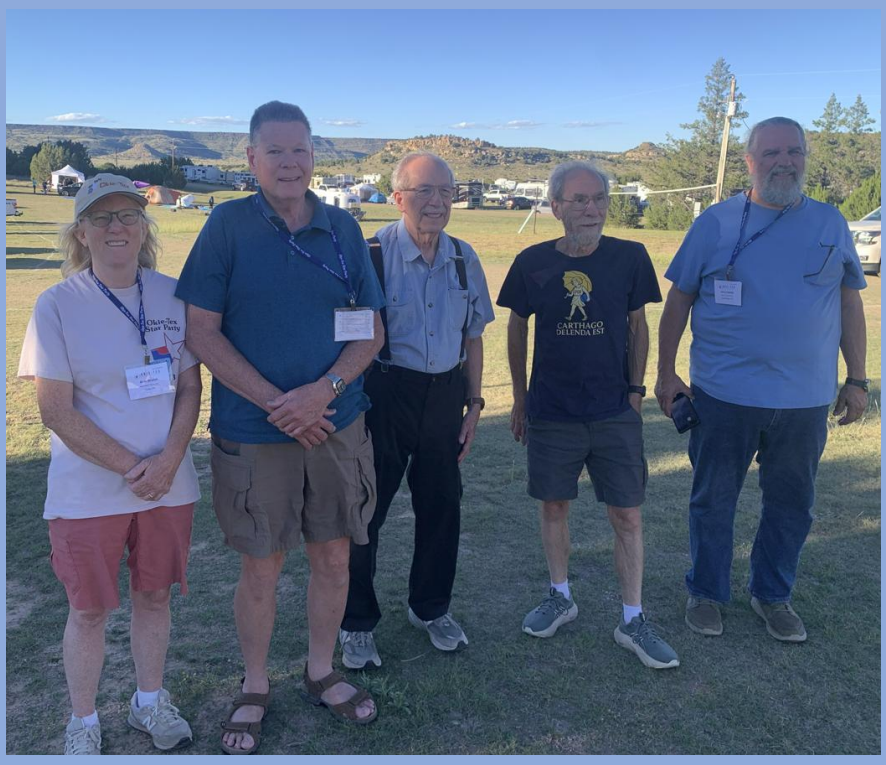
Brad Young & Jack Reeder



Don Bradford & Skip Whitehurst



Kacy Luker



Ann Brunn, Tom McDonough, John Land, Skip & Jerry

Observing Chairman Brad Young



My First Okie-Tex on the “Dark Side”

"If once you start down the dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny. Consume you it will..." — Yoda

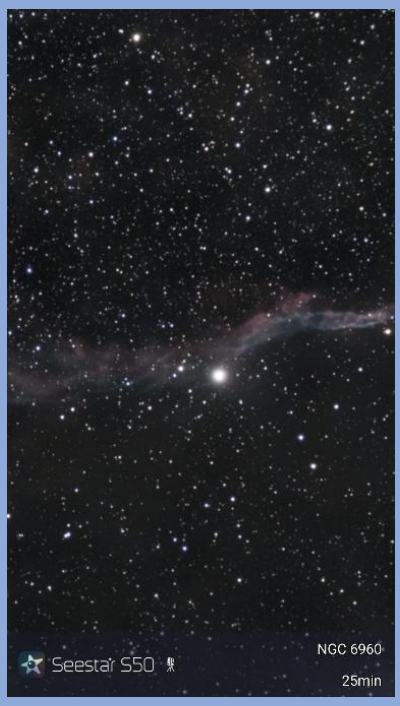
For 18 years (except twice when I went to another star party) I have been to Okie-Tex and loved every trip. I always enjoyed it visually until this year, bringing first a 12” Dob then my 22” Dob I have now. I used my time there to see the objects I might never see without its pristine dark skies and was able to finish the NGC objects in the north because of it. Besides that, I enjoyed meeting old and new friends, seeing the folks I rent a room from, the staff and volunteers. And I enjoyed annoying imagers with sarcastic comments about their time there, holed up asleep all night while the scope did all the work. Sometimes I would stay up all night and see them sleepily covering their scopes before going to breakfast while I walked up the road to get in my car and go to my room and crash.

Well, after brining a Seestar with me for the first time, I now understand some of what they do. This year was warm and rather clear the first three nights, and we had one half night before a cold front came through, with rain and storms. Fearing damage, I packed up Dob and waited for Thursday night. Now with just a Seestar, I sat freezing in my chair until it hit me – I don’t have to be here! Just like the previous Thursday night when I arrived, I went back to my room, sat in a warm bed and ran images with the scope outside. Friday night, I didn’t even bother, just packed up the last of my stuff and went back to the room. I have truly crossed over and understand the unavoidable lure of imaging. I still enjoy using the big scope visually, but when it’s cold or windy or hot or still or dark, I may be inside running plans now.

When I want to run away, I drive off in my car
But whichever way I go
I come back to the place you are – “In Your Eyes” Peter Gabriel

This doesn’t mean I won’t still be going to Okie-Tex every year. But it does give me more time and energy to just enjoy the beautiful skies there, the people, the talks, and the whole experience.

Below are a few images from my trip:



Western Veil Nebula



Eastern Veil Nebula



Cocoon Nebula



Bubble Nebula



Barnard's E *- dark nebula*

Treasurer Report
Cathy Grounds



Note: While Cathy was enjoying her vacation, John Land is prepared this month's report

As of Oct 25, 2026, we have 174 members with 70 new members this year.
Please welcome our newest members, Thomas Norris, Cynthia Sanders, Melissa Jones, Ronald Sellers, Vicki McCabe, Steve Lucas, William Varney, JD Colbert, Kael Calles, Fred Morgan Dennis O'Hearn

FAQ: How do I know when to pay my dues? You will receive a notice by email when it is time to renew your membership. Look for it on or around the 1st of the month in which your membership expires. If you are not sure just check with the treasurer.

Don't forget these easy methods to Join or Renew your membership:
https://www.astrotulsa.com/join – see the "join" tab at the upper right

1. **PayPal (click "join/renew" on the website) and follow the prompts, there is small fee.**
2. **Mail in a check or money order to**
   Astronomy Club of Tulsa, PO Box 470611, Tulsa, OK 74147.
3. **Direct your bank's bill pay service to send payment to our PO Box address above.**
4. **Pay cash at any club event or swipe a credit card (there is roughly a 3% service charge).**

As always if you have any questions or concerns or if your email, phone, or mailing address has changed please email me at: AstroTulsa.Tres@gmail.com

Membership rates for 2025-2026 are as follows: All include an Astronomical League Membership and you will receive their magazine *The Reflector* each quarter.
Adults: $50 per year
Sr Adult: $40 per year (65 or older).
Students: $40 per year
Additional Family membership: $30 including voting rights.

The regular membership allows all members in the family to participate in club events but only ONE Voting Membership and one Astronomical League membership.

Magazine Subscriptions- You can see subscription info on the "Join" tab at www.astrotulsa.com.

You can get a discount rate as an Astronomy Club member.
However, you will need to do so directly using their discount rate web links.
Both have options for DIGITAL as well as PRINT subscriptions.

To learn about Sky and Telescope magazine see their home page
Digital $ 37.05 Print & Digital $ 45.75 includes a $ 10 club discount
Use this **Sky & Telescope Subscription Link**

To learn about Astronomy magazine see their home page
Use this **Astronomy Subscription Link** **Digital $ 39.95 Print & Digital $ 49.95** no club discount

You are invited to join us to learn more about Astronomy and view the wonderful sights in the night sky.

Check the EVENTS section at https://www.astrotulsa.com/



ASTRONOMY CLUB OBSERVATORY
Located on a hilltop about 25 miles SW of Tulsa
Features: classroom, restroom, dome with 14-inch telescope and an acre to set up your telescopes.

Weather permitting, we host two types of observing nights.

GUEST OBSERVING NIGHT – RSVP requested
This event is open to our Guests – both individuals and families as well as our regular members. Several of our club members set up telescopes for public viewing.
* Groups need to make separate arrangements.

MEMBERS OBSERVING NIGHT usually on a Friday near new moon
Reserved for club members and their families to allow them to pursue observing projects.
The Observatory is ONLY OPEN for SCHEDULED EVENTS.

Check the EVENTS section at https://www.astrotulsa.com/
Follow our map directions DO NOT USE GPS

Two Options for travel to the observatory

MOSTLY PAVED ROADS – Hwy 75 to 201st St S – through Mounds OK

Most DIRECT ROUTE – Hwy 75 to 241st St S – some coarse gravel & dirt roads

---



Join us for one of our Monthly Friday evening in town club meetings. Our meetings are free and open to both guests as well as our members.

Specific Dates are posted on our website

We will be meeting at the Tulsa Air & Space Museum Planetarium
Located at 3624 N 74th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74115
On the road a bit east of the entrance to the Tulsa Zoo

The Tulsa Air & Space Museum hosts many indoor and outdoor exhibits and events commemorating Tulsa's rich history in Air and Space.

Check out the schedule for other full dome shows presented in the James E. Bertelsmeyer Planetarium. Use this link for Show Times and Tickets

ASTRONOMY CLUB OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT – JONATHAN FUSSELL
astrotulsa.pres@gmail.com

TREASURER – CATHY GROUNDS
astrotulsa.tres@gmail.com

Use the club CONTACT PAGE
To Send a Message to any of the officers or board members or click the CONTACT tab on the top of our website

BOARD MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:

DON BRADFORD
AMANDA BUSTOS
SCOTT BRATT
JERRY CASSITY
RICHARD FOSTER
BRYAN KYLE
JOHN LAND
JACK REEDER
JAMES TAGGART
SKIP WHITEHURST

STAFF:

FACILITIES MANAGER – JAMES TAGGART
astrotulsa.obs@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR - JOHN LAND
tulsaastrobiz@gmail.com

ACT Website & Facebook manager SCOTT BRATT
kg5vw.ok@gmail.com

Instagram Jonathan Fussell

OBSERVING CHAIR - BRAD YOUNG
hafsnt1@gmail.com

COMMUNITY OUTREACH – TIM GILLILAND & DON BRADFORD

NIGHT SKY NETWORK – SCOTT BRATT

WEBMASTER - JENNIFER JONES
SeedTechnologies.com

PERMISION TO REPRINT ANYTHING FROM THIS NEWSLETTER IS GRANTED, ***PROVIDED THAT CREDIT IS GIVEN TO THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR AND THAT THE ASTRONOMY CLUB OF TULSA "OBSERVER" IS LISTED AS THE ORIGINAL SOURCE.*** FOR ORIGINAL CONTENT CREDITED TO OTHERS AND SO NOTED IN THIS PUBLICATION, YOU SHOULD OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM THAT RESPECTIVE SOURCE PRIOR TO REPRINTING. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION. PLEASE ENJOY THIS EDITION OF THE OBSERVER.