



The Meridian

The newsletter of the
Quad Cities Astronomical Society

October 2008

<http://www.qcas.org>

September Meeting Minutes

Joe Bannon, Secretary

The September meeting was called to order at approximately 7:30 and since one of the evening's topics was nominations for Board positions, everyone introduced themselves to the group. During this a recommendation was made to add the club's Web site to the Meridian.

Dues were the first topic of discussion and Karl reviewed the current dues structure: \$20 per year for an individual and \$25 per year for a family. Dales asked if dues cover expenses and Steve responded that since we dropped our membership in the Astronomical League, dues cover expenses. Dale asked about marketing efforts to increase membership and therefore, revenue. The Web site and the club's flyer were mentioned though it was noted that the flyer needed to be updated. Joyce and Dale mentioned the low probability that people will drive to Sherman Park and further noted that it's difficult to find. Dale suggested meeting at a central location to form a caravan to lead people to the site. Further discussion on this point was postponed so nominations for Board positions could be discussed.

Karl reviewed the positions and the fact that he, Jim and Steve had held their positions for three to five years. Karl and Jim expressed a desire to not continue in their positions. Steve was willing to relinquish his role if someone was interested but said he was willing to run for Treasurer. Joe said he was willing to relinquish his role and run for either President or Vice-president, or was willing to run for Secretary if there were nominees for president or Vice-president. Jim noted that Gary was willing to run for President if no one else would. Discussion followed and included questions, comments and nominations which are summarized in the following bullets.

- People who did not meet the one-year membership requirement were willing to "understudy" to the President and Secretary, assuming the current President and Secretary ran for their positions.
- Dana asked about his membership status, saying he believed there was a provision in the by-laws that granted founding members membership for life. He also noted that he hasn't paid dues but has paid for the annual fee for the club's Web site (\$50). Cecil noted that the by-laws are silent on the issue of whether payment for a club expense can be considered payment of membership dues and that this was a Board decision. The Board excused itself to discuss these topics. Nothing was concluded on the topic of the by-laws regarding a membership for life provision since a copy was not available. The bylaws state "To be a candidate for any office a person needs to be a paying member in good standing for at least one

year.” It was the Board’s decision that Dana met this requirement, which allowed him to run for a position and he said he would run for President.

- The responsibilities of the Vice-president were discussed and Chris agreed to run.

Therefore, the slate of candidates is:

- President - Dana Taylor
- Vice-president – Chris Hebel
- Treasurer – Steve VanHyfte
- Secretary – Joe Bannon

The Eastern Iowa Star Party was discussed next and the dates are October 3-5. Joe and Jim will work on updating the club’s flyer in time for this and Karl noted the need for someone to be there early on Friday to greet people. During the day Steve said he would probably be working on the Menke scopes. A question was raised as to whether the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center’s Ecology Day was scheduled for that same weekend. In the past people have come from that event to the observatory and not knowing the usual courtesies, have had white lights leading their way or pointing at the telescopes. (*Note: I have checked with the WREEC and Ecology Day is scheduled for Saturday, October 4. I will work with them to try and get the word out to their participants to be cautious with their flashlights when approaching the observatory.*) Karl asked who will set up the directional signs and who will take them down. Joe said he would take the signs down but there still is the need for someone to set up the 4-5 signs.

Karl reminded everyone that the October meeting is not only elections but also the banquet and to bring a dish to share.

Dana volunteered to do a presentation on astrophotography at the next meeting. Joyce showed the pneumatic cable release she and Steve are donating to the club that will work on a mechanical camera.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10.

Presidential Ramblings

Karl L. Adlon

I suppose I could go back to the Meridian that contained the first Presidential Ramblings that I wrote, but instead I’ll note the one thing I remember and that is that I wanted QCAS to be more FUN. Why join an organization like QCAS if it isn’t fun? Has it been more fun the last 3 years than the previous? Did I accomplish that goal? Something to think about.

I’ll make this my shortest Presidential Ramblings and end it here. Except for saying to all of you who helped in some way during the last 3 years: THANK YOU!

Wishing Y’All Clear Skies!

Karl

- Don’t forget to bring a dish for pot luck to the October Meeting, October 21st.
- We’ll conduct our elections at the October meeting (see Meeting Minutes).
- See you at the Eastern Iowa Star Party, October 3 – 5.

Observations

Karl Adlon

The Meridian Editor is always looking for articles. Why don't you write one?

I can't remember how young I was (very) when I asked Mom what the stars were, what they were made of and how they shined. Guess I've always been interested in space and astronomy.

Not recently, I observed (to myself) that I liked to observe things: baseball games, car racing, flowers, birds, sunrises, sunsets. As a youngster, I dreamed of seeing the surface of the Moon "up close and personal". That would have been some observation!

Each month I'm going to write this column, barring unforeseen circumstances. I want next month to concentrate on observations of the sky, but first, these observations:

- We spend too much time during the monthly meeting on QCAS business.
- For an astronomy club, we spend precious little meeting time talking about astronomy.
- I joined this club after being a member of PAC because it was stated that QCAS was an "observing club". In comparison with *my* PAC experiences, I'd say that's true.
- Yes, I enjoy talking with y'all; beautiful images of things in space (that I'd like to photograph some day); and marveling at the latest telescopes and technology. But, don't take this personally, most of all I enjoy OBSERVING.

So I'm going to push myself to observe more often, to observe the objects I've always enjoyed and to at least try hard to observe those faint things I've wanted to see but haven't yet. And I'll report my observations in this column.

I invite you to join in.

Next Month: My EISP Observations. Maybe I'll be observing you!

Upcoming Celestial and Club Events

Sep. 27	Saturday	Jens-Wendt Observatory – PUBLIC Star Party
Oct. 3-5	Fri. – Sun.	Eastern Iowa Star Party
Oct. 6-7	Mon. – Tue.	Moon is lower right of Jupiter on the sixth and then left on the seventh
Oct. 10	Friday	Mercury is 18 degrees west of the Sun (Morning)
Oct. 17-30		Mercury 5 degrees above the E horizon approx. 45 minutes before dawn
Oct. 20	Monday	Monthly Meeting (19:30) @ Deere-Wiman Carriage House
Oct. 21	Tuesday	Peak of Orionid meteor shower but also last quarter Moon
Oct. 25	Saturday	Jens-Wendt Observatory – Star Party

Jens-Wendt Observatory – Quad Cities Astronomical Society – Located at Sherman Park in Dixon, Iowa

Monsignor Menke Observatory – St. Ambrose University – Located at Wapsi River Environmental Education Center in Dixon, Iowa

Member Astrophotos



The images above show the “piggy back” bracket for the 20”scope. The bracket allows the camera to be mounted at various positions. The image on the left shows the camera mounted at the end of the tube (left) and the image on the right shows a position closer to the center.

QCAS Contacts

Elected Officers			Volunteers and Committees		
President	Karl Adlon	kmja@mchsi.com	Facilities	Jim Rutenbeck	jim@qconline.com
Vice-president	Jim Rutenbeck	jim@qconline.com	Web Master	Dana Taylor	dana@nelsonstaylor.com
Secretary	Joe Bannon	mzbannon@aol.com	Outreach	Joe Bannon	qcas@mchsi.com
Treasurer	Steve VanHyfte	vanhyfte@mchsi.com	Programming	Jim Rutenbeck	jim@qconline.com
Director	Gary Charnoski	stargazer_44444@yahoo.com			

All other contacts can be sent to qcas@mchsi.com or mailed to the club at P.O. Box 3706, Davenport, IA, 52808.

Members are also reminded that anyone can submit articles for *The Meridian*. Submit articles to Joe Bannon at jbannon@midamerican.com and mzbannon@aol.com.