



Newsletter of the Quad Cities Astronomical Society

www.qcas.org

August 2015

Meeting Notes

Business Meeting, August 17th

1. A dentist has offered to donate a Celestron Nexstar 8SE with the original tripod and an upgraded GPS. He would like a letter stating the value of the telescope. The agreed upon donation value was \$1000, Dale will write the letter stipulating that the value was decided upon after an Internet research comparable equipment. There was a discussion considering the usefulness of this 8" telescope versus the 10" Meade donated by Cecil Ward. Bruce stated that the club does not have a telescope with "go to" capabilities but that the 10" still has value. Jeff agrees with Bruce and Bruce smiled.

2. The block house and its contents were discussed. Matt went out 2 years ago and organized the contents. Dale wants to know if what was in there was all necessary or if some things could be removed. Dana stated some things can go and that there are too many telescopes. Bruce feels that some contents, while not useful are collectible and that there are not too many telescopes since there is room for them.

3. Dale asked the guests if they would like the opportunity to check out telescopes if members. Andrew said he would, he took an astronomy class and enjoyed it but only used the planetarium at Bettendorf high school and was excited by the prospect of visiting the observatory. Sam only has a 4" scope and enjoys the ability to use the telescopes in the block house. Dale then stated he has two additional scopes at home, a Bushnell and a 6" Meade, that he would donate if they would be accepted. Bruce said the more the merrier.

4. Dale nominated Shawna Duncan to replace Karl Adlon as secretary. Bruce seconded the motion and all were in favor. Shawna Duncan is the new secretary.

5. John Baker was not present to report as Treasury. Dana and Bruce stipulated that the account balance is approximately \$2000.00.

6. A list is being compiled of the work done at Menke Observatory. Dr. Mitchell is expecting larger than usual numbers at his next Star Party, August 22nd. Jeff Struve volunteered to help.

7. Last year there were 2 star parties or open houses in Davenport at the soccer field. There was a discussion about having two events on the same night, the other at Sherman Park. It was agreed that attendance would be negatively affected at Sherman Park if an in town party was the same night. There has been no commitment from members yet but tentative dates were agreed upon, Friday September 18th and Friday October 16th. These are the day before Menke's open houses and the week before Sherman Park, which will give volunteers an opportunity to advertise these events in town. Dale is familiar with Credit Island, it is a nice facility with bathrooms. Dale will talk with Amanda about emailing the Davenport Park and Recs email list of approximately 5 - 7k contacts about our events. Dale stated that our club is able to provide an Astronomy evening of value regardless of weather. Shawna will email Dale the dates so he can get commitment from members.

8. Ava Duncan agreed to present the powerpoint presentation Dana created at a future event.

9. There was a discussion by Jeff and Karl regarding membership fees and changes occurring via email prior to this meeting. The discussion included incentives to participate in open houses by increasing the membership fee for those who don't and adding two new levels of membership, students and associates. Students would have the same access as members for a lesser fee and associates would have limited access but could have some "skin in the game." Associate memberships would be \$10 and students \$15. Bruce felt that mandating voluntarism would only cause us to lose members. Another possibility would be that the student memberships include a mentor program. Bruce stated that he felt membership should not automatically include access to the 16" scope in the domed observatory but that it should be signed off on as the 20" is. There was agreement to this. It was also suggested that a checklist is needed so people can check out the equipment in the block house.

10. This led to a discussion of liability. There has been no issues in the last thirty years. Dana stated that members were protected as the group is incorporated. Shawna was given permission to research this further and find out what/how we are covered at Sherman park and as a corporation.

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Calendar

Note: **Meetings** are at the Bettendorf Public Library @ 6:30 PM

Observatory Open Houses are at Sherman Park, Dixon (Calimus), IA

September 7
Labor Day
- No Meeting
- Library is Closed

September 24
Business/Astronomy Meeting

September 19
SAU's Menke Observatory Star Party

September 26
Observatory Open House

October 5
Astronomy (dialogs) Meeting

October 9 - 11
Eastern Iowa Star Party @ Menke Observatory

October 19
Business/Astronomy Meeting

11. Advertisement: Dale has arranged a free advertisement in the River City Reader. He will also contact the Argus and as stated earlier Amanda at Davenport Parks and Rec.

12. Sam spoke to the church in Geneseo and said he would talk with the Geneseo newspaper. Dale told Sam to have the church give us a date and tell us what they want and we will provide it.

New business:

Soon, Dana will be taking down the website for a few days to upgrade the web server. He will email members a few days before for awareness.

Dale will not be at the next business meeting.

There is no first Monday meeting in September as that is Labor Day.

The club mascot Molly passed away, rest in peace Sweet Molly. Bruce moved that Ophelia, a.k.a. Queen Cassiopeia, become the new mascot. The Motion was granted.

Purchases:

Bruce stated we need one more plastic bin for storage. Dana will purchase this. Dana will also purchase 4 more folding or stackable chairs at Dale's request.

Dana moved to adjourn, Shawna seconded, meeting adjourned.

"Fast" Planetary Scope?

by Karl Adlon

That's an oxymoron, right?

A few quotes from "What the Future Holds" of ALPO's "Strolling Astronomer" by Thomas Dobbins, Vol. 56, #1:

The evolution of the planetary telescope has followed Voltaire's axiom that "the perfect is the enemy of the good". The advent of webcam imaging irrevocably changed observing methods, largely relegating the visual astronomer to the status of "telescopic tourist". The new observing methods have in turn irrevocably changed the notion of what constitutes a good planetary telescope. The contrast-robbing effects of a moderately large central obstruction that represented a serious handicap for the visual observer are not nearly as harmful for the webcam imager. Consequently, the long-focus Newtonian and the Schiefspiegler are destined to become rare curiosities.

Today an aperture of 8 or even 10 inches is probably the minimum required for serious planetary work, and the finest high-resolution images are captured using apertures of 12 to 16 inches. Economically choices of instrument in these sizes are limited to Schmidt-Cassegrains and compact, comparatively fast Newtonians. Here lies the future of the planetary telescope

QCAS Correspondence:

Please contact the society at: P.O. Box 3706, Davenport, IA, 52808.

Members are welcome and encouraged to submit articles for The Meridian. Submit any and all interesting items (via e-mail) to: Shawna Duncan, Secretary.

QCAS Officers and Contacts:

Officers

President: Dale Hendricks
Vice-Pres: Bruce Brooker
Secretary: Shawna Duncan
Treasurer: John Baker
Director: Dana Taylor

Chairpeople

Facilities: Dana Taylor
Web Master: Dana Taylor
Outreach: Tom Bullock

dhusna68@mchsi.com
brookers3@machlink.com
sduncan77@gmail.com
johnbsys@aol.com
dana@nelsontaylor.com

dana@nelsontaylor.com
dana@nelsontaylor.com
tombull58@yahoo.com