



June 20 Meeting Notes

The June 20th, the first day of summer, meeting was held at the Credit Island Lodge. (Their air conditioning works extremely well.) Attendees were: Dale Hendricks, Mike Ombrello, Dr. Robert Mitchell, Bruce Brooker, Craig Cox, Jeff Struve, Karl Adlon, Matt Neilssen and Greg Weinberg.

Business

Matt Neilssen was recognized for donating and helping install storage cabinets in the 20" scope observatory.



Thanks, Matt!! And Thanks to all who helped!

Dr. Mitchell noted that digital setting circles were installed on the SAU 12", thanking Karl Adlon.

During the Mars Viewing discussion it was noted that PAC had about 200 people at Niabi Zoo for Mars viewing. (Dale made note that differentiation between QCAS and PAC is that PAC is like the "fast food" of astronomy and the QCAS is more technical with focus on "imaging".) Due to a question, Dale will check on Davenport Parks and Recreation Dept email list to determine if we are on it and what they may have sent regarding the Mars Viewing.

Improving the web linkage between SAU and QCAS was discussed. Jeff Struve agreed to draft a paragraph the Dr. Mitchell might use in discussions with Administrators and IT.

Dale will contact Scott Hock or more appropriate contact at Parks & Rec about "killing" the mercury vapor lights IF QCAS conducts an Open House at/on Credit Island.

It was noted that there is no WiFi at The Lodge.

Winter viewing – Dale offered to contact Pete Bruecken at Bett for possible "show" at Bettendorf HS planetarium. Also revisited the offer from Jeff Struve to become more fully integrated with the equipment to be our liaison with Bettendorf if appropriate and OKed by Pete.

Newsletter of the
Quad Cities
Astronomical Society
www.qcas.org
AUGUST 2016



QCAS Mission Statement:

To stimulate an interest in the science of astronomy in the Quad Cities Area, to nurture an ongoing desire by Quad Cities Astronomical Society members to study the cosmos and to provide members of our community opportunities to experience the beauty and joy of Astronomy.

June 20 Meeting Notes (cont'd)

Presentations

Dr. Mitchell provided some information he received at a Great Eclipse (2017) Workshop. Planning has already begun by some organizations. Possibilities for QCAS and SAU include caravanning. One suggestion was to rent a Winnebago. Various possible location were discussed: MO, IL & NE. Regarding a webcast, Dr. Mitchell is working with SAU to connect up and display the eclipse on campus. Dale volunteered to be the QCAS contact/support on campus.

Further discussions took place regarding recommendation that an article be submitted to local news outlets for publication one month prior to eclipse. Dale to contact Dispatch/Argus and other outlets.

The subject of Outreach was discussed. It was noted that it is part of what we do but not our focus. We have done much – Bruce noted the 2 Family Nights at the Putnam, the eclipse at the Davenport soccer field and other activities with a total audience of roughly 700 "guests"

Dale offered to contact the Tri City Jewish Center to determine willingness/interest in a presentation and viewing outside following a presentation.

-Karl Adlon

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Calendar of Opportunities

Monday, July 18
QCAS Monthly Meeting
at the Credit Island
Lodge, 6:30 PM

Saturday, July 30
QCAS Observatory
Open House

++++ August + + + +

Saturday, August 13
SAU Star Party @
Menke Observatory

Monday, August 15
QCAS Monthly Meeting
at the Credit Island
Lodge, 6:30 PM

Saturday, August 20
QCAS Observatory
Open House

+++ September + + +

Friday-Sunday,
September 2 – 4,
Eastern Iowa Star Party
@ Menke Observatory

Monday, September 19
QCAS Monthly Meeting
at the Credit Island
Lodge, 6:30 PM –
Nominations Due

Saturday, Sept. 24
QCAS Observatory
Open House

+++ October + + +

Monday, October 17
QCAS Monthly Meeting
at the Credit Island
Lodge, 6:30 PM –
Elections

Eastern Iowa Star Party (Part 1)

-Jeff Struve

Back on July 3, Dale forwarded to the general membership an email providing a bit of detail on our upcoming Eastern Iowa Star Party and a request to reply back to me your feelings on attendance. I (we) received very few responses and encourage you to respond letting me know your possibility of attendance. This will really help in our having to set up the facility with power, make any arrangements for lodging, have available the right amount of beverages and munchies and chili, etc.

We are having the star party over the Labor Day weekend (the nights of September 2nd and 3rd) to allow enough time to have 2 full nights of observing, and still allow for a bit of recuperation time for those of us that have work and have other obligations following the holiday. This also gives us Saturday day/afternoon to discuss things that we may be able to try out Saturday night.

I have made arrangements to have the President and a guest speaker from the Cedar Amateur Astronomers give a talk on their facility, which is incredible, and I need to firm it up. Dr. Mitchell may be giving a talk on spectrometry with a demo that evening. The Popular Astronomy Club will be talking about their mobile observatory, and are making contact with their Augustana Professor to see if he will give a talk as well.

So far, along with QCAS, we will have participants from The Popular Astronomy Club, The Cedar Amateur Astronomers and The Naperville Astronomical Association.

Menke Star Party

The July 9 star party was a real success. The wispy clouds disappeared as the sun went down and Mars, Jupiter and Saturn were very bright in the southern sky. Only viewing problem was the moon which had about 2 hours to set and really leave the sky in good viewing shape. I am not certain how many people were there but one couple was staying at the Wapsi Environmental Center. Jeff brought two friends and a couple was already in the domed observatory when I arrived before sunset and had an opportunity to view the crescent moon. All together I think there must have been about 10 to 12 visitors in addition to Mike Ombrello, Jeff Struve, Tom Bullock and myself. Dr. Mitchell was working the star finder on the computer linked to the 14" scope and giving people a very good view. All four big moons of Jupiter were visible and at least two Saturn moons were available. Lots of "shooting stars" to awe the visitors and many statements that they were having a great time and wanted to attend our Open House at the last of this month.

Congratulations to Dr. Mitchell and all the QCAS help for providing a great evening of viewing for all the guests who showed up to enjoy the skies.

-Dale Hendricks

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: Karl Adlon, Secretary.

QCAS Officers and Contacts:

Officers

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

Chairpersons

Facilities: Dana Taylor
 Web Master: Dana Taylor
 Outreach: Matt Neilssen

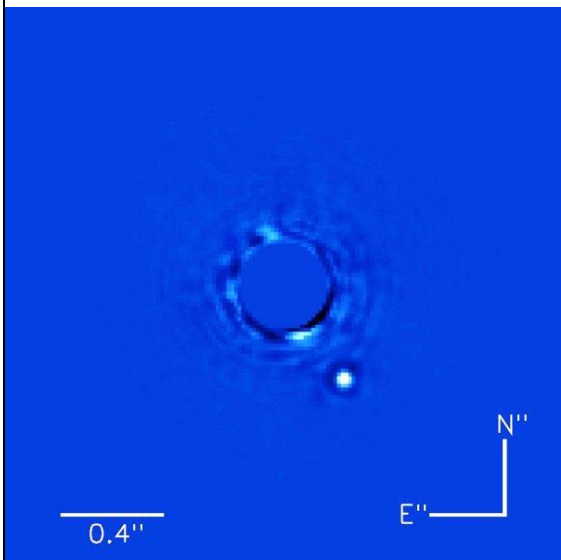
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Exoplanet News

We now have what appears to be photographic evidence of an exoplanet. Here is the info -

While it may look like only a tiny smudge to the untrained eye, a freshly released image represents the best direct photograph ever snapped of a planet beyond our solar system.



Located some 63.5 light-years from Earth, Beta Pictoris b appears to be a Jupiter-like gas giant planet. It orbits a star similar to our own sun but much younger, at about 12 million years old (the sun has marked nearly 4.6 billion years). A combined 30-

minute GPI image depicts the planet Beta Pictoris b (bright spot) orbiting its star (center), which has been subtracted from the image. Credit: Bruce Macintosh et al.

Captured in a record-setting one-minute exposure, the exoplanet orbits its parent star a little closer than Saturn orbits the sun. That's about ten times farther than Earth is from our sun. Previous pictures—including Hubble Space Telescope images released in 2006 – has revealed that a disk of dusty debris surrounds Beta Pictoris. A gap in the disk had suggested that the gas giant planet was plowing through the debris disk and clearing an orbit for itself. The existence of the planet wasn't confirmed until the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope captured a first picture back in 2009.

-Dale Hendricks

Other Plant News

Juno just arrived at Jupiter after a five year "voyage" and successfully entered orbit around this favorite planet. I went outside last night with the specific intent of looking at it before it sank into the tree line west of my house. Knowing that it was going to have a close look by an inanimate object circling it somehow made this Big Boy more accessible. Have you all seen the movie of the moons circling Jupiter constructed from the still photos Juno has already taken? The emotion of the project manager as he described the movie was testimony to reality that even though we know a lot what we don't know is unfathomable. May Juno surprise and delight us with its findings of our large friend Jupiter for years to come.

-Dale Hendricks

This Plant News

We will no doubt continue to see a great deal of progress in the science of exoplanet discovery and imaging in the coming years and this is fascinating science at its best. However, we have some things in front of us that will hopefully confirm our continued focus on things closer to "home". There is a Star Party at Menke this Saturday; the upcoming EISP has focused a great deal of attention on this activity with Jeff plowing the way (not "ploughing" as the Brits would have us believe) in our continuing efforts to make more and better astronomy available to more people. But if we are to continue as a "successful" amateur astronomy club we need to have support and commitment from our members to ensure this success.

Each of us has something unique and special to contribute to this effort. Sam Snow has the younger generation perspective and has brought friends to some of our events in hopes of kindling a broader and more generational appeal to astronomy. With so much available on line today the drudgery of actually setting up an instrument, calibrating it and then looking the temptation is to just look at what others have looked and recorded. Many of us are a bit "longer in the tooth" than Sam and a lot of you have continuously demonstrated your expertise and passion in your photographs and observing throughout the year.

Who are we, where have we been and where are we going? These are questions that any organization must ask itself from time to time. I relate this to one of my last projects at Deere – working to restore the quality of our industrial design and keeping our "brand" fresh and unassailable in court. Once we had completed this work my vice president told me that we would have to do it all over again in about ten years. Once the "new" wore off then complacency would set in and we would find ourselves back where we were when I was asked to be involved in the industrial design work.

The business cycle is about eleven years. The sun spot cycle is about eleven years. I have been a member of the QCAS since January 2008, somewhat short of 11 years but moving to that mark. It may be time for us to be out in front of the eleven year cycle and take some time to determine where we are on the eleven year scale. With the talent, passion and varied interests of our members I have no doubt that the results of evaluation will give us a good roadmap to our near term future.

-Dale Hendricks

Eastern Iowa Star Party (Part 2)

-Jeff Struve

Getting back to the point, since this event can only be successful if we have a respectable turn out.

As we near the event, I will be sending another email asking for your RSVP so that I can ensure that there is a spot for you - so, the questions are as follows:

1. Are you strongly considering attending, and if so, Friday Night, Saturday Night, or both nights?
2. How many will be in your party and not responding separately to their own email?
3. Do you require electricity for your gear?

If you are attending both nights, and prefer to go home in between observing/imaging, you can leave your gear set up, and covered as I will have folks on site keeping watch.

You probably have other questions like food and lodging concerns - and realizing this, there are too many possibilities, so rather than list them all, let me know your needs!

I look forward to hearing from you, and am actively seeking volunteers to help.

Multiplicity

Between other activities and poor weather conditions, it is hard to get out and do astronomy as frequently as I like... I'm sure most of you can relate.

I did find a certain amount of enjoyment joining clubs and currently belong to the Quad City Coin Club, Quad Cities Archeological Society, The Popular Astronomy Club, and of course the Quad Cities Astronomical Society...

Being in 2 astronomy clubs gives 2 nights per month that I know I can dedicate to astronomy no matter the weather conditions - and weather and time permitting there are other club events that I can participate in each month.

So, finding 2 to 4 astronomy base outings not enough, a month or two ago I decided to join the Cedar Amateur Astronomers in Cedar Rapids - and did attend last Thursdays meeting at their observatory complex. Along for the trip I was accompanied by Allan Sheidler, the PAC president. We were greeted and made quite at home.

The meeting was from 7 pm till 10 pm, and included a 15 minute munchie and beverage break. The meeting went quick, and afterwards we were given a rushed 45 minute tour of their facility which included a number of classrooms, work rooms, computer rooms and last but not least 3 fully equipped domes and a roll top roof building. Their gear is quite impressive and I took quite a few pictures, but think that if you want to hear and see more about their Eastern Iowa Observatory, that you can visit QC Astronomy or CAA on Facebook, visit their website, or better yet join us at the Eastern Iowa Star Party where they will be attending and making a presentation on their site.

-Jeff Struve

Astronotes

- Contact Jim Rutenbeck if you would like to donate something for the EISP door prize drawing.
- If you do Facebook, check out "QC Astronomy".
- Late July astrophotography targets from my calendar:
M8, M20, M22, M13, M17, M16
M57 if everything is working great
Using 250mm lens: North American and Pelican Nebulae; Lagoon and Trifid Nebulae
- The August star party at Menke is during the Perseid meteor shower.
- 45 years ago (1971) on July 26, Apollo 15 was launched. On July 30, the Falcon landed in the Hadley Rille/Apennine region while Endeavour remained in lunar orbit. Apollo 15 splashed down on August 7.



Yes it is! My favorite image from the space program!
Hadley Rille – Apollo 15