



Minutes of DAS E-Board Meeting Friday, November 30, 2007

Officer/E-Board Attendees: Wayne Green, Keith Pool, Brad Gilman, Darrell Dodge, Jack Eastman, Joe Gafford, Ron Mickle, David Shouldice, Ron Pearson, Bryan Wilburn, Dan Wray **Other:** Aaron Reid, Ivan Geisler, Wayne Kaaz, Bill Ormsby,

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 by the President, Wayne Green.

Minutes of the September meeting were read and approved with minor corrections.

Chamberlin Report – Aaron Reid

No news on the start date of the grant window refurbishment. Aaron has made phone inquiries. Chamberlin attendance figures were provided: attendance year-to-date is slightly over 3000. Reservation figures were 3980 for public nights, which Ron Mickle noted was a more important number than attendance due to weather and other factors.

Aaron reported that at the beginning of the year, the Colorado IDA will circulate petitions to get an IDA license plate to promote interest in preserving Colorado dark skies. They need volunteers to get signatures together, as well as design ideas. Wayne Green suggested that Aaron put an article in the Observer. Dan Wray suggested developing a license plate frame as another way of doing the same thing without higher vehicle registration costs.

ALCON report

Nominations for MARS elections are moving along very slowly. Jerry Sherlin has sent out e-mails, but there are very few responses, although we do have enough people for all slots. We will try to hold an election in January. Wayne Green will get together with Western Area Astronomers members and see why they moved away from the Astronomical League. Jack Eastman said it died in committee: no interest, but no animosity.

Treasurers Report – Brad Gilman

If it wasn't for the extra auction income (\$836.80), we would have just broken even for the month. The invested Van Nattan fund is at \$51312.02 – up 8.5 percent per year.

Secretary – Darrell Dodge

The Secretary compared Sky and Telescope discounted subscriptions with the roster of active DAS members. A few anomalies were noted and reported to S&T. A monthly renewal reminder

was sent out to about 40 people whose memberships were expired or due to expire in the next month. DAS membership is increasing this year. We have gone from 283 to about 312 since March. The process of reviewing the Observer for Patti Kurtz is working well and appears to be reducing egregious errors.

Vice President – Keith Pool

David Grinspoon will be the speaker in January. Mike Carroll will give a presentation on his “space art” for NASA, magazines, and books at the February Meeting. Bryan White will give his updated 3-D aurora and comet presentation at the March Banquet. (Note: subsequent to the E-Board meeting, the months for Mr. Grinspoon and Mr. Carroll were switched to accommodate travel by David Grinspoon.)

President – Wayne Green

Wayne Green reported on conversations he has had recently with Dr. Stencel. Wayne is interested in conducting a study of what kind of data was used at the turn of the century to do time. A more accurate sidereal clock on the 20-inch Clark-Saegmuller telescope would be helpful. Getting a way to read the more accurate large setting circles would increase the usefulness of the telescope, however, Ron Pearson spoke up for a period-correct solution. Wayne’s machining of the new piece for the 20-inch Clark tail is going well.

Wayne Green reported that Roling Ball’s Astro Corral has been opened by astronomy clubs in Northern Colorado. For them, the southern sky is bad because of Greeley and I-25 lights. Bill Travis of the Boulder Astronomical and Space Society came out to the DAS dark site last month and was impressed with the setup, amenities, and skies. Another group in Wyoming is interested in starting their own annual star party. Bill Travis thinks that it may be possible to obtain a school section from the Colorado Land Bureau, allowing more outreach to schools. Bill has friends on the CLB Board of Trustees and can help get CU and CSU professors to push this for us.

The Haswell land access deal near Eads is ready to go through, according to Wayne. This will transfer 11 acres to the Deep Space Exploration Society.

Outreach Report – Bryan Wilburn

The Montessori star party in Castle Rock attracted 75 people.

There were 75 people at The Fort Star Party (“The Night the Stars Fell”) – including 55 invited guests plus 20 others. There was a lecture by Steve Lee, and presentations by Bryan Wilburn and a National Park Ranger. Ron Pearson, Dan Wray, Wayne Green, and Bryan Wilburn attended.

The Girl Scout Star Party in Littleton was attended by 220 children and parents. Chuck Carlson, Wayne Green, Jack Eastman, Dan Wray, and Bryan Wilburn provided telescopes.

Upcoming Star Parties: The Grange, next April.

A light meter for sky luminance – recommended by IDA – has been received. Ron Mickle says it would be OK if people took it out to the dark site at Deer Trail. He suggested that we should be doing measurements at Chamberlin and the dark site so we can get a feel for changes in

luminance/light pollution. Ron asked Aaron Reid if there are procedures for using the light meter. Aaron responded: Point it overhead and push the button once, let go, wait for a beep after a few seconds. Look at the display. The user needs to specify the time of day the measurement was made.

Aaron Reid said that DAS should get more involved in the "Globe at Night" dark sky program this year. Details are on the Web site at www.globe.gov

Wayne Green noted that he is developing a reservation system for outside events. This would be similar to the present Public Night and Open House System. Representatives of organizations wanting assistance to put on star parties could use it to contact the DAS and provide details about their proposed or planned events.

Van Nattan-Hansen

Given the healthy state of the Van Nattan fund, Ron Pearson asked where the \$836.80 proceeds from the auction (which usually go to the VNH fund) should go. Jack Eastman moved and Ron Pearson seconded that it be put in the general fund. This motion was approved by the E-Board.

Someone asked how we should advertise the 2008 VNH award competition. Ron Pearson replied that Tim Pimentel has a mailing list for schools and he will send out a flyer

Darrell Dodge asked Ron Pearson for information on this year's awards and past awards for posting on the Web site with the call for 2008 entries.

Finance:

Wayne Green asked if fundraising projects are needed? There was no overt response from the E-Board.

A philosophical question was posed by Wayne Green: What is our future vision? Some E-Board members responded that we are doing plenty for others and need to start doing things for the DAS and its members.

Dark Site:

Wayne Kaaz obtained a modification of the lease agreement from Bernie Poskus regarding the electrical service to send to Henry Weisensee. Wayne K. wants the E-Board to review it and vote to approve. Wayne Green says that it clarifies what we are actually doing, rather than what we intended to do. DAS will pay for the extra power we use, obtaining usage data from Mr. Weisensee's panel. The difference will be reported to the rural electric coop.

It was decided to put the proposal on a list for a vote at the next Board meeting. Wayne Kaaz will be resigning at the end of the year. He says that we should either select a new chairman or dissolve the committee, as we don't have any funds to do anything. Wayne Kaaz said he will remain on the committee as treasurer. The need for a new dark site committee chair will be announced in the January Presidents Corner.

Wayne Green reported that a Tuff shed has been located for storage at the dark site. It is 6x8 feet (less than 100 sq ft), which means that a permit from Arapahoe County will not be required.

Wayne also noted that the site needs red lights to guide people to the entrance and down the road.

Library:

Wayne Green reported that Phil Klos is working out well as the new librarian for Chamberlin and has made a lot of visible improvements already.

A book by Hal Secrest (apparently from the early 1950's) was donated to the Chamberlin library by Dave Shouldice. The book features an article by Professor Howe that he was going to submit to the university magazine, as well as an article by Howe's wife, mentioned going into a room at Chamberlin Observatory and watching the seismograph.

Web Site

Darrell Dodge mentioned that he is planning to develop a Members area that will allow members to have pictures of them with their telescopes. Several more D-files were added to the local server from old Tripod pages. A special page on Comet Holmes was developed shortly after the eruption, updated periodically, and featured images of the event made by DAS members.

Wayne Green mentioned the possibility of adding a Wiki to the Web site so that DAS members could actively participate in reporting on late-breaking astronomical events.

New Business

17.5-inch Telescope

Wayne Green handed out a draft charter for a telescope exploration committee to use the existing 17.5 mirror and construct a substantial DAS telescope for use in research activities. Wayne proposed that Ron Pearson be the chairman of the committee, as he had expressed interest in the project in the past.

Ron Pearson moved to establish budget numbers for the project and do a design. The motion was seconded by Jack Eastman and approved by the E-Board.

The existing telescope needs to be tested to find out its f-ratio. Some Board members suggested that it is probably f/4.6.

It was noted by Dave Shouldice that the 17.5-inch collection area of the proposed scope is highly cost-effective. The aperture of a telescope of 16 inches needs to be doubled to obtain one more magnitude.

Motion to Adjourn

There was a motion to adjourn at 9:28 pm by Wayne Green, seconded by Jack Eastman and approved by the E-Board.