



March 28th, 2008

Minutes of the DAS Executive Board

Attendees:

Officers: Wayne Green (Pres), Keith Pool (VP), Brad Gilman (Treas), Darrell Dodge (Sec)

Trustees: Jack Eastman, Dan Wray, Joe Gafford, Ron Pearson, David Shouldice, Bryan Wilburn, Frank Mancini

Others: Aaron Reid, Bill Ormsby, Dennis Cochran, Ivan Geisler

The March 2008 EBoard meeting was called to order by Wayne Green at 7:38 pm. The minutes of the February 29th, 2008 EBoard meeting were reviewed and approved with minor corrections.

Chamberlin Observatory Report – Aaron Reid

Work is scheduled to start on the Chamberlin Observatory restoration grant in mid April. Rhonda Maas of Building Restoration Specialties will be in contact with Aaron about the start time.

The start of the grant work was celebrated by several events, including a program on Channel 9 with Dr. Stencel giving a tour of Chamberlin and a big meeting at the observatory with various local dignitaries and officials from DU.

Aaron Reid showed a photo of the cat mascot of the Denver Public Library at the South entrance of Chamberlin Observatory. Aaron said that it would be OK to use this photo for publicity purposes.

The phone at the observatory is still not working reliably after the wiring was replaced. The phone works when the plug is jiggled in the wall jack.

One of Dr. Stencel's graduate students is working on a solution for problems with the accuracy of the malfunctioning Clark 20-inch telescope encoders.

There is a new sign in the observatory library warning that no new books should be added to the collection unless approved by DU.

ALCor Report

Wayne Green reported that someone from the fledgling Estes Park astronomy club had proposed having the 2011 ALCON at the YMCA center in Estes Park. Mr. Green asked if the DAS would be willing to provide assistance to them. He noted that we would need to approach the AL this year for this to happen. Several people asked about the number of people attending recent ALCONs. Wayne said that attendance is modest – only about 200 people -- perhaps because regional star parties are competing with the convention. Wayne Green and Darrell Dodge are planning to attend ALCON this year.

Vern Raben's daughter is an event planner for the Lutheran church. She may be a good resource for a possible convention bid.

The four-state MARS region includes Wyoming in name only, as not one club from the state is a member of the Astronomical League. Wayne said that one of his goals as the new MARS regional chair is to get one or more Wyoming clubs involved. The Laramie Astronomy Society just opened a public observatory.

Officer Reports

Treasurer – Brad Gilman

There was \$24,000 in the DAS checking account as of the end of February.

Secretary / Web and Newsletter – Darrell Dodge

There were 343 active members at last count (end of March.) The March newsletter was completed and sent out. The April newsletter will be about 1 week late.

Darrell Dodge and Ron Pearson prepared an article on the Van Nattan-Hansen Scholarship, highlighting the careers of six past recipients of the scholarship.

Vice President – Keith Pool

Nothing to report other than upcoming general meeting speakers, which now include Mark Bottorff in July.

President – Wayne Green

Election is over and went well. However, Mr. Green did mention that the procedure of using a show of hands to decide a run-off needed to be reviewed.

Mr. Green reported that 65 people had already signed up for the DAS spring banquet. The food orders were: 33 lasagna and 32 chicken dinners. Costs will be \$830.09 for dinners in chaffing dishes and \$100 for the use of the Columbine Unitarian-Universalist Church sanctuary and kitchen. Desserts ordered included 20 cannolis, 20 cheese cakes and 20 tiramisu. We will need at least 70 place settings.

Committee Reports

Outreach

Internal outreach activities continue to have good attendance. For external outreach, Bryan Wilburn reported that there was an April 17th event for up to 30 children in the works. There was also a planned star party at the Grange in Castle Rock.

There was a discussion of what to do to raise more funds for DAS outreach activities. A proposal was put forth to put new signage on the old DAS donation boxes to solicit funds for DAS Outreach Program activities at Open Houses and other events. Jack Eastman so moved, Dan Wray seconded, and the proposal passed unanimously.

David Shouldice reported that he approached a representative of the Denver Audubon Society at an Audubon meeting at their facility near Waterton Canyon. The representative expressed some interest in the idea of a collaborative arrangement for use of the facility by the DAS for society and outreach star parties. David noted that they have a class room, storage building with garage door access, and outdoor restroom built by Army Corps of Engineers. The land is owned by Jefferson County Parks as part of Chatfield and involves a large collaboration of a number of

groups. David's impression from the discussion was that the representative welcomed the idea of increased utilization of their site. David had viewed the nighttime skies at the site and suggested that they would be good for regular outreach programs, and that the facilities would be similar to those we have now at Chamberlin. His impression was that there would not have to be a fee to the DAS for use of the site.

Wayne Green suggested that he should meet with the head of Audubon and discuss mutual interest. One idea to help establish communications would be to organize a star party at the site for Audubon members. Binocular astronomy might be a good match for them because of all the members who have high-end binoculars and want to learn how to use them to view the night sky.

Finance Committee

The DAS Treasurer, Brad Gilman, purchased an off-lease \$225 Dell laptop for use as a dedicated DAS financial computer.

Telescope Committee – Ron Pearson

Ron hauled things out of corners in his garage and pulled things together. He and his son Neal made measurements. The shaft is 2.4 inches in diameter and 33 inches in length. Ron is working on the flotation cells.

Old Business

Proposal for Single Membership Date

Darrell Dodge, the outgoing DAS secretary, submitted a formal proposal that the EBoard consider revising its procedures and the DAS Bylaws and establishing a single renewal date, to replace the present policy of having the renewal date be the first day of the original joining month. This proposal had been provided to the EBoard at the February 29th meeting, but not formally submitted because of the absence of the treasurer and the incoming secretary, Ron Pearson.

After reading the proposal and hearing the rationale provided by Mr. Dodge, several members said they were in favor of a pro-rating system to compensate members impacted by the change. There was general agreement that the dues should be increased one dollar to \$36 per year to make it easier to divide the dues into 12 equal segments.

The following motion wording was developed:

“Change the dues billing cycle to the calendar year beginning January 1st for all members. Begin prorated membership payments in May 2008, toward implementing annual billing in January 1, 2009 and thereafter. Those who paid dues from February through May of 2008 will receive a reduced bill on January 1, 2009. The dues for new members joining for a partial year will be prorated in their second year of membership.”

After discussion, Frank Mancini moved to accept the proposal as worded. David Shouldice seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, David Shouldice moved to adjourn. Jack Eastman seconded. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Darrell Dodge, DAS Secretary.