

**Denver Astronomical Society**  
**Minutes of May 16, 2014 E-Board Meeting**

**Officers Present:**

President - Ron Hranac                      Vice President - *vacant*  
Secretary - Dena McClung              Treasurer - Luis Uribe

**Board Members Present:**

Jack Eastman      Joe Gafford              Chuck Habenicht                      Digby Kirby  
Ed Scholes              Sorin              Jeff Tropeano              Dan Wray              Ron Pearson

**Observatory Representative:**

none

**Other Members and Guests:**

Hugh Davidson, Volunteer Coordinator                      Dennis Cochran  
Darrell Dodge, Website Administrator                      Brad Gilman  
Stuart Hutchins                      Johnny and Eileen Barela

**The meeting was called to order** with a quorum present at 7:30 p.m.

**The Previous Meeting's Minutes** were read, amended and approved.

**Chamberlin Business:** Due to Dr. Stencel's absence, Ron Hranac read an email sent by Dr. Stencel (see Online Updates section). One item mentioned therein was the inability of DU to replace Aaron Reid. An idea was presented to offer the services of a DAS member to carry out those duties, but was shelved.

**Treasurer's Report:** In addition to the online update provided by Luis (which includes account balances), he reported that he's having performance issues with the treasurer's laptop and will be contacting Scott Leach for help in resolving them. Luis reported that he went to the Colorado Secretary of State's office to retrieve the user name and password for DAS to enable him to file the required reports. However, the SOS was directed to delete all of those. Luis was given temporary ones with a promise of new permanent ones to follow. He also received an extension until August 2014 for filing the 2013 report. It was noted that the member head count needs to be included in each Treasurer's Report.

**Special Business**

**Vice President Vacancy:** This vacancy exists due to the resignation of Lisa Judd, who has turned in her key to Chamberlin and removed herself from the Public Night teams as well. Ron Hranac cited the pertinent section of the DAS by-laws that authorizes the executive board to appoint a replacement for any officer who does not finish his or her term. The only volunteer for the position was Stuart Hutchins, who spoke for a few minutes about his involvement with the DAS and his qualifications for the position. A **motion was made and passed to appoint Stuart Hutchins as Vice President** for the remainder of Lisa's term. It was mentioned that Lisa had had a notebook containing information on speakers, and that the club needs to ask her to forward it to Stuart. It was agreed that the membership would be notified of Stuart's appointment via a Constant Contact message and a brief statement in *The Observer*. Dena agreed to email said statement to Patti Kurtz.

## Old Business

**New Member Welcome Letters:** Ron Pearson informed the board that a letter is already in existence in the e-board files online, and suggested that it would just need to be signed by Ron Hranac. Jeff agreed to download it and make whatever tweaks are necessary. Digby will continue to make calls to new members.

**Picnic:** Due to the Chamberlin Observatory 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration scheduled for July 19, Dan has looked into finding a location for the weekend of August 9-10. He reported that Bear Creek Lake Park is owned by the City of Lakewood. No official events are scheduled after dark because it incurs overtime pay for staff. The pavilion rents for \$200 and dates available for it may be scarce. All attending would have to pay admission. It was agreed that Dan should see if he can reserve the pavilion for either day that weekend. If it is not available, Ed Scholes will look into reserving space at Chatfield State Park.

**Chamberlin Observatory 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration:** Jeff is working with Ron Hranac and Dr. Stencel to confirm the wording of the press release. Twenty-two or -three people signed up to volunteer at the last general membership meeting. Dave Cuomo with DMNS is planning to provide two speakers to augment those already on tap. It was agreed that we need to keep an eye on the supply of fliers, and that 8.5" by 11" posters need to be created and placed in high-traffic locations such as community colleges, recreation centers, libraries, and coffee shops. A special web page also needs to be created and put up very soon offering detailed information about the event.

**Dark Sky Site Lease Renewal:** Darrell has made a PDF of the existing lease and has composed a lease extension. He suggested raising our payment to \$600 per year. A revised cost of electricity needs to be noted therein. No mice have been caught in the multi-mouse trap that Darrell placed. Access to Brooks Observatory (for mice) has been blocked off. He has purchased the hardware cloth. The issue of DSS storage will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

**Dr. Stencel's Endowment Support Request:** After a discussion about a few different options for supporting this request, the board came to agreement on the best option. A **motion was made and passed as follows:**

**DAS will present a proposal to Dr. Stencel incorporating the following points:**

**DAS will donate \$5,000 to DU for the express purpose of funding the establishment of an endowment for the support of Chamberlin Observatory;**

**DU will give DAS a thank-you letter on DU letterhead acknowledging the gift for the intended purpose;**

**Public Night Fees will be raised by \$1 per person with that increase going to the DAS to repay the \$5,000 and enable DAS to provide more support in the future.**

**Finance Committee:** A third member for this committee is still needed. The draft charter language has been drawn up. The primary purpose of the committee will be to make recommendations regarding a contingency/reserve fund.

## **New Business**

**Eyepiece Purchases for the 20”:** These have been delayed due to the work on the focuser. It was agreed that the existing lenses will first be cleaned, then re-evaluated. It was agreed that the Public Night teams should look at the eyepieces after they are cleaned and make recommendations about whether or not to replace them. Some additional eyepieces will need to be “auditioned” once the work on the focuser is complete. It will be raised for discussion at the operator re-certification meeting, and Hugh will take input from Public Night operators.

**Public Night Reservation Pre-payment:** It was suggested and agreed that Hugh should schedule an all-hands meeting of the Public Night volunteers to discuss problems encountered with no-shows. The volunteers will be asked to decide how best to address the problem.

**Membership Database:** Dena reported that she plans to streamline the process for those who need information from the official member database by putting it online as a document on Google Drive. Those who need access are to be given it, with permission to view and make comments. She will be the only person who can edit. By putting it online where those who have a need can simply look up needed information, it will relieve everyone of sending emails back and forth with questions and answers. She will need perhaps two weeks to clean up the existing information and put it online, and will advise all who need access as soon as it is available.

**Next Meeting:** The next e-board meeting will be held on Friday, June 20 at 7:30 p.m.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made and passed at 10:00 p.m.

## **Online Updates - May 2014**

### **Subject: Chamberlin Observatory**

Submitted by Dr. Bob

Several months ago, I accepted an invitation to speak at Little Thompson Observatory ([starkids.org](http://starkids.org)) this Friday evening (May 16th) - assuming eBoard could be covered by Aaron Reid. However, with his resignation from DU, this memo will have to suffice as the Observatory Report for this month, in lieu of my attending in person.

Main points:

1. After investing 55 hours personally over the past 3 weeks, and with the help of a team of DU and DAS folk plus some specialized tools, we managed to un-jam the Right Ascension motion of the 20" telescope, placing the 20" back in service. Some tweaking may still be needed to finalize the repair, and that is being worked. We were out of service from April 11 until May 9. Apparently this same problem happened in 1982, according to a memo from Dr. Everhart. I'm in the process of documenting what was done, so that future incidents can be resolved more efficiently. Repair team members included: myself, Matt Brochin, Jack Eastman, Joe Gafford, Stuart Hutchins, Digby Kirby, John Kronfeld. Ron Mickle, Fred Orthleib, Ron Pearson, Dave Shouldice and Dan Wray. I appreciate their participation.

2. Telescope re-certification class is planned for 1-3pm tomorrow, Sat. May 17th at Chamberlin. This is REQUIRED for all current and aspiring scope operators, plus anyone interested. This risk-management event helps promote safety and reduce our collective liability.

3. Mr. Reid's departure highlights the importance of growing the observatory astronomy staffing endowment fund. We do not have the budget to fill the Observatory Coordinator job he vacated. I hope DAS can help with a financial pledge in support.

4. Groundbreaking for the new Engineering building atop the old Olin parking lot finally happened last week. Perhaps 18 months to completion.

5. If there are any other DU-related items that arise from eBoard discussion, drop me a note outlining the issues.

--Dr.Bob

\* \* \* \* \*

**SUBJECT: Yahoo Groups (Listserve)**

SUBMITTED BY Greg Marino and Ron Pearson

STATUS: Initial purge of the main listserve completed. This resulted in 3 expired members rejoining the DAS and 32 expired members being removed. We also removed 3 hard-bouncing addresses. There are approximately 21 unidentifiable members on the main list serve. We will attempt to identify these members using off-list email. Those that are expired or who ultimately don't respond will be removed. For those that remain on the listserve, we will track the alias information for future use.

I'll just add that we started with 192 "members" on the denverastro group and we now have 157, that includes a couple of new members who have joined since the cut. In addition to the 32 expired members deleted there were several 'aliases' we deleted in the roll from one or two members who attempt to use multiple aliases to obfuscate their email identity from Yahoo, e.g. Scott Leach. (Ron #1)

Ron is correct; the majority of listserve members are identifiable because they use their real name, or they use the same email address on the list as in the roster. But there are quite a few who have anonymous user names and email addresses for use on listerves and forums. In a lot of cases that concern is well justified, however our set up is pretty safe as evidenced by 13 or 14 years with no significant issues. So when we identify the "mystery" members, we will document who they are. And when new members join, we will document it if the email is not obvious and differs from the one in the roster. That will take more time, but I think it's worth it so that we can identify every member. (Greg)

BOARD ACTION: None Required

\* \* \* \* \*

**SUBJECT: External Outreach**

SUBMITTED BY Naomi Pequette

**STATUS:** We had a several very successful events in late April and May. Several students and families that were at our star party at Henry World Middle School came to Space Day and visited our table and solar viewing.

At Starfest, we had about 40 people come to the panel that Sorin gave, and between 100 and 150 to the stargazing event Saturday night.

At Space Day, we estimate about 500 people stopped by the table inside Space Odyssey, many of whom also enjoyed solar observing before the clouds became too thick.

The same day at Dinosaur Ridge about 200 people participated in solar viewing at the DAS table.

**Upcoming Events:**

Saturday, June 7th 10am - 2pm: Majestic View Trail Days has invited us to have a table and provide solar viewing for their event. 3 volunteers have signed up so far.

Mt Evans: There are 2 events on Mt. Evans where they would like us to provide 4 scopes and volunteers. This is an event that is limited on the number of attendees due to parking and Forest Service restrictions. We will be one of 4 "stations" that visitors will come to throughout the night. The theme of the event is "Cosmic Connections." The first night is Thursday, June 19th from 8pm - 9:30pm (volunteers need to arrive at 6:30) and the second is Friday June 27th starting at 8pm. For the second event volunteers can bring 3 guests. So far only Luis is signed up for both nights.

Monday June 23rd at 10am: Wulf Rec Childcare Center in Evergreen would like us to bring up scopes to do daytime observing of the moon as well as solar observing for about 30 students. Only 1 volunteer signed up at this time

Tuesday, June 24th at 6:30pm: The Boy Scouts have requested a dinner time presentation for their Twilight Camp. The Barela's have tentatively agreed to this.

We are still getting requests in for this summer and fall.

BOARD ACTION: None

**SUBJECT: IT Dept. and Reservation System**

Submitted by Scott Leach

STATUS:

**IT** - Nothing to report.

**Reservation system** is not being utilized to its maximum potential.

People are not honoring their reservations which leaves many empty seats on public nights.

The observatory is being 100% booked which prevents others from making reservations, and then reserved guests are not attending which is a waste.

This is occurring so frequently that it has become an expected norm.

This has been an ongoing issue for as long as I have been a member, and was the driving force behind migrating to a new reservation system capable of billing in advance which is what we currently have.

I suggest that the issue of pay in advance reservations be addressed and approved; as it is the only reasonable method of reducing the number of empty seats and assuring 100% proceeds for the events.

Board Action: Address pay in advance reservations to help in the prevention of “no-shows” on public nights.

Submitted by Scott Leach

\*\*\*\*\*

**Subject: Quartermaster's Report**

Submitted by Ed Scholes

No Scopes on loan right now. Asset stickers are on there way. When they arrive, we put them on everything...maybe even a few club members.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Subject: New Member Contacts**

Submitted by Digby Kirby

Calls to new members continue. I got a little behind but will catch up this week. Those folks I have reached have generally been receptive and appreciative. Several new members have shown up at the general meetings and shown enthusiasm.

Board action required: none.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Subject: 20" Telescope Adapter**

Submitted by Digby Kirby

Stuart obtained aluminum stock at no cost with the help of Dr. Bob and will start machining soon if he hasn't already. The Volunteer machinist expressed some reservations about a two piece design which Stuart does not share and therefore Stuart has agreed to do the machining himself. Stuart should be at tonight's meeting to answer any questions we may have but at this point it appears that thanks to Stuart and Dr. Bob, we'll have this adapter made and operational soon at no cost.

Board action required: To be determined.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Subject: Social Media**

Submitted by Jeff Tropeano

STATUS: I continue to post to Social Media sites: Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and YouTube.

YouTube video have a total of 675 video views, with the most recent (New Horizons) having 107 views. Facebook page has 653 followers. Twitter has 156 followers, although we were recently mentioned by PGA Tour Professional Jimmy Walker. There has been no activity on Yelp, which is surprising and disappointing. Although I had previously recommended not soliciting yelp reviews, I think it's time to do a little nudging.

BOARD ACTION: No action required

\* \* \* \* \*

**Subject: Membership Survey Committee**

SUBMITTED BY: Jeff Tropeano

STATUS: Jack, Digby and Jeff have met and reviewed the membership data together and have discussed the main highlights. We will continue to review the data, and will have a full report and recommendations to the board by the next board meeting.

BOARD ACTION: No action required

**Subject: Treasurer's Report**

Submitted by Luis Uribe

Status: Other than the various filings and a nagging issue with the laptop it looks like I'm getting a handle on this Treasurer stuff. Contact me with any questions.

Treasurer Report

Standing Accounts

1st Bank Accounts

Type of Account	Ref No	Amount
Checking	X9663	\$21,162.25
Checking	X1049	\$4,339.80
Premier Time Savings	X9213	\$10,535.77
Time Deposit Savings	X3552	\$5,174.32
Denver Credit Union		\$65,749.74

## Tranasctions in April

PayPal	Amount	Fee	Total
Memberships	\$572.00	\$ 17.06	\$554.94
Donations	\$130.00	\$ 3.46	\$126.54
Current Balance			\$2,019.78

## Mail

Mail-In Membership			\$ 88.00
Mail-In Donations			\$ 10.00
Mail-In Subscriptions			\$ 32.95
Total			\$130.95

Public Night	Number	Fee	Total
Adults	78	3	\$234.00
Children	30	2	\$ 60.00
DU Students	2	0	\$ - 0
Total Entry			\$294.00
DAS Donations			\$ 28.00
Total			\$322.00

Payments	Description	Amount
Darrell Dodge	Heater Strap	\$ 81.38
Darrell Dodge	Observer	\$ 57.15
Darrell Dodge	Constant Contact	\$225.00
SS Optika	Binoculars	\$159.98
Chuck		
Habenicht	Banners	\$161.63
X Sorin	Flyers x2	\$128.67
Ed Scholes	Asset Stickers	\$385.00
Total		\$1,198.81