

**Denver Astronomical Society**  
**Minutes of December 12, 2014 E-Board Meeting**

**Officers Present:** President - Ron Hranac Secretary - Dena McClung Treasurer - Luis Uribe

**Board Members Present:** Jack Eastman Joe Gafford Chuck Habenicht  
Digby Kirby Sorin Jeff Tropeano Dan Wray

**Absent:** VP - Stuart Hutchins Ed Scholes Immediate Past President - Ron Pearson

**Other Members and Guests:** Hugh Davidson, PN Volunteer Coordinator Brad Gilman  
Johnny & Eileen Barela Darrell Dodge

**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.

**DU's Historic Chamberlin Observatory Business:** Dr. Stencil was unable to attend; see the online updates attached for a message from him.

**Treasurer's Report:** Luis' report will be sent via email and attached when available.

**Old Business**

**Newsletter Editor:** Darcy Schlicting withdrew her offer to be the editor. Cyndi Bray does not yet have a computer suitable for the job. The search for a new editor continues.

**Holiday Party:** Feedback from those attending the party was generally good. Embassy Suites was one table short, which was rectified when Stuart pointed it out. The room was not ready on time as had been promised. The audio speakers did not distribute the sound equally. The bartender had no cash for the first 20 minutes she was "open."

**New Business**

**Vacancies:** The External Outreach Coordinator position is open due to Naomi's resignation, following her promotion to Assistant Coordinator for Museum Programs at the DMNS (specifically their Space Odyssey Exhibit). The backup Yahoo Moderator position is open due to the resignation (from that position only) of Ron Pearson. Dena has agreed to take over those duties. The Secretary position will need to be filled during the February election, as Dena is not going to run again. The Treasurer position will also need to be filled at the election, as Luis is not going to run again.

**DAS Website Domain:** Darrell reported that denverastrosociety.org has been renewed for one year at a cost of \$15.95. Wayne Green is working with the Chinese group to transfer the domain to an email address dedicated to a DAS officer position, most likely president. It is possible that we'll be required to use the physical address of Chamberlin Observatory for it. Darrell recommended also purchasing the domains "denverastronomy.org," "denverastronomy.com," "astronomydenver.org," and "astronomydenver.com." **A motion was made and passed to purchase those four domain names in the name of DAS.**

**Dark Site:** Due to lack of participation by previous members of the dark site committee, Darrell asked for the e-board's permission to dissolve and reconstitute that committee. After consulting the by-

laws, Ron Hranac instructed Darrell to reform the committee as he sees fit. New work has been taking place at the nearby exploratory drilling site, but Sorin, who saw it the previous evening, said that he saw work lights there, but nothing big happening.

**Annual Elections:** Darrell has sent out a Constant Contact message announcing that nominations will be accepted at the January general meeting. Tim Pimentel has agreed to head the election committee.

**Spring Banquet:** After some discussion about the two options provided by Stuart via email, **a motion was made and passed to hold the Spring Banquet at the Embassy Suites DTC on Costilla Ave in Centennial. Another motion was made and passed authorizing Stuart to sign a contract with them and put up to \$2500 on the DAS credit card to secure the event.**

**January PN Price Increase:** The price change planned for January 1 has not been made on the PN reservation website. Currently, visitors can sign up through March. It was decided that several things need to take place before the price change and the prepay option can go into effect: the terms of service will have to be reviewed and posted, the members of the PN teams will have to be trained, and language to be printed on receipts will have to be selected. A date for the launch of these changes will have to be set. Darrell will post an approved copy of the new TOS on the website.

**Olin Hall Reservation Conflict:** Ron Hranac agreed to ask Ron Mickle to follow up with DU to guarantee that our general membership meetings are the only event scheduled for Olin Hall on our meeting nights.

**IDA Bill:** The annual bill for \$100 has been received from the IDA. **A motion was made and passed to pay it.** Also, **a motion was made and passed to make Grace Ormsby** (widow of longtime member Bill Ormsby) **an honorary member of the DAS.**

**2015 Budget Discussion:** It was noted that when our public night fees increase, our income is likely to increase as well. Luis asked that no current year data be taken into account until all 2014 transactions have been entered in QuickBooks. Sorin recommended starting a list of anticipated new incomes and expenses to take into account for 2015. Jeff suggested that we begin the budget process in September and use data from the previous 12 months. It was agreed that DAS should ask Dr. Stencel for regular updates (perhaps quarterly) on the Chamberlin endowment fund. **A motion was made and passed to approve the preliminary 2015 budget, subject to revision when actual figures are available in January.**

**DAS History:** Due to recent talk about cleaning out the DAS office upstairs and organizing the pertinent records, the topic of the club history was raised. Most of the club's records were destroyed in a flood in the 1980s. Since then, Dan has been trying to reconstitute them with items donated by members and from saved newsletters. There is one past president whom he has not been able to identify, along with several vice presidents. He also has an old scrapbook. The question was raised: should the DAS have an official historian or a history committee? The discussion will be continued. A need to have Scott Leach update his IT records and Ed update the Quartermaster records was identified.

**Next E-board Meeting:** The next e-board meeting will be held on Friday January 9 at 7:30 p.m. at DU's historic Chamberlin Observatory.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made and passed at 9:04 p.m.

DAS Online Updates, December 2014

Subject: Scope loaner program  
Reported by: Ed Scholes  
Report: No scopes on loan  
E-Board action: None required

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Subject: Social Media  
Reported by: Jeff Tropeano  
Report: Facebook Followers: 797      Twitter Followers: 205  
          YouTube Views: 2,248      YouTube Subscribers: 34

Dave Schlichting's MAVEN update from September was posted to YouTube and has received 36 views (pretty low). This month we had a situation on Twitter that was discussed at length on the e-Board list serve.

E-Board action: None required

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Subject: Dark Site  
Reported by: Darrell Dodge  
Report: I completed the sealing off of the gap under the warming hut with 1/4-inch hardware cloth and pea gravel at the end of Nov. Quite a bit of pea gravel still needs to be spread over the "no mouse land" around the observatory and the hut. No mice in hut or observatory as of Dec 10th. The threshold of the hut has been enlarged with 9 paving stones (3 more would not hurt). Mike Hotka reported on Wednesday, Dec 10th that workmen at the fracking site were installing another small tower. Careless drivers are still running over and wrecking the anchor hole caps.  
E-Board action: Permission to disband and reconstitute the Dark Site Committee, as many/most members are no longer frequent users of the Dark Site.

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Subject: Web Site and Domains  
Reported by: Darrell Dodge  
Report: Wayne Green has begun contacting the Net-Chinese domain registrar for denverastro.org to effect a transfer to a DAS-controlled email and a DAS EBoard officer. He sent them additional information at their request this week.  
I would like to propose acquiring the additional (available) domains astronomydenver.org and denverastronomy.org from a reputable registrar. These could be pointed at the existing hosting account and serve as backups or replacements for the denverastro.org domain, which is still damaged due to previous shaky registration and past use as a porn referral site. ("Google never forgets")  
E-Board Action: Approval to purchase the additional domains (total annual cost of \$24 for both)

Subject: Absence from E-board on Dec 12.  
Reported by: Stuart Hutchins  
Report: Due to a schedule conflict I cannot attend E-board this month.  
E-board Action: Request to be excused. My reports and request for E-board actions are below.

Subject: Spring Banquet  
Reported by: Stuart Hutchins  
Report:

1. Received email confirmation from Devin Pier at Embassy Suites Denver Tech Ctr for the Mar 7 Banquet date. He offers same arrangements and "we should be able to keep pricing the same". Last year we had 70 people and buffet service at 21.47 per plate including service charge. They recognize our tax exempt status - sales tax billed was zero. Last years invoice and the menu selection are attached to this post.
2. Checked out The Bistro, a medium sized, classy, quiet restaurant located on S. Santa Fe in the Aspen Grove shopping center, recommended by Ed Scholes. Same distance south of Chamberlin as the Tech Center. They offer a wide selection of Continental Cuisine and even a large group could offer considerable variety. They have two rooms. The smaller will accommodate something over 60 people and has its own projector and screen installed which we could use for free. The main room has an impressive bar and holds 100. We would be able to set up our own projector and screen, but the front door is here and patrons coming in to the second room or to the bar would be passing by our meeting. The owner and his son, the manager seem to be very accommodating. Menu entrees are priced at \$14-17. The manager suggested \$25 per plate, before gratuity, including salad, sides and drinks. We could reduce that a bit by restricting entree choices and sides, but probably adds up to \$25-30 total.
3. Requested info by filling out an online form at Courtyard Marriot, on Colorado across from the Blackeyed Pea (Florida Ave). Good central location, but no response yet, so no venue info.

E-board Actions Required:

1. Consider the venues and make a choice. December is not too early to lock down the reservation.
2. Authorize the use of DAS credit card up to an appropriate cap as we did for the Holiday Party. Since we now have the card in the treasurer's name and possession, I expect to work closely with Luis to make the reservation/financing process smoother than the recent experience.

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Subject: 2015 Speakers  
 Reported by: Stuart Hutchins  
 Report: Lineup so far:

Jan 2 Astronomy Professional from DU. Name and Topic being arranged.  
 Feb 6 Jeff Bennet, Astronomy text author - relativity for laypersons and other topics.  
 Mar 7 Roger Clark - Nightscape photos, updates of Cassini, Imaging Q&A.  
 April - June Software Bisque rep - probably Daniel Bisque.  
 Hoping to find someone from New Horizons team (Pluto), The Rosetta mission, and maybe Dawn (Vesta and Ceres asteroid encounters).  
 Action Required: None.

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Subject: Number of Members  
 Reported by: Dena McClung  
 Report: 390 paid members as of 12/11/2014; 16 honorary or technical members.  
 E-board Action: None required

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Subject: Chamberlin Observatory Report  
 Reported by: Dr. Stencil  
 Report:

1. New whiteboard installed. The thin aluminum framing did not give us a lot to work with, but it appears stable. A supply of markers is in hand, but heavy users may want to bring their own, to be sure of having good ones. We'll work on creating a better "chalk tray" too (ideas welcome), or

someday upgrade to a better model.

2. Reminder that during snow season, everyone who is able should help with snow removal. Thanks.

3. Recent logbook entries indicate a concern with the dome slit mechanism becoming noisy and/or harder to open. On inspection, the cables appear to be in good shape, but wear on one of the slit door cross-member angle iron pieces is apparent - see attached photo. Whether this is new or ongoing is not clear, but bears monitoring. The slit operates alright if one opens and closes it slowly and in less than a hurry. We found no evidence of wholesale shifting in the slit support assemblies. Thus the condition appears chronic but not a show-stopper at present, but continued user reports are encouraged. This will be an expensive item to fix, eventually.

Otherwise, we continue on track for over 4,000 guests in 2014, despite a rocky start this spring with the RA motion jam and repair. Members of the DAS were instrumental in getting that resolved, particularly Stuart, Dan, Digby and others, whose help is appreciated.

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Subject: IT

Reported by: Scott Leach

Report: 1. Library and ready room computers were updated on the 9th without issue.

2. I will be working with Hugh to update the reservation system to the premier version and employing the pay in advance system. Work on this may have to begin over Christmas break since I do not have very much available time these days.

Board Action: I will reach out to others as needed for SME support.

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**Treasurer Report**

Standing Accounts 31 Dec 2014		
1st Bank Accounts and Investment Fund		
Type of Account	Ref No	Amount
Checking	X9663	\$10,534.95
Checking	X1049	3592.14
Premier Time Savings	X9213	\$10,546.28
Time Deposit Savings	X3552	\$5,175.62
Principal Fund (2nd Qrtr Rprt)		\$67,014.89
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$96,863.88</b>

Deposits	Total
General Fund	<b>\$774.45</b>

Transactions in 31 Dec 2014			
PayPal	Amount	Fee	Total
Memberships	\$3,127.79	\$ 91.21	\$3,036.58
VNH Fund	\$192.00	\$ 5.42	\$186.58

Darksite Fund	\$326.00	\$ 8.97	\$317.03
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**Current Balance** **\$8,996.94**

Mail	Amount	Fee	Total
Mail-In Membership			\$ - 0
Mail-In Donations			\$ - 0
Mail-In Subscriptions			\$ - 0
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ - 0</b>

**NOTE: Mail-ins held until January 2015**

Public Night	Number	Fee	Total
Adults	66	\$ 3.00	\$198.00
Children	44	\$ 2.00	\$ 88.00
DU Students		\$ - 0	\$ - 0
Total Entry			\$286.00
DAS Donations			\$ 12.00
Open House Individuals	13	2	\$ 26.00
Open House Family	6	5	\$ 30.00
Open House DU Stdnts			
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$354.00</b>

**Donation VNH**

Payments	Description	Amount
	Dark Sky Assoc	\$100.00
		<b>\$100.00</b>