

Denver Astronomical Society
Minutes of January 9, 2015 E-Board Meeting

Officers Present: President - Ron Hranac VP - Stuart Hutchins Secretary - Dena McClung

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

Absent: Treasurer - Luis Uribe Immediate Past President - Ron Pearson

DU Representative: Ron Mickle

Other Members and Guests: Hugh Davidson, PN Volunteer Coordinator
Bernd Christensen Dennis Cochran

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. Stencel sent a message via Ron Mickle. DAS' new outreach coordinator is Lindsey Shaw. Any fund raising done in the observatory must be cleared through Dr. Stencel. Starry Night Pro is on the dome computer, but version 6 won't open. Ron Mickle would like us to upgrade to Starry Night 7, or at least allow it to self-update without admin approval. The dome computer's cursor is running wild; it may need to have the laptop heater installed. All agreed that we should plug the February 6 general meeting to the public because of speaker Jeffrey Bennett. Ron Mickle will talk to Dr. Stencel about who will ensure that Olin Hall is reserved for us. He will check with Barb in the Physics Dept. He did say that "Dr. Bob said it won't happen again."

Treasurer's Report: Due to a work conflict, Luis was unable to attend the meeting. His report is not available yet, but will be submitted when he's able to finish it, around this coming Monday.

Old Business

Annual Elections: Tim Pimentel is heading the nomination committee. Jeff is running for secretary. No one has been nominated for Treasurer. New member Ken Sturrock is interested in running for board member. Nominations will be accepted until the February General Membership meeting, and can be sent to nominations@denverastro.org. Dena is willing to help anyone who runs for treasurer on the deposit end, but does not wish to take on the other treasurer duties, such as making payments or doing reports. Sorin brought up the need to send a Constant Contact message, a listserve message, and a notice on the website listing nominees in advance of the election. Ron Hranac will ask Darrell to publish that.

PN Reservations and fees: Scott is waiting for guidance on how to set up the reservation system. Jeff, Darrell, Hugh and Scott need to get together to get things set up for the changes. Hugh agreed to get them together to work on it. There needs to be a link to Terms of Service on the reservation page, with verbiage about not refunding money, needing to present their receipt at the observatory, and the fact that we cannot take cards at the door (cash and checks only). The reservation system is now on

the Gold level (\$43.99 per month). Scott will arrange to have automated reminder emails go to those who have made reservations. Fee increases will go into effect when the system is ready to go.

Officer and Board Vacancies: The VNH chair position has been filled by Ron Pearson. The backup Yahoo! moderator position has been filled by Dena. The Outreach Coordinator position has been filled by Lindsey Shaw. Naomi Pequette has taken Dave Cuomo's position at DMNS. Naomi and Lindsey have been talking about transferring that responsibility. **A motion was made and passed to make Naomi a technical member.**

Newsletter Editor: Bernd Christensen has offered to become the newsletter editor. He's most interested in the content portion of the letter, even though he has no editing experience. However, he will be moving back to Germany in late spring. Ron has heard from another member in the last few days who is interested (but gave no details). Sorin would be interested in being the editor but only if *The Observer* was published on a quarterly basis. Jeff has discussed changing the platform for the website with Darrell, and the one they're considering would have the option of offering an online publishing segment. The board's consensus was to have a monthly newsletter. Perhaps 25 members ONLY get the newsletter via mail, and visitors pick it up when it's available at Chamberlin Observatory. Bernd would use MS Office. Jeff recommended getting Bernd into touch with Patti to get him started. It was agreed to have Bernd begin.

Spring Banquet: Reservation forms have been arranged through Luis on the DAS Credit Card. Roger Clark will be the speaker, with the topic to be Roger's choice. Menu items need to be selected, preferably via e-board listserv, in the near future (Stuart will put together a message). Maximum number of attendees is at least 60-90. The price will be roughly the same as the Holiday Party, \$25 per person. A cash bar with a minimum amount of business required will be provided. Stuart will check on audio and video both with Roger and Embassy Suites.

Budget Discussion: The discussion was tabled until the February meeting.

New Business

VNH Scholarship Committee: No information was available due to Ron Pearson's absence. Brad has year-end fund totals from the VNH account summary (see online updates). Ron Hranac would like the scholarship committee to look into other options for investments, perhaps with input from people on the finance committee.

NSN pins and certificates for Volunteer Recognition: Information on DAS' outreach efforts is due to the Night Sky Network by January 28. Chuck asked if we want to change the threshold of the number of volunteer events/shifts required to be eligible. Last year we had just under 50 people who received pins and certificates. It was agreed that we need to do the work of recognizing our volunteers, not relying on them to self-report. We can continue collecting the information the same way we have.

Spring Banquet Awards: Ron Hranac will order special awards for Patti, Luis, Dena, Lisa, Naomi and Tim Pimentel. He asked the board to think about the most appropriate recipient for this year's Bill Ormsby Memorial Volunteer Service Award. Dan recommended Dave Tondreau, the longest-serving public night volunteer. Ron Hranac is also considering Johnny and Eileen Barela. Ron needs three

weeks to have the awards made in advance of the banquet. Ron asked people to submit their nomination for this award via private email. He will send a free admission certificate via email to give to servers at Village Inn, Embassy Suites, and others who help at DAS events.

Fund-raising: Dena will ask about the costs of the Rose City T-shirts and calendars. Dave Catlin has passed out DAS logo stickers, which could be a sales item. Jeff will ask David if he still needs to borrow a banner.

Membership Survey: It was agreed that this needs to be an annual event, and that the results need to be reported to the membership. We need to ask Darrell if the last results are in the member's file section online.

Miscellaneous: Dena suggested that the board try to find ways to encourage more volunteer participation, asking for them to promote their own ideas. Stuart said that we will have a membership meeting dedicated to astrophotography, probably in April. He would like to have astronomer Alan Stern speak about his role as principal investigator on the New Horizons mission to Pluto. Jeff will contact Chris Spears, meteorologist, about speaking. CU Boulder has a new solar satellite up, so finding someone to speak about that mission should be investigated too. Sorin mentioned that we need vertical banners with portable stands to erect behind the DAS table at conventions so they will stand out. He will look into getting those. Anomaly Con will be in March. Ron Hranac agreed to put the e-board agenda out on the GM yahoo listserve prior to next month's meeting.

Next e-board meeting: The next e-board meeting will be held on Friday February 13 at 7:30 p.m. at DU's historic Chamberlin Observatory.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made and passed at 9:31 p.m.

DAS E-board Online Updates January 2015

Subject: Yahoo Group Listserves
Reported by: Greg Marino
Report: Main Denverastro listserve has 6 new members this months and 1 pending. Current membership 174. Ron Pearson stepped down as back-up moderator effective 1/1/2015. Training materials provided to Dena McClung and she was set up as backup moderator effective 1/3/2015.
E-Board action: None.

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Subject: Quartermaster's Report
Reported by: Ed Scholes
Report: We have no scopes on loan at this time. DAS property stickers are on most important items (still some items in the dome roon and library to mark).
E-Board action: None.

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Subject: Membership Renewals

Reported by: Dena McClung

Report: As of 11 p.m. Thursday January 8, I've received and processed 108 renewals via either PayPal (94) or Snail Mail (14). We've also had 14 new members join since 12/1/2014, so those folks are all current through the end of 2015. I will check the post office box again tomorrow on my way to Chamberlin.

Board action: None required.

In the event Ron M attends to represent DU interests and I'm not present, I'd like these comments to be read and entered into the minutes. Thanks. --Dr.Bob

DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR JANUARY 2015

For the calendar year 2014, the tabulated logbook entries show that we hosted 3,773 students and guests. This is essentially the same number hosted during 2013 (3,735). If you consider that the telescope was off-line for repairs, a month last spring, we probably should consider that a slight increase in attendance was seen. Our 20 year average has been 4,800 per year, partly due to enhanced interest related to comets, Mars and eclipse events over time.

Telescope current status: some snow and ice related issues, largely resolved but no show-stoppers so far (knock wood). Chronic maintenance to be address when warmer weather returns.

Calendar notes:

Fri Jan 23 - Jupiter triple shadow/satellite transit - starts with Io ingress ~10pm, triple shadow transit 1128pm (2328 MDT) and triple satellite transit about 40 mins later, 00:08. Aside from weather, there is an 11pm park curfew, thus a public event is probably not advisable (and considering the Open House scheduled for Sat Jan.24th anyway). However, if DAS observers/videographers wish to reserve the 20 inch that evening, please contact Dr.Bob ASAP for coordination.

Sat Jan.24 Open House, as planned.

Fri Feb.6 - DAS general meeting with very special speaker: Dr. Jeffrey Bennett, award-winning astronomy textbook author, and author of several best-selling popular science books. He will be speaking about General Relativity (made simple) and the 100th anniversary of Einstein's 1915 paper. We could promote this for a larger audience, perhaps with Jeff's social media machinery - ideas?