

**Denver Astronomical Society**  
**Minutes of July 10, 2015 E-Board Meeting**

**Officers Present:** Ron Hranac – President, Stuart Hutchins – Vice President,  
Michael Nowak – Treasurer, Jeff Tropeano – Secretary

**Board Members Present:** Joe Gafford, Jack Eastman, Ken Sturrock, Ron Pearson, Chuck  
Habenicht, Sorin, Johnny O. Barela

**Observatory Representative:** Dr. Robert Stencel

**Absent:** Dan Wray, Ed Scholes

**Members and Guests:** Dave Tondreau, Darrell Dodge, Eileen Barela, Hugh Davidson

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**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.

**New Agenda Items:** Ron Hranac added the following items to the agenda:  
1) Astronomical League membership discussion.  
2) Denver Post advertising solicitation

**DU's Historic Chamberlin Observatory Business:** Dr. Stencel updated the group on some equipment issues: The Telrad on the 20" is still not working, and Dr. Bob suggests replacing the Telrad instead of continuing to try to repair it. The scope light that lights the declination wheel is not working. Dr. Bob is looking for a new 2 or 4 watt LED bulb for it. Bats, bees, mice, moths, and other critters are in season. A reminder that there are gloves in the ready room if you need to remove a bat.

Sorin donated a decorative ships wheel to the observatory for restoring the look of the manual dome rotation mechanism. It needs to be affixed safely, and to be clear the intent is for it to be non-functional. The wheel will not interfere with the door, since the radius of the wheel is small enough to fit between the wheel slot and the door.

There is a request from Northglenn town hall for an event at the end of the month. Ron Hranac forwarded the request to Lindsey Shaw for coordination.

Pluto flyby is Tuesday! Could be interest in viewing Pluto through the 20" with the upcoming press coverage.

Dr. Bob wanted to salute Dave Tondreau with entertaining and educating 80 young people at the observatory today.

**Treasurer's Report:** Michael Nowak gave an update on the club's finances with the treasurer's report attached to these minutes. Michael Nowak will write a check to the VNH fund and give it to Ron Pearson. The insurance has not yet been paid because Michael hasn't yet received an invoice. Michael will pay the insurance bill based on the previous amount that was given to him. Michael Nowak will confirm with Dena that the Public Night attendee and payment information includes PayPal prepayments. Michael mentioned he doesn't see much related to Public Night payments, which made the group think he isn't accounting for all of the PayPal funds.

Ron Hranac raised a few action items related to the VNH funds. Speakers have donated their speaker's fee into the VNH funds, which requires a transfer of money from the general fund to the VNH account. Historically, people have donated to the VNH fund at renewal time, and Ron suspects that some of those donations have been missed. Michael and Darrell will audit to ensure all of the VNH donations have been accounted for.

Ron and Darrell asked about the Dark Sky Site payment. Michael doesn't believe it's been paid, and will check to confirm and send a payment if not.

AL dues were paid, but not approved by the board.

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## OLD BUSINESS

**Summer Picnic:** Stuart hasn't yet finalized the BBQ catering due to a computer meltdown, but will do so this week. Ron Hranac added a blurb about the picnic in the newsletter. Side dishes, dessert, bread, soda, etc.... are encouraged by attendees. A constant contact email will be sent to the membership with more information, and Stuart will coordinate with Darrell. Jeff will add information about the spring picnic on Social Media.

Joe asked if Stuart has called to look into an EZ-up awning for the picnic. Stuart hasn't yet, but will coordinate.

**General Membership Meeting for July:** Stuart mentioned he was trying to get Chad Percival for next month, but he is now unavailable. Stuart then got Brian Warner, but he had to cancel as well. Emily Levesque will present on July 31<sup>st</sup> "The Weirdest Stars in the Universe."

**Camcorder:** Darrell has received the camcorder and other related equipment. Darrell provided a written online update that is included below. Darrell recommends that the club gets a better tripod. Darrell needs an adapter for the microphone, or a separate audio recorder for the microphone.

**Jack Eastman moved to approve \$150 for a tripod for the camera. Chuck Habenicht seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Darrell is requesting that someone be able to cover operating the camera if he is absent. Jeff volunteered to cover in the event of Darrell's absence.

**2016 Calendar:** Joe Gafford brought the 2016 calendar, which is attached below. He also uploaded the calendar file to the e-board listserv file share. The November board meeting will be the cutoff date for changes for the 2016 calendar. The RMSS star party has not finalized dates yet, and is not included in the 2016 calendar. Dr. Bob suggested adding the transit of Mercury on May 9 from sunrise to noon. Any change requests to the calendar can be posted on the listserv online for Joe to update.

**September Lunar Eclipse:** The DAS will be hosting a special event at Chamberlin on the evening of the lunar eclipse, which starts at 7:00 PM. DAS scopes will be set up no later than 6:30 PM. CBS Denver is happy to participate in and promote the event, Jeff Tropeano will coordinate. It was suggested that the DAS use a flyer to advertise the event, and Sorin has produced a 3" or 4" round sticker to promote the event, which is attached. 500 3" stickers is \$175, 500 4" stickers is \$225. The adhesive is permanent, which means it is removable, but not resettable.

Sorin will get a quote for 1000 4" stickers and distribute to the e-mail group. The group will approve within a few days.

**Magazine Subscriptions:** Last week, the decision was made to eliminate DAS involvement for magazine subscriptions by the end of the year. Sorin contacted the two magazines to clarify the process for a member to self serve their membership discount with the magazines. Sorin's update is attached below. How do we want to communicate this to members? An update is required to the new member welcome letter. Sorin suggests that after a member pays with PayPal, a receipt will be produced by PayPal, and the information on how to self serve the discount will be included on the receipt. It's important to not widely distribute the instructions so that non-members can pretend to be a member and get the discount.

Sorin suggested doing a constant contact to update the existing membership, as well as a blurb in the Observer.

Stuart recommends that when a member sends a check in the mail, the DAS send a confirmation that a check has been received. A letter can be included that describes the renewal process.

Jeff Tropeano will reach out to Dena about mailing members a receipt when they receive physical mail or a check.

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## NEW BUSINESS

**Reservation System Payment Options:** \$39.95 per month is the cost for the reservation system software, which is billed monthly. Jeff Tropeano brought up the fact that an annual prepayment saves the club up to 10%.

The group approved prepaying. Jeff Tropeano will coordinate.

**Equipment Donations to DAS:** Someone approached the DAS with an offer to donate some equipment. The e-mail discussion consensus was to accept the donation, and the equipment would

be sold at auction, and that it wasn't needed for loaner equipment. It is not possible to store the equipment at the observatory. Ron Pearson mentioned that there is a policy document on the e-board files that could be used to determine if we should accept a donation.

Jeff Tropeano mentioned that DAS should not turn down donations, as per its mission statement of spreading the word and wonder of astronomy. Ron Pearson feels that junk telescopes are less useful than no telescopes at all, and that donations should serve a specific purpose.

Ron Hranac asked that Ron Pearson send the policy document to the rest of the group via e-mail.

**Westword Bridge Project:** A director of the Westword bridge project, Phuong Phan, came to the meeting after a large group of 80 young people came to the observatory. Phuong had great feedback, and said the kids were engaged and appreciative of the event. Each year there are 4 groups from kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Dave Tondreau will coordinate with Mike Nowak to arrange for payment. There are three other sites in Denver Public Housing neighborhoods.

**Brooks Observatory Lead Operator Solicitation Approval:** Darrell would like to hand off responsibility of the lead operatorship to someone that knows the equipment better. Preferably someone that can operate the Losmandy and Gemini equipment.

The group encouraged Darrell to solicit for a member in good standing to take on the lead operatorship.

Stuart asked how many people over the last year have shown interest on learning to operate that scope and equipment. Only Mike Hotka had, but lost interest after trying to use the equipment.

**Denver Post Advertising:** Ron Hranac was solicited by a Denver Post advertising salesman. Ron responded mentioning that the Denver Post used to post a science column, and suggested the Denver Post bring it back. The costs would be prohibitive: the low cost option would be \$700 for a full page color ad.

**Astronomical League Membership:** Ron Hranac brought up a discussion from the listserv about if DAS should continue to participate in the Astronomical League. A few members enjoy the Astronomical League perks, including viewing lists and pins, but most of the membership does not utilize the services. Ron Hranac suggested that we do another membership survey similar to the one Jeff Tropeano coordinate 18 months ago. In the membership survey, we should ask a few specific questions about the Astronomical League to determine if DAS should continue its participation.

Jeff Tropeano will coordinate the set of questions for the next survey for the membership.

**Next E-board Meeting:** Friday, August 7 at 7:30 p.m. at Chamberlin Observatory.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed at 9:34 p.m.

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## MOTIONS

- Jack Eastman moved to approve \$150 for a tripod for the camera. Chuck Habenicht seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
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### SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

The follow Action Items are indicated in the meeting minute with underlined text, and are aggregated below:

- Ron Hranac will forward the Northglenn Town Hall public outreach request to Lindsey Shaw for coordination.
- Michael Nowak will write a check to the VNH fund and give it to Ron Pearson.
- Michael and Darrell will audit to ensure all of the VNH donations made by speakers have been accounted for.
- A constant contact email will be sent to the membership with more information, and Stuart will coordinate with Darrell.
- Jeff will add information about the spring picnic on Social Media.
- Joe to add the transit of Mercury on May 9 from sunrise to noon to the 2016 calendar.
- Jeff Tropeano will coordinate with CBS Denver for the September Lunar Eclipse event.
- Sorin will get a quote for 1000 4" stickers for the September Lunar Eclipse and distribute to the e-mail group.
- Jeff Tropeano will coordinate paying the web reservation system annually instead of monthly.
- Ron Pearson send the donation policy document to the rest of the group via e-mail.
- Dave Tondreau will coordinate with Mike Nowak to arrange for payment to the Westword Bridge program.
- Jeff Tropeano will coordinate the set of questions for the next survey for the membership.
- Jeff Tropeano will reach out to Dena about mailing members a receipt when they receive physical mail or a check.

### PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

- ✓ Ron will call Dennis and ask him if he will be available to sell tickets at Open House.
- ✓ Michael Nowak will pay the Liability Insurance Policy bill.
- ✓ HD video camera will be ordered and delivered to Darrell Dodge.
- ✓ Ron will ensure that an announcement goes into the Observer about the picnic.
- ✓ Michael Nowak to research if Public Night prepayments are being properly accounted and reported on in the treasurer's report.
- ✓ Luis Uribe will accompany Michael Nowak to the bank to add Michael as a signatory on the Denver Astronomical Society bank accounts.
- Hugh Davidson will contact the Public Night team leads informing them that, in a cancellation, they should contact Michael.
- In a few months (July / August), the e-Board suggests revisiting the policy of not requiring prepayment for Public Night in a couple of months. Hugh Davidson should coordinate this discussion with the Public Night team leads.

- Hugh Davidson will write a blurb to be put in the newsletter for new volunteers for Public Night team 2.
- ✓ Michael Nowak will follow up with Luis to see if the Dark Sky Site lease and electrical bill has been paid. If it hasn't it needs payment ASAP.
- ✓ Stuart Hutchins will follow up with Lisa Judd to find out the names of some catering and barbeque companies that can provide services.
- ✓ Dr. Stencil will put a pair of thick gloves in the ready room in the event someone needs to grab a bat.
- Ed Scholes will check to see if the DAS has a Telrad to donate to the 20" Clark telescope.
- ✓ Darrell Dodge will e-mail the interested folks to form up the new Dark Sky Site committee.
- ✓ Stuart Hutchins will coordinate the Spring Picnic.
- ✓ Stuart Hutchins will provide a written report of the Spring Banquet to the e-Board listserv.

## ONLINE UPDATES

### **Subject: External Outreach**

Reported by: Lindsey Shaw

Report: *The only outreach event we've had since the last e-board meeting was the Denver Art Museum: Untitled event. As usual, I CCed you on the reports for that event; this time sent by David Tondreau. If you need me to pass along again, let me know.*

*July 11 is the Candelas Star Party and Candelas Swim and Fitness Club at Townview in Arvada. Ken Sturrock will be participating, but we really need at least one more person to set up for some night-time observing. I've asked Ken to recruit in person at the public night tonight and the e-board meeting tomorrow.*

*Next week is the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Aurora. Rev. Carol Meredith has asked us to come out to their annual community summer camp. The theme this year is "Reaching Beyond the Stars." There will be 60-65 latino kids and their families in attendance (they all speak English). So far David Tondreau is the only one to have signed up. He has offered to come for two days of the camp with one day dedicated to solar observing and the other a presentation on Pluto and the night's sky. As of now we have proposed July 14 and July 15 but are waiting to hear back from Rev. Carol to confirm.*

E-Board Action: *Just to ask anyone if they could help out at the Candelas Star Party on Saturday. They've already made a \$100 donation to DAS, so we should really try and meet their request of at least 2 DAS volunteers.*

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### **Subject: Quartermaster's Report**

Reported by: Ed Scholes

Report: *Linda and I are in Las Cruces for the ALCon right now. we are having a great time, but I will miss the E-Board meeting Friday.*

*One telescope is on loan right now: PST, on loan to Mike Hotka until Aug.1st.*

E-Board Action: *None Required.*

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**Subject: Dark Site Committee**

Reported by: Darrell Dodge

Report: *In response to new member requests, I will be providing a scheduled orientation, clouds or shine, at the Dark Site July 18th.*

*Mike Hotka and I will be cutting grass at the site Saturday, July 11th. I will be operating the 14-inch to prepare for demos on the 18th.*

*My polling of existing members resulted in the following continuing Dark Site Committee members:*

*Darrell Dodge*

*Digby Kirby*

*Scott Leach*

*David DeLassus*

*Mike Hotka*

*Joe Gafford*

*Ron Hranac (DAS President - automatic membership)*

*I will be soliciting for a few additional members on the DAS Yahoo group and/or the Observer.*

E-Board Action: *Approve solicitation for a permanent Brooks Observatory Lead Operator, preferably a long-time member who has experience operating Losmandy products and thinks they are great, doesn't mind losing observing or imaging time on his own equipment.*

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**Subject: Web Site**

Reported by: Darrell Dodge

Report: *Response to the new WordPress site was positive. Based on what I've received, I will be finishing up missing essential content and formatting the mobile application during July; switching the site over sometime in August.*

*Sent out the General Meeting and Observer emails and several rounds of new member welcomes in June. All 9 New Member emails were received; 6 people actually opened them. Two additional new members already in July.*

E-Board Action: *None*  
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**Subject: Camcorder Equipment Purchase**

Reported by: Darrell Dodge

Report: *The Sony HDR PJ670 camcorder and accessories were received in good condition. The camcorder and built-in projector are working well. The external microphone will need an adapter to work with the camcorder. Not all of the extras will be useful as expected. For example, the tripod is not very robust and doesn't move smoothly enough. However, it will be fine for mounting the light supplied in the package. The add-on telephoto lens has an unacceptable vignette (and doesn't add much functionality), but the wide angle lens is very good. The massive supplemental battery will probably provide all the operating time we will ever need.*

E-Board Action: *Need one or two additional camcorder operators for times when I am not able to attend meetings.*



**Subject: IT Assets**

Reported by: Ken Sturrock

Report: *PN online scheduling issues handled by Jeff Tropeano, Mike Nowak and Darrell Dodge. Ron Pearson and Ken Sturrock made some progress resurrecting the Stellacam during the June Open House, but work remains to be done. Sturrock will check on status and updates of presentation computer stored in Transit room on July 9. Computer in warming room is up-to-date.*

E-Board Action: *None, as far as I know.*



**Subject: 2016 calendar**

Reported by: Joe Gafford

Report: *Hard copies of calendars made with the Outlook calendar file published last month available.*

E-Board action: *Any corrections, additions or discussions by E-Board, Dr. Bob and the affected committee members by those who downloaded the vcs file and went through the 2016 calendar within the past month. A copy is in the Files section in the E-Board Yahoo group. Updates and discussions as warranted up to the Nov. 13 E-board meeting. Final 2016 DAS calendar will be published in early Dec.*



**Subject: Magazine Subscriptions**

Reported by: Sorin

Report: *This is an action item I took from the last board meeting to look into whether members could sled-service discounted Astronomy and S&T subscriptions. The result is that yes, both S&T and Astronomy magazine provided self-services online instructions for our members to get the club discount rate that do not require any DAS involvement.*

*By providing these links/instructions to our members (perhaps in the paypal receipt when they sign up or renew) there will be no need for individual action from the DAS treasurer or other official for our members to enjoy the club rate subscription discounts.*

*Sky and Telescope*

*<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/clubspecial>*

*The S&T link is targeted to new subscribers with an auto-renewal feature (in theory, cuts down on those annoying renewal reminder letters). Existing S&T subscribers should be able to sign into their account to manage renewals at the discount rate. I assume the above link would also work as they would just match up the name and address in their database.*

*Astronomy*

*The full instructions they provided are below, but I think just including this link is a little easier:  
<https://secure.kalmbach.com/order/?c=RCLUB144>*

*The Renewal Key code of RCLUB144 has been created for the members of your club.*

*Please direct your members to the link below and instructions provided.*

*<https://secure.kalmbach.com/customer/default.aspx?siteid=1&pubcode=asy>*

*If already a registered Astronomy.com website member:*

- 1. Enter your email address and password to Sign In.*
- 2. Select Renew Subscriptions from the right vertical navigation area.*
- 3. Enter the unique Renewal Keycode of RCLUB144. Click Continue.*
- 4. Select the Subscription Rate (1 year, 2 years or 3 years)*
- 5. Enter your credit card information and Submit Order.*
- 6. You will receive a confirmation page immediately. Please print this page for your records.*

*If NOT a registered Astronomy.com website member:*

- 1. Under 'Don't Have an Account?' click Register Now*
- 2. Click 'I am a magazine subscriber'*
- 3. Find Your Subscription using your Customer Number and Postal Code OR your name and mailing address.*
- 4. Enter your email address and a password to Create an Account.*
- 5. After Creating Your Account Successfully, click on 'My Account Homepage'*
- 6. Select Renew Subscriptions from the right vertical navigation area.*
- 7. Enter the unique Renewal Keycode of RCLUB144. Click Continue.*
- 8. Select the Subscription Rate (1 year, 2 years or 3 years)*
- 9. Enter your credit card information and Submit Order.*
- 10. You will receive a confirmation page immediately. Please print this page for your records.*



**Subject: VNH Scholarship Fund Report**

Reported by: Ron Pearson

Report: *Nothing new to report re applications since June report. A financial report to e-board for 2nd Qtr., 2015 will have to be made next month after July statements are collected.*

*Apparently a donation of about \$100 was made to the VNH Fund according to Treasurer's report.*

E-board Action: *Treasurer needs to transfer the donation so it can be deposited in the VNH CUD account and provide donor info so a thank you-tax deduction letter can sent to the donor.*

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**Treasurer Report for June 2015**

**Standing Accounts June 30 2015**

**1st Bank Accounts and Investment Fund**

Type of Account	Ref No	Amount
Checking	X9663	\$24,016.41
Checking	X1049	\$3,417.01
Premier Time Savings	X9213	\$10,556.80
Time Deposit Savings	X3552	\$5,176.92
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$43,167.14</b>

**Deposits**

**Total**

General Fund Checking Acct X9663	6/3/15	\$2,000.00	Transfer from Paypal
	6/29/15	\$1,291.00	
		\$3,291.00	

**PayPal**

Transactions in June 2015	Number	Fee	Total
Regular Memberships	8	\$36.00	\$288.00
Student Memberships	1	\$12.00	\$12.00
Banquet	0	\$-	\$-
Donation Darksite	0	\$-	\$-
Donation General	0	\$-	\$-

**Balance at June 30**

**\$778.71**

Mail	Number	Fee	Total
Mail-In Membership	2	\$36.00	\$72.00
Mail-In Donation for VNH	1	\$100.05	\$100.05
Outreach Payment for Broadmoor	1	\$500.00	\$500.00
Mail-In Subscriptions	1	\$32.95	\$32.95
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$705.00</b>

Public Night, Open House, Etc.	Number	Fee	Total
Public Night Guests	201	Various	\$244.00

Open House Guests	205	Various	\$342.00
Total Entry	406		<u>\$586.00</u>
Donations at Open House/Public Night	0	0	<u>\$-</u>
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$586.00</b>

<b>Payments</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Western Amateur Astronomers	Membership	\$20.00
Mort Levinsky	Mag Sub Refund	\$34.00
Darrell Dodge	Reim. For Camera	\$699.90
Astronomical League	Membership Dues	\$1,710.00
		<b>\$2,463.90</b>