

Denver Astronomical Society
Minutes of June 19, 2015 E-Board Meeting

Officers Present: Ron Hranac – President, Stuart Hutchins – Vice President,
Michael Nowak – Treasurer

Board Members Present: Sorin, Chuck Habenicht, Joe Gafford, Jack Eastman, Dan Wray,
Johnny O. Barela

Observatory Representative: Dr. Robert Stencel

Absent: Ken Sturrock, Jeff Tropeano – Secretary, Ed Scholes, Ron Pearson

Members and Guests: Dave Tondreau, Eileen Barela, Hugh Davidson, Darrell Dodge,
Dena McClung (Taking Minutes in Jeff Tropeano’s absence)

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: Member Francis Rew approached Ron Hranac at last month's Open House and suggested showing science-related You-Tube music video presentations during future Open Houses. Ron has a concern about copyright issues, as the videos look to have been taken from TV shows and modified by the people who posted them on You-Tube. Ron played one of the videos and most agreed that the music is annoying, as it uses Auto-Tune to change speech into music. The board declined to accept her offer. Sorin suggested using public domain NASA videos, and Dena suggested having some for youngsters available in lieu of a speaker when the group would be appropriate.

DU's Historic Chamberlin Observatory Business: Dr. Bob suggested that in light of the New Horizons mission to Pluto, telescope operators might have a good chance to look for Pluto at the very end of the next Open House. It's currently rising a bit late but will be in better position for the July Open House. He noted that the observatory is experiencing an influx of moths, bees, and bats. He asked that if these cause problems, that volunteers call DU to report the situation and ask for assistance. He displayed a new wheel that was designed to replace the wheel missing from the original dome-moving apparatus. Sorin showed the attendees a ship's wheel that he owns and is willing to donate; he will bring it to the next meeting, as most members liked it better than the one presented. It was noted that the gears are present in the apparatus, so steps will need to be taken to ensure that the wheel is inoperative and stationary. Dr. Bob asked that telescope operators make notes in the log book whenever appropriate. Dena mentioned the crack in the southeast door, which was noticed by DAS members last month. Dr. Bob agreed to inspect it and see if it needed any work. Dr. Bob reiterated his recommendation that Open House volunteers use the numbered ticket and bullhorn system for more efficient crowd control.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's report is attached. Michael reported that he transferred \$15,000 from Paypal to the General Fund. A need to sort payments in order to distinguish

memberships payments, donations, and Public Night pre-payments was identified. Chuck mentioned that our last speaker donated his fee; so \$50 needs to be transferred from the General Fund to the VNH Scholarship fund. A check for \$500 has been received from The Broadmoor for outreach. Michael has been added to the general fund as a signatory. Other action items from the previous e-board meeting are still outstanding.

OLD BUSINESS

HD Video Camcorder: Ron reported that when he and Darrell Dodge went shopping for the HD Video Camcorder approved for purchase in the previous meeting, they quickly discovered that it was not possible to get one with all of the desire features for the amount that had been approved. When Darrell found a good deal on Amazon.com for approximately \$650-\$700, an online vote of the officers and board members took place, and the Amazon purchase was approved. It will be delivered to Darrell's house.

Summer Picnic: The annual DAS picnic will be held at Chamberlin Observatory on July 25 at 4:00 p.m. in conjunction with Open House. DAS will provide meat, sodas, paper plates, utensils, etc. Ron Hranac estimated that 60-70 people would likely be in attendance. The board decided to go with a BBQ menu. Hugh would like to meet with Public Night volunteers prior to the picnic to see how the pre-pay reservation system is working out for them. Ron will ensure that an announcement goes into the Observer about the picnic. Easy-up canopies are needed; a request will be put on the list-serv. Stuart will do inventory of paper plates, utensils, etc. Members need to bring coolers and side dishes. Bennett's BBQ is recommended to provide the meat.

September Lunar Eclipse: Since the lunar eclipse will take place on the evening of Sunday, September 27, DAS will have a special event open to the public in addition to the regular September Open House. The eclipse begins a little after 7:00 p.m., so Ron would like members with telescopes and volunteers to arrive around 6:30. Ron talked to Justin McHeffey from Channel 4, who will pass it along to his colleagues to see about getting coverage of the event. Ron asked him to see if they might send the Mobile Weather Lab. Chris Spears has talked to Jeff about it as well. The board agreed that it would be great to have advance coverage with an eye toward boosting attendance. Dr. Bob said that it would be fine to go "weights high" to make the 20" available for public viewing, since the moon will be low in the east when the eclipse begins. Alternatively, looking at Saturn through the 20" would be a good option, allowing members to offer views of the eclipsed moon to guests on the lawn, since field-of-view issues might make it less desirable in the 20". Dr. Bob suggested that DAS make fliers to hand out at Open Houses between now and then. Sorin agreed to design something, and suggested that we offer it printed on a collectible round moon-photo sticker. He will price options and post them on the list-serv.

Meeting Speakers for remainder of 2015: Stuart sent out an email with all of the speakers for the rest of the year previously; he has since tentatively scheduled Chad Percival (a Florida educator) who is touring the U.S. to talk about the 2017 eclipse, for sometime next year. Brian Warner, who is doing asteroid light curves through grants from NASA, will be our July 31 general meeting speaker. The Hungaria family of asteroids that exist just outside Mars' orbit will be discussed. His book about photometry and his software to assist people who are working with light curves are available. In

regard to the annual October meeting, aka the DAS yearly auction, Stuart received an email from someone who has an LX200, and wants to find a buyer. He told him that DAS takes donations of telescopes for sale at the auction, and about the members-only classified section, but made it clear that DAS does not purchase telescopes.

Membership Report: The current total number of members is 349, including 14 adults and one student who joined since last month's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

STEM Bridge Project: Dave Tondreau gave a presentation about the project, with which he currently volunteers. The children served are in low-income, disadvantaged Denver neighborhoods. In addition to providing tutoring and educational programs, they also offer a limited number of college scholarships. Dave asked the DAS for a \$400 donation to pay for 80 children to get to see a planetarium show at the DMNS. Dan Wray made a motion to donate \$400, and Jack Eastman seconded it. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sorin suggested donating a couple of student memberships if we have a couple of kids who are very interested. It was mentioned that we also need to make them aware of the VNH scholarship.

Magazine Subscriptions: Ron stated that this benefit is VERY time consuming, taking a huge amount of the Treasurer's time due to the need to process each application via telephone. Jack pointed out that he was able to renew his own subscription via telephone in two minutes, and it would be easy for each member to do it themselves. Stuart raised concern about new members seeing that existing members can continue to get a discount, but that they will not be able to get the discount. Sorin will contact the magazines to ask if they will accept new members on their word, instead of through DAS. A motion was made to phase out the magazine discount benefits through DAS as of December 1, 2015 by Stuart Hutchins. Sorin seconded. The motion passed.

2016 Calendar: Joe sent a report to the e-board along with uploading a calendar file to the E-board list-serv. It will be up for vote next month.

WordPress version of new DAS web site: The website is viewable at <http://www.denverastro.org/das/> . Darrell asked that officers and board members take a look at the draft version above. He has some errors to correct, and the site is still largely under construction. The reason for change is that Darrell needs other people to have access for updating and creating content. The software is very user-friendly; one does not need an HTML editor, as WordPress uses PHP. WordPress has the ability to do blogs, i.e. President's Corner, Lindsey's outreach blog, Meet Your Fellow Astronomer, etc. The events calendar is very adaptable too, and is downloadable. It has Google Map link and a mobile app as well. There is a plugin available on the WordPress website to allow members to manage their own profile, which would in turn allow us to move our member database there and have them assist us in keeping their information current.

Open House Ticket Seller: We need to see if Dennis is going to be available to perform that function. If not, a substitute will have to be recruited. Ron agreed to call Dennis and ask him.

Latest Reflector: The Astronomical League wants to digitize their member list in order to send out *The Reflector* via email and cut down on their mailing expense. They would like us to provide our members' email addresses to them. For now, the board declined to share the email addresses, but may look at asking our members for permission to do so in the future.

Liability Insurance Policy: The renewal deadline is approaching. Ron suggested that we renew the policy now, and look at it later to see if any changes need to be made. The board instructed Michael to pay the bill.

Next E-board Meeting: Friday, July 10 7:30 p.m. at Chamberlin Observatory

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed at 9:18 p.m.

MOTIONS

- Dan Wray made a motion to donate \$400, and Jack Eastman seconded it. There was no discussion. **The motion passed unanimously.**
 - A motion was made to phase out the magazine discount benefits through DAS as of December 1, 2015 by Stuart Hutchins. Sorin seconded. **The motion passed.**
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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 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.

PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

- 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.
- ✓ Michael Nowak will follow up with Luis Uribe and Ron Pearson on the Q1 VNH account transfer that is outstanding.
- ✓ Michael will follow up with Luis to make sure he has the appropriate access to the donation information for VNH.
- ✓ Jeff Tropeano to ask Dena McClung to cover for him for the next e-Board meeting.
- 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.
- ✓ Ron Hranac will follow up with Luis on the Q1 funds transfer.
- 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: *I believe there are 4 events I have to report: 5/7 "Mythology of Constellations" presentation by Jennie King for Aurora Quest K-8; 5/9 Scout Day at Dinosaur Ridge; 5/31 Space Day at DMNS; and the 6/13 Broadmoor event. Of course you were at Scout Day and Space Day, and I believe I CCed you on the event reports for the two others. If you need me to pass them along again, please let me know. Grumpy was CCed on event report emails for the events, and I told everyone to send him their hours. I was told the \$500 check for the Broadmoor event has been issued.*

Below are the upcoming events:

1. June 26, 8-10pm: Denver Art Museum plaza. For DAM's June "Untitled" event, which is their late night adult educational program, they would like us to set up scopes on the plaza for some nighttime observing.

2. July 7 or 8: Easter Seals of Colorado Rocky Mountain Village site in Empire. Boy Scout Troop 506 in Arvada would like some DAS members to come to their summer camp to help the boys work on the Astronomy merit badge. There will be 10-12 scouts between the ages of 12-15 and 3-4 adult leaders present. Whoever goes is welcome to join them for dinner and stay the night (they will have a tent set aside if needed).

3.. July 11, 8:30pm: Candelas Star Party at Candelas Swim and Fitness Club at Townview in Arvada. This event was previously postponed due to inclement weather. They'd like us to come and bring out scopes for some night time observing.

4. July 13-17, 9:30-11:30am (any day): 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). They have a parking lot to set up solar scopes and also a basement for a presentation. They are open to suggestions about the activity but liked the idea of solar observing and Ron #3's meteorite collection.

Thanks!

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Subject: Quartermaster's Report

Reported by: Ed Scholes

Report: *No scopes on loan.*

E-Board Action: *None Required.*

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Subject: Yahoo Group Listserves

Reported By: Greg Marino

Report: *Total membership on the main listserve is up to 194. No issues to report.*

E-Board Action: *None Required*

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Subject: Dark Site Committee

Reported by: Darrell Dodge

Report: *Entire Dark Site mowed and trimmed by David Delassus and me. Trimming around pads needed to be refreshed on the Dark Site weekend due to rapid growth rate. No evidence of snakes or mice in or around buildings. Oriented 5 new members, including Julie and Bob Gibson, who live in Watkins and have offered to check the site when requested.*

The CMOS battery in the Gemini 1 system was dead, which was not unusual after one year. However, I tried two 2032 batteries that should have been live and the system failed the time check with each one. I'm hoping that a certifiably fresh battery will work next weekend.

Mosquitoes are very bad this year, and some people have taken to wearing mosquito netting.

E-Board Action: *None required.*

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Subject: Web Site

Reported by: Darrell Dodge

Report: *I have completed a review version of the DAS Web site on the WordPress platform, which is used for over 25% of the world's Web sites and has an easily configurable mobile application plug-in. URL: <http://www.denverastro.org/das>*

E-Board Action: *review and comment requested.*

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Subject: YouTube Videos

Reported by: Darrell Dodge

Report: *Purchased Sony HDR PJ670 Camcorder with audio, visual, and file storage accessories to record Monthly Meeting videos and other DAS events.*

E-Board Action: *None Required. (Thanks for quick response!)*

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Subject: IT Assets

Reported by: Ken Sturrock

Report: *With Ron Rhanac's negotiation, I received the passwords and account information from Scott. When last at Chamberlin, I logged into two (Transit & Warming Rooms) of the three machines we have there as the administrator and looked them over; they appeared fine. I began security and maintenance updates on the warming room machine.*

Priorities include finishing updates on both machines and continuing to work with others to get the video connection to the 6" telescope camera operational and sharable.

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

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Subject: 2016 calendar

Reported by: Joe Gafford

Report: *2016 calendar populated from Jan 2016 to Mar 2017. The Outlook .ics file is available on the DAS E-board Yahoo Group, Files section. Hard copies will be printed for the July 10 E-board meeting for changes and corrections.*

E-board Action: *None*

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Subject: Speaker July 31

Reported by Stuart Hutchins

Report: At the SAS Symposium last week I got a commitment from Brian D Warner to speak at our upcoming General Meeting Fri, 7/31. Email contact and arrangements are in progress.

Brian is a highly accomplished amateur astronomer whose specialty is light curves and the study of minor planets. He has old connections to DAS through Terry Schmidt, whose picture hangs in the Chamberlin Library. He operates the Palmer Divide Observatory, is the author of A Practical Guide to Lightcurve Analysis and Photometry, wrote the MPO software used for automation of observatory, imaging, and lightcurve data reduction, now at rev 10.

He publishes in The Minor Planet Bulletin, Icarus, and at the SAS. All around good guy to know

E-Board Action: None

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Treasurer Report for May 2015

Standing Accounts May 31 2015

1st Bank Accounts and Investment Fund

Type of Account	Ref No	Amount
Checking	X9663	\$23,230.31
Checking	X1049	\$3,602.14
Premier Time Savings	X9213	\$10,556.80
Time Deposit Savings	X3552	\$5,176.27
Total		\$42,565.52

no act
May

Deposits

		Total
General Fund Checking Acct X9663	5/18/15	\$15,000.00
	5/29/15	\$259.00
		\$15,259.00

PayPal

Tranasctions in May 2015

	Number	Fee	Total
Memberships	13	\$36.00	\$468.00
Banquet	0	\$-	\$-
Donation Darksite	0	\$-	\$-
Donation General	0	\$-	\$-

Balance at May 31

\$2,516.39

Mail

	Number	Fee	Total
Mail-In Membership	2	\$36.00	\$72.00
Mail-In Donations	0	\$-	\$-
Mail-In Subscriptions	0	\$-	\$-
Total			\$72.00

Public Night,Open House, Etc.

	Number	Fee	Total
Public Night Guests	95	Various	\$131.00

Open House Guests	41	Various	\$41.00
Total Entry	136		\$172.00
Donations at Open House/Public Night	1	15	\$15.00
Total			\$187.00
Donation VNH			\$-
Darksite Fund			\$-
General Fund			\$-

Payments	Description	Amount
	Darrell Dodge	Roster Printing
		\$547.36
		\$547.36