

Denver Astronomical Society
Minutes of September 4, 2015 E-Board Meeting

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

Board Members Present: Joe Gafford, Jack Eastman, Chuck Habenicht, Sorin, Johnny O. Barela,
Ken Sturrock, Ed Scholes

Observatory Representative: Dr. Robert Stencel

Absent: Jeff Tropeano – Secretary, Dan Wray, Ron Pearson

Members and Guests: Dena McClung, Eileen Barela, Ryan Remein (Guest)

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:

Stuart suggested use of the letterhead that was created for the thank you letters. Added to Old Business.

DU's Historic Chamberlin Observatory Business:

Dr. Stencel:

- Big item: Tim and Cathy Havens are moving way. Dr. Stencel offered the use of DU's Historic Chamberlin Observatory for a going away party. Noted benefits of them being our telescope store for 43 years.
- Happy to note trainee names showing up in log book. Please encourage them to keep up with it. Recertification will be sometime next spring.
- Sidereal clock has stopped ticking. Dr. Stencel looking into finding qualified expert for repair and maintenance.
- Dr. Stencel offered to field help from DU to manage the building for Sept 27th lunar eclipse.
- Overcrowding of Olin 105, a mere 50 years ago, Proposal for planetarium, through promotion, gates planetarium happened through there. We have the legal feasibility to expand Chamberlin. Couple million dollars, could solve parking and capacity issues. Reminder of old ideas.
- Getting calls and emails about reservation system. Seems to open on a 3 month calendar. November was still all greyed out. Ron #3 noted he had forwarded this to Jeff to get this extended.
- Received an email from a senior center requesting on Oct 6th, pointing at high up object so as not to require climbing the scope ladder.
- Telescope seems to be working.

Treasurer's Report:

- Michael summarized treasurer's report.
 - Question about a letter for a \$20 donation, Ron #3 comment that in the past, donation letter minimum was \$100.
 - Ron #3 brought up Status of VNH donations, have email about speaker fees so far this year, notes about other donations from January. Concern about nothing done in 2014 for speaker fee donations. Stuart did not notify the Treasurer of these. Speakers had already been setup when Stuart took over mid-2014. Stuart noted he still has all the correspondence from 2014. Ron #3 suggested Michael go through the checkbook and see if any checks were written to speakers, double check with Dena. Stuart will go back through email to see which speakers wanted to donate. One exception being Dan Wray and Ron Hranac filled in one meeting. No speaker fee or donation for that.
 - When a telescope is checked-out, we take a \$100 deposit. Ed has just been keeping the check until the scope is returned, then disposes of the check. Suggestion from Dena to return the check when equipment is returned.
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OLD BUSINESS

2016 Calendar:

No changes to report from Joe.

September Lunar Eclipse:

Ron Hranac noted we ran out of first batch of stickers. More should arrive in about a week. Getting word out, continuing to plug this on social media and through media contacts. Over 193 RSVPs through Facebook so far. Operation will be much like an open house. Hugh will not be present, two people (not identified) to help outside the observatory. Members should plan to setup by 6:30.

Dr. Bob said he will round up some DU helpers for the telescope and inside Chamberlin. 20" will not be available for visual observing of the eclipse that early. Dr Bob suggested observing a higher object.

Camera testing, Ken noting that Ron #1 has an older DSLR, focal reducer, on the GRUB. May be easier to setup a small refractor outside with a camera instead. Need to figure out a wireless streaming solution for outside. Ron offered his Televue scope for this purpose if someone can find a camera.

For those who volunteer for DMNS and the Eclipse event, Pizza will be provided at Chamberlin on DAS. Ron will place the order from DMNS.

Solar Day at DMNS (Sept 27):

Free day at the museum, meaning as many as 10k visitors. Noted that we can drive on the service sidewalk, unload, then park. Suggestion to get there by 8:30 AM, museum opens at 9. Sign-in at volunteer desk. Museum will provide lunch.

We will have a DAS tables inside, and Ron to do something on meteorites.

Holiday Party:

Stuart sent update that both venues used in the past are booked on Dec 5th. After discussion, Stuart will check if there is availability on Sunday the 6th or other available December dates. Ron Hranac extended an invite to Dr. Bob to Holiday party.

Letterhead:

Stuart notes that we have a letterhead we should use for the thank you letters. Stuart will send the letterhead out again to the eboard list serve. Notes it is already in the yahoo files section. Ron recommended that we send PDFs for the thank you letters via email.

NEW BUSINESS**Dena: STEM Presentation**

Ryan Remein spoke about an event and opportunities with the Cherry Creek School District. STEAM-a-Palooza, intended to connect people, students and teachers, professionals, hobbyists, enthusiasts. All-day event where students can share projects and presentations. Bringing out groups like Denver Bomb Squad, others. Opportunity for students to meet STEM professionals. Hands on experience. {see flyer}

Have 5 tracks, last is space science, don't have a lot of resources for space science. Not sure where to go, what to do. Wants to understand how they can leverage DAS among other programs. Do balloon programs with micro-experiments.

Dena: talk of getting solar scopes out to STEAM-a-Palooza, twisting Ron's arm about doing a meteorite presentation. Ron volunteered to do a lecture on meteorites. Ryan noted there will be access to 2 auditoriums for slide presentations. Dena poked Jack to get involved with some sort of light presentation. Jack stated he'd be interested in doing something. Event capped at 2000 right now, but expecting to open it back up to more attendees. DAS members interested in participating need to reserve a free ticket.

Dena asked how we can best interface with Ryan and our membership for participation. Ron suggested getting in touch with Lindsey to put out the call for volunteers. Dena to notify Lindsey and work with her on coordinating. Suggestion to put something in November newsletter, maybe October. Dena will work with Ryan on messaging to the DAS membership.

Ryan noted they are looking for speakers for high schools, and may be willing to pay a stipend.

Chuck noted that the Nov 21 is an open house night at Chamberlin. Opportunity to advertise the open house at the STEAM-a-Palooza event.

Ryan looking for advice on telescopes to purchase for the schools. Dena will put Ryan's contact info out on the eboard list.

Contact from Henry (dark site): (Informational, no board action)

Ron got a call while he was away. Henry got a letter from a business in Aurora asking to lease one acre of his property with driveway access, secluded, septic, well with water, 20-foot observatory, and adjacent office building.

Ron looked up the company online, business is data analytics, surveillance, and other things they do for the government. Public company. Darrel talked to Henry, told them what these guys do, and Henry decided he wasn't interested.

Membership poll:

Jeff sent out the proposed questions on the eboard list. Ron noted high response rate last year, over 30%. Thinking of being able to track trends year over year by keeping the survey broadly the same. One thing added under benefits was membership in the Astronomical League, due to the recent discussions about the value of the AL membership. Request that everyone give feedback to Jeff on the survey, so we can get this going out to the membership.

DAS Auction (Saturday Oct 24):

Setup at 11, bidding at 1:00. Ron has not connected with auctioneer yet. Request for items for the auction.

S&S Optika:

Cathy and Tim announced at the last general meeting that after 43 years they are retiring and closing shop. Have published the last star party events in Sept. Ron noted that after the general meeting announcement, a member asked Ron if there was something we could do to show our appreciation.

Jack offered a motion to make Cathy an honorary member. Ron held on that. Dr Bob has offered DU's Historic Chamberlin Observatory to host a going away party. Dr Bob suggested that he and Ron work the date for with Cathy and Tim.

Motion made by Jack, seconded by Ron to make Cathy and Tim and honorary members. Passed unanimously without discussion.

Other Items:

- Chuck: We have four 6' banners, none are upstairs. One is down in Castle Rock, other 3 are missing. Chuck will check with Lindsey to see if she has any of the banners.
- Dr Bob notes that the schedule cards provided by S&S will go away.
- Stuart suggested putting skype on the presentation laptop to test out the overflow suggestion at Olin to skype from the main room up to the room above. Ken will install skype on the machine in preparation to test it out.

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

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed at 9:19 p.m.

MOTIONS

- **Motion made by Jack, seconded by Ron to make Cathy and honorary member. Passed unanimously without discussion.**
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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 and Dr Bob** to work with Cathy and Tim to find a time for an S&S going away event.
- **Michael** to go through the checkbook and see if any checks were written to speakers, double check with Dena.
- **Stuart** will go back through email to see which speakers wanted to donate.
- **Stuart** will check if there is availability on Sunday the 6th or other available December dates.
- **Stuart** will send the letterhead out again to the eboard list serve.
- **Chuck** will check with Lindsey to see if she has any of the 6' DAS banners.
- **Ken** will install skype on the presentation machine in preparation to test it an Olin overflow plan.
- STEAM-a-Palooza Oct 21:
 - **Ron** volunteered to do a lecture on meteorites
 - **Dena** to notify Lindsey and work with her on coordinating DAS participation.
 - **Dena** will put Ryan's contact info out on the eboard list.
- **ALL:** give feedback to Jeff on the survey, so we can get this going out to the membership.

PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

- ✓ Ron Hranac will send his photos of the picnic to Zach Singer for the newsletter.
 - ✓ Jeff Tropeano will send an e-mail blast to the local media contact list.
 - Ron Hranac will update the donation letter to include the Federal Tax ID number, which is suggested.
 - ✓ Sorin will do a design for a Lunar Eclipse banner that is generic enough to be used in the future, but also has a space to add a date.
 - Stuart will update the signage to increase the prices, and Ron will begin reminding the members of the kitty jar at the end of the membership meetings.
 - 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.
 - Joe to add the transit of Mercury on May 9 from sunrise to noon to the 2016 calendar.
 - ✓ 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.
 - ✓ Jeff Tropeano will coordinate the set of questions for the next survey for the membership.
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ONLINE UPDATES

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Subject: Quartermaster's Report

Reported by: Ed Scholes

Report: *The C5 and G2 mount are still on loan until the end of September.
New Genimi 2 added to te inventory.*

E-Board Action: *None Required.*

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Subject: External Outreach

Reported by: Lindsey Shaw

Report: *No external outreach events to report for the past month.*

Upcoming events:

- 1. September 5, 8:30pm: Star Party @ Cherry Creek State Park.*
- 2. September 12, 10:00am (8:30am setup) - 2:00pm: Rocky Mountain PBS Kids Fun Fest @ 1089 Bannock Street, Denver.*
- 3. September 27, 9:00am (no later than 8:30am setup)- 4:00pm: Denver Museum of Nature & Science Free Day.*
- 4. October 2, 7:30PM: Star Party @ Perry Park*

Thanks!

*Best,
Lindsey*

E-Board action: *None.*

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Subject: Membership

Reported by: Dena McClung

Report: *Total Members - 378 Students - 18 Regular - 349 Honorary - 11*
Action Required: *None*

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Subject: Yahoo Group Listserves

Reported by: Greg Marino

Report: *6 new members this month on the main DAS Listserve. Membership is now at 204. No problems to report. We did get a complaint from a DAS member wanting to join the Listserve that Yahoo Groups won't let him apply without a cell phone number. This member does not have a cell phone. I checked and that is actually a Yahoo policy.*

Action Required: *None*

Subject: Social Media

Reported by: Jeff Tropeano

Report:

Facebook: 949 Followers (+50 over the last 2 weeks). 184 people confirmed for the Lunar Eclipse event according to Facebook RSVPs. Advertising working very well.

Twitter: 281 Followers

YouTube: 81 Subscribers, 6,415 total views. Emily Levesque video is not published yet because we do not have her slides. I have reached out twice, but have not received a response from her.

E-Board action: *None.*

Subject: Membership Survey

Reported by: Jeff Tropeano

Report: *Here are the proposed 2015 Membership Survey questions. Mostly the same from the 2014 survey (intentional, so we can track trends over time):*

1. Are you a member of the Denver Astronomical Society?

Yes

Yes, but not planning to renew

No

2. Which benefits of DAS membership are most important to you?

Volunteering for public outreach (for example, open houses, public nights, Colorado Astronomy Day, etc.)

Monthly meetings and speakers

Access to the Dark Sky site

Access to Chamberlin Observatory

Supporting (but not participating in) astronomy outreach and education

Interactions with other local astronomers

Access to the DAS equipment loaner program, the library in Chamberlin

Membership in the Astronomical League

Other (please specify)

3. Do you generally attend the monthly general membership meetings?

Yes

No

4. If you don't attend the monthly meetings, why?

Not interested

Inconvenient location

Charge for parking

Lecture hall is uncomfortable

Fridays are inconvenient

Other (please specify)

**5. What other activities would you like to participate in that aren't being offered now?
(examples: Amateur Telescope Making, Astrophotography, etc...)**

6. Our annual dues (\$36 annually for adults, \$12 for students) are:

Extremely overpriced

Overpriced

Appropriately priced

Underpriced

Extremely underpriced

7. What do you like most about our club

8. What changes would most improve our club?

9. What do you think is our club's biggest weakness?

10. What do you think is our club's greatest strength?

E-Board action: *Review questions and suggest changes.*

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Subject: VNH Scholarship Committee

Reported by: Ron Pearson

Report: *The VNH committee met on Sat. Aug. 22. All comm. members present except Tim Pimentel. The comm. reviewed three applications received in 2015 for scholarships. Some other partial applications received only by email were not reviewed. Two students were awarded \$1,500 each; Ariel Sandberg and Connor Bray. The awards were presented at the Aug. Gen'l Meeting of DAS in DU's Olin Hall. Both students were present to accept the awards. Connor Bray is a current Student member of DAS as well as apprentice PN*

telescope operator. He is starting his 1st year at Colorado School of Mines in Engineering Physics. Ariel Sandberg has been a DAS Student member in previous years and is starting her 2nd year at U. of Michigan Ann Arbor majoring in Aerospace Engineering. Comm. member Jeff Tropeano will be preparing letters to the students.

Financial activity: Receipt for purchase of award reception cakes (~\$33) submitted by email to Treasurer for reimbursement. Withdrawal of \$3,000.00 from CUD Money Market Fund for the two awards; no costs involved. Due to recent stock market steep downturn, it is anticipated that 10%-20% losses have been incurred in the LPL investment fund. Statements will likely be received later in Sept. and reported in Oct. Information just received from VP Stuart indicates there may not have been transfers of DAS speaker's donations to the VNH Fund in 2014 or 2015. DAS Treasurer is trying to work out and accounting for all donations and speaker honorariums donated to VNH for 2014 and 2015 for transfer to VNH CUD account.

Upcoming: Annual DAS-VNH Fund raising Auction to be held Oct. 24th.

E-board Action Req'd: Accounting of and transfer of all donations to VNH Fund for 2014-15 as requested two months previous.

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Subject: Speaker Stipend VNH Donations

Reported by: Stuart Hutchins

Report: 6 speakers so far this year have directed by email reply their \$50 stipends be donated to the VNH Fund. This totals \$300. I have provided the contact information to the Treasurer and the VNH chairman by email to the E-Board group.

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Subject: General Meeting Speaker September 25

Reported by: Stuart Hutchins

Report: Dr John Bally. Will talk on the formation of star clusters, massive stars and systems from giant molecular clouds. A short announcement has been provided to the Observer editor and the webmaster.

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Subject: Holiday Park Dec 5 Plans

Reported by: Stuart Hutchins

Report: Both previous Embassy Suites are booked for Dec 5. I am looking for another venue at comparable prices.

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E-Board Action: *Suggest alternate venues or the possibility of shifting the Dec 5 date. When I get pricing, an expenditure approval will be needed.*

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Subject: DAS Okie-Tex Participation

Reported by: Joe Gafford

Report: *24 DAS members have registered.*

Plus 3 former DAS members: Micky Smith, James Odin, David Levy (Main Speaker)

Total Colorado: 41

Total all: 422.

Cathie and Tim of S&S Optika will not participate but Mark will bring down some requested items for them.

E-Board Action: *Someone to bring a DAS banner for a group photo? Otherwise none*

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Treasurer Report for August 2015

Standing Accounts August 31 2015

1st Bank Accounts and Investment Fund

Type of Account	Ref No	Amount
General Fund Checking	X9663	\$21,417.39
Dark Site Checking	X1049	\$3,417.01
Premier Time Savings	X9213	\$10,556.80
Time Deposit Savings	X3552	<u>\$5,177.57</u>
Total		<u>\$40,568.77</u>

Deposits

		Total
General Fund Checking Acct X9663	8/24/15	\$480.00
TOTAL		\$480.00

PayPal

Transactions in August 2015	Number	Fee	Total
Regular Memberships	9	\$36.00	\$324.00
Student Memberships	5	\$12.00	\$60.00
Total Reservations			\$601.00
Donation Darksite	0		\$0.00
Donation General	1		\$20.00

Balance of Reservations Paypal at August 31	\$3,829.57
Balance of Treasurer Paypal at August 31	<u>\$1,650.95</u>

Total Paypal Funds at August 31**\$5,480.52**

Mail	Number	Fee	Total
Mail-In Membership	0	\$36.00	\$0.00
Mail-In Donation for VNH	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Outreach Payment for Broadmoor	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mail-In Subscriptions	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total			\$0.00

Public Night, Open House, Etc.	Number	Fee	Total
Public Night Guests	160	Various	\$226.00
Open House Guests	156	Various	\$254.00
Total Entry	316		<u>\$480.00</u>
Donations at Open House/Public Night	0	0	<u>\$0.00</u>
Total			\$480.00

Payments	Description	Amount
Sorin	Reimb for Eclipse Stickers	\$307.15
Stuart Hutchins	Reimb for Spkr Dinners & Picnic	<u>\$385.21</u>
		<u><u>\$692.36</u></u>