



Presidential Ramblings

by Dale Hendricks

Seems every once in a while it is necessary to leave our "rut" and do what we do differently. The flood at the Bettendorf Library was not anything that we could have affected but we did respond to it.

A British writer about a hundred years ago or more was working on some papers when his cat knocked over a candle and set fire to all he had written and accomplished for the last few years. After the house was rebuilt or repaired and he started writing again he offered this – "every 10 years or so we should have our houses burned down such that we have no choice but start over and begin afresh".

Don't know that I would wish for anything like that to force a new start but – here we are in the Lodge for our Mars viewing and will be meeting there through October, taking us nearly to the end of my last year serving as president of the QCAS. We changed our place of meeting and for some of us that means a much longer drive and a different venue for "noshing" after our meetings for those of us who do meet and partake. We created a relationship with Davenport Parks and Recreation and by working together we have been generously granted a no cost meeting place plus the full support of the Director and his staff. It has been suggested that we might want to host an Open House on Credit Island during the remainder of the year when we do hold and host them. By advertising with Parks and Rec we might draw a few more people to a viewing by saving them the 20+ mile trip out to Sherman Park.

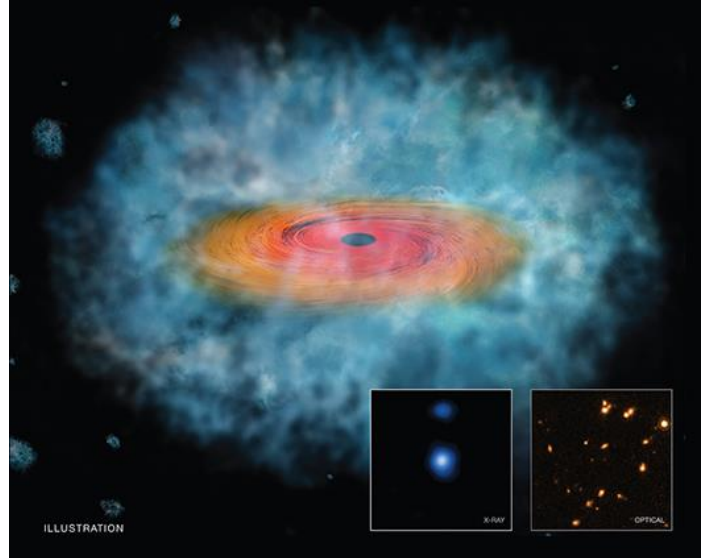
I learned from Pete Bruecken that there has been extensive work done with the planetarium at Bettendorf High School. In Pete's own words: "We're in the throws(sic) (throes) of the planetarium upgrade". Will have to gather info on just what that means and if there is an opportunity for us to work with Pete and his staff occasionally to provide some "inside" viewing opportunities for many more folks.

(Continued at right)

Newsletter of the
Quad Cities
Astronomical Society
www.qcas.org
JULY 2016



NASA Telescopes Find Clues For How Giant Black Holes Formed So Quickly



- Evidence that some early supermassive black holes formed directly from the collapse of a gas cloud has been found.
- These results could represent a major step in the understanding of how the Universe's first giant black holes formed.
- Two candidate black hole "seeds" have been identified, possibly at less than one billion years after the Big Bang.
- Astronomers combined data from Chandra, Hubble, and Spitzer to make this discovery.

See <http://chandra.si.edu/photo/2016/bhseeds/> for more.

Presidential Ramblings (cont'd)

In ending, I have found that change, oft times just for the sake of change, can be a good thing. One of the laws of motion states that an object in motion will stay in motion until something makes it do something different. That's a paraphrase of course but it gets the meaning across. Adapt to change, embrace change, hang on to that which is core and works and build on it.

We have, we are and I trust we will continue to do so without losing sight of why we are together in the first place.

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Calendar of Opportunities

Note: **QCAS Monthly Meetings** are at the **Credit Island Lodge** @ 6:30 PM

Observatory Open Houses are at Sherman Park, Dixon (Calimus), IA

Other **QCAS Events** as noted

Saturday, June 18
PAC Niabi Zoo
Star Party

Monday, June 20
QCAS Monthly Meeting

June 23, 24 & 25
Quad Cities Air Show

Saturday, June 25
QCAS Observatory Open House

Saturday, July 9
SAU Star Party @
Menke Observatory

Saturday, July 16
PAC Niabi Zoo
Star Party

Monday, July 18
QCAS Monthly Meeting

Saturday, July 30
QCAS Observatory Open House

Saturday, August 13
SAU Star Party @
Menke Observatory

May 28 Open House

by Bruce Brooker

It was a productive night at the observatory. Matt and Bruce got the cabinets Matt so generously donated to the club installed. Thanks Matt!



Above: Matt and the cabinets he donated.

They also calked around the leaking door - more to be done on that to keep the rain out.

There were nine people and one dog (mascot Cassie) in attendance. QCAS members there were: Mike Ombrello, Matt Neilssen and Bruce Brooker.

Matt got the 16 inch in the domed observatory going and afforded some decent viewing of Jupiter and Mars in spite of the clouds and wind.

Mike was getting to know his new scope.

The temperature was great and the bugs not too bad.

July Night Skies

July Moons
July 4 – New
July 12 – First Quarter
July 19 – Full
July 26 – Last Quarter

Evening Planets: Jupiter, Mars & Saturn
mid-Night: Pluto
Morning Planets: Neptune & Uranus

Mars is distancing itself from Earth, so before it gets too low, let's take a good look at **Saturn!** Right now, the rings are about as open as they get, so see how many rings and ring divisions you can see. Compare the ring brightness to the planet brightness. Are any details on Saturn visible? How many moons are visible? (A planetarium program is a good resource to use to identify them.) Personally, I think members of the public get the most enjoyment in seeing Saturn – more than once they have exclaimed that they didn't know it could be seen that well in our telescopes! Have FUN!

Later, when it's darker, our "favorites" are well-placed for viewing.

Not far from Saturn (in the sky, that is) are the Lagoon Nebula and globular cluster M22.

If you prefer to look overhead, try the Ring Nebula, the Dumbbell Nebula and globular cluster M13.

While those might be the (my) most popular targets, there are plenty more to see:

Nebulae: Trifid, Omega (aka Swan) and Eagle.

Open clusters: M11 – the Wild Duck, M6, M7, M23, M24, M25

Too many sights to list them all!

QCAS Correspondence:

Please contact the society at: P.O. Box 3706, Davenport, IA, 52808.

Members are welcome and encouraged to submit articles for The Meridian. Submit any and all interesting items (via e-mail) to: Karl Adlon, Secretary.

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Mars Viewing at Credit Island

by Dale Hendricks

Kudos to the City of Davenport Parks and Recreation Department – again. From initial contact with a Parks and Rec rep, to the second visit to finalize details to last night when Tim our Parks Ambassador met me at the Lodge – all flawless.

Set up began in the Great Room but the sun coming in the windows convinced us to move to the hallway room inside the door and that worked quite well. Members present for both the presentations and viewing outside were:



Matt Neilssen, Karl Adlon, John Baker, Dana

Taylor, Craig Cox, Mike Ombrello, Bruce Brooker and his Muscatine contingent which included our mascot Cassie and Katie, Jeff Struve (and thanks to Jeff for chair clean up and put away after the event) and Tom Bullock. If I left anyone out, my apologies – it was a busy night for me as it was for many.

Presentations covered Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and a Tour of the Universe. Matt gave an informative and interesting overview of Lucky Imaging – we need to hear more of that in another meeting, Matt.

Following the presentations we trooped outside and wonder of wonders visible were Saturn, Mars,

Jupiter and the Moon. Some clouds and humidity but those assembled to take a look were rewarded and many had their very first look at Saturn and the responses are all the same – WOW!!

Great job everyone and Scott to you and your excellent staff – please give them sincere high 5s and a BZ!!

See you all at our regular business meeting 20 June at the Lodge at 6:30pm with the same format – 30 minutes of business up front



and then 90 minutes for astronomy ONLY!!

We welcome our newest member – Greg Weinberg. Welcome aboard, Greg and we look forward to your



participation and contributions and to the completion of your wife's residency in Des Moines in December. Looking forward to meeting her.

Great job, everyone.

-Dale



More Mars Viewing at Credit Island



Here's a nice photo taken by Matt Neilssen and posted to Facebook with an invitation to all to come to our star party.

I've brightened the image so you can see a few things: The yellow-green is the grass being illuminated by the street light – which had a swarm of bugs flying around it – for a while making it hard to find Saturn. That's Matt's scope pointed at Saturn.

To the left of it in the distance is Bruce Brooker and his telescope.

To the left of center is Craid Cox and his telescope also pointed at Saturn.

Then, the group of 3 are Tom Bullock and 2 visitors.

A few "observations" associated with this event:

- In the 24 hours prior, the forecast sky conditions changed so much one way and then the other that calling them unreliable is overly kind. About 4 hours before the "start" I watch the satellite loop of clouds and decided it might be good and brought my scope. Yes, I'm patting myself on the back!
- Observing conditions were "variable", as in changing through the session; sometimes decent, sometimes obscured and other times in between.
- I would call the views of Mars "good" during most of the session and "better" later.
- Saturn was very good, considering conditions, with Cassini's division visible.
- Regarding Jupiter, one young visitor proclaimed "I can see two stripes!" The four Galilean moons were all lined up on one side of the planet.
- A notable feature on the Moon were the wrinkle ridges in Mare Serenitatis.

- Karl Adlon

Where Do You Want to Go?



You've probably heard this phrase a lot, but maybe not how I intend it. I'm trying to follow up on Dale's closing phrase "why we are together in the first place."

I have 2 questions but before I get to them, I hope you'll let me expound. These questions have been asked before but I think we need some better answers, because things do change. If I ask you "why are you in the Club?" the question is so open ended that the answers may not be useful to Board Members or individuals. An answer like "to be associated with blah-blah-blah" doesn't help. I'm looking for specifics, like "I want to learn how to ... build a telescope ... do CCD imaging ... observe faint galaxies ... etc." By knowing what *you* want to do, we can team up to go where we all individually want to go.

So, here are the 2 questions:

1. What is *your* #1 goal that you wish to achieve related to astronomy?
2. What are *you* willing to do to help QCAS and members achieve their goals?

If you are even a little like me, you have quite a few goals and they change in importance from time to time. So all you need to do is recognize what is #1 right now.

Answering question 2 may be a little more difficult. It might be easier if we all knew the answers to question 1. I think that right now the club could use some help in a few areas: writing articles for the Meridian (don't laugh); helping with presentations; helping before and after meeting with arranging the room; helping with EISP; helping with Facilities upgrades and maintenance; etc. You can probably think of more.

Please think about *your* answers to these 2 questions. While question 1 is personal to you, the answers to both questions are important to QCAS in the long run.

Look for more on this subject.

And thank you for what you do for QCAS!