

# THE MERIDIAN

Newsletter of the  
Quad Cities Astronomical  
Society

[www.qcas.org](http://www.qcas.org)



## DECEMBER 2016

**QCAS Mission Statement:**

To stimulate an interest in the science of astronomy in the Quad Cities Area, to nurture an ongoing desire by Quad Cities Astronomical Society members to study the cosmos and to provide members of our community opportunities to experience the beauty and joy of Astronomy.

### Presidents Greeting

Season's greetings and welcome to December! Thank you to all that attended our November meeting, and I hope to see all of you, and those that couldn't attend, at the meeting being held on December 19<sup>th</sup>.

I'm really interested in hearing your thoughts on our club meetings, particularly what type of presentations you are interested in... also, what types of events and activities that you'd like the club to provide both during and outside of meetings. We've all heard the old saying, "Actions speak louder than words", and in keeping the club being valuable to you, your comments and participation speak volumes. We want to continue to support the desires of the membership, and to do so effectively, those desires need to be heard *and* seen... now, off of the soap box!

I wanted to again extend a Happy Birthday to Mike Ombrello, and as Karl Adlon mentioned in a Facebook greeting, I hope that with all the candles on your cake that you celebrated during the day so as to not ruin your night vision!

Also, just a note to give a 'well done' to former member Ava Duncan who performed at the Festival of Trees on Tuesday, November 22nd... She is quite the violinist, and I wouldn't be surprised if we heard more about her in the future. Definitely a rising star.

A final note... please remember to send me notes on your astronomical endeavors since our last issue of Meridian... stories, new gear, events, things you want to sell, and of course pictures!

I would like to extend to each and every one of you, your families and friends the warmest holiday wishes and may your skies always be clear!

Clear Skies!  
Jeff



### Last Society Meeting Minutes

#### **Date/Time Location**

6:30 PM on Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup>  
The Bettendorf Library

#### **Attendance**

Ken Boquist, Craig Cox, Mike Dannenfeldt, Robert Mitchell, Matt Neilssen, Ian Spangenburg, Dave Ruddy, Jim Rutenbeck, Jeff Struve

#### **Presentations**

After the greeting, the group watched a slide show consisting of pictures submitted by the membership since the last issue of the Meridian. Pizza and beverages were served to make up for the missing of the traditional October dinner meeting.

The aforementioned pictures were then shown individually and described by the member responsible for the submission. Pictures were submitted by Jim Rutenbeck, Karl Adlon, Ken Boquist, and Mike Ombrello. We also had a few pictures of our members at the Adams School and Putnam Museum outreach events. At Adams School we had John Baker, Robert Mitchell, Matt Neilssen, Jeff Struve, and Dana Taylor. At the Putnam Museum, Ken Boquist and Dana Taylor were in attendance.

Craig Cox gave a presentation on the use of PoleMaster. Due to logistics issues... poor outside location for viewing North... Craig showed a short video of the process and gave a narrative of the process.

Jeff Struve gave a presentation on an Aztec/Mayan constellation called Tianquitzl which is now referred to as the Pleiades. Jeff provided a bit of the star lore behind the cluster and how it was used by the ancient Maya and Aztecs.

#### **Treasurers Report**

- At the time of reading, we had \$3843.05.
- The power bill is prepaid for the next 5 months.
- Club dues can be paid from September until March 31<sup>st</sup> at which time membership may lapse.
- The report was approved.

#### **Review of Minutes**

- The minutes as per the November Meridian were approved.

## Old Business

- Jeff announced that we have an open position for the Director at Large. The 2004 bylaws will be reviewed to further clarify the filling of this position. At this time it is believed that the offer is to be made to past presidents until the office is filled. If it is still open, nominations will be taken and an election will be held. Committee chair positions that may be open include Outreach.
- Jeff met with Shawna Duncan and picked up the club documentation. It seems that the most recent edition of the bylaws are the ones that Karl sent out dated 2004.
- Adams School – There were approximately 490 guests in attendance. Institutions involved in presentations included The Popular Astronomy Club, St. Ambrose University, and The Quad Cities Astronomical Society. QCAS members participating in this event included Dana Taylor, John Baker, Robert Mitchell, Matt Neilssen, and Jeff Struve.
- Putnam Museum – There were approximately 125 guests in attendance. QCAS members participating in this event included Dana Taylor and Ken Boquist.

## New Business

- There are a lot of mole hills at the Sherman Park Jens-Wendt observatory.
- The block house is very cluttered and it is very difficult to navigate to the circuit box to turn on the building red lights.
- Discussing an inventory and potential disposal of club owned gear, Ken Boquist volunteered to help review items. After the meeting, Mike Ombrello and Steve VanHyfte also volunteered.
- The contract with the county should be reviewed to ensure that we are meeting our end of the contract by holding the proper number of public open houses.
- Jeff Struve advised that research will be done to see how new officers can begin their responsibilities on January 1 rather than immediately upon election.

## Other

The club adjourned to the Village Inn located on Elmore and 53<sup>rd</sup> to continue the comradery. Craig Cox, Robert Mitchell, Jeff Struve, and Steve VanHyfte attended.

## Next Society Meeting

### Date/Time Location

6:30 PM on Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup>

Bettendorf Library – Check the bulletin board for which room...

### Presentation

Mike Ombrello will be making a presentation on the astrophotography processing software called PixInsight



-Top to Bottom, Dana, Robert, and Jeff at Adams School-



-An outdoor view at Adams School, courtesy of Matt-



## Last Board Meeting Minutes

### **Date/Time Location**

6:30 PM on Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>  
The Village Inn on Elmore and 53<sup>rd</sup> in Davenport, IA

### **Attendance**

Jeff Struve - Present  
Craig Cox - Absent  
Robert Mitchell - Present  
Matt Neilssen - Present  
Dale Hendricks - Absent  
Mike Dannenfeldt – Guest

### **Agenda**

#### Putnam Museum Event

Matt will contact Dale, Dana, and Putnam to find out what arrangements were made.

#### Solar Event

Robert is working with the Putnam Museum. They are interested in participating, simulcast, pre-event presentation, viewing in back of the museum, SAU has eclipse glasses. We still need logistics on QCAS visiting Grand Island, NE for the event.

#### Board Meeting Schedule

First Monday of the month and then adjust, if necessary, at the meeting prior (6:30PM)

#### Web/FB – Bylaws

We discussed the club acquiring [www.qcas.org](http://www.qcas.org)... Maybe consider a new site on WordPress... We need to delete 2 of the 3 Facebook pages...

#### Dues

Matt will send out notice to the club

#### Bank account

John and Joe will need to sign an affidavit to be removed from the bank account; all others need to meet together at the bank. John offered to be the book keeper. All approved. We have \$3868.05 in bank as of 11/10/16

#### 2017 Event calendar

All ok...we will need to work with Robert to coordinate Menke Observatory open house nights.

#### Committee Chairs

Jeff contact current chairs and find out if they still want to continue the position.

#### Topics for next meeting

- What went wrong with elections... how do we fix... review and update bylaws?
- Jeff to go over the records picked up from Shawna and finds bylaws.
- Matt and Jeff will search email for references to bylaws

## Next Board Meeting

### **Date/Time Location**

Board Meetings will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 6:30 PM. The December meeting will be held at the Village Inn Restaurant on Elmore and 53<sup>rd</sup> in Davenport, IA. Please notify Jeff Struve if you plan on attending so seating arrangements can be made. Ordering from the menu is Dutch Treat.

### **Agenda**

#### Primary Topics

- Moving public open house at Jens-Wendt to the Saturday nearest the new moon or 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter moon
- Reviewing and rewriting bylaws
- Discussing the standing committees
- Discuss joining ALCON
- Discuss organizing the Messier Marathon, Astronomy Day, Perseid Meteor Shower, Eastern Iowa Star Party, and a swap meet.
- Coordinating info on our website and Facebook pages.
- Having a single QCAS contact for all outreach endeavors.
- Talk about purchasing a wide FoV refractor to mount on the 20" Reflector (Jims?)
- Clean and convert the block house into a warm room/viewing center
- Take inventory of club equipment
- Mole Hills at Sherman Park

#### Secondary Topics

- Reviewing the Mission Statement
- Society Meeting Location
- Club project – Build a Poncet mount for the clubs Dob
- Club project – convert the 20" scope into a truss system
- Discuss a High School Ambassador Program



-Top to Bottom, Dana and Ken at the Putnam Museum-

## Submitted Articles

### **Member Spotlight**

*My Early Days in Astronomy by Mike Dannenfeldt*

I heard about astronomy and my mind started to think about it at a young age. I got started back in the early 60's, at 12 yrs. old. At that time I lived on Davenport Ave. off Locust St. in Davenport. Sometimes things are meant to happen, a block away I knew this Chiropractor by the name of Dr. Neiswander who I found out was very into Astronomy. He invited me to his home on Jersey Ridge & 46th St. I was absolutely amazed at the size of his telescope. It was a 12" reflector which now is at the Menke roll off roof observatory. As a youngster, I felt like I connected up with the right person. It was the first time that I saw the moon close up, Jupiter and its moons, Saturn, and M 42. I was impressed to say the least!

At that time I saved money up from my grass mowing and snow shoveling jobs to purchase a 6" reflector. My Dad even constructed a small 8' square fold out roof observatory for my 6" scope. I currently own an 11" Celestron with a Hyper Star.

I continued to search out more local people involved in astronomy & clubs. In my search for a club I ran across the Popular Astronomy Club that met on the Augustana College campus once a month. Dr. Harry Nelson, professor of Mathematics, was president of the club. He had an interesting topic every month; he made you think about astronomy to expand your mind, great speaker! The club had an annual potluck every August at the Carl Gable Observatory off Coal Town Rd. in Moline. It was equipped with a very long Refractor. I remember that most of the time it seemed like I hung out with people that were always older than me, as an only child growing up, I grew up with adults anyway, so I always seemed to adapt well, and never afraid to speak up to add to my knowledge.

At about 14 yrs. old, 1965, I discovered the St. Ambrose on campus observatory on the NE corner of their property. It was about a block west of the intersection of Lombard and Harrison. I was curious to find out what was inside this Observatory, I called St. Ambrose and they made a connection with Monsignor Menke. Then one night we met at the observatory and low and behold Dr. Neiswander had donated his 12" reflector to the college that I had my first look threw just a couple of yrs. earlier. Small world I guess. So at the end of the evening Monsignor Menke said, the interest I showed and what I had learned he felt like I should have a key to use the observatory. He also told me to feel free to bring people to show off the universe. The dome on the observatory back then is now the same dome that is out at Dixon, IA where the St. Ambrose observatory is now located.

I feel like one of my biggest observations and lucky to be there at the time, was back in Oct. of 1965. It was a comet named Ikeya-Seki that graced our skies. It was a bright comet that streaked way across the southern fall sky, night after night that Oct. Other neat things I have been fortunate to witness is the transits of Venus & Mercury. When I witnessed this it goes to show you just how small we really are as these planets slowly move across the face of our sun. I find Astronomy is a great mind exerciser too!

That is my story on how I got started in Astronomy!

Mike Dannenfeldt

## Gallery

The below pics were shown and discussed at the November 2016 meeting...

6 entries from Jim Rutenbeck



-Flame and Horsehead Nebulae (Jim)-



-Andromeda and companion Galaxies (Jim)-





-M33 Galaxy (Jim)-



-Rosette Nebula/Cluster (Jim)-

2 entries from John Robbins



-NGC253 Galaxy (Jim)-



-Double Cluster (John)-



-NGC7000 Nebulae (Jim)-



-2/3rds Moon (John)-

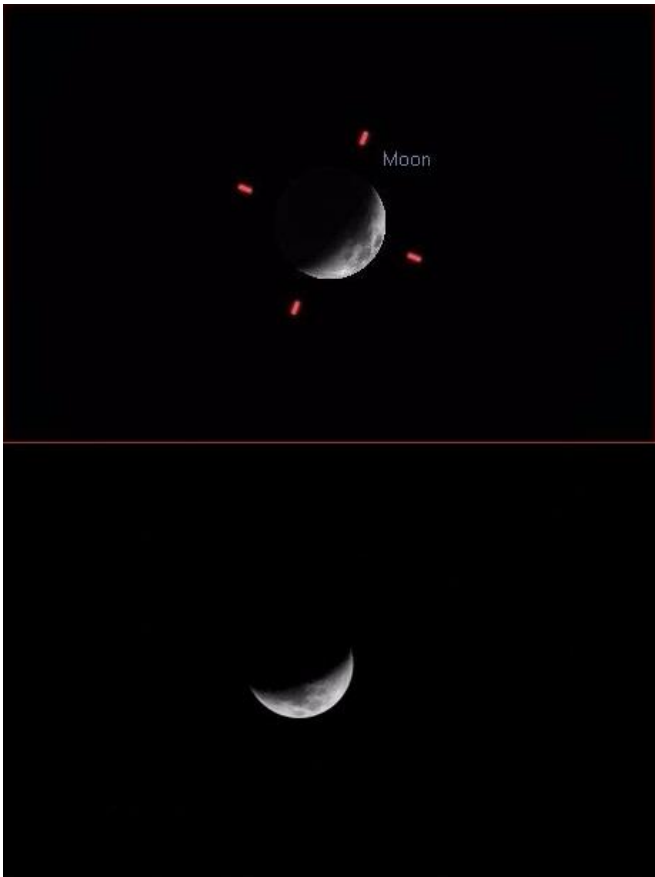
3 entries from Karl Adlon



-Veil Nebulae (Karl)-



-Moon (Karl)-



-Scale Comparison, Stellarium (Top) Actual (Bottom) (Karl)-

2 entries from Ken Boquist



-M34 Galaxy (Ken)-



-M34 Galaxy and company (Ken)-

1 entry from Mike Ombrello



-IC1396 Elephant Trunk Nebulae (Mike)-



## Last Month in QCAS

Jim Rutenbeck, Karl Adlon, Mike Ombrello, and Jeff Struve have been periodically going out to the Menke Observatory to continue tweaking the polar alignment on the Orion HDX mount in the dome.

11/20/16 – Jeff Struve and Dr. Mitchell escorted Alan Sheidler (PAC) and Lee Carkner (Augustana College) thru a demonstration of the Menke Observatory Orion HDX mount and Celestron HD1400 SCT. There was an electrical event that occurred in Augustana's dome which severely damaged their mounts electronics. They are in the market to replace the mount and asked to see the Menke set up...

11/28/16 – Dale Hendricks was able to make a few room reservations in Aurora, NE for the Solar Eclipse. Contact Robert Mitcell if you are interested in a room... while supplies last!

**TV to Watch** - or to record for later if you get a clear night.



SyFy's **The Expanse** began last year with Season 1 and picks up again this February. Look for Season 1 reruns, maybe starting in December.

The Expanse is based on a series of books by James S. A. Corey, the pen name of authors Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck. The first novel, Leviathan Wakes, was nominated for the Hugo Award for Best Novel in 2012 and Season 1 is based on this first book.

I missed much of Season 1, so I borrowed the books for the library and I've read the 5 available. A 6<sup>th</sup> is available and two more are planned. Then I borrowed the Season 1 DVDs.

My suggestion is to read Leviathan Wakes and then watch the DVDs. You'll get more out of the story.

And it is a really good story!

-Karl Adlon

## **For Sale – Wanted**

For Sale – Orion 90mm short tube refractor. 500 mm focal length. Equipped with 1.25 inch focuser, 45 degree diagonal, 26mm Sirius Plossl ep, 6x30mm finder and tube rings that are larger than the tube. There is a plate on the bottom of the tube assembly with 1/4 inch x 20 threaded hole for mounting to a camera tripod. Excellent condition. Price \$100. Must be picked up by Dec. 3. Contact Jim Rutenbeck at [JRutenbeck@frontier.com](mailto:JRutenbeck@frontier.com)

## **Editor's Note:**

Please help improve the substance of our newsletter by submitting articles and pictures for publication. Variety is the spice of life... be spicy!

Types of articles that would really be interesting could include What's In the Sky This Month, equipment reviews, experiences you've had in astronomy, sketches you've drawn, trips you've taken to observatories or star parties, a high level overview of your favorite astronomer, movie, book or article reviews, list astronomy gear that you want to buy or sell, and of course pictures you've taken and how they were done...

If each member submitted 1 article per year we could have an incredibly varied and interesting newsletter... that is my challenge to you!

Also... Drop an email, text, or make a phone call or two... members want to get together outside of normal club events to discuss and work on our hobby!

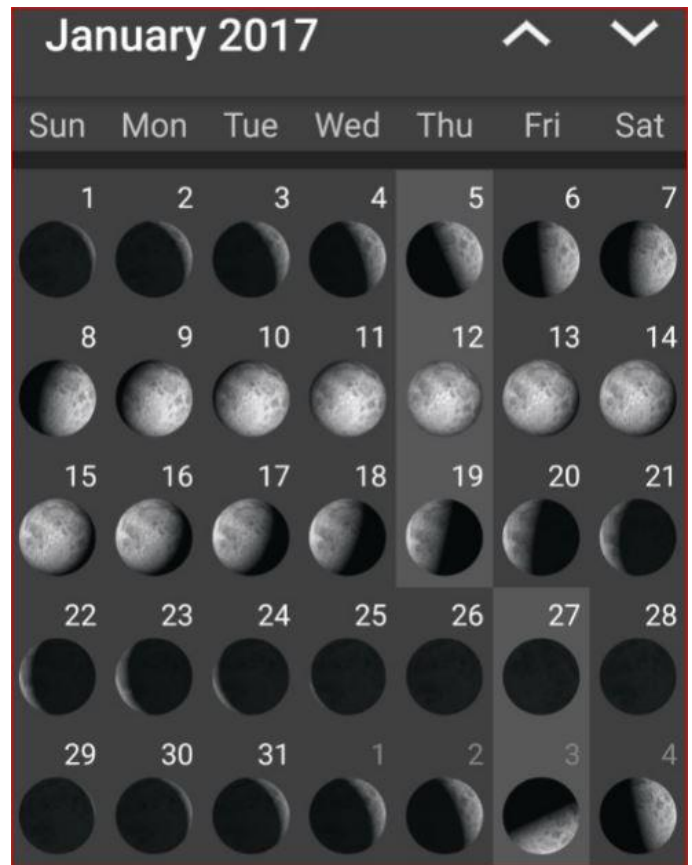
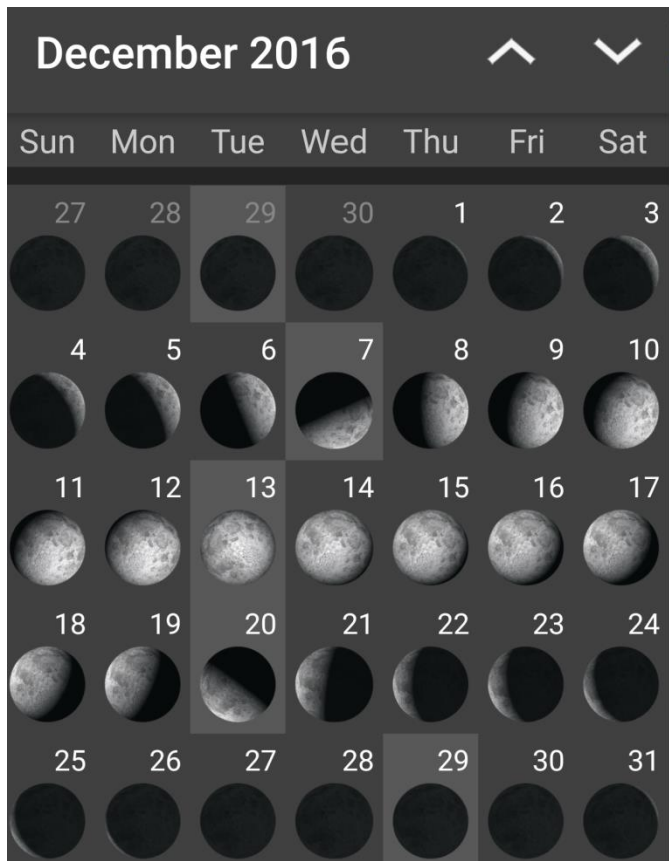
Jeff

*PS... A special thank you to Mike Dannenfeldt for being in the Spotlight, Karl's TV Show Review, Adams School, PAC, Matt, Jim, John, Karl, Ken, and Mike for their photo contributions, and Dr. Mitchell for his excellent note taking during the 11/13 Board meeting and 11/21 Society meeting... it really helped in putting together this issue!*

## **Calendar of Events**

### 2017 TENTATIVE

01/16/17 – Society Meeting  
01/28/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory?  
02/20/17 – Society Meeting  
02/25/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory?  
03/20/17 – Society Meeting  
03/24-26/17 – Messier Marathon at Menke Observatory  
03/25/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory?  
04/17/17 – Society Meeting  
04/29/17 – Astronomy Day  
04/29/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory  
05/13/17 – Menke Observatory Public Open House  
05/15/17 – Society Meeting  
05/27/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory  
06/17/17 – Menke Observatory Public Open House  
06/19/17 – Society Meeting  
06/24/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory  
07/15/17 – Menke Observatory Public Open House  
07/17/17 – Society Meeting  
07/22/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory  
08/12/17 – Public viewing of the Perseid Meteor Shower  
08/12/17 – Menke Observatory Public Open House  
08/19/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory  
08/21/17 – Solar Eclipse  
08/21/17 – Society Meeting  
09/18/17 – Society Meeting  
09/22-24/17 – Eastern Iowa Star Party  
09/16/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory  
09/23/17 – Menke Observatory Public Open House  
10/16/17 – Society Meeting  
10/21/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory  
11/18/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory?  
11/20/17 – Society Meeting – Annual Dinner  
12/16/17 – Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory?  
12/18/17 – Society Meeting



### 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: [PwrHsePro@aol.com](mailto:PwrHsePro@aol.com) and [MitchellRobertC@sau.edu](mailto:MitchellRobertC@sau.edu)

### QCAS Officers and Contacts:

#### Officers

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Treasurer:	Matt Neilssen	<a href="mailto:Matt.Neilssen@gmail.com">Matt.Neilssen@gmail.com</a>
Director:	<b>Pending</b>	<b><a href="#">Pending Acceptance</a></b>

#### Chairpersons

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