

# THE MERIDIAN

Newsletter of the  
Quad Cities  
Astronomical Society

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



**MARCH 2018**

**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:

Hi all!

March is on its way... in like a lamb and out like a lion, or is it in like a lion out like a lamb? In either case, I'm hopin' for a lot of wool!

This is a great time for all to start brushing off their gear, due to dust gathering over the winter season... also a bit of brushing up on how to set things up... update and practice running any software that you use... and start thinking about any objectives that you have for the year. I'm hoping to finish aligning the Menke 14" SCT, do a bit of Spectroscopy, Double Star viewing, brushing off my cameras for a little AP... what are your plans!

March will be a busy month. On 3/05 we have our monthly Board meeting. Email me if you want to attend! On 3/14 we have been asked to demo our stuff to the Naturalists... please plan on attending as a good show of membership support will be appreciated. We have our annual Messier Marathon from 3/16 through 3/18. Amateur astronomers only, although guests are fine as long as they don't interfere with the viewing/imaging! Our regular Society meeting is on 3/19. Bring paper, pencils, and calculators as Ian has plans for us regarding his presentation... sounds like a test??? And lastly, 3/24... Let's head out to Jens-Wendt Observatory (aka Sherman Park 0 and check out a bit of the end of month Nebulae!

We may have some exciting plans for this year's EISP! More later!

Clear Skies!

Jeff



USS Enterprise 1965 Los Angeles



First Lunar Pic 1969 by Armstrong

## **Last Society Meeting Minutes:**

### **Date/Time Location**

6:30 PM on Monday February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
105 McCarthy, St. Ambrose University, Davenport, IA

### **Attendance** (11 in attendance)

Jeff Struve  
Don Robinson  
George Bailey  
Tom Bullock  
Byron Davis  
Craig Cox  
Ken Boquist  
Steve VanHyfte  
Paul Levesque  
Matt Neilssen  
Ian Spangenberg

### **Presentations**

New Gear (and for sale)

- Byron Davis has a set of Celestron Ultima eyepieces for sale that he brought in for us to inspect they are 1.25" – 5mm, 7.5mm, 12.5mm, 18mm, 24mm, 35mm, 40mm, 2X Barlow - \$400.00 for the set.
- Byron Davis – Bought a new 2" 2X Barlow which he passed around for us to check out... pretty nice!
- Jeff Struve purchased a book on measuring double stars... "Observing and Measuring Visual Double Stars"

Member Outings

- Ken Boquist continued working on the Astronomical League Planetary Nebulae Program at Wayne-Jens Observatory on February 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Public Night – The February 17<sup>th</sup> event was cancelled due to weather.

Announcements

- John Baker emailed pictures of an article in the Bettendorf News about the Bettendorf High School Planetarium.
- Jeff Struve talked about the Wilton School System Observatory and his participation in helping with selection, installation, configuration and training users of the desktop software to be used.
- The March Society Meeting Presentation will be on Orbital Mechanics and presented by Ian Spangenberg. Remember to bring paper, pencils and calculator!

Main Presentation

Dr. Mitchell had come down with Bronchitis so sent Jeff Struve the link and information for his presentation on the American Astronomy Convention and his participation.

### **Treasurers Report**

- PAC donated \$100.00 for our helping at the Putnam Museum during the Solar Eclipse
- Verizon donated \$750 for astronomy related volunteer work accomplished by Matt Neilssen. Thanx Matt!
- 3M donated \$250 for the 33 volunteer hours provided by Jim Rutenbeck. Thanx Jim!
- Our balance - \$3958.63
- We still need to do a complete inventory.
- Check with your employer for grants and fund matching.
- Don't forget membership dues! \$20 per individual and \$10 per each family member! – Deadline is March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Review of Minutes**

The January Minutes as per the February Meridian were approved.

## Old Business

- The doors at McCarthy Hall are kept locked when school is not in session. These dates are as follows: January 15, May 21, June 18, July 16, and December 17... On those meeting dates, the doors will be open from 6:30 PM and locked again at 7:15 PM. If you are running late, and need access after 7:15, text Jeff at 309-737-0206 and he'll send someone to let you in. We hold a brief social/Open Discussion time from 6:30 until the meeting starts at 7:00 PM.
- March 14<sup>th</sup> – IA Association of Naturalists Statewide Workshop at Sherman Park... Please plan to attend!
- March 16 - 18 – The Menke Observatory Messier Marathon ... A great amateur astronomer's only event!
- March 24<sup>th</sup> – Nebulae Viewing at Jens-Wendt Observatory... Public welcome!
- April 21<sup>st</sup> – Astronomy Day at Bettendorf High School and that evening at Jens-Wendt Observatory...
- August 11<sup>th</sup> – Meteor Shower Party at Pleasant Valley High School or Jr. High School...
- September 7 – 9, 2018 is the EISP... speakers are shaping up!
  - Dr. Jenifer Anderson, Professor of Geoscience, Winona St. University, who is expert in impact craters. I believe that she has done work for NASA, and she was one of the guest speakers at last year's North Central Regions Astronomical League event.
  - Dr. Paul Sipiera, author and Planetary Studies Foundation President and CEO, who will speak on space rocks, and will bring in part of his extremely large collection for us to view.
  - David Levy... yep... in person! We are still in the planning stage, but it looks pretty good. This will still need a few pre-registration reply's before we can commit... so if you haven't please email Jeff Struve at [PwrHsePro@aol.com](mailto:PwrHsePro@aol.com)
  - ES may donate a scope. Jeff will hold on accepting this as a prize until it is confirmed that we will have David Levy speak. If not, we'll ask for a couple eyepieces instead.
  - Registration Fee?
    - \$25 for the party only, \$35 for speakers only, \$50 for party, raffle, and speakers?
    - Munchies by donation
    - Please email Jeff as above or check in to QCAS Facebook page to mark your interest!
- Steve VanHyfte brought up doing a bit of work on our 20" Newtonian:
  - Drive cover replacement
  - Fix focuser flip mirror to work properly
  - Primary mirror is binding – repair – needs 18 point support structure.
  - Adjust the altitude for proper polar aligning
- Matt talked on the new web site... hopefully available soon, but he needs pics of club events and a description of what the pic is!
- Future Society meeting presentations requested:
  - George Bailey asked for:
    - Measure double stars – position, angle, separation
    - Measuring variable stars – magnitude
  - Ken Boquist asked for:
    - Local weather forecasting for astronomical viewing
  - Ian Spangenberg asked for:
    - Black Holes
    - Orbital Mechanics (He can give the presentation in March)
- We still will be setting up a time to collimate our SCT's
- We discussed the continuing endeavor to relocate the Jens Wendt Observatory to the Menke Observatory site. We feel that a 24' X 32' structure will meet our needs in housing the 20" and 16" Newt's as well as additional pads/piers for member use.

## **New Business**

- Future Presentations:
  - Future Meeting – Weather Forecasting by Christen Allen
  - Future Meeting – RSpec by Jeff Struve
  - Future Meeting – Carl Wenning on the Astronomical League
  - Future Meeting – Alan Sheidler has a number of presentations that he had previously used for other activities
  - Steve VanHyfte – Talk on LA, Observatory, Crater, Dark Skies....

## **Next Society Meeting:**

### **Date/Time Location**

6:30 PM on Monday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
105 McCarthy Hall, St. Ambrose University, Davenport IA

### **March Presentation**

Orbital Mechanics by Ian Spangenberg. Bring paper, pencils, and a calculator!

Presentations for future meetings include Christian Allen on weather forecasting the QCA, Jeff Struve on the RSpec Spectroscopy software, Carl Wenning on the Astronomical League, and Alan Sheidler on topics to be agreed upon. Contact Jim Rutenbeck or Jeff Struve if you'd like to make a presentation.

### **Other Business**

- 20" Newt Refurb
- Observatory Relocation
- New Web Site

## **Last Board Meeting Minutes:**

### **Date/Time Location**

Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
6:30 PM to 8:30 PM  
Village Inn – Elmore, Davenport

### **Attendance**

Jeff Struve – Present  
Craig Cox – Absent  
Robert Mitchell – Present  
Matt Neilssen – Absent  
Dana Taylor – Absent  
Jim Rutenbeck – Absent

### **GUESTS**

Steve VanHyfte – Present

### **Agenda**

- 2018 Calendar
  - February 17<sup>th</sup> Open House
  - 03/14/18 (Wed) – Sherman Park requested event for the Iowa Association of Naturalists Statewide Workshop – Placed on 2018 calendar
  - March, Friday 16 – Sunday 18 is the Messier Marathon
    - March 24<sup>th</sup> Public Open House - Jeff and Craig will be out of town
  - April, Sat 21 – Astronomy Day w/evening Public Night – BHS
    - BHS is on board!
  - August, Sat 11 – Meteor Shower Party w/Constellations and Mars – PVHS
    - PVHS is on board... may hold the event at the Jr. High... better location

- September 7-9 EISP
  - Dr. Siperá – Honorarium needed
  - Dr. Anderson Honorarium needed
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> speaker? – David Levy?
  - Door Prizes
  - Charge \$25 for EISP w/o David Levy
- Public Nights
  - Lights Off Signs and Parking Area Signs
    - Craig will investigate
  - Canned Presentations
- Administrative
  - Main agenda topics for 2018
    - New Website
      - Moving Jens Wendt Observatory to the Menke site
  - Treasurer Report
    - Verizon donation of \$750.00 offered
    - Membership dues not received by March 31<sup>st</sup> result in membership lapse
    - We need to do a complete inventory of items owned
    - Balance \$4469.38
  - Trifolds
    - Jeff to try to have draft ready for the March Board meeting
  - Membership Registration/Renewal Forms
    - Jeff to try to have ready for March Board Meeting
  - Membership Cards
    - Use current until they run out
- Jens Wendt Observatory Relocation to the Menke site
  - Revamp 20" (Steve VanHyfte) – Mirror cell revamp to 18 point (we are 9 point), Mirror edge support, Flip mirror, Replace the drive cover – Tentative completion date, July 14<sup>th</sup> Public Open
    - Add a refractor?
    - Turn into truss?
      - Tube not flexing
      - Focusers not aligned properly
      - Inferior focusers may be adding the flexure
      - TT John Baker about 18pt floatation system...
      - Drive Cover Box – has template ready
      - 20" is 99" long and horizontally 5.5' high
    - Roll off Roof Building – 24' X 32'
    - Piers for 16" and 20" Newtonians and room for tripod mounted scopes
    - Poured floor – Expansion joints to eliminate vibrations
    - Roll off Roof building to be frame, Dome Building to be concrete block for aesthetically matching the current structures – have a warm room for PC remote control?
    - 6' walls with an additional 18" wall built onto roof for head room when roof is closed
    - Additional electrical capacity
    - Additional pads w/electricity outside
    - Make sure Wi-Fi band width is sufficient
    - Dr. Mitchell will check for the Menke Roll Off Building plans and see if their Engineering Class will take on drawing prints and materials list for our building.
- Web Site
  - Will contain Treasurer Info (Board Member Access), Minutes, Applications, Links, Other
  - Approved budget of up to \$2500.00 for web site less picture gallery

- Other
  - Astronomical League
    - \$10 for club
    - Minimum of 5 members
    - \$7.50 per member unless all join then \$5.00 per member
  - Flipcause fundraising

**Next Board Meeting:**

**Date/Time Location**

Unless otherwise noted, Board Meetings will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 6:30 PM 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**

- Upcoming Events
- New documents
  - Trifold
  - Application Form
  - Membership Renewal Form
  - Membership Cards
- Observatory Relocation
- Discuss the new web site

**Other Business**

- Discuss work to be done on the 20”
- Discuss continued inventory
- Discuss selling our heavy fiberglass step ladder and replacing it with an aluminum ladder for use in the roll off roof building.

**Secondary Topics**

- Intro to Spectroscopy class
- PixInsight meetings/class

**Member Spotlight:**

- **None this month – Subject Member Needed!**

**Submitted Articles:**



Pictures submitted by John Baker

## SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL PLANETARIUM

*By Paul Levesque*

There aren't many high schools in the United States with their own planetarium, and fewer still with planetariums that use the latest digital technology. Residents of the Quad Cities are fortunate to find such a planetarium right in our community, at Bettendorf High School, home of the Donald A. Schaefer Planetarium.

For the remainder of the school year, the Schaefer Planetarium will feature three shows that are open to the public. Admission is free but seating is limited, so please call or e-mail ahead if you'd like to attend. Two are the shows are double features, with both professional productions and productions created by Bettendorf High School teachers and students.

Here's a look at the dates and descriptions of upcoming shows:

**February 27:** "Phantom of the Universe," a professionally produced show that looks at the fundamental particles of the universe and tackles big questions such as "Where did we come from" and "What are we made of?" The show runs about 40 minutes, with a question-and-answer session to follow.


**March 20:** "Oasis in Space" is a professionally produced show that takes us to on a tour of the universe to the farthest reaches of the cosmos, starting and ending at that oasis known as the planet Earth. That date will also feature a BHS-produced show titled "Renaissance," which looks at the era when modern science was born.

**May 1:** "From Earth to Universe" is a professionally produced show that discusses some of the latest breakthroughs in astronomy and cosmology and travels to the edge of the known universe. The second feature is a BHS production titled "The Works of Walt Whitman," an examination of the works of the noted American transcendentalist poet produced as part of the high schools' advanced placement American Literature class.

To make reservations and for more information, call the high school at (563) 332-4516 or send an e-mail to Christopher Like at [clike@bettendorf.k12.ia.us](mailto:clike@bettendorf.k12.ia.us).

## MORE LOCAL SCHOOL SPONSORED PLANETARIUM INFO!

*By Grant Harkness*



**The Wilton Observatory Project**  
INSPIRING THE WORLD'S NEXT GREAT EXPLORERS!

**Contact Us**  
[WiltonObservatoryProject@gmail.com](mailto:WiltonObservatoryProject@gmail.com)  
563-447-0151

**Social Media**  
[www.facebook.com/WiltonObservatoryProject](https://www.facebook.com/WiltonObservatoryProject)  
<https://twitter.com/wcsobservatory>

**Contribute**  
[www.PayPal.me/WiltonObservatory](https://www.paypal.me/WiltonObservatory)

Wilton Observatory Project  
Wilton Community School  
1001 Cypress Street  
Wilton, IA 52778

More later!!!

## Gallery

- None this month – Subject Member Needed!

## For Sale – Wanted

### For Sale:

- Byron Davis has a set of Celestron Ultima eyepieces for sale – 1.25" – 5mm, 7.5mm, 12.5mm, 18mm, 24mm, 35mm, 40mm, 2X Barlow - \$400.00 for the set.



- A gentleman by the name of Jerry Hansen is selling his telescope, filters, and other associated equipment. If you are interested in finding out more about it, please let me know and I will send you his contact information so you can find out more and negotiate directly with him (if interested). It looks like a nice unit. Thanks. Al Sheidler. [ADSheidler@gmail.com](mailto:ADSheidler@gmail.com)

### **INSTRUCTION MANUAL 6", 8" & 10" STARFINDER REFLECTING TELESCOPES**



**Meade Instruments Corporation**  
16542 Milliken Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714-5032 (714) 756-2291



- New 2<sup>nd</sup> Addn "Inside PixInsight" by Warren Keller. \$30.00 – 1 left! Contact Jeff Struve at [PwrHsePro@aol.com](mailto:PwrHsePro@aol.com)



- Mike Ombrello has for sale the pictured binocular bom and tripod... Contact Mike at [Ombrello@mac.com](mailto:Ombrello@mac.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...

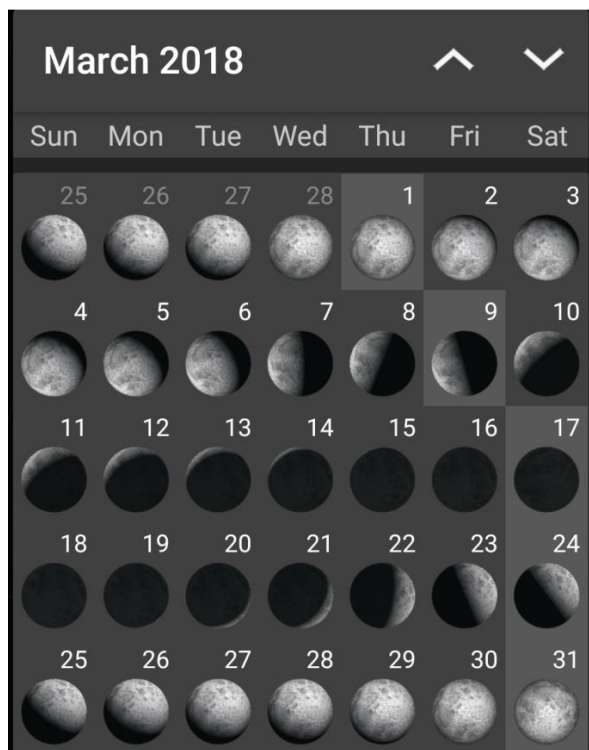
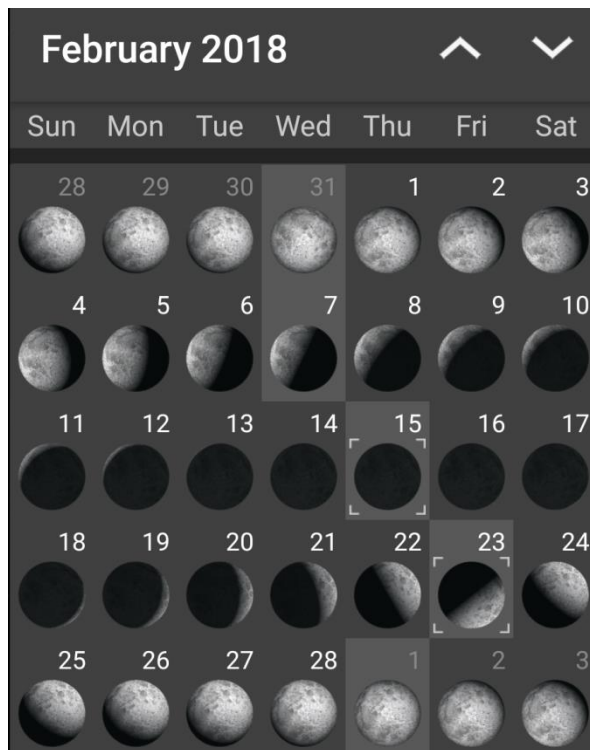
If each member submitted 1 article per year we could have an incredibly varied and interesting newsletter... that is my challenge to you!

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

## **Calendar of Events – 2018**

01/04/18 – Board Meeting  
01/15/18 – Society Meeting  
01/20/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waxing Crescent 5:00 PM Intro to Spectroscopy and Double Stars Presentation)  
02/05/18 – Board Meeting  
02/17/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waxing Crescent 5:30 PM Intro to Imaging Presentation)  
02/19/18 – Society Meeting  
03/05/18 – Board Meeting  
03/14/18 – Sherman Park requested event for the Iowa Association of Naturalists Statewide Workshop  
03/16-18/18 – Messier Marathon  
03/19/18 – Society Meeting  
03/24/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (First Quarter 7:00 PM Orion and Other Nebulae Presentation)  
04/02/18 – Board Meeting  
04/16/18 – Society Meeting  
04/21/18 – Bettendorf High School Astronomy Day w/evening Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waxing Crescent 8:00 PM EAA Presentation)  
05/05/18 – Menke Public Open  
05/07/18 – Board Meeting  
05/19/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waxing Crescent 8:30 PM Presentation???)  
05/21/18 – Society Meeting  
06/04/18 – Board Meeting  
06/09/18 – Menke Public Open  
06/16/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waxing Crescent 8:30 PM Star Cluster Presentation)  
06/18/18 – Society Meeting  
06/21/18 – Wayne Jens Memorial Solar Observing Day  
07/02/18 – Board Meeting  
07/07/18 – Menke Public Open  
07/14/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waxing Crescent 8:30 PM Presentation???)  
07/16/18 – Society Meeting  
07/21/18 – Niabi Zoo w/PAC  
08/04/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Last Quarter – 8:00 PM Planets Presentation)  
08/06/18 – Board Meeting  
08/11/18 – Pleasant Valley High School – Meteor Shower Party w/Constellations and Mars  
08/18/18 – Menke Public Open  
08/20/18 – Society Meeting  
09/06/18 – Board Meeting  
09/07-09/18 – Eastern Iowa Star Party  
09/15/18 – Menke Public Open  
09/17/18 – Society Meeting  
09/29/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waning Gibbous – 7:00 PM Moon Presentation)  
10/01/18 – Board Meeting  
10/13/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waxing Crescent 6:30 PM Andromeda and other Galaxies Presentation)  
10/15/18 – Society Meeting  
10/20/18 – Niabi Zoo w/PAC  
11/05/18 – Board Meeting  
11/10/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (Waxing Crescent 5:00 PM Presentation???)  
11/17/18 – Niabi Zoo w/PAC  
11/19/18 – Society Annual Dinner Meeting and Elections  
12/03/18 – Board Meeting  
12/15/18 – Public Night at Jens Wendt (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 4:30 PM ISS, Satellites, Iridium Flares Presentation)  
12/17/18 – 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/or [MitchellRobertC@sau.edu](mailto:MitchellRobertC@sau.edu)

**QCAS Officers and Contacts:**

Officers

President: Jeff Struve	<a href="mailto:PwrHsePro@aol.com">PwrHsePro@aol.com</a>
Vice-Pres: Craig Cox	<a href="mailto:AdmiralCox2000@yahoo.com">AdmiralCox2000@yahoo.com</a>
Secretary: Dr. Robert Mitchell	<a href="mailto:MitchellRobertC@sau.edu">MitchellRobertC@sau.edu</a>
Treasurer: Matt Neilssen	<a href="mailto:Matt.Neilssen@gmail.com">Matt.Neilssen@gmail.com</a>
Director: Dana Taylor	<a href="mailto:Dana@NelsonTaylor.com">Dana@NelsonTaylor.com</a>

Chairpersons

Facilities: Dana Taylor	<a href="mailto:Dana@NelsonTaylor.com">Dana@NelsonTaylor.com</a>
Meridian Editor: Jeff Struve	<a href="mailto:PwrHsePro@aol.com">PwrHsePro@aol.com</a>
Outreach: Matt Neilssen	<a href="mailto:Matt.Neilssen@gmail.com">Matt.Neilssen@gmail.com</a>
Programming: Jim Rutenbeck	<a href="mailto:JRutenbeck@frontier.com">JRutenbeck@frontier.com</a>
Web Master: Dana Taylor, Matt Neilssen	<a href="mailto:Dana@NelsonTaylor.com">Dana@NelsonTaylor.com</a>
Publicity: Paul Levesque	<a href="mailto:Levesque5562@att.net">Levesque5562@att.net</a>