



The Meridian

The newsletter of the
Quad Cities Astronomical
Society

March 2013

Secretary's Notes

Dale Hendricks

18 March

Members in attendance:

Karl Adlon	Joe Bannon	Bruce Brooker	Dale Hendricks	Dr. Robert Mitchell
Matt Neilssen	John Robbins	Preston Ross	Jim Rutenbeck	Dana Taylor
Steve Van Hyfte	Cecil Ward	Mitch White		

Agenda: No agenda was provided prior to the meeting. Dale Hendricks, filling in for Joe Bannon, had an agenda based on our current situation (Joe leaving for a new job in California creating the need for a new president) and follow up on activities/subjects covered at the February meeting.

Here is the outline document from which Dale conducted the meeting: We did not cover all of these nor were the ones we did cover discussed in detail - there was some resolution to some of these:

- Meetings have become nearly all business - we should talk/discuss/share more about astronomy.
- Conduct major business in Board and Committee meetings (face to face or electronic) and limit monthly meetings to short reports except for important information / decisions.
- Have an astronomy topic of some sort at each meeting, perhaps related to the month, about 15 minutes long. This should leave plenty of time for open discussion (what people are working on or have accomplished or want to know). Plus have a presentation ready that could be given at any time (e.g., supernova) if nobody has something for discussion.
- We tend to hibernate in the winter (almost over now, but there'll be another). The Club should be more pro-active regarding public observing. Officers and members should feel secure in knowing that someone will be at the Observatory for Open Houses.
- Have local public star (moon & planets) parties (parks, libraries, etc.) because not everyone is willing to travel to Dixon, IA.
- In the winter, plan polar bear star parties but have a backup plan to meet and have a discussion/bs session or watch a video if it's cloudy.
- An Open House assignment list is needed - "everyone commits" to at least one date and shows up or finds a replacement.

Here are the major topics we did bring up for discussion and some degree of resolution -

1. **President Joe Bannon Ships Off** - Joe did not make the beginning of the meeting but did join us later. He shared comments with us about his new job opportunity, reminisces on his time with the QCAS and his best wishes all of which were warmly received. You will be missed, Joe, but we look forward to your updates from CA, both job and astronomy related. ***Best wishes and fair winds and following seas – from QCAS***
2. **Vacancy for the President position:** - Jim Rutenbeck and Dale Hendricks both volunteered to fill the president position. After some discussion, checking the procedural requirements and bylaws, a vote was taken and it was determined that Dale will fill the position. With Dale taking the President's position we need to fill the Secretary position.
3. **Strategic Plan/Mission Statement:** (From our Feb Meridian) - this has been a discussion topic... but there is growing urgency to develop a plan that can be used to help guide our work and activities. Without this, determination of how to use the new observatory, what type of instrument we want/need to be mounted in it, whether or not we can mount more than one type of scope, etc., what our short, medium and long term plans are and how to use that information for grant applications will be difficult and could possibly be seen as disjointed. A subcommittee has been formed to develop this information and it will meet prior to the next meeting to present a proposal to the members. Dana is leading this group. Thanks for your commitment, Dana. Volunteers for a subcommittee are needed to start this process and soon.
4. **Facilities** - updated plans for the dome on new observatory: this was the most discussed agenda item of the meeting. What are the plans for the new observatory? What type of instrument should be mounted in the building - Newtonian or Schmitt-Cassegrain? Each has plusses and minuses but we need to have a more in-depth discussion/evaluation of what we want the observatory to be for us and others. Again, we will expect a detailed update at our next meeting. Jim suggested that the subcommittee meet 30 or 40 minutes prior to our next meeting.
5. **Solar Filter for the 20-inch** – Last meeting Steve Van Hyfte turned over the solar filter, which he fabricated, to John Baker. Bruce Booker reported that he and John took it to the observatory and tried it out. Both agreed that it worked well.
6. **Grants** - only brought up for discussion again. Matt Nielssen is employed by Verizon and confirmed that he can obtain a \$750.00 grant from Verizon for his work with a nonprofit - us!. That led to a wider discussion about companies like Hon Industries. Dale committed to contacting the John Deere Foundation to determine their criteria for awarding criteria
7. **Outreach** - Matt continues to do good work on outreach and has a file of events/activities in which our group/individuals have been involved. He has requested any member who is planning "something" send him a note providing the basic info for his files and PR work. Thanks for your interest and energy, Matt.
8. **CCCB agreement** - no response back from this body - Dana to follow up - info at next meeting.
9. **Treasurer's Report** - Sent email by John Baker - current account balance is \$1,788.31 This amount includes additional dues less \$72.00 to pay for our annual P.O. box fee.
10. **Bettendorf Planetarium** - Dale asked Preston Ross to check with staff at BHS to determine interest - he reported that there was interest and we now should work on items/activities/events

of mutual interest where we could work together to provide quality experiences for interested groups and/or individuals. Thanks Preston - we will keep working this.

11. **Connectivity at Sherman Park** - Dana was absent at the Feb meeting and volunteered to follow up with the Sherman Park ranger to determine if he has County funded internet and, if so, whether we could have wireless access. Report at next meeting.
12. **Comet Pan-STARRS** - Several members were able to capture this comet on their own equipment and we hope they will all be published to our website. Good job, everyone, and Dana thanks for your belated "capture" and sharing.
13. **Reminders** – Members are encouraged to submit articles for the Meridian - see the last paragraph of this issue. Similarly, we would like to have a presentation at each meeting and seek suggestions (what do you want to know?) and participants.

Upcoming Celestial and Club Events

Mo	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Note that blue shaded cells are that members should consider	shaded cells are that members should consider	QCAS or QCAS supporting.	supported events			
MAR	24	25	26	27 Full Moon Moon close to bright star Spica	28 Moon close to planet Saturn	29	30 QCAS Star Party
APR	31 EASTER Mercury at greatest elongation west	1	2 PanSTARRS close to M31 Andromeda Galaxy	3 Last Quarter Moon	4	5	6
APR	7	8	9	10 NEW MOON	11	12	13 Thomas
APR	14 Moon close to planet Jupiter	15 7PM - QCAS Meeting	16	17	18 First Quarter Moon	19	20 PAC Niabi Zoo Star Party
APR	21	22 Lyrid meteor shower	23	24	25 Full Moon	26	27 QCAS Star Party / Open House
MAY	28 Saturn at Opposition	29	30	1	2 Last Quarter Moon	3	4 Eta Aquarid meteor shower Menke Star Party
MAY	5	6	7	8	9 7th Graders at the Observatory - Daytime - Solar NEW MOON	10	11
MAY	12 Mother's Day	13	14	15	16	17	18 PAC Niabi Zoo Star Party First Quarter Moon
MAY	19	20 7PM - QCAS Meeting	21	22	23	24 Venus, Jupiter & Mercury cluster low in evening sky for a few days	25 Full Moon QCAS Star Party / Open House

Jens-Wendt Observatory – Quad Cities Astronomical Society – Located at Sherman Park in Dixon, Iowa

Monsignor Menke Observatory – St. Ambrose University – Located at Wapsi River Environmental Education Center in Dixon, Iowa

QCAS Contacts

Elected Officers			Volunteers and Committees		
President	Dale Hendricks	dhusna68@mchsi.com	Facilities	John Baker	johnbsys@aol.com
Vice-president	Craig Cox	admiralcox2000@yahoo.com	Web Master	Dana Taylor	dana@nelsonstaylor.com
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Treasurer	John Baker	johnbsys@aol.com	Programming	Jim Rutenbeck	jrutenbeck@frontier.com
Director	Dana Taylor	dana@nelsonstaylor.com			

All other contacts can be sent to the club at P.O. Box 3706, Davenport, IA, 52808.

Members are also reminded that anyone can submit articles for *The Meridian*. Submit articles to Jim Rutenbeck jrutenbeck@frontier.com or Dale Hendricks at dhusna68@mchsi.com.