



The Meridian

The newsletter of the
Quad Cities Astronomical
Society

May 2012

Secretary's Notes

Dale Hendricks

Members in attendance:

Dana Taylor
Craig Cox
Dale Hendricks
Jeff Struve

Jim Rutenbeck
Bruce Brooker
John Baker
Chris Day

Ken Boquist
Robert Mitchell
Joe Bannon
Matt Neilsson

Mitch White
John Baker
Deake Schneider

Treasurer's report: Craig Cox reported a total of \$2,035.57.

Old/New Business - Venus transit - 5 June at St Ambrose. POC is Dr. Robert Mitchell. (See report below for details of the Venus transit at St. Ambrose.)

Transit of Venus by Dana Taylor

It is now June 6th, the day after the Transit of Venus. I would gauge the event a complete success even if clouds periodically covered the sun. But, overall, I would say that we were able to present at least 90% of the event. Dr. Mitchell mounted a video camera to a Celestron C8 telescope located on the deck to project the event onto a large screen so everyone was able to view it without standing in long



Venus Transit by John Baker

lines. The event started with a small glitch in that we missed first contact. What with mounting a video camera along with a diagonal it's hard to exactly tell the image orientation. Is it inverted, reversed left-to-right, both? That situation was quickly corrected and when the image was finally projected on the screen there was spontaneous applause from the audience. Everything went smoothly from that point on.

Dr. Lee Carkner, John Deere Planetarium at Augustana, had been invited to attend by Dr. Mitchell and brought an 8-inch Dobsonian with solar filter so everyone could also view the event directly. With approximately 80 people in attendance (Dale counted them) the lines to

view were quite long. Dr. Mitchell began with a short description of what to expect and some background on transits. That was followed by a presentation from Dr. Carkner on the planet Venus which was well done and well received. Then I did my "Wonders of the Heavens" presentation that I put together for the Figge event later this summer. This gave me a chance to do a dry run in front of real people. It worked out well with only minor changes needed. Including Dr. Mitchell there were four Society members at the event representing us.

Note from Dale - I work with the President of St. Ambrose, Sr Joan Lescinski, on the Davenport Airport Commission and I took the liberty of sending her a note about the Venus transit event at St. Ambrose. My note and her response are attached here -

From: dhusna68@mchsi.com [mailto:dhusna68@mchsi.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 6:12 AM
To: Joan Lescinski, CSJ,
Subject: Venus transit gathering at SAU

Sister Joan - just wanted to pass along to you that we had approximately 90 - 100 people in the ballroom at Rogalski Hall yesterday to watch the Venus transit live. We had a telescope on the balcony attached to a computer and projector giving us a live view of the transit. There was applause when the planet first penetrated the limb of the sun. We also had a telescope set up with a sun filter so people could watch directly. Robert Mitchell from your staff set this up and it was a huge success so a big "thanks" to Robert and SAU for making this such a great event. We had three members of my astronomy society at this event but Robert carried the heavy load and was everywhere, it seemed, making this a great event for those in attendance. Next transit is 2117 so for those of us who aren't making plans to attend that future event, we had an historic experience with this one.

Kudos to Robert - great job. As we say in the Navy - "BZ"!!

Dale

Dear Dale and Robert,

I was delighted to get this message from you (I note how early in the morning you are working already!) and to hear of the number of people who gathered to watch the Venus transit live. We are very appreciative of Robert Mitchell's assistance to you. He is an outstanding professional, so I am not surprised to hear of his good work in helping to make this unique event happen for so many interested people.

I very much appreciated your message.

With thanks,

Sister Joan

NASA Art Exhibit - This exhibition will be at the Figge July 14-October 7, 2012.



Image: Norman Rockwell, Behind Apollo 11, 1969; oil on canvas

In celebration of its 50th anniversary in 2008, NASA is collaborating with SITES and the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum on the exhibition *NASA | ART: 50 Years of Exploration*. Drawn from the collections of NASA and the National Air and Space Museum, the exhibition features 72 works of art commissioned by the NASA Art Program. Established soon after the inception of the U.S. space program in 1958, NASA's Art Program provides a unique way to communicate the accomplishments, setbacks, and sheer excitement of space exploration to the public. The selected works span the entire history of NASA and include paintings, drawings, photographs, sculptures, and other media by such artists as Annie Leibovitz, Nam June Paik, Robert Rauschenberg, Norman Rockwell, Andy Warhol, William Wegman and Jamie Wyeth.

Photos for our exhibit at this exhibition have been delivered to Studio 1. Students will draw and paint out photos and the museum will videotape the classes. Additionally, the Society has now been asked to present four (4) sessions at the Thursday night sessions in the auditorium.

Sherman Park Observatory Site - Dana and Dale visited the observatory prior to the May meeting and inspected the building which was found to be in much need of repair. A checklist of repairs required and materials/items needed to effect the repairs will be made. Volunteers with carpentry or "helping" skills are solicited to complete some of the most needed repairs prior to this winter.

New Observation Dome Construction - There was much discussion on this topic. The dome is still on site and we basically agreed that where it now sits is a nearly perfect site for the new construction. Karl Adlon's survey responses were distributed to the attendees with some discussion as to what the survey indicates. Dana had developed an animated computer video of the projected new building. What is now needed is contributions of money and materials. John Baker stated he would visit the site on Tuesday 22 May to look at the site and possibly remove the concrete pad on which the dome now sits.



Here is John's email update for those who might not have seen it -

"Last night Jeff Struve, my brother-in-law Pat, and I went to Sherman Park and removed the pad that was under the dome. The original plan was to move the dome off to the side and leave it there so that it may still have been used by members but, after pulling the slab we decided that it would be better to move the dome back over the spot from where the pad was removed. If you go out there at night please be careful not to trip on the slab that is resting on the ground in front of the dome."



Nice work John - many thanks to you and your "impressed" helpers.

It was suggested that the amount of money needed to complete the construction could be covered by the money in our account and if we make the decision to do this the account will be replenished by donations from our members. No specific amount was specified - any and all contributions would be welcome and accepted.

Before we can begin any work we need to inform the Clinton County Conservation Board of our plans to ensure we have their support. One of our members will attend the next meeting to provide this information and inform the Society of their decision.



Outreach Programs - There are several programs in the near future. One is at Calamus on June 18, the same date and time as our next meeting. The program is scheduled for 4:30 - 6:00.

Ms. McConaghy at the Davenport Library, 6000 Eastern Avenue, has asked for our support at an astro party 23 June.

There is also a request for our participation at a back yard party from 1:00 - 2:00 in Eldridge in July at the library.

During the discussion it was suggested that we might want to invest in a reasonably good star projector to keep in our "kit" of materials for such outreach programs.

Next meeting: Next meeting is 18 June.

Upcoming Celestial and Club Events

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
JUN	10 Neptune 6° south of Moon	11 Last-Quarter Moon	12 Uranus 5° south of Moon	13	14 For rest of month: see Mercury in the morning!	15	16 Valentina Tereshkova first woman in space -1963
JUN	17 Father's Day	18 7PM - QCAS Meeting	19 NEW MOON	20 Summer begins; longest day / shortest night.	21	22	23 SAU Menke S.P.
JUN	24	25	26 1730- Charles Messier born	27 First-Quarter Moon	28	29 1868- George Ellery Hale born	30 QCAS Star Party
JULY	1	2	3 Full Moon	4 	5	6	7
JULY	8	9	10	11 Last-Quarter Moon	12	13	14 
JULY	15 Moon, Venus, Jupiter & Aldebaran form quadrangle in dawn sky	16 7PM - QCAS Meeting	17	18	19 NEW MOON	20 	21 SAU Menke S.P.

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	Dana Taylor	dana@nelsontaylor.com	Facilities	John Baker*	johnbsys@aol.com *(For Jim Rutenbeck)
Vice-president	Joe Bannon	mzbannon@aol.com	Web Master	Dana Taylor	dana@nelsontaylor.com
Secretary	Dale Hendricks	dhusna68@mchsi.com	Outreach	Joe Bannon	mzbannon@aol.com
Treasurer	Craig Cox	admiralcox2000@yahoo.com	Programming	Jim Rutenbeck	jrutenbeck@frontier.com
Director	Open	---			

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 Dale Hendricks at dhusna68@mchsi.com.