



# The Meridian

Newsletter of the Quad Cities Astronomical Society • April 2014

## Meeting Notes

John Robbins, Secretary

**April 21.** Meeting called to order by Dale Hendricks at 6:35pm. The meeting was attended by 14 members and two guests. Members included: Cecil Ward, John Baker, Dana Taylor, Dale Hendricks, Karl Adlon, John Robbins, Brian Haysbrook, Robert Mitchell, Matt Neilssen, Jeff Struve, Sam Snow, Debbie Ven Horst-Snow, Bruce Brooker, Jim Rutenbeck and Mitch White. Guests included Peter Brueken and John Gwhin, both from Bettendorf High School.

### Agenda

*Treasurer's Report.* The Society account balance was about \$2200 "in the kitty."

*Upcoming QCAS Events:*

**April 28th, 8pm,** QCAS Open House at the Jens-Wendt Observatory, Sherman Park.

**May 2nd, 8pm,** Riverdale School, Port Byron, An evening to highlight Mars. Karl Adlon is coordinator.

**July 16 & 17,** Scott County Library in Eldridge is hosting a summer skies program with the Star Lab. Dana Taylor is coordinator.

*Facilities.* Bruce demonstrated clock drive drift issues on the 16" by showing a time-lapse movie of the lunar eclipse. By noting a nearby star's path from frame to frame, the drift was evident. John B produced a layered image which shows this directly (see inside for image).

The JMI NGC-MAX computer on the 16" is reported by Bruce to be working.

John B reported some electrical issues and thrown breakers while operating the dome.

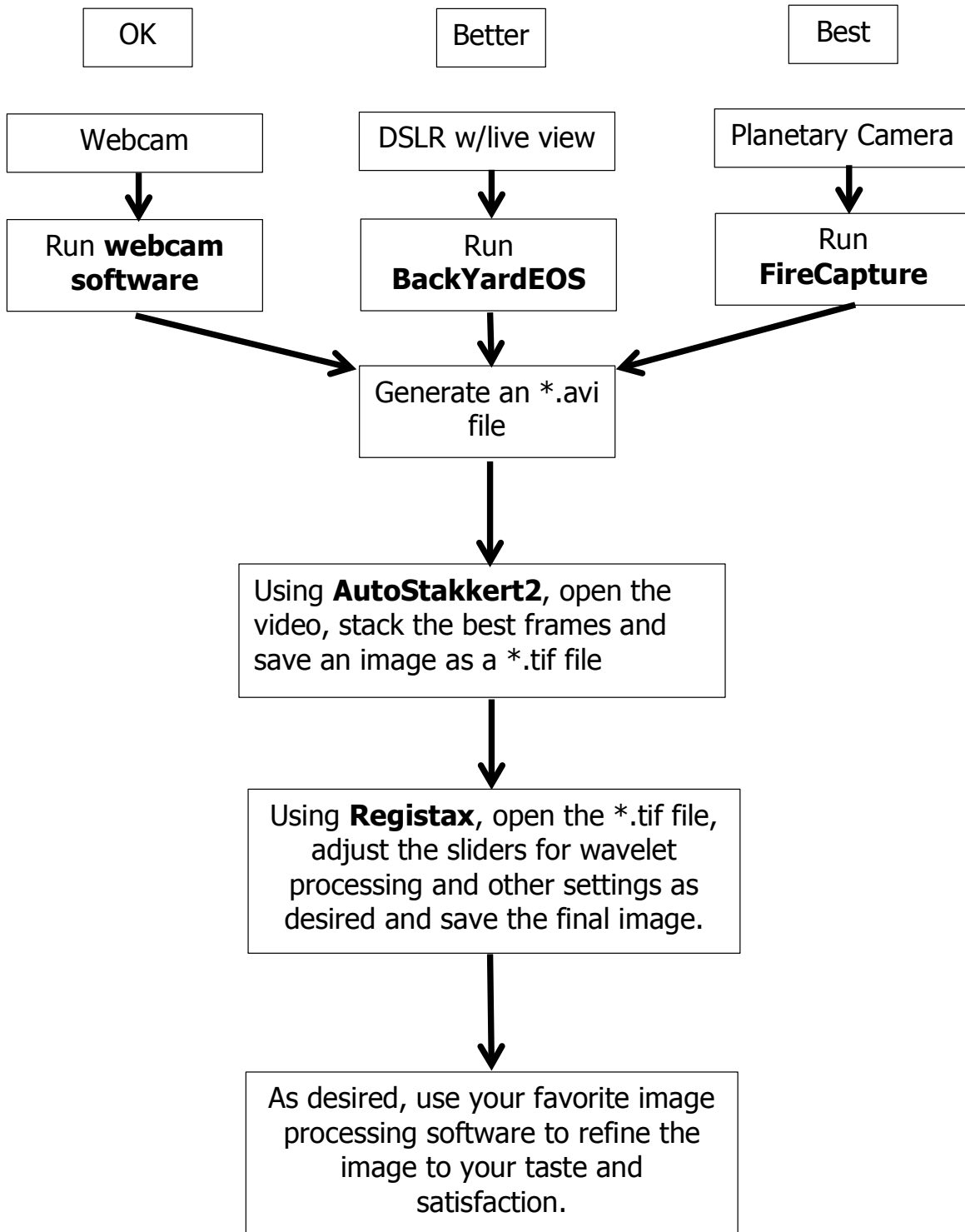
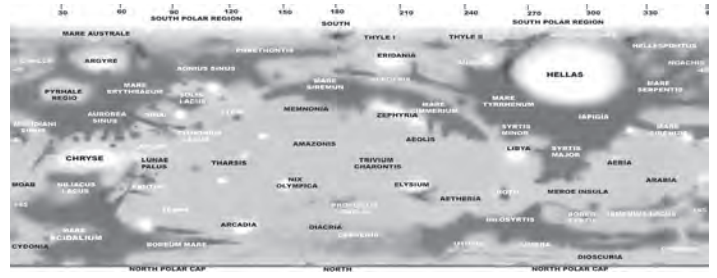
*Presentations.* Peter Brueken described the planetarium facility at Bettendorf High School. He also gave us a list of programs that the planetarium hosts over the course of a year, some public and many educational programs for local students. QCAS is welcome to learn about the facility and create their own programs - further coordination needed. BHS astronomical gear includes two 8" telescopes and an Edmund Astroscan. Primarily used in the BHS football field.

Dana Taylor showed photos he took of April 15th's lunar eclipse. He also showed video taken during the brush fire at Sherman Park on April 11th. The brush fire followed a controlled burn that had been thought to have been put out. If QCAS members hadn't been present to make 911 calls, the observatory could have been in serious jeopardy, or lost. Fortunately, with light winds, and with at least 15 emergency vehicles responding, disaster was averted. More photos, inside.

Karl Adlon gave a "live" demonstration of the use of software to process planetary astrophotographs. His flow chart is seen on the next page.

*Other Business.* Cecil Ward was interested in selling his Meade 2120 LX3 SC (10") with University 2" diagonal, 9x50 illuminated finder,

tripod, mount and drive. Cecil brought it to the meeting and proposed a \$600 price tag. Dana proposed that the club buy it as a larger transportable scope (seconded by Jeff). The QCAS purchase is contingent on QA test observations. [right: Mars map]



Karl Adlon provided his best recommendations for planetary astrophotography processing during his presentation at the April 20th QCAS meeting.

# Lunar Eclipse - April 15, 2014

Photos by Club Members



This photo was taken by Dana Taylor at a moment near the middle of the eclipse. Taken through the 20", it is actually comprised of four photos stitched together.



This is a blended composite of a series of 79 photos of the eclipse that John Baker took over a 40 minute period. The interest in this photo is that it demonstrates drift in the mount/drive of the 16" telescope. Note the trail of the stars. If the mount were properly aligned and the drive had been operating smoothly, the star should appear as a point. Slight motion of the Moon would be expected.



Stacked photo of eclipse by Karl Adlon.



Composite photo of eclipse sequence by Dana Taylor.

## Brush Fire at Sherman Park • April 11, 2014

Photos taken by John Baker. Apparently a controlled burn got re-started and threatened QCAS facilities.



From this angle, the fire looks perilously close to the roll-off roof, 20" telescope building.

Here you can see some of the 15+ emergency vehicles that ultimately responded to the fire call.



Once water was thrown on the fires, smoke became quite an issue. Hopes for any observing that evening were pretty much dashed at this point.



One more eclipse photo. This one is not from a club member, but the brother of a member. Tom Robbins took this photo from his back yard in DeKalb, IL. Taken with a Canon 5D MkII, 600mm telephoto lens attached, along with 1.4x teleconverter. ISO800 exposure was 1.3 sec at f/6.3. Effective focal length was 840mm.



If you should ever see a star inside the crescent moon, be sure to take a photo of it!

### QCAS Officers and Contacts:

President: Dale Hendricks	Vice-president: Craig Cox
Secretary: John Robbins	Treasurer: John Baker
Director: Dana Taylor	Facilities: John Baker
Web Master: Dana Taylor	Outreach: Matt Nielssen
Programming: Jim Rutenbeck	

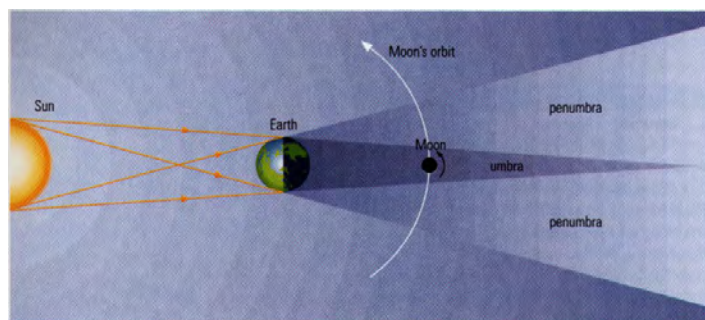
## Celestial Calendar

April 25 18:16 Venus 4.4°S of Moon  
 25 22 Mercury at Superior Conjunction  
 28 06:36 Moon at Descending Node  
 29 01:04 Non-Central Annular Solar Eclipse  
 29 01:14 NEW MOON

May 01 10:51 Aldebaran 2.0°S of Moon  
 02 18 Mercury at Perihelion  
 04 09:02 Jupiter 5.5°N of Moon  
 05 01 Eta-Aquarid Meteor Shower  
 06 05:22 Moon at Apogee: 404319 km  
 06 22:15 FIRST QUARTER MOON  
 08 04:43 Regulus 5.2°N of Moon  
 10 13 Saturn at Opposition  
 11 08:32 Mars 3.0°N of Moon  
 12 07:47 Spica 1.7°S of Moon  
 12 17:06 Moon at Ascending Node  
 14 07:41 Saturn 0.5°N of Moon: Occn.  
 14 14:16 FULL MOON  
 16 07 Venus at Aphelion  
 18 06:58 Moon at Perigee: 367099 km  
 21 07:59 LAST QUARTER MOON  
 25 02 Mercury at Greatest Elong: 22.7°E  
 25 10:43 Venus 2.3°S of Moon  
 25 12:56 Moon at Descending Node  
 28 13:40 NEW MOON

All times are CDT.

List from [www.astropixels.com](http://www.astropixels.com)



**Meetings:** First Monday (workshop) at 6:30pm, and third Monday, (business), at 6:30pm, Bettendorf Library, 2950 Learning Campus Dr., off of 18th Street, Bettendorf.

### Correspondence:

Please send to 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: John Robbins or Dale Hendricks.