

MONTHLY MEETING

March 20, 2015

Location: Rhonda and Karen's Home in Marlborough

Present: Julie Farhm, Jim & Phinie Faux, Rhonda MacLeod, Bruce Norlund, Angel & Suzanne Rosario, and Karen Walter. Guests: Susan & Kevin Rolke, Scott Devine.

In the President's absence, V-P Angel chaired the meeting.

Secretary's Report:

- Jim Faux reviewed the minutes from the February meeting and they were approved without changes. We currently have 16 paid members for 2015. Julie joined us tonight and makes that "17".

Treasurer's Report:

- President Bob reported, from Vermont, the balance as of February 28, 2015 is the same as the January 31, 2014 balance of \$1,217.30.

Upcoming Events:

- March 21st. The monthly scheduled observing has been canceled due to the weather forecast: snow, cloudy, rain, falling frogs...
- April 17th: The April meeting will be held in the Student Center at KSC. Observing on the 18th will begin at **8 PM**. Note: The Lyrids meteor shower peaks the night of April 21/22. [Lyrids have nothing to do with Vega. The true source of the shower is Comet Thatcher. Every year in April, Earth plows through Thatcher's dusty tail. Flakes of comet dust, most no bigger than grains of sand, strike Earth's atmosphere traveling 49 km/s (110,000 mph) and disintegrate as streaks of light.]
- The annual [Northeast Astronomy Forum](#) [NEAF] will be held on April 18th & 19th at SUNY Rockland Community College in Suffern, NY. Angel gave an overview of the event, is interested in attending on the 18th, and is looking for club members to join him. Email him if you are interested in car-pooling.

Old Business:

- Bob submitted our application for approval as a new corporation with the Department of State in Concord, NH along with the \$25 fee after our February meeting. He has not heard from them as of today.
- New club t-shirts. We have a number of new t-shirts in various sizes. Contact Bob or Bruce if you are still interested.
- The KSC Physics Dept. observing sessions are ongoing weekly through April. See the schedule of remaining dates on the club website.
- Many thanks to Gail Zachariah for the excellent speakers she corralled for her 2105 Library Astronomy lecture series. Well done Gail!

New Business:

- We received a call from Allison Henry, Keene 7th grade MS teacher, about having a class presentation on astronomy and holding an observing session for them. Interest was expressed about providing an observing session and possible a classroom presentation. Jim will pursue this with her.
- Bob will contact the Brooks about possible dates for our annual spring dinner with them.
- Gail contacted us about doing a presentation during the Keene Library Open Workshop/Craft Day on April 25 during 10-4. Bob is going to follow-up with her about details.

- Jim mentioned the new organization and programs for the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center in Concord.
- Jim mentioned the April 15th discussion with Kenneth Bergman, KSC, about his October 2014 photo trip to the arctic. Sponsored by the Keene Photo club, the evening begins at 6:30pm at the Senior Center and is free and open to the public. See attached flyer.
- The club discussed possible on-the-fly future club observing sessions. We would send an email to members notifying everybody of the date/time/location for observing between our regularly scheduled monthly sessions. The club officers will set this up. Members, stay tuned.

Meeting Activities:

Astronomical League's Constellation Hunter Program by Angel

Angel continued his new program series for the club: The Astronomical League's Constellation Hunter Program. For February, the focus has been: Auriga, Gemini, and Monoceros. Members' tasks were to learn about these three, observe and sketch the constellations, be able to identify major features and names in the constellations, and identify the adjacent constellations.

As usual, Angel gave each of us a written quiz [personal learning exercise] on each of the constellations where we identified the major stars and neighboring interesting objects and constellations.

For March, the constellations are: Cancer, Canis Minor, Lynx
<https://www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/consthunt/const.html>

The purpose is to help all of us learn the sky as a group. Angel will email club members constellation charts monthly as this becomes a rolling month program that runs throughout the year month after month. This way new members can start the month they join. After a whole year goes by members can continue reviewing their knowledge, completing months they missed, and working on other observing programs. The monthly schedule will include constellations visible that time of the year between 8-9 pm nightly. Upon completion of the 12-months study and completion of your monthly logs, you will receive an AL pin and certificate. Thank you Angel!

The evening concluded with lively discussions on many related and un-related astronomical topics while we all enjoyed the excellent variety of food offerings prepared by Karen and Rhonda. Many thanks to Karen and Rhonda for opening up their home for our gathering on a snowy March evening!

Future Projects & Activities:

1. Observatory
 - a. Apply creosote on base plates and roof support members.
 - b. Install stone at bases of roof support posts. Jim Fox will procure stones.
 - c. Maintaining the T111 siding as long as possible scrape and paint when necessary. And, when absolutely necessary, install vinyl siding one side at a time over a four yr.
 - d. Junie will fabricate and install new roof retainer brackets when he can.
 - e. Install removable skirt around bottom of observatory inside wall.
 - f. Install exterior rubber shield over south wall drip shield and/or replace existing wood drip shield where deteriorating.
2. Assemble 6 Dobsonian bases for the 6" telescope tubes at Junie's.
3. Junie indicated he would determine if collimation is correct for 15" Obsession telescope along with determining its vibration issues at high magnification and determine if 12.5" mirror needs recoating.

The next monthly meeting will be held on April 17th at KSC.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Faux, Secretary