

MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

September 12, 2015

[Attention: Hyperlinks Below]

Location: Keene State College

Present: Carol Littleton, Angel and Susan Rosario, Robert Taylor.

Secretary's Report:

- There was no report.

Treasurer's Report:

- There was no report.

Upcoming Events:

- *Stay tuned for* possible on-the-fly future club observing sessions. Notifications with details will be by email from Bob if and when clear skies re-appear.
- Our next club meeting will be on October 16th at 7:00pm at KSC.
- The October 17th scheduled observing session will be at the club observatory, weather permitting, and beginning at 7:00pm.
- The members indicated that they would not be attending the upcoming Springfield, VT, Steampunk Festival - <http://springfieldvtsteampunkfest.com/>.
- Members of the Keene Unitarian Church members plan to attend the moon observing on the 19th as well as attend our Oct observing at KAA on the 17th.
- Bob mentioned the lunar eclipse on September 27th starting at 9:07pm. Members present decided not to hold a formal club event that evening.

Old Business:

- Bob indicated that the mowing and trimming has recently been done with only the observatory painting remaining for this year.

New Business:

- Bob mentioned that he received two emails from the Astronomical league indicating that they were going to be going digital and a site I could download to get the Sept issue-Angel didn't get this email. They are still going to be sending out the magazine for a while. I will notify all our club members getting the Reflector to see whether they received this notice. For the September meeting: Bob's overview of the Stellafane Convention.
- Club elections for 2016 will be held next month. The one-year offices are: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. The descriptions of the officers' responsibilities were sent to club members last month. Feel free to contact any of the current officers.
- Bob talked about trying to polar align the 12.5 equatorial mounted telescope and the problem with doing it. And how to make it more user-friendly to find non-naked eye objects when the scope is not polar-aligned. One suggestion was over the course of a year or so document a list of deep sky items coordinates so that anyone can dial them in rather than hunting for them when you can't see them in the sky. One other suggestion was to use the 15" Dob telescope to find these objects, as it is a much easier telescope maneuver, but recognize its magnitude limitations with floor vibration.

The other possibility down the road is to replace the telescope with a GO-TO or tracker telescope,

as it doesn't appear based on the weight of the telescope that it could be mounted on a tracker base. Of course, we could continue to use the 12.5" as a star-hopping telescope as it always has been.

- Bob did a review of the 2015 Stellafane Convention, which included his best view of Saturn through the 13" Schupmann telescope at the McGregor Observatory allowing him for the first time ever to see the bands around Saturn along with its stunning ring. He attended two talks: one on using DSLR cameras to document variable star activity and submit it to the American Association of Variable Star Observers (AAVSO) and a talk on Carbon Stars, which was also very interesting. Bob also did his usual going to the mechanical telescope judging and to Junie's mirror making class.
- For the October meeting: Bob will give a hands-on demonstration of how to set-up and use an equatorial mounted telescope using the donated 4" telescope at the October meeting, and practice collimating it.

Meeting Activities:

Astronomical League's Constellation Hunter Program by Angel

Angel continued our on-going program series for the club: The Astronomical League's Constellation Hunter Program. For July, the focus has been: Lyra, Aquila, and Cygnus.

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.

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 August, the constellations are: Delphinus, Cepheus, Lacerta, and Pegasus.

<https://www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/consthunt/const.html>

The purpose is to help all of us learn the sky as a group. The monthly schedule will include constellations visible that time of the year between 10-11 pm nightly. Upon completion of the 12-months study and completion of your monthly logs and sketches, you will receive an AL pin and certificate.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Taylor & Jim Faux
September 26, 2015