

## MONTHLY MEETING

April 17, 2015

**Location:** Student Center, KSC

**Present:** Jim Faux, Rhonda MacLeod, Susan & Kevin Rolke , Angel Rosario, Bob Taylor, and Karen Walter.

### **Secretary's Report:**

- Jim Faux reviewed the minutes from the March meeting and they were approved without changes. With the addition of Susan and Kevin Rolke, we currently have 19 paid members for 2015.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

- President Bob reported the balance as of March 31, 2015 is about \$1,239 compared to the February 28, 2015 balance of \$1,217.30. Actually, we have \$1,339 - see New Business below.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- The annual dinner with the Brooks is scheduled for Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm at Pappagallo's. Contact Bob to make your reservations.
- Observing on the 18<sup>th</sup> will begin at 8:30 PM at Otter Brook Dam.
- 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 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> at SUNY Rockland Community College in Suffern, NY. Angel gave an overview of the event, is interested in attending on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Susan, Kevin, and Jim will be joining him.
- On May 12<sup>th</sup>, Bill Fredericks, from Salem, will be presenting on astrophotography at the SoVerA monthly meeting at Magic Mtn. According to Bob Dudley, President of SoVerA, *"I believe that his talk will be pretty generally with emphasis for the novice. I know that he is going to talk about star trails, some simple guided photography. I know that he will be talking about what he has a set-up and maybe some programs that he uses for handling the data."*
- *Stay tuned* for possible on-the-fly future club observing sessions. Notifications with details will be by email.
- Our next club meeting is on May 15<sup>th</sup> at Bruce Norlund's, 267 Gilsum St., Keene. KSC is closed down.

### **Old Business:**

- We have received our official NH State incorporation as a non-profit corporation approval and our state certificate. Our obligation is to file an on-line report every five years along with a \$25 fee.
- New club t-shirts. We still have a number of new t-shirts in various sizes. Contact Bob if you are interested. Cost is \$20.
- The KSC Physics Dept. observing sessions are winding down and the last spring date is April 30<sup>th</sup> from 8-10pm on Appian Way, KSC.

### **New Business:**

- Rhonda reported on her outreach sessions with Julie Farhm's HS class at Monadnock RHS and Allison Henry's 7<sup>th</sup> grade class at the Waldorf School. Thank you Rhonda!
- Gail contacted us about doing a presentation during the Keene Library Open Workshop/Craft Day on April 25 during 10-4. Unfortunately, due to members not being available, we were not able to participate this year.

- Dr. Jeffery McClintock, Senior Astrophysicist at the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, gave a talk at the recent Keene Library lecture series. Dr. McClintock has graciously asked that his \$100 honorarium from the Library be presented to the club. We are writing him and thanking him for the donation.
- Several members have expressed interest in astrophotography. We decided to form an astrophotography subgroup sharing knowledge, experiences, techniques, etc. Our first meeting will be at 7pm on May 8<sup>th</sup> at Jim and Phinie's. Angel, Rhonda, Bob, and Jim have indicated interest.
- Jim mentioned that the club needs to notify the NSN of our outreach activities with libraries and schools or other groups. Please send Jim details of any events you conduct with topics covered and participants' demographics.
- With KSC shut down on Friday evenings between May and August and insect activities at the observatory, the club discussed looking at alternative locations for our monthly meetings.
- Claudio's KSC CALL class may visit our observatory for a star party with us in the coming weeks – possibly May 1<sup>st</sup>. Stay tuned for specifics!
- Angel proposed exploring other [beginner observer programs](#) offered by the Astronomy League for future club participation.
- Angel also proposed club members come to the next meeting, and future meetings, prepared to informally present an astronomical topic for 3-5 minutes. The topic could be details on one of the constellations for the month, variable stars, an interesting article – no dissertations. No more than 5 minutes. No obligation. We agreed to give it a try.

### **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 March, the focus has been: Cancer, Canis Minor, and Lynx. 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 April, the constellations are: Leo, Leo Minor, and Sextans  
<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 8-9 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.

The evening concluded with lively discussions on many related and un-related astronomical topics while we all enjoyed Phinie's excellent brownies.

### **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. period.
  - 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 May 15<sup>th</sup> at Bruce's.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Faux, Secretary