



The Celestial Observer

*Newsletter of the North Shore
Amateur Astronomy Club*

September, 2012

From the President

Our August monthly meeting was successful and productive as we once again had a quorum, and we had the opportunity to plan some of our club's upcoming events. There are several star parties scheduled in the near future. Our previous star parties this season have been successful. Although we didn't have a scope clinic this month, it was very gratifying to see that attendees of previous clinics are joining the club and attending meetings as active members of the club; thanks, Millers!

I wanted to bring back the club tradition of the pre-meeting dinner at China Blossom and we had a nice time with six of us attending and discussing astronomical topics while enjoying the buffet.

We have had some notable observing sessions of late at Veasey Park. In particular, views of the Lagoon Nebula through Kevin Hocker's 12 inch Dob with my narrow band filter and views of the Double Cluster through Ron Sampson's 8 inch Apo with 24mm Panoptics in a binoviewer would be at the top of the list. I am also quite proud of our ability to locate and observe Saturn in broad daylight with the aid of an inexpensive digital protractor and a free online site that converts RA and DEC to alt and az coordinates in real time.

This technique was one of the many Dob mods that were described in the presentation, "How to Teach an Old DOB New Tricks". The other mods will be posted on our website.

Several members of our club recently participated in a Veasey paint-the-building project that enables us to have continued use of the facility for observing sessions and meetings. Thanks to the participants.

Lately I have been thinking about my eventual retirement in about 12 years give or take. I would like to end up in one of the astronomy villages that are becoming more numerous. I would be looking for dark skies but not too far (an hour or so) from a decent sized city for services that small towns in the country don't have. There is one in Chiefland, Florida that's about 40 miles from Gainesville, a college town. If anyone else has researched the subject of astronomy villages I would be interested in what you found out.

If you have questions or comments email me: [president at nsaac.org](mailto:president@nsaac.org).

*Bryan Stone,
President*

NSAAC Welcomes Our New Members:

Barry Yomtov from Marblehead
Nicole Hotz from Beverly
Nicholas Leonardson from Marblehead

*Kevin Hocker,
Membership Director*

Minutes of the NSAAC Business Meeting, August 3rd, 2012

President Stone called the August Business Meeting of the NSAAC to order at 8:12 PM. There were 8 members present plus 5 Board members. There was a quorum. Meeting was official.

Secretary:

The minutes of the June business meeting were accepted by acclamation.

Treasurer:

Kevin gave a brief treasurer's report.

Membership:

Kevin Ackert announced that we have 102 paid members in good standing of which 17 are family and 2 are honorary. 21 members have yet to renew.

Early Meeting Announcements:

Open forum on the agenda after New Business

Committee Reports:

Merrimack College:

Kevin did open the observatory on one evening, but clouds were bad. He had 10 people in attendance. No information available on other dates. Kevin indicated that Jeff Hayes, one of the volunteers at Merrimack, is resigning from the staff and therefore they need a replacement for operating the telescope at Merrimack. If anyone is interested in filling this position contact Kevin Ackert.

Salem State:

Salem state college observatory is closed for the summer. The dome has been fixed and they have been taking some images with their DSI CCD camera.

News, Correspondence, and Upcoming Activities:

Star Party Committee:

The upcoming star parties are:

- Thursday, Aug 16th, Wenham Public Library
- Saturday, Aug 18th, Middleton Scouts at Endicott Park, Danvers
- Thursday, Aug 23rd, Beverly Children's Library
- Thursday, Sept 13th, Rowley Public Library
- Saturday, Sept 15th, Maudslay State Park
- Saturday, Sept 22nd, Amesbury Battis Farm
- Saturday, Sept 29th, Trails and Sails at Veasey

Telescope Clinic:

No activity.

Old business:

New Business:

The star party coordinator is looking for additional members to provide talks at Star parties.

The secretary will contact Veasey management about possibly removing the tree that is blocking views to the east.

The secretary will inquire about the workday schedule.

The club acknowledges Caiden, a recent YAP winner, for being the honorary vice-president at tonight's business meeting.

The entertainment for the meeting was an informative and entertaining talk by Bryan Stone entitled "How to Teach Old Dobs New Tricks".

Board Meeting will be Monday August 13, at 7:30 PM at Veasey.

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM

*Respectfully submitted,
John Hobbs, Secretary NSAAC*

Star Party News

Star party season is starting up as school season begins.

Fred Sammartino did successfully host a nice group of girl scouts from North Andover at Merrimack June 11th, and qualified them for their Astronomy badge. 16 people were in attendance.

On June 20th, Brewster LaMacchia gave a presentation on the moon and craters to an audience of 5 adults and 4 Children at Camp Nihan, a Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation facility in Saugus, MA. After the presentation limited observing of Saturn and M13 was provided by scopes supplied by Leor Zolman, Bryan Stone, and John Hobbs. Photographs of the event were taken by Bill Drown

On July 5th, Fred Sammartino did a presentation for students of the Gulf of Maine Institute at the Alydenrood Retreat Center in Newbury, MA for about 30 students and staff. Scopes were provided by Bill Drown, Leor Zolman, and John Hobbs.

July 11th at Veasey Park, Fred Sammartino gave a presentation to about 10 adults and children at a star party for the Langley-Adams Library in Groveland. Scopes were provided by Leor Zolman, Bryan Stone, John Hobbs, and Ed Burke.

For a list of upcoming star parties, see this month's minutes.

The Star Party Committee would like to thank all the members who have supported our star party effort and look forward to your continued participation in the coming months.

*John Hobbs,
Star Party Coordinator*

September New Moon Weekend

I won't be able to attend observing at Starport for the August new moon weekend, so I'm counting on the September new moon weekend as a chance to get to Starport and use Godzilla. Starport has some accommodations in Barrie's home, and one can always pitch a tent in the field (as I do). This September 14 to 17 I'll be opening my place in Madison, NH (55 miles from Starport, 1.25 hrs. driving) to members who want to observe at Starport at night and relax with swimming, canoeing, kayaking, or sitting on the deck during the day. Alternately, if you've wanted to observe at Starport but have non-astronomy family members you could leave them at my place to relax. There are four bedrooms, two of which are taken. Our goal is to have a larger group join us for the fun. Please contact me if you'd like more information.

Kevin Ackert

Getting to Veasey Memorial Park

From Interstate 95 north, take the Route 133 west (54B) exit, and follow it into Georgetown Center. Go straight through the light, now on Route 97N. Go about 1.5 miles and take a left onto Salem Street (Tea Garden Restaurant at this intersection). Stay on Salem Street and turn left onto Washington Street. VMP is down a bit on the right.

Directions to all of the NSAAC observing sites are available on our web site's "About" page at:

<http://www.nsaac.org/about.htm>

E-Mail Listserve

If you have email access and are an NSAAC member in good standing, you may want to subscribe to the email notification system that Lew Gramer established for the Club in 1996. This is a "members only" system that places you in contact with other members for late breaking news concerning spontaneous observing activities, outings, tech talk, etc. You can subscribe by emailing your request to the address below. Your message should look like this:

To: majordomo at nsaac.org

Subject: Email list (you can put anything here)

Body: subscribe NSAAC *Full-Name* <*email-address*>

To remove yourself from the email list, or to temporarily suspend delivery from the list or access your other options, please use our "Subscriber Settings" Web page:

<http://lists.nsaac.org/mailman/listinfo/nsaac#subscribers>

Contact Information

For more information about the club and its activities, contact Kevin Hocker, Membership Director, email: [membership at nsaac.org](mailto:membership@nsaac.org) or Bryan Stone, President, e-mail [president at nsaac.org](mailto:president@nsaac.org).

Our club web site is: <http://www.nsaac.org>.

The *Celestial Observer* is edited by Leor Zolman. Feedback, and member contributions are welcome. Contact: [newsletter at nsaac.org](mailto:newsletter@nsaac.org).

Suggestions regarding the content of the NSAAC web site are always welcome; Please email [webmaster at nsaac.org](mailto:webmaster@nsaac.org) with your ideas.