

## Upcoming Meeting

The next meeting will be Saturday April 17 at 7:00 pm at Golden Pond Observatory. As always visitors are welcome to attend!

## Last Meeting Highlights

About 25 people attended our last meeting on March 13.

**Annual Potluck:** Our plans for using the Administration Building fell through, so we ate dinner in the GP Observatory as we have in the past. It worked out much better than expected! Before most of us arrived, some members rearranged the furniture in the meeting room to better facilitate our growing numbers. As a result we weren't eating at the serving tables as we have at the last few dinners (except, of course, those who elected to surround the dessert serving table - you know who you are!) and the food was plentiful and excellent as usual.

**Officer Elections:** Ross Workman conducted the elections by written ballot. Vince Medlock and Alan Dudenhofer ran for Vice President while Laura Dietrich and Dale & Carol Baltimore ran for Secretary. The other offices were uncontested. Dale and Carol were reelected as Secretary and, after a close race, Vince was elected as Vice President.

**Financial Report:** David provided a detailed financial report. The bottom line is that, including star party revenue, the club made \$20 in 2002 and \$745 in 2003.

**Twin Lakes Star Party:** Ross has already scheduled a guest speaker for the star party - our now famous club member Jay McNeil! Also a projector and laptop computer will be available for use by star party speakers this year. Based on feedback from some star party attendees and some club members, Ross suggested that we not purchase door prizes for the next star party, but that we use this money instead to provide a meal for attendees and to include a souvenir pen/red flashlight combo in each registration packet. This would benefit everyone instead of just a few door prize winners. We will still give away door prizes solicited from vendors. We also discussed reprising some our new "learning opportunity" sessions (collimation, sketching, etc.) and touring some other nearby home observatories during the star party.

**Meeting Space/Additional Chairs:** John Workman said that the club will probably be able to meet in the planetarium on cold or rainy nights when attendance overwhelms the observatory meeting room. We will revisit this issue in the fall. John also agreed to investigate the possibility of using some chairs that are currently in storage at the Nature Station.

**Planetarium Show:** Following the meeting Don Partain showed us the new planetarium show Ring World in the newly upgraded planetarium. Both the show and the upgrades are really nice!

## **Astronomical League Awards**

These AL observing club certificates were awarded at the last meeting:

- Bob Vickers, Double Star
- David Paessler, Urban Club
- David Paessler, Master Observer

AL Certificates pending arrival:

- Vince Medlock, Honorary Messier

This brings to 42 the number of AL certificates earned by club members! The WKAA website lists club members who have earned observing club certificates and provides links to the Astronomical League website.

Contact David if you have any questions.

## **Events and Opportunities**

**Telescopes to the People:** 100 to 150 people from about ages 3 to 75 came to the McCracken County Public Library in Paducah for "A Night with the Planets" on Thursday March 18. Prior to the observing session, David gave a talk to a standing room only audience in the library's public meeting room. Following the talk the public viewed Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, and Venus through nine telescopes set up by several club members. It was another excellent public viewing session!

**TMessier Marathon** The Messier Marathon was rained out. Maybe the weather will cooperate next year!

**Astronomy Day:** Astronomy Day will be held Saturday April 24 at the Golden Pond Planetarium. There will be free planetarium shows and club members will set up telescopes, distribute astronomy literature, and meet and greet the public. Check out the Astronomy Day article on the WKAA website for more information. Contact David Byrd if you can help.

**NIAGfest:** This is an astronomy convention held in Northern Indiana April 23-24. See the Niagfest website for more information.

**Texas Star Party:** This is a really nice star party held in west Texas May 16-23. About 800 people attend each year and the skies are so dark that you can see 7th magnitude stars

with your naked eye. Jay McNeil goes every year and has offered to caravan with anyone who is interested in going. See the Texas Star Party website for more information.

**Venus Transit:** There will be a Venus transit June 8. The last occurrence was in 1882.

**15th Annual Twin Lakes Star Party:** The star party will be held October 9 - 16 at Pennyriple State Forrest.

**Website:** If anyone would like to include an article on the WKAA website, contact John McCubbin . Articles don't have to cover advanced or technical topics - they could be about something as simple as a beginner's first experiences observing. New club member Michael Cohen has posted several book reviews you might want to check out!

b>Sky and Telescope subscription discount: Club members who subscribe through the club receive a \$10 discount. They also receive a 10% discount on products purchased from Sky Publishing. Turn in your renewals to David in order to receive the discount.

## **New Members**

No new members have joined since the last meeting. The club currently has 34 paid members for 2004.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Current Funds as of 4/11/04

Bank Balance        2340.20

**Dues:** Dues of \$15 are now past due and payable at the April meeting or by mail to: David Paessler, 9840 Enlow Dr, Kevil, Ky 42053