

The Faint Fuzzy

The Official Newsletter of the West Kentucky Amateur Astronomers
July 2007

From the Editors: Thanks to all who have participated in the various public outreach programs this summer: Summer Nights, Sheriff's Ranch, Lake Barkley, and the Girl Scout camp. Everyone seems appreciative of the Club's efforts! Harold Meyers is doing a great job at coordinating Summer Nights volunteers. If you haven't signed up yet to help, please do so.

UPCOMING MEETING: Saturday, July 14th, 7pm, at Golden Pond Observatory. Visitors are welcome, and if skies are clear we will set up scopes for the regular Summer Nights program.

It's not too early to begin making plans for the Star Party in October. Stay tuned for monthly updates here in the *Faint Fuzzy*. We need everybody's help this year to ensure another successful event!

—Bob & Melissa

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: June 16, 2007

Sixteen members attended the meeting. Club President Dale Baltimore brought the meeting to order.

Club Magazine Subscriptions

Returning to a discussion from the previous meeting, Dale brought up the possibility of the club purchasing subscriptions to *Amateur Astronomy Magazine* and/or *Astronomy Technology Today* for our library. David Paessler suggested we delay the decision until the next meeting.

David also announced that there has been a change in *Sky & Telescope* subscription renewals through the Club. Members no longer have to go through David to renew, and can do so directly through *Sky & Telescope* and still receive the club discount. New club discount subscriptions, however, must still be started through David.

There has been no similar change with *Astronomy* subscriptions. They still need to be renewed through David in order to receive the discount.

Club Library

We discussed having a yearly budgeted amount for the club library. According to Carol Baltimore, club librarian, most of our books are castoffs and/or donations. It was suggested that some Astronomical League observing guides should be added to the collection. Sandy Phfistner suggested we set aside \$100 a year to upgrade the library as needed. The club voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Astronomy Day Budget

Sandy also suggested a yearly budget for Astronomy Day. The reaction was generally favorable but it was decided to bring this up again closer to the date of the event.

Deep Sky Imager

The Deep Sky Imager, donated by Bill Brockman, is now available for club use. Checkout procedures will be similar to those used for club telescope checkout. Bill said he was willing to show people how to use it when he is in town for meetings. Vince Medlock has copies of the checkout forms for the telescopes and these can be modified for the imager.

Sheriff's Ranch

As of the June meeting, two Sheriff's Ranch sessions had occurred, with six more scheduled. With 70 boys and 68 girls (alternating each week), it helps to have additional scopes on hand. If you can help out, please contact David Paessler (see below)--and don't forget to bring bug spray!

Lake Barkley State Park Opportunity

Dale reported that he had spoken with Jenny Howard, Lake Barkley Naturalist/Education Specialist. She had explained her plans to work with the astronomy club in Louisville to bring John Dobson (father of the Dobsonian-style telescope) to the area for the Lake Barkley Harvest Moon festival in September. She would like help with public viewing from WKAA members. She would like to coordinate the event with Don Partain and Golden Pond. Club members were generally favorable but expressed some concerns that we not spread ourselves too thin just before the Star Party. We basically agreed that we would help with the viewing, but would be unable to help with organizing responsibilities.

Star Party Speaker Suggestion

Jackie Mathis told about Marvin Russell, a Physics Professor from West KY University (Bowling Green), who teaches astronomy. Jackie suggested Dr. Russell as a Star Party speaker. Members thought this was a good idea. He also mentioned that we could use the Dawson Springs library for a public event sometime.

Jackie is considering starting a scholarship fund for Dawson Springs High School science majors (~\$200-250). He plans to come up with the eligibility guidelines.

Club Shirt Update

Sandy and Jim Phfistner presented information on club shirts they had gotten from "Faye's Embroidery" in Murray. This shop can do a variety of shirts and jackets, and is willing to work with us to provide what the club wants. There would be a one time setup fee of \$85, and then individuals could order the size and style item they prefer. A motion was passed that the club pay the setup fee. Shirts could then be ordered at any time, providing the design doesn't change.

Treasurer's Report

The current bank balance, as of 6/16/07 is \$3530.08, including the first Star Party preregistration for 2007!

McDonald Observatory Trip

After the meeting, David Paessler gave a laptop slide show of the group trip to McDonald Observatory in Texas. David, Dale Baltimore, Bill Kassebaum, Eric Newell (SC), and Jeff Burton rented the 82" telescope for a night. They said the skies in Texas were so clear, they had difficulty identifying the constellations! They had a wonderful trip.



David and the 82" at McDonald Observatory in Texas.

Observing

The skies were clear, so club members had 8 scopes ready for Summer Nights viewing. It was a good crowd of over 50 people!

KUDOS

WKAA Makes the Nashville *Tennessean*!

As reported in last month's *Faint Fuzzy*, the article on Land Between the Lakes by freelance writer, Danny Lee, appeared in the June 24th issue of *The Tennessean*. In addition to a lot of information about LBL, there was a section devoted to astronomy in the park and WKAA's Summer Nights public outreach. When asked about the telescope viewing, WKAA President Dale Baltimore was quoted as saying, "The kids love it. Most people who come through here have never even looked through a telescope. Here, they can even see the big red spot on Jupiter. They can see the rings of Saturn, and they're just thunderstruck."

Astronomical League News

Congratulations to Harold Meyers, who was awarded his Messier Certificate at the meeting! Thanks also to Harold for his donation to the club library of a notebook of downloaded star charts.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Summer Nights

We continue to have some wonderful Summer Night programs, with clear skies (most of the time) and appreciative crowds. Attendance, for the most part, has been good. Thanks again to club members who provide this important outreach to the public.

If you have not already signed up to help at one or more Summer Nights programs, contact Harold Meyers (phone: 731-587-6064; email: hambone10100@yahoo.com)

Girl Scout Camp

Harold arranged for an astronomy night at Camp Hazelwood, a Girl Scouts camp near Paris, TN, on June 22nd. Bob Vickers put on a slide show for the girls, and then he, Harold, Alan Dudenhofer, and Melissa provided telescope entertainment. Nearly sixty girls from ages 7 to 15, plus their counselors, enjoyed seeing the moon and planets, and whatever deep sky objects were visible in the bright moonlight.

2007 Twin Lake Star Party!

Mark your calendars! The 2007 Twin Lakes Star Party will be October 6th - 14th! Check out pictures from last year on the [WKAA website!](#)

CLUB RESOURCES

Loaner Scopes

The club has two Dobsonians (6", 8") available for club members to borrow. Anyone who has been a club member for six months, completes a training/safety session, and signs a written agreement may borrow one of the scopes.

Library

The club has several books and magazines available to members for reference or checkout. Take a look and see what we have at the next club meeting.

Magazine Discounts

Club members who subscribe to *Sky & Telescope* or *Astronomy* magazines through the club receive a discount! Annually you can save \$10 on *Sky & Telescope* and \$9 on *Astronomy*. Contact David Paessler for more information.

CLUB OFFICERS

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