

The Faint Fuzzy

*The Official Newsletter of the West Kentucky Amateur Astronomers
June 2007*

From the Editors: Summertime is a busy time for WKAA--there are lots of public outreach opportunities. We encourage **all** club members to take an active role in these ventures so that a small group of members don't get burned out before the summer's over! Thanks ahead of time.

—Bob & Melissa

UPCOMING MEETING: Saturday, June 16th, 7pm, at Golden Pond Observatory. Visitors are welcome, and if skies are clear we will observe after the meeting.

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: May 12, 2007

Nine members attended the meeting. Due to the absence of President Dale Baltimore, Vice President Jim Phfistner conducted the meeting.

Astronomy Day

Melissa Vickers read her notes from the informal debriefing session held at the end of the day on Astronomy Day. These notes will be included in the meeting minutes.

Sandy Phfistner suggested having a dollar amount (perhaps \$50-\$75) budgeted each year for Astronomy Day activities, including copy cost of handouts, children's table supplies, etc. The discussion was tabled until a future meeting, due to the absence of some of the officers.

John Holland discussed his attempts to get an announcement about Astronomy Day in the Hopkinsville, KY, paper, *The New Era*. They did not print the article he submitted, and instead, put one long sentence buried on the back page weekly listing of events. He plans to ask the paper what is needed to actually get an article in the paper.

The Benton, KY, paper typically carries information about LBL and the planetarium, but never mentions Astronomy Day.

Suggestions for next year included writing an article well ahead of time, inviting a reporter, and following up with an article afterwards.

Sheriff's Ranch

In past years, WKAA has provided observing programs for the underprivileged children's camp at the Sheriff's Ranch near Gilbertsville, KY. David Paessler has set up a program with them again for this year for every Thursday night for the months of June and July. Volunteers should arrive between 8pm and 8:30pm and are usually done by 9:30pm. There are about 50-100 kids per week. David needs volunteers, so contact him (see below) for further details.

Lake Barkley State Park Opportunity

Jim and Sandy Phfistner gave a report about having helped with the Lake Barkley Earth Week celebration. The Phfistners and Dale and Carol Baltimore were on hand to show the moon and Saturn to approximately 15-18 people, and were treated to a free buffet meal for their efforts.

Jim said that Jenny Howard, Lake Barkley Naturalist/Education Specialist, also had requested volunteers to set up scopes for their "Blue Moon Over Kentucky celebration," May 31-June 1.

Summer Nights

LBL Golden Pond "Summer Nights" will start May 26, Memorial Day weekend and will continue for 15 weekends through Labor Day weekend. Harold Meyers volunteered to coordinate signups.

Astronomy Technology Today Magazine

Harold Meyers brought a copy of a new magazine he had subscribed to. *Astronomy Technology Today* deals mostly with building scopes and other technical information. The introductory subscription rate is \$12/year for 12 issues. It was suggested that the club should consider getting a subscription to be kept in the observatory library. This was tabled pending further discussion.

Treasurer's Report

The current bank balance, as of 6/5/07 is \$3530.08.

Observing

It turned out to be an excellent evening for observing--a perfect opportunity for Alan Dudenhofer to show off his new 16" Meade Lightbridge Telescope. Much of the evening was spent crowded around Alan's scope, talking and observing.

KUDOS

A big thanks to John Holland and Alan Dudenhofer for repairing the drive mechanism for the observatory dome scope. This will make it much easier to use.

Astronomical League News

Congratulations to Harold Meyers, who will be awarded his Messier Certificate at the next meeting!

PLANETARIUM NEWS

Golden Pond Planetarium Director Don Partain announced, "We have a new show starting June 1st, called 'Far Out Space Places.' It is about our solar system as a place for a far out vacation. . ."

Showtimes are 10am Monday through Friday, and 4pm on Saturday and Sunday.

SUMMER NIGHTS

- **May 26th:** This was the first Summer Nights program of the year, and club members Jim and Sandy Phfistner and Harold Meyers set up scopes for the public. Viewing conditions were not great, but they were able to show the 15-20 visitors the Moon, Venus, and Saturn.
- **June 2nd:** Club members Dale and Carol Baltimore and Bob and Melissa Vickers were on hand in the hopes that the sky would be clear enough for viewing. It was not! However, a freelance reporter from the *Nashville Tennessean* had come to do a feature article on LBL, including the planetarium and the club activities. He interviewed Dale and Bob at length and got a tour of the observatory. He said the article is scheduled for June 24th in the Travel section of the newspaper. The article should be available online at:
<http://www.usatoday.com/travel/gcitavel/destination.aspx?cid=tennessean>
- **June 9th:** Harold Meyers reported that seven club members set up scopes under clear skies at LBL for 36 people who had come for Summer Nights. The viewing was great and the temperature was nice. The public was treated to views of Venus, Saturn and numerous deep sky objects. Thanks to everyone who helped.

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[[@](mailto:hambone10100@yahoo.com)]yahoo.com)

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 and Telescope* or *Astronomy* magazines through the club receive a discount! Annually you can save \$10 on *Sky and Telescope* and \$9 on *Astronomy*. Turn in your renewals to David Paessler in order to receive the discount.

CLUB OFFICERS

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