

THE FAINT FUZZY

*The Official Newsletter of the West Kentucky Amateur Astronomers
May 2006*

UPCOMING MEETING:

Our next meeting will be Saturday May 27th at Golden Pond Observatory at 7:00 pm. The Summer Nights program is also scheduled to start this Saturday! Be ready to stay after the meeting and help the public view if you can. As always visitors are welcome to attend!

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

Dale Baltimore called the last meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Ten people attended. David Paessler and Bob Vickers were at the Mid-South Star Gaze in Mississippi and Bill Kassebaum was at the Chiefland Star Party in Florida.

Astronomy Day: Jim and Sandy Phfistner described plans for Astronomy Day. They have assembled about 50 kids' packets including a solar system quiz, astronomy fun facts, astronomy terms from A to Z, and a sundial that the kids can make. Sandy reported that Heather plans to have a banner that people can write or draw on. We will then save the banner and display it during Astronomy Day 2007. Jim asked for people to bring scopes for solar viewing as well as to bring different types of scopes so that people can see the differences. He also noted that David Paessler is developing a club pamphlet and that the planetarium folks are providing supper for WKAA volunteers. See [below](#) for a report on the actual Astronomy Day event.

Summer Nights: Dale Baltimore reminded everyone that the Summer Nights program starts soon. There was a discrepancy between the WKAA and LBL websites as to the start date. Also lbl.org lists Summer Nights on both Friday and Saturday nights. [Dale talked to planetarium director Don Partain and found out that it starts May 27th. Don also said that he is going to try adding a planetarium show on Friday evenings, but he is not asking WKAA members to volunteer on Fridays – just on Saturdays as we have done previously.] See [below](#) for more information on Summer Nights.

Website: Dale reported that Ross Workman and John McCubbin have disabled the forum on wkaa.net due to a high volume of spam. They may try it again in the future.

Viewing: It was very cloudy, so we didn't get to view.

ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE (AL) AWARDS:

There are no pending awards or submissions at this time. See www.astroleague.org for more information about observing clubs/awards. Also see wkaa.net for a list of club members who have completed awards. Contact David if you have any questions.

NEW MEMBERS:

We have three new club members: Richard Payne from Owensboro, KY and Donald and Suzanne Watkins from Bumpus Mills, TN. Welcome to the club!

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Balance (5/23/06): \$2739.54

Membership Dues: If you haven't paid your 2006 membership fee (\$25), it is past due. See David Paessler at the meeting or mail your payment to him at 9840 Enlow Dr, Kevil, KY 42053. Currently we have 30 paid up members.

OTHER EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Astronomy Day: Astronomy Day was held May 6th at Golden Pond Planetarium and Observatory. The public viewed the sun through several different telescopes. Jim Hall brought his PST (hydrogen alpha filter for viewing flares and prominences) while John Holland, Warren Wepking

and Dale Baltimore set up their scopes with white light filters for viewing sunspots. The 12" observatory scope was also equipped with a hydrogen alpha filter and the club's SCT was fitted with a white light filter for solar viewing. We also set up club scopes to show the differences between scopes. Vince Medlock wowed the kids with "on-fire" demonstrations of solar viewing without a filter and David Paessler gave a talk on getting started in astronomy. Club members also distributed packets of astronomy activities put together by Jim and Sandy Pfistner and Heather Shearbourne and displayed some great posters that Heather made on the sun, the solar system, and different types of scopes. The planetarium staff gave free planetarium shows and then topped off the day by providing supper for the WKAA volunteers. The crowd was smaller than some years – probably due to the bad weather forecast – but everyone seemed to have a good time and learn something as well. The weather stayed fairly clear until later in the afternoon when clouds came in. Thanks to all the club members – including Heather's daughter – who came out and helped. Thanks especially to Heather for coordinating the event and to Jim and Sandy for assisting her!

Summer Nights: The Summer Nights program starts this week! It is set to begin on May 27th and runs through August. The program consists of an 8 p.m. planetarium show each Saturday night followed by viewing through the observatory and WKAA members' telescopes (weather permitting). Crowds range from as few as 30 to over 100. It is an enjoyable time and the public is always appreciative. Please come and help out if you can!

Illinois Dark Skies: The Fifth Annual Illinois Dark Skies Star Party will be held September 21st - 24th, 2006 at the Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area (JEPC), 25 miles northwest of Springfield, Illinois. See www.sas-sky.org for more information.

Princeton: The sidewalk astronomy session in Princeton was cancelled.

Library: The library currently has 23 books and magazines available for checkout. Two books were checked out at the last meeting.

Club Website: Check out the articles, photo gallery, and other useful info at www.wkaa.net.

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

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 Tel* and \$9 on *Astronomy*. Turn in your renewals to David Paessler in order to receive the discount.

CLUB OFFICERS LIST:

[See WKAA Contact Information.](#)

Clear skies,

Dale & Carol Baltimore