

THE FAINT FUZZY

*The Official Newsletter of the West Kentucky Amateur Astronomers
October/November 2006*

UPCOMING MEETING:

Our annual Chili Supper will be at Golden Pond Observatory at **6:00 pm** on Saturday November 18th. The club meeting will follow at 7:00 pm. As always visitors are welcome to join us for both supper and the meeting.

STAR PARTY HIGHLIGHTS:

*[Thanks to David Paessler for this write-up. We added the italicized comments in brackets.
– Dale & Carol]*

TLSP 2006 was a success although we had only 3 out of 8 observable nights. We had our fair share of rain this year that kept attendance down. Even with the rain, we had 44 parties register and come to our event. We also had several club members set up on the field all week. *[There were a total of about 75 adults on the field, including 15 first-timers. They came from Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, & Alaska!]* The first Saturday night was a good night for observing with mild temperatures. We had three days of rain and dreary weather to deal with until Wednesday rolled around clear and pretty. Several on the field stayed up late enjoying the dark skies of Pennyryle. We again endured another day of rain Thursday to find a hidden gem in an unforecast clear Friday night. We had several people come from out of town to take advantage of the break in the weather and observe most all of Friday night and Saturday morning. It looked like Saturday would also bring good skies. We had our free lunch and the pork chops were as good as Ross had advertised! With full bellies, we enjoyed the drawings for the door prizes. As usual there were surprises as the winners were called. We had several first time ever winners this year! After some well needed naps, it looked to be another good night of observing in spite of the weatherman's forecast. The field was alive with activity as dusk fell only to be spoiled by the arrival of clouds from the west. By the time they reached the zenith, I decided to break down and load up. I had just finished loading the last of it when it started to sprinkle. Those of us finished packing rushed around the field to help others pack up before everything got wet. It ended up being just a shower to chase us off the field as the real rain didn't arrive till later Sunday. It was a bittersweet end to an enjoyable week.

On reflection, I would like to personally thank Dale and Carol Baltimore who camped onsite and worked hard all week long to ensure everything went well. Without Carol's constant attention, our warm room snack bar would have been a disaster. Also a big thanks to Bill Kassebaum who also spent the week on the field and helped keep things in order. *[There were several other club members who also helped out when they were onsite, including Jim & Sandy Phfistner, Bob & Melissa Vickers, Alan Dudenhofer, and Heather Sherbourne. Thanks to them as well!]* I would also like to personally thank all the participants who took their time and money to come to our event! Without you we would have very little to show for our efforts, as it is for you that this event is held. Could things have run smoother? Yes. Could we have used more club members' help at this club-sponsored event? Yes. I was disappointed at the lack of support shown by club members and their lack of attendance at 'their' event. Pennyryle is not that far of a drive for most of us, and even on the rainy days we could have used the help and participation of quite a few more members. I realize we all have busy lives, but we all are needed to put on an event of this magnitude.

Thanks again to those of you who did come and attend and help out.

-David Paessler

SEPTEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

About 17 people attended the meeting and the club's 20th anniversary picnic including brand new members, Greg & Gretchen Myrick from Calvert City.

Picnic: It was a little chilly, but the two days of rain and storms stopped before the picnic. The food was good and everyone seemed to have a good time. Thanks again to Jim and Sandy Phfistner for organizing the picnic, bringing all the food and supplies, *and* cooking the burgers and hotdogs!

Public Outreach Award: Bob & Melissa Vickers reported on the [Astronomy Magazine Public Outreach Award](#). As we mentioned in the last newsletter, WKAA was 2nd runner-up out of 32 entrants. We didn't win the money, but Astronomy Magazine did send us a some goodies – including a very nice letter signed by several Astronomy Magazine personnel and 2 special issues of Astronomy Magazine – “Atlas of the Stars 2006” and “Mars: Explore the Red Planet's Past, Present and Future.” Melissa noted that our support for the KY Sheriff's Ranch is the primary activity that impressed the judges. Thanks to everyone who provided information for the package and a *big thanks* to Bob and Melissa for pulling it all together.

Website: John Holland recommended that the club find an alternate host for our website due to some ongoing problems. He said that John McCubbin is willing to host it for us on his server. He would only charge his club membership fee, but we would not be able to have the photo gallery or club weather on the website. David volunteered to explore hosting options and report back at the November meeting.

Star Party: Ross and David provided several details on star party preparations.

Viewing: Bill Albritton asked everyone to send an e-mail notification to the biglist when they go out to Golden Pond to view on non-meeting nights. He would like to view at GP when others are going to be there. We were unable to view after the meeting – we were lucky the rain stopped for the picnic!

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.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Balance (11/14/06): \$2804.29

Star Party Income: Five T-shirts, ordered before the star party, have not yet been paid for, so \$100 is still pending. Once these shirts are paid for, the star party will have made a *profit of \$57.41!* There are some extra shirts that have not yet been sold. If all of these shirts sell, then they will generate an additional \$120 profit.

OTHER EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

TSLP T-Shirts for Sale: We have 8 extra shirts from the TLSP 2006 Star Party. If you failed to get one at the star party, you have another opportunity! The price has been reduced to \$15 each and shirts are available in sizes S, M, L, and XL. See David at the meeting if you are interested in one of these.

Library: There are 2 new items in the library: Astronomy Magazine's “Atlas of the Stars 2006” and “Mars: Explore the Red Planet's Past, Present and Future.”

Club Website: The 2007 Activities Schedule has been posted. There are also several new star party photos in the photo gallery. See www.wkaa.net for details.

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:

President, Ross Workman – Dawson Springs, KY 270-797-8959 planetman[[@](mailto:planetman@bellsouth.net)]bellsouth.net

Vice President, Bill Kassebaum – Paducah, KY/Key West, FL ngc1952[[@](mailto:ngc1952@bellsouth.net)]bellsouth.net

Treasurer/Astronomical League Coordinator, David Paessler – Kevil, KY 270-488-3784 dcpaessler[[@](mailto:dcpaessler@wkaa.net)]wkaa.net

Secretary, Dale & Carol Baltimore – Paducah, KY 270-554-6603 w.daleb[[@](mailto:w.daleb@comcast.net)]comcast.net

Star Party Coordinator, Ross Workman – Dawson Springs, KY 270-797-8959 planetman[[@](mailto:planetman@bellsouth.net)]bellsouth.net

Assistant Star Party Coordinator, Bill Kassebaum – Paducah, KY/Key West, FL ngc1952[[@](mailto:ngc1952@bellsouth.net)]bellsouth.net

Website, John McCubbin – Hopkinsville, KY jomcc2[[@](mailto:jomcc2@wkaa.net)]wkaa.net and John Holland – Hopkinsville, KY yjohn4[[@](mailto:yjohn4@wkaa.net)]wkaa.net

Clear skies,

Dale & Carol Baltimore