

# Minutes of the University Lowbrow Astronomers for the Year 2007

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Note: It is possible that additional minutes were printed in one of the newsletters, look at the month in question and the next few months. Minutes are most likely to be found the month after. So the December 2003 minutes would most likely be in the January 2004 newsletter, but could be in the December 2003 or February 2004 newsletters.

UNIVERSITY LOWBROW ASTRONOMERS--REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES OF 3-16-2007

1.) Announcement of current Officer nominations and reminder of nominating process and timing:

President: Charlie Nielsen

Vice President: Jim Forrester, Ken Cook, Mike Kurylo, At Large

Treasurer: Yasu Inugi

Observatory Director: D.C. Moons

Newsletter Editor: Mark Deprest

Webmaster: Dave Snyder

2.) Discussion of Astronomy on the Beach 2007 donation. Motion by Charlie Nielsen, support by Dave Snyder to donate \$300 to the event this year. Motion carried by show of hands.

3.) Discussion lead by D.C. Moons regarding worm replacement and associated observatory repair and maintenance items. Motion by Mark Deprest, support by Doug Warshow to allocate \$1500.00 for worm repairs and associated maintenance. Motion carried by show of hands.

4.) Motion by Kurt Hillig, support by Dave Snyder to grant the Observatory Committee autonomy on worm replacement project decisions, within approved allocation. Motion carried by show of hands.

This document respectfully submitted by Charlie Nielsen on March 27, 2007.

UNIVERSITY LOWBROW ASTRONOMERS--OFFICER MEETING  
MINUTES OF 3-16-2007

1.) Officer nominations:

President: Charlie Nielsen

Vice President: Jim Forrester, Ken Cook, Mike Kurylo, At Large

Treasurer: Yasu Inugi

Observatory Director: D.C. Moons

Newsletter Editor: Mark Deprest

Webmaster: Dave Snyder

2.) Observatory: D.C Moons proposes worm replacement project for McMath telescope will commence in April and he will offer motion to general membership at regular meeting for approval of expenses.

3.) Meeting Topics and Speakers:

April: Elections and swap meet. (confirmed)

May: "The Worm Turns", D.C. Moons. (confirmed)

June: "Introduction to Astrophotography", Brian Ottum. (confirmed)

July: "New Equipment Show and Demo(?)", John Kirchhoff, at Sherzer (EMU)  
Observer(confirmed)

August: Open

September: "Welcome to the Moon", D.C. Moons (confirmed)

October: Ken Bertin, subject not confirmed. (probable)

November: "Oki-Tex Star Party Report", speaker unknown. (proposed, needs V.P. follow-up)

December: "Artsy Meaningless Slide Show", Fred Schebor. (proposed, Charlie will inquire)

This document respectfully submitted by Charlie Nielsen on March 27, 2007.

## Officer's Meeting Minutes of the University Lowbrows

Time: 7:30pm 2007-07-06

Location: Old Country Buffet on Eisenhower in Ann Arbor Attendees; Charlie, Dave, Bob, Ken, Mike & Yasu

1. Mark Deprest proposed via e-mail that the Lowbrows consider directly emailing the newsletter to the membership.
  - a. We decided it was okay for Mark to directly email until members opt out.
2. McMath Update
  - a. Ask D.C. Moons for worm drive return date
  - b. Stepper motor differential is being rebuilt by Mike Kurylo. There is no visible wear or damage. It just needs a good cleaning, lubrication, and some backlash adjustment.
  - c. Electronics – Ken Cook stated that there are some motor control issues and would like the newly designed electrical plans from Mike Radwick.
  - d. Primary Mirror Recoat – Kurylo discussed recoating with Flabeg (Metro-Pittsburgh, PA), cost is ~\$1000 for either standard or ultra-high coating, and can be completed in a week. They would like to see pictures of the current mirror condition since chipping is a major issue. [www.flabeg.com](http://www.flabeg.com)
  - e. Can we have outdoor outlets installed on the South wall of the observatory? It would also require an interior mounted wall switch and approval of George Latimer. To be handled through D.C. Moons.
  - f. How about a decent piggyback astrophotography mount for the McMath?
3. Meade LX5 2120 Update
  - a. The scope, mount and tripod are being cleaned. The glass is quite dirty if someone would like to volunteer to show me how to tend to that task.
  - b. The drive motors are not sufficiently moving the scope, even though I adjusted the clutches. Bobby G. recommended contacting Dr. Clay for a supercharging and I am waiting for a response from him. [www.arksky.org](http://www.arksky.org)
4. MiniMath (17.5”) Update
  - a. The CAD (computer aided design) is almost complete. I am willing to present the concept for the scope during the October meeting as a backup.
  - b. Can we start collecting the parts for the rebuild?
5. Lowbrow Refractor
  - a. Is there any interest in the club acquiring a refractor, mount and tripod to improve our collection?
  - b. With the addition of a solar filter it would make a good general purpose scope for club use.

6. Wall Size Sky Chart
  - a. A large chart to hang on the exterior East or South wall for observing sessions and instructional use.
  - b. Would be nice if it was a glow-in-the-dark variety.
  - c. One for winter, and one for summer.
  
7. Lowbrow Decals/Logo Contest
  - a. We've had this discussion before, but can we commit to one logo?
  - b. Is there any interest in having decals made for scopes, scope boxes, or vehicle windows?
  - c. Would be a good promotional aid if applied to the club equipment.
  
8. Event Calendar
  - a. Ask D.C. to move his talk from 9/14 to 9/28.
  - b. Move Ken Burton from October to 11/16.
  - c. Ask Mark Deprest about Okie-Tex for February.
  - d. Charlie will ask Warren Smith about using the Sat. Morning Physics room for Fred's slide show in December.
  
9. Lowbrow Picnic
  - a. Is there enough club interest in a members only picnic/observing session at the observatory?
  - b. Another option would be a potluck or club subsidized dinner during the December slide show. This may require University approval.
  
10. Fundraising
  - a. Pending approval from George Latimer, could the club raise funds by selling bottled water, red lights, sky charts or bug spray/towelettes?
  
11. Night Sky Network
  - a. Should we hold scheduled talks? Six per year would be a reasonable number if we had sufficient volunteer help.
  - b. Another outreach program would be to hold classes for homeschooling groups. This would probably be a paid position.
  
12. Web Ad for Schools
  - a. Yasu recommended placing educator notices on our homepage.
  
13. Lifetime Membership Plaques
  - a. After the tremendous gift from Jim Wadsworth we will look into having small engraved wood plaques made with the Lowbrow logo recognizing large gifts or lifetime memberships.
  
14. Observatory Purchase Items
  - a. First Aid Kit
  - b. Wet Wipes/Hand Cleaner

- c. Towels
  - d. Garbage Can
  - e. Fire Extinguisher (Class ABC)
  - f. Mouse Traps
  - g. Mouse resistant (Rubbermaid) containers for storing items
15. Webster Telescopes/Kennedy Mirror Test [www.webstertelescopes.com](http://www.webstertelescopes.com)
- a. Erik Webster is scheduled to have a 28" mirror blind test with three of his scopes for the Astromart forum. Two of one type coating, and the third mirror with a second type of coating.
  - b. They may be looking for visual observing volunteers, I am still waiting for a reply from Erik.

See you at the next meeting,  
Mike

## University Lowbrow Astronomers

### Minutes of the August 17, 2007 Monthly Meeting

Our official club meeting was brought to order by club president Charlie Neilsen after an excellent presentation by Mike Simonsen on cataclysmic variable star observing

- Charlie noted that our club logo is missing from the Peach Mountain Clear Sky Clock website which is probably due to a missing contribution to the CSC.
- DC Moons made a motion that the club treasurer be authorized to spend the modest amount to keep our logo on the Clear Sky Clock assuming it is below the \$100 major expense limit. Ken Cook seconded, the motion carried, with DC against his own motion (See Newton's Third Law).
- Treasurers Report - Yasu We have some new members, and some existing members not paying their dues for a net result of 103 members. We have more than \$7,600 in the bank.
- Norb Vance Reminded the club of a free (right price) pipe organ concert Friday Nov. 9th 2007 at EMU featuring astronomy and physics inspired musical pieces. The organizers of the concert will accept original compositions for inclusion in the program.
- VP Mike Kurylo - no report
- VP Ken Cook Ken pointed out that the next meeting (September 28) has no speaker or topic. Mike Radwick and Ken met regarding the new drive electronics. Work by Mike Radwick is proceeding on the layout of the second PC board for the drive system. Jason Maguran offered to assist with the electronics.
- VP Bobbie G. - no report
- Newsletter Editor Mark Deprest - No Report - Ha! - We NEED Articles - He received only one feedback on emailing the news letter Was it OK to email the newsletter? Mark pointed out that Mike Simonsen's website is really good.

Mike Simonsen mentioned that if you *\*really\** liked it then email the AAVSO with comments on his talk.

Mark noted that a new Night Sky Network (NSN) astronomy tool kit arrived. The title is "The Search for Planets". He might review it for the September meeting.

- Webmaster Dave Snyder - We have flyers! If any members have ideas as to where we should distribute the flyers please let Dave know. Dave noted that we now have three new email lists at ~lowbrows: OTSP, BFSP and now GLSG
- Open House Director Jim Forrester - No Open house tomorrow night (Saturday August 18, 2007) Jim mentioned that the RASC website has excellent tel-rad friendly star charts. Jim also mentioned that J R Torres in Spain has produced an excellent star atlas down to +12.5 mag that can be downloaded and used for free (right price again). He warned that they are Large files.
- Observatory Director D C Moons - In the continuing saga "As The Worm Turns" -- We have the new WORM for the McMath! This 5 pound piece of precisely machined steel replaces the corroded original worm in the RA drive of the McMath This is the culmination of a 17 year process since the corrosion was noticed on the worm in 1989. ( Note: a motor turns the worm which meshes with the big bronze worm gear which turns the telescope in Right Ascension to compensate for the earth's rotation ) Carson Diamond Wright has done an excellent job producing a new worm and reboring the journals in the housing to fit the new worm. Their dimensional tolerances are excellent. Our project received much personal attention from their chief engineer.

We will install the new worm and housing on Saturday August 25th. Tentative agenda: OBSCOM should arrive at 2 pm. VIPs should arrive at 4 pm First power up at 6 pm We will need a photographer too.

Mike Kurylo has worked on the differential for the RA drive. It is ready to go after a good cleaning, and re-lube.

DC pointed out some extra work that Carson Diamond Wright did - rework the adjusting screw, hardened insert for the take up screw to push against. They recommend a light machine oil. OBSCOM will write

new operating procedures that may include lube RA drive prior to open house or observing run. Several options were mentioned: drip system, Teflon, synthetic grease, triflow.

Recoating the Primary of the McMath? We can see light through the coating. General consensus was not at Klausing. Flabeg in Pittsburgh PA wants \$1000 and 1 week to recoat the 24" mirror. DC felt that we should reinstall the mechanics prior to pulling the primary.

Other possible improvements to the McMath - Rework the Cell? Refigure the Mirror? Several divots in the surface. Rework the electronics.

- Charlie asked Mike Kurylo to review some of his ideas from the last officers meeting.

Some of Mike's ideas:

1. Optical telescope coating testing at Webster telescopes? - Our window of opportunity is closing fast.  
- Anyone want to help visually test different coatings during actual observing? Please contact Mike.
  2. Do we need outside outlets on the south wall of the observatory?
  3. Anyone interested in a good camera mount on the side of the McMath? - Mike noted that he wouldn't use the current camera mount.
  4. 10" Schmidt-Cass - tune-up & clean-up - Mike made a wooden storage box for it
  5. Where are the donated parts for the 17" coultter rebuild (the Mini-Math)
  6. How about a pier outside for the 10" Schmid-Cass?
  7. selling items to guests to help them with observing - mosquito repellent, red flash light, star chart, etc. Several members thought that was a good idea.
- The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted  
Ken Cook VP



## NOTES FROM U.L.A. OFFICER MEETING OCT. 19, 2007

### Gate Key Status:

It is confirmed that D.C., has an original key. We believe Jim Forrester has his original key (or he knows who does), that Fred Schebor has his original key, and Bernard Friberg may still hold one of the original four. It is of the utmost importance that the Officers understand that all official U of M keys are serial numbered and marked "do not duplicate", and that based on historical events, discovery of a violation of U of M policy would be seriously frowned upon by U of M officials.

### McMath Drive Status:

The new worm appears to be working very well, better than the original in fact. The status of the repair of the original drive electronics circuit board is unknown. Mike Radwick will be presenting a proposal for the cost of building his new and enhanced drive electronics and installing it. He is generously offering to absorb his labor costs. If the club membership approves the project, provisions will be made for reverting to the older electronics should that ever be necessary.

### Meeting Speakers:

We have swapped November and February. The Oki-Tex crew will be presenting in November, and Ken Bertin will be in February. Bobby G. will stay on top of the February meeting. December is still Fred Adams. Charlie will stay tuned with Fred. Dave will be involved also. Mike Kurylo has volunteered to assist Charlie with training and operation of the A/V system in room 170. Charlie is working on permission to use this room at the time of this writing. It is not confirmed, but likely to be approved. If it goes according to plan, we will want to do some promotion for this event. January is still Artsy-Meaningless. Ken Cook will stay in contact with Fred Schebor on this one. D.C. stated that he should be ready to do a presentation for the March meeting. John Kirchhoff is likely for July, and Tom Trusock for August. Please confirm, but I think Ken Cook is handling Tom Trusock. There was some discussion of the idea of talking to John Kirchhoff about setting up a display at the Dec. 8 event at the Exhibit Museum. Perhaps Dave should check with the Museum about this idea before we approach John K.

Respectfully Submitted by Charlie Nielsen 10/28/2007

## **Notes for General Membership Meeting of December 21, 2007**

Proposal to donate \$130 to Saturday Morning Physics. The proposal passed.