

Minutes of the University Lowbrow Astronomers for the Year 2010

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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 2010 minutes would most likely be in the January 2011 newsletter, but could be in the December 2010 or February 2011 newsletters.

ULA Meeting Minutes from May 21, 2010

1. Charlie Nielsen called to order and introduced the club and guest speaker Myron Campbell.
2. Charlie reported on AA schools presentations.
3. June 26-Leslie Park event.
4. Charlie met with AOSS and they are taking over operation of the Peach Mountain Radio Telescope after the Astronomy Department discontinues.
5. New AC receptacles on south side of observatory and cement work is proceeding.
6. Mark Deprest (Newsletter Editor) reports that he needs articles. He has none for June, July, or none thru 2012. Camp Hazelwood; showed stars to 10 year olds (sky cleared just in time). Expect 2 events there next year. New comets are naked eye in June. Has new Night Sky Network poster.
7. Liz Calhoun (Treasurer) reports a bank balance of \$8995, and 117 members. Liz made a motion to spend \$657 for a T-shirt run. The motion was seconded and passed with one nay-sayer (who certainly did this simply to be rebellious). \$142 of the expenditure is for 24 T-shirts reserved for guest speakers. Special Lowbrow prices are set at \$10 for T-shirts and \$20 for Sweatshirts.
8. Dave Snyder (Webmaster) reports that he met with Jeff Masters and he has been booked for our January 2011 guest speaker. Jeff is co-founder and Director of Meteorology at The Weather Underground.
9. Paul Walkowski (VP) reported the null set.
10. Jim Forrester (VP) reports that we better have better luck on our June Open Houses!
11. Mark Deprest went to Tomahawk Lake last weekend (5/15) and he had excellent observing conditions. He is planning on going again on June 4-6, or June 11-13, and is inviting observing partners.
12. Meeting adjourned.

Produced by Charlie Nielsen based on minutes taken by Jim Forrester. Some minor modifications and additions have been made.

University Lowbrow Astronomers
Meeting Minutes Friday June 18th, 2010

The well attended meeting with over 50 members and guests was called to order at 7:40pm by President Charlie Nielsen.

A multimedia presentation by Charlie Nielsen gave an overview of Colonel Lousma's career and the Apollo 13 mission. The material was courtesy of picseach.com, NASA images and utube.com.

Colonel Jack Lousma was introduced at 7:54pm. He gave an extemporaneous presentation of the Apollo 13 mission focusing on the positive attitude that permeated the NASA organization.

About 9pm questions were entertained by Jack Lousma with some spirited comments on the future direction of NASA.

At 9:45pm the business portion of the meeting began.

Officers Report:

Dave Snyder (Web Master) would welcome additional content from club members.

Jim Forrester (Open House Coordinator) reported that the club is 0 for 12 on planned open house events due to cloudy skies. Saturday June 19th looked promising. He would send an email out on Saturday as to whether the open house could take place.

Jason Maguran (Vice President) had nothing to report.

Mark Deprest (Newsletter Editor) has a few articles but needs more for the next newsletter.

Elizabeth Calhoun (Treasurer) reported the club membership roster was at 115. She has sent out membership renewal reminders but has had few responses. The Lowbrow shirt sale program has gone very well. Shirt sales and expense transactions are in progress. The club treasury is at about \$9000.

Mike Radwick (Observatory Director) reported that the McMath telescope mirror is in need of recoating as the surface is noticeably deteriorated and is affecting the telescope image quality. The mirror is a 1940 vintage cast Pyrex weighing in the order of 135 lbs. Mike has received a quote from Flabeg near Pittsburgh to recoat the McMath Mirror. Two options were quoted.

Option A: Aluminum Oxide Quartz with 88% reflectivity: \$550

Option B: Enhanced Aluminum coating with 92% reflectivity: \$750

The company would need 2 weeks advance notice in order to schedule the work and 3 to 4 days to complete it. Mike suggested that transportation costs could be minimized if it could be delivered by a club member going to the Black Forest Star Party in September and picked up on the return. He estimates it to be 100 miles further for the route to include Flabeg. Mike estimated that the total cost to the club would be in the \$1000 to \$1400 dollar range.

Some discussion entailed that the secondary should be recoated at the same time to take advantage of the possible more reflective coating and to reduce McMath telescope downtime in the future. Mike explained that the secondary coating looks fine now and that it could be easily removed from the McMath at any time in the future. Mike estimated that cost of the secondary coating would be under \$200. It was suggested that he obtain a quote from Flabeg for the cost to recoat the secondary at the same time as the McMath.

Discussions by club members debated the durability of the Option A and Option B coatings with no conclusive results.

Discussions related various methods in use and other possibilities to protect and control the environment of the McMath mirror to extend the life of the mirror coating. Mike commented that earlier coatings in the existing observatory had lasted 10 years and in his judgment that last coating did not have a durable quality. He expects in the current observatory environment we should expect a coating to last 5 to 10 years.

It was asked of the Treasurer to project if the club had sufficient revenues to support recoating the McMath once every 5 years. The treasurer's judgment was that there were sufficient revenues to support \$1000 or so every five years. Some comments were made by members that we could raise revenue if required by actions such as raising club membership dues.

Mike pointed out that the work on the McMath should be completed before the cold weather of October and that Flabeg was shut down for a time in July. A work crew of 6 to 8 would be required for 6 to 8 hours to disassemble the McMath and remove the mirror.

Mark Deprest made a motion:

To authorize the officers of the club to develop a plan and spend the money required to resurface the McMath telescope with Flabeg. The motion was supported by D C Moons and a show of hands demonstrated club support for the motion.

Charlie Nielsen has received an email from Norb Vance recommending that the club purchase for \$1400 a Celestron CGEM equatorial mount for the club owned Meade 10" SCT telescope. Norb would modify the dove tail of the Meade telescope to accommodate

the Celestron mount. Charlie suggested that the telescope would be used for general observation and would be a good platform for astrophotography. It could be used in the observatory in conjunction with the McMath or when the McMath was unavailable.

Discussion entailed as to whether this telescope was a priority for the club to expend monies on versus other possible projects such as PST (Personal Solar Telescope) for public outreach programs. Comments from club members were:

- 1) Even with this expenditure there would be monies available for other projects.
- 2) It would be a waste of the Meade 10" purchased for \$750 to not spend the additional \$1400 to make it fully operational.
- 3) Mark Deprest would make his PST available for public outreach programs and if the club should make a PST project a priority and not have funds to pursue them, he would donate his to the club.

D.C. Moons made a motion:

The club should purchase the Celestron mount for the Meade 10" telescope. Mark Deprest supported the motion and a show of hands demonstrated club support for the motion.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:50pm.

Minutes recorded by Don Foey and edited by Charlie Nielsen.