

Minutes of the University Lowbrow Astronomers for the Year 2013

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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 2013 minutes would most likely be in the January 2014 newsletter, but could be in the December 2013 or February 2014 newsletters.

Lowbrows Astronomy Club

Meeting Minutes

18 January 2013

Charlie Nielsen, President, called the meeting to order,

- Open house dates : After a brief discussion following open house dates were approved for 2013:
March: 9 & 16 ; April: 6 & 13 ; May: 4 & 11 ; June: 8 & 15 ; July: 6 & 13 ; Aug.: 3, 10 & 31; Sept.: 7 ; Oct.: 5, 26 ; Nov.: 2 & 9
- Send Articles !!! : Jim Forrester, Newsletter Editor, requests members to write articles for the news letter !
- Leslie Science center event last Saturday (Jan 12th) was attended by 12 people who enjoyed practicing with the scope. The turnout might been better, had it not been for WEMU announcing that the event was on Friday night (Jan 11th)
- Yankee Air Museum Event : See details below. Lowbrow members have been requested to participate.

NASA Fly Me to the Moon Launch Party,

Saturday, February 9th , 2013

5PM-9PM

http://www.yankeearmuseum.org/documents/YAM_NASA.pdf

"A one hour photograph session with Jack Lousma, a former astronaut and Michigan native will take place from 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM. A member of the second manned crew 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM. A member of the second manned crew on the Skylab Space Station and commander of the third space shuttle mission STS-3, Mr. Lousma also served on the astronaut support crews of the Apollo 9, 10, and 13 missions. The line made famous in the movie "Apollo 13" - "Houston, we have a problem.", was received at mission control by Jack Lousma. Help Yankee Air Museum celebrate the success of our space program. Light refreshments will the success of our space program. Light refreshments will be provided." - From the event information flyer.

- Charlie mentioned that there will be two more events at Leslie Science center and one at Brighton recreation area in the coming months. Stay tuned.....
- Officers election and the Annual General Body Meeting for 2013 will be held during the April monthly meeting.

- The Club members acknowledged the efforts and contributions of the Webmaster, Dave Snyder. He is retiring at the end of this term in April. Dave has been the webmaster for many, many years..... Belinda will assume the responsibilities of the webmaster.
- Doug Scobel, Treasurer, mentioned that we have about 107 members and have about \$7700 in the bank.
- Mike Radwick, Observatory Director talked about the fly-by of Asteroid 2012 DA14 on February 15. See the link below:
<http://earthsky.org/space/asteroid-2012-da14-will-pass-very-close-to-earth-in-2013>

Mike will have more information in the newsletter.

The next meeting is on 15 February, 2013.

University Lowbrow Astronomers (ULA)
Officers Report
Dennison Bldg. Room 807

March 15, 2013

Officers Report conducted by Charlie Nielsen, President ULA;
Meeting Minutes recorded by Jack Brisbin V.P;

Night Sky Network Outreach Pins; 3 pins were sent to Mark Deprest.

Discussion on the passing of George Latimer. He was considered King of the Hill and a very close friend of the ULA. Charlie Nielsen conducted a moment of silence in remembrance of George Latimer.....9:06 pm.

Charlie introduced Dave Shindell, President of the Optical Society of America (OSA) Ann Arbor section. The Ann Arbor section recently hosted the James Webb Space Telescope talk that was attended by some ULA members. Mr. Shindell explained the Mi Light group. The Mi Light group is a related association of companies in the Optics and Photonics industry. The Ann Arbor Section of OSA obtained a two year grant from the State of Michigan to better train people employed in the optics field. The Mi Light group thought highly of the ULA and *asked the ULA to partner with them.*

Meeting Minutes Note: Goto: mi-light.org and you will see the ULA logo with the other member logo's.

Astronomy at the Beach donation for \$300.00 was discussed. The club has donated to this event every year. Motion was made to donate of \$300.00. Membership voted YES.

A Wayne State University professor will give us a talk on Black Holes or Neutron stars. The membership voted for Neutron stars.

Officers report;

Jack Brisbin; presently working on having the Youngastronomers.org web site listed in the Ann Arbor Family magazine under classifieds. They have a special free category that we qualify for. The 8" f/7 Cave dobsonian has been cleaned up and maintenance repairs have been made to the rocker board and azimuth bearing board. Telescope should be back at the Observatory starting April.

Doug Scobel; We have about 110 members in the club and just over \$8000 in funds. He also reminded us about the Messier Marathon at Lake Hudson on April 6 through 7. John Kirchhoff will have his motor home there for warm ups.

Dave Snyder, Web Master; Dave will be stepping down as web master after 15 years of service to the club as of April 2013. Thank You Dave! Belinda V.P., will take over some of the activities. We are still looking for someone to take over the Webmaster position or work as a shared position? There was a discussion on different ways of distributing the clubs newsletter over the Internet and archiving the newsletter. There was talk of changing some web activities to Google Drive or a Drop Box service.

Jim Forrester, Newsletter Editor; Discussed some of the changes with the group and starting May 1st the newsletter will change how it is emailed. Jim has tried to keep the newsletter under 5 mb but this is not easy, considering pictures and other graphics.

Election Announcement, Election of Officers will be conducted at the April 19, 2013 meeting. Charlie Nielsen, President will send out election reminders through e-mail.

--Jack Brisbin--

Officers Meeting April 19, 2013

Vice President Jack Brisbin submitted a report (this report included below).

Officer's report by Jack Brisbin

1. April 5th, 8th/7 Cave dobsonian was returned to observatory after repairs were made see newsletter article.
2. Young Astronomer web site will be published in Ann Arbor family magazine for free. Because the web site shows how to get free items they let use their free classified ad space. Starting in May. That's what they told me last week.
3. April 5th myself and Kurt Hillig went to the observatory and Kurt greased some of the bearings on the McMath Mount and pier. We also did the wheels on the roll off roof observatory. What we noticed was the observatory roof hits the wall and rubs up against it. This damages the roof/wall.



The wheel roof alignment is off, see the next picture. This is not a photo exaggeration, the wheel is that far off. This is something we need to fix and discuss how we do it.

To fix this, the other wheels need to be aligned with the roof





We need to set up a repair schedule and tackle some of these problems. Kurt had some ideas on how to align the observatory roof and we need to do some cement work on the wall.

It will be very important to get AOSS opinion on this work and their support.



I will be available to help with work on the observatory walls and the roof wheel alignment. The roof wheel alignment is more complex to solve when you consider the weight of the roof and wheel axle assembly weight.

Apr 20, 2013

to Lowbrow-members

A few notes from last night's Lowbrow meeting:

Krishna Rao is our new Webmaster. Dave will be continuing to help him until his time frees up later this year. There was a hardy round of applause for all the work and dedication that Dave Snyder has provided for many years. To demonstrate that we are not willing to let him out of work completely, we elected him VP. Another new VP is David Jorgensen who was nominated and seconded at our officer's meeting. This demonstrates what could happen to you if you miss the elections meeting. Having said that I think David is going to serve us well, and when he was informed earlier today he did not head for the woods. We also owe our undying gratitude to Jason and Srinu for their previous service as VP's, and helping us with outreach activities. All other officer positions remain the same.

The membership voted on and approved the expense of \$475 to buy John Causland's Argo Navis. We are going to use this to replace the NGC Max unit that is currently our digital setting circles for the McMath. The Argo Navis unit will be much more accurate and user friendly. There was also considerable discussion about the 17.5 inch Coulter mirror that Doug Nelle, Jack Brisbin and Tom Ryan refigured. Jim Forrester is going to produce a document that will show us what we need to purchase and for how much, to place the mirror in a Hubble Optics portable Dobsonian assembly. The tone of the discussion led me to believe we may actually complete this project, and have a great club resource as a result.

Jack Brisbin provided us with pictures of the condition of the wheels that are used on the McMath Observatory roof. The wheels are not square with the tracks, and one in particular is barely still on the rail. If it comes off we have a serious and immediate problem. It was decided that we will repair this condition soon, likely early June. Kurt Hillig described how we can accomplish this.

I have made contact with our Liaison to AOSS and we are planning to meet for lunch soon to discuss what we can do regarding outreach for AOSS and to get permission and possible monetary help with repair of the deteriorating cement blocks on the SE corner of the building. If it works out, Mike Radwick will be joining us for this initial meeting.

Jim; if we do not see any corrections or objections from the officers in the next few days, please consider this as meeting minutes and publish in our newsletter. Thanks.

Clear skies,
Charlie

Meeting Minutes; Jack Brisbin V.P
University Lowbrow Astronomers, Ann Arbor Michigan

May 17, 2013

Officers report: 8:50pm

Belinda V.P: working on the Google calendar for the web site and continuing to work on guest speakers.

Charlie Nielsen President.: discussion on having a club picnic towards the end of summer. Next open house at Peach Mountain is June 8 and 15.

March 23 Westland event, Library enjoyed the presentation; telescopes and solar observing

May 14 at Holly MI, Hazel Park Campground students liked the telescopes and observing session.

June 21, Lowbrow meeting, Mark Deprest will give a talk on the Grand Canyon Star Party. At a later date Mark will give a Comet talk at the Ford Astronomy Club that will also be shown on Wyandotte's cable TV

June 22, Leslie Science Center A/2, club will conduct a Star wheel presentation and Observing session.

June 25, Michigan Math and Science Scholars observing session at Peach Mountain

June 28, Brighton State Park Observing session, park ranger will be present at Observing session

Jack Brisbin V.P; Continue to update the YoungAstronomer.org web site.

Dave Snyder V.P; Dave is leaving the web master job after 15 years and is working with other members to establish an orderly transfer of web master duties. Mike Radwick is currently scanning some of the old newsletters, these will be added to the web site.

Doug Scobel; Treasurer reports a 109 members and renewed the clubs membership in the International Dark Sky Association. About half the club members renew as seniors.

Jim Forrester Newsletter editor: June Newsletter has some material, but we need more articles for the upcoming months.....start writing!

Meeting Minutes Note;

The clubs membership was notified by E-Mail that the club will be voting on financial expenses to build the club's telescope a 17.5 Dobsonian designed telescope. Starting in April club members starting expressing their opinion on three designs; Tele Kit, Dobstuff and Hubble Optics. Each kit contained an itemized cost for a Digital Setting Circle's and separate GoTo Drive costs. Jim Forester and David Jorgenson V.P put together a spread sheet (5 Pages)

showing the financial costs for all three telescope designs and e-mailed it to the membership in the second week of May. The members at the club meeting where all informed about the vote and some members brought copies of the spread sheet with them.

Discussion before the vote;

This data is from the spread sheet e-mailed to the membership.

Totals

Subtotals	A	A+B	A+C
	Basic		
	Scope	Scope + Setting Circles	Scope + Go-To
Telekit	\$3,132	\$3,560	\$4,999
Hubble	\$3,296	\$3,768	\$4,969
DobStuff	\$3,040	\$3,717	\$4,907
Range: Max-Min	\$256	\$208	\$92

Charlie Nielsen club President conducted the discussion on which kit to build and 3 or 4 members started expressed their opinions; NGC Max from the McMath to use on the 17.5 dob; Hubble optics is in Hong Kong, ground ship is 10 weeks. Dobstuff had a 2 month lead time. Discussion on how much will the telescope get used and used at public events like Astronomy at the Beach annual star party? A Club member has agreed to let us use his wood shop building (24' by 24') to build the telescope. Another discussion on drive extensions, power ground board, encoders, motors and software. Where are we going to store it and observatory discussion. Getting the 17.5" mirror coated and purchasing a 3.1" secondary mirror from a club member. This went on for 30 or 40 minutes.

First Vote; John Wallbank made a motion to vote on the A+B column and not spend the money on the A+C column. After some discussion the motion was seconded and supported. A majority vote approved the motion.

Second Vote; Charlie Nielsen made the motion to vote on the A+B Scope+Setting Circle's categories; 1.Telekit, 2.Hubble, 3.Dobstuff. There was a discussion on the motion and members could only vote once. The motion was seconded and supported. On the first vote; 1.Telekit vote, the majority of the members present voted for the Tele kit. The Yes votes (show of hands) approved the vote. There were no votes against the approval. There were not enough member votes left to conduct a vote on 2.Hubble or 3.Dobstuff.

Doug Scobel will contact AstroSystems to put together the order, and to get the final price quote before actually ordering.

Meeting ended at 9:50pm; submitted by Jack Brisbin V.P.

Lowbrow Meeting November 15, 2013

- 1) Edward Cackett from Wayne State University gave a talk on Neutron Stars.
- 2) December 7 is "Comet Discovery Day" at the U-M Museum of Natural History. Mark Deprest plans to give 2 or 3 comet talks. Jeff Hindline plans to bring some telescopes and other equipment. Charlie and Dave plan to give some optics demonstrations. If anyone else would like to help out with a toolkit let Charlie know.
- 3) On Tuesday there will be presentation for the American University in Cairo. The Cairo presentation will be Tuesday, Nov 19 at 11:30 AM our time, and 6:30PM, Cairo time. David Jorgensen will do this presentation at the Chelsea Library.
- 4) Charlie announced that club member Merry Celeste Donovan passed away from stage 4 cancer recently. Before she passed away, Merry had offered to work on a redesign of the club web site. She didn't complete this task, but before she died she had made a redesigned club logo. Dave Snyder talked about this briefly and this logo was displayed on the screen. One potential issue, the logo has a block M, that the University might object to. There was a discussion of this issue. Dave had volunteered to talk to Myron Campbell (Associate Dean of Natural Science) about this.
- 5) Jim Forrester: The Newsletter will be just lunar eclipse photos and photos from the 17" project unless there are additional contributions. A proposed schedule for 2014 open houses was presented:

March 22, 29

April 26

May 3, 24, 31

June 21, 28

July 19, 26

Aug 23, 30

Sept 20, 27

Oct 18, 25

Nov 15, 22

Astronomy at the Beach is September 26 and 27, so the Sept 27 date was removed. Mike: Should have 17" done by Messier Marathon. Almost always have conflicts in September, don't know when BFSP is. There was discussion about the schedule. The next issue is having coordinators for each of these dates. Jim Forrester has taken March and Don Fohey has taken April 26 & May 3. The rest of Schedule needs volunteers. Adopted schedule as is. Send articles to Jim.

- 6) Doug Scobel: Report on Telescope. We have glued up the mirror box and rocker box. Meeting on Saturday Mornings, 3 meetings so far. Mike K spent most of his time measuring and putting this information into a CAD program to produce a 3D model. This can be articulated or exploded. Hope to make a lot of progress tomorrow. David J: One issue is keep the work space at a reasonable temperature, at the same time keeping the fumes down. Doug Scobel: The best time to do finishing work is in the

spring. While we have been working just on Saturday mornings, the work would go faster if we met Friday night and then on Saturday mornings. Mike Kurylo has a shop in New Hudson.

Treasurer's Report: 116 members and \$4000 in the kitty. Calendars haven't arrived yet. On September 21st, a group of Lowbrows brought telescopes to the Families with Chinese Children, and the event organizers sent a card in appreciation. Doug distributed this card.

- 7) Jack Brisbin: Jack talked about the Young Astronomers Web Site. It is possible to observe Comet ISON. He is using a site near Ford Road & Prospect. It is currently about 6th Magnitude, not visible naked eye, but visible in binoculars.
- 8) John Causland: Tomorrow is Saturday Morning Physics. Jeff McMahon will be giving a talk "Mapping the Beginning of the Universe."
- 9) Dave Snyder: We already discussed the possible new logo.
- 10) Mike Radwick: nothing
- 11) Fred Schebor: Fred will be giving the Artsy Meaningless Slide Show in December. He is looking for photos to add to his collection.

Recorded by Dave Snyder.