

THE FOCUS

The Official Newsletter of United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey

January 1997

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November Board Meeting

Summary of the UACNJ Board of Directors Meeting, November 30, 1996

In member clubs reports, Don Urban of the Rockland club described plans for the 1997 Astronomy Forum on Sunday, April 20th. Three tables were still left. Brochures will be printed mid-January, and ads will appear in Astronomy in March. They expect 600 to 700 attendees this year, and they are looking for larger facilities for 1998. Preregistration is encouraged. Ralph Marantino of AAAP and Al Witzgall of AAI noted a schedule of speakers from the professional and amateur astronomy community at their clubs.

Tom Massey gave the Treasurer's report. As of Nov 30th, UACNJ has \$3,966.71 on deposit including a \$2500 CD just rolled over for renewal. Heating expenses were briefly noted.

As Observatory Chairman, Barry Malpas reported the first public day for 1997 will be April 5th, with Astronomy Day events on April 12th. The NY Times published an article in its New Jersey section on Sept. 29th on the UACNJ and its associated clubs. There was a water pump failure that was repaired by Bruce Gundlach and Don Greenwood. Some user damage occurred to the 16-inch telescope: a logbook was recommended. The Exxon grant proposal for \$2000 of equipment is in progress at Exxon. Audio-visual equipment donations by Don Greenwood and Bruce Wright were acknowledged. The slide projector will be relocated. The soda machine continues to work and produce

income. Ralph and others complimented the completed Observatory concrete pads.

The following officers were duly elected effective Jan 1st 1997:

President: Ralph Marantino,
AAAP (2nd year)

Vice Pres: Ron Russo,
MMAS, SSG (2nd year)

Sect: Kevin Conod,
NJAG (1st year)

Treas: Ron Schechter,
AAI (1st year)

Trustee: Saul Moroz,
AAAP (1st year, 3-year term)

In new business: Al Witzgall will offer a set of 4-inch f/15 refractor elements to the UACNJ, and will work on other optical projects. The Montclair club delivered its promised donation of a 16-inch telescope. It was delivered that afternoon by Dave Henderson. In related matters, Barry offered to loan telescopes for club observatories at Jenny Jump.

Barry Malpas proposed that the UACNJ support his sponsorship of a "Stellar Spectrum Certificate". Barry would offer this certificate nationally, to recognize the observation of spectra as supported by an information packet. The goal is to support these activities. His proposal was voted on and approved unanimously. Barry also suggested similar programs of a regional basis might be done, such as a Caldwell list with AAAP or another list of observable objects with AAI. Barry also offered a draft version of a Jenny Jump "Observer Guide Book", and requested comments by January.

Ron Russo from Credentials reported 13 member clubs, and from the Constitution Committee that he and Darryl Foyuth have a first draft. Ron

Russo also suggested that club dues be raised to \$25 with a \$10 discount if paid promptly. Consensus suggested that an outline of benefits be included with the "bill". The motion was made and approved, to raise dues to \$25 annually, but to offer a \$10 discount if dues are paid before March 31st, noting that dues are otherwise due on March 1st.

The Deep Sky event at Jenny Jump, sponsored by the Deep Sky Society, was reported to be poorly attended. After some discussion of sponsored events, suggestions were made about purchases of food, site fees, and parking, giving the sponsoring groups some responsibilities and obligations; but no votes were taken. Barry will present some developments in parking at the next meeting. Ron Russo recommended cash tracking methods: Treasurer-elect Ron Schechter will review and make recommendations. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 AM. The next Board of Directors meeting will be February 8th at 11AM at Jenny Jump, with a snow date of February 15th.

*These summary minutes respectfully
submitted for publication,
Herbert R Johnson, Secretary UACNJ*

UACNJ

Board Meeting

*The next meeting will be held on
Sat., February 8, 1997 at
10 a.m.*

*The meeting will be held
at Jenny Jump*

*All are welcome to attend the
meeting.*

*For directions call Barry
Malpas at: 908-755-6932*



THE JUMP NOTES

Several events will be taking place in the near future at the UACNJ Consortium Observatory at Jenny Jump State Forest in Hope, NJ.

There will be regular Saturday Work Sessions every other Saturday. Work sessions usually begin at 10 a.m. and run all day. During these Saturday work parties, renovations are made to the house, observatories as well as the grounds and anything else that needs work. If you haven't yet attended a work session, you really should. You'll not only be helping with the site but it's a great way to meet people from other clubs (and not bad exercise, either!)

In mid October of 1995 we received the official word from the State that the site plan had been approved. This means that five new observatories have begun construction. We have begun setting up work crews to help dig and pour the foundations. If all goes as planned we will be pouring the concrete for the foundations in late September or early October. If you have any spare plywood or 2x4's they are greatly needed! Please come out and lend a hand!

We need your support to make the Observatory a success. If you're already a supporting member of the Consortium then you know that yearly dues are due. Regular membership is \$20, Sustaining memberships cost \$50. Your dues help pay the bills that are incurred at the Observatory to keep it operating. This may sound like a beg-a-thon, but I assure you that it is not, that money is needed to help keep this fine dark sky site available to amateur astronomers. If you are not a Consortium member and would like to become one, contact Barry Malpas at 908-755-6932 for more info.

It appears as though UACNJ may be acquiring a 28" telescope as a donation. The instrument belonged to Otto Naegele, a former AAI member who passed away in April of 1995. The instrument, currently owned by Ross

Bloom, was constructed by Mr. Naegele in the mid 1950's and is a combination Newtonian/Nasmyth Cassegrain design. The primary mirror and at least one existing eyepiece were ground, polished and figured by Mr. Naegele. There is also a 5.5" refractor, mounted as a guidescope on the tube. The equatorial mounting that it is on was constructed from a universal axle off of a 1948 Willies Jeep.

If UACNJ is fortunate enough to receive this fine instrument as a donation, a 15' x 15' roll-off roof building has been proposed for construction to house this telescope. Jenny Jump would then be the home of the largest operating astronomical instrument in the state of New Jersey. In the coming months there will be more news found here regarding this situa-



AAI RUNNING TWO TRIPS TO 1998 ECLIPSE

AAI is sponsoring two different trips to observe the February 26, 1998 total solar eclipse. There are both land and sea trips available.

The land trip consists of seven nights in Aruba. Airfare, hotel and transportation to the eclipse site are all included in the \$1550 cost.

If you're more inclined to observing the eclipse from the ocean, AAI is also running an Eclipse Cruise. The Cruise ship departs from Miami and will sail about the Caribbean for nine nights. The cost of the sea trip is approx. \$1700.

If you interested in going on either one of these trips you'll want to put in your deposit right away, as space is extremely limited. For more info on the land trip contact Joe Arcaro at 908-889-6607 (evenings). For cruise information call 908-248-2378 or 908-855-6941.

**Submissions for The Focus
should be sent to:**

**The Focus
c/o Wayne Zuhl
717 Brookside Place
Cranford, NJ 07016**

or via email at:

wzuhl@turbo.kean.edu

UACNJ RECEIVES EXXON GRANT

The UACNJ received a grant of \$2000 towards the purchase of a CCD camera and related equipment for use on the 16-inch Newtonian Telescope at Jenny Jump. This funding was made possible through the Exxon VIF grant program, and with the aid of UACNJ observers, AAI members and Exxon employees Mike Luciuk and Donald Kruse. The camera has already been purchased in kit form and is being assembled by Don Greenwood. The additional equipment, such as filter holder, filters for color work, etc. are currently under order. The equipment will help to greatly enrich our research and public programs. Many thanks to Mike and Don for their efforts in acquiring this grant and to Exxon for having such a program available.

Northeast Astronomy Forum & Telescope Show V

The Rockland Astronomy Club is once again hosting the Northeast Astronomy Forum. This year's event will be held on Sunday, April 20th at the Holiday Inn in Suffern, NY. The festivities begin at 9 a.m. and continue on until 7 p.m. Admission is only \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door.

Some of the leading astronomical manufacturers and dealers will be set up in a "swap table" type area. Vendors will have almost anything that the amateur could possibly want, such as telescopes, binoculars, eyepieces, CCD's books, meteorites, jewelry and other astronomical accessories and novelties. There will be door prizes and a raffle as well.

A terrific selection of lecturers will be speaking throughout the day, such as J. Kelly Beatty from Sky & Telescope, John Shibley, John W. Briggs, Brent Archinal, Sam Storch, Charles Scovill and Bob Berman.

For more info or a brochure call (201) 768-6575 (evenings) or email Don Urban at: durban1@aol.com