

The OBSERVER

The Newsletter of the Twin City Amateur Astronomers, Inc.

May 2006 Volume 31, Number 5



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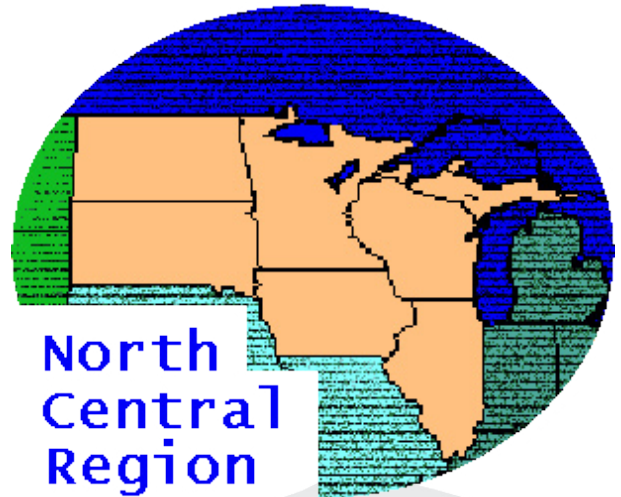
NCRAL Convention April 21/22

Eight TCAA members represented the club at the annual convention of the North Central Region of the Astronomical League in Appleton, WI, on April 21/22. Dan Miller, Duane Yockey, Carl Wenning, and the Mike Rogers & Jean Memken family were in attendance for this event. While Mike and Dan flew up to Wisconsin, the rest arrived by car. Carl arrived a day early and was able to visit the EAA Aviation Museum and get a behind-the-scenes tour. Duane arrived Friday afternoon and was able to join Carl for a showing of the new IMAX movie *Solar Max*. The others arrived in time to attend the whole of the Saturday meeting.

The conference was a series of interesting talks presented by a series of distinguished

individuals. Among the speakers were Ron Dantowitz who presented "Adventures in High Resolution Imaging," Dr. Andrew Ingersoll who presented "Cassini Looks at Saturn" and Guy Consolmagno and Dr. Dan Davis who reviewed for the audience their book "Left Turn at Orion."

The highpoint of the convention for many was the keynote dinner address on Saturday evening presented by Dr. Harrison



TCAA Calendar of Events

- May 13, "Astronomy Day" at Barnes & Noble, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- May 27, MOOS at SGO, Dusk -
Coordinators: 1. Mike Rogers, 2. Dan Miller
- June 3, POS at SGO, 9 p.m. - 11 p.m.
Coordinators: 1. Kevin Brown, 2. Mike Rogers
- Summer events
 - July 22/August 19, MOOS, TCAA Picnics
 - September 24, "Family Science Day" by Challenger Learning Center

The Observer

Newsletter of the TCAA, Inc.

The Observer is a monthly publication of the Twin City Amateur Astronomers, Inc., a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization of amateur astronomers interested in studying astronomy and sharing their hobby with the public.

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rwennin@ilstu.edu each month.

Membership Dues

Individual Adult/Family \$40
Full-time Student/Senior \$25

To join the TCAA, send your name, contact info, and dues payment to:

Duane Yockey
508 Normal Avenue
Normal, IL 61761



TCAA members in attendance at the NCRAL convention: Rogers/Memken Family, Carl Wenning, Duane Yockey, and Dan Miller.

Schmitt, Apollo XVII astronaut, and the last man to walk upon the moon. He talked about returning to the moon to gather He₃ to help solve the looming energy crisis on Earth. His talk was titled "A Trip to the Moon and Beyond."

At the Saturday afternoon business meeting, the assembled TCAA members carefully considered hosting this same convention four years hence, in 2010, the 50th anniversary of the TCAA. The offer was tentative, pursuant to further discussions among the club membership. Nonetheless, the offer was warmly received by NCRAL President Ty Westbrook at the NCRAL business meeting on Saturday afternoon, and it is hoped that we will make the invitation formal in the not too distant future.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES May 9, 2006

The Board of Directors met from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the office of Lewis, Yockey & Brown. In attendance were Board members Dan Miller, William Carney, and Duane Yockey. Guests were Kevin Brown, Mike Rogers and Carl Wenning. Board members not in attendance were Brian Barling and Neale Lehmkuhl. The meeting commenced with approval of the last set of minutes and the April Treasurer's report that showed a balance of \$3,331.92. Duane noted that the balance will drop soon as this is the time of year when numerous annual bills are paid (*Sky Calendar* subscription, liability insurance, and Astronomical League dues).

Discussion then turned to the NCRAL convention. Events at Appleton, WI, were reviewed, and then the proposal to host the 64th

annual NCRAL convention was addressed. The TCAA has proposed to host the 2010 convention that will fall on the 50th anniversary of the TCAA. Duane motioned approval of such; William seconded. The ensuing discussion dealt with the things that we might include in such a meeting: Challenger Learning Center visit, planetarium visit, Astronomy magazine senior editor Michael Bakich, USGS geodetic scientist Brent Archinal, and even a performance by the Galileo Players held in the Normal Theatre. The tentative site would be the new conference center being built in downtown Normal. Agreeing that suitable resources and funding will exist (75 attendees with a \$100 registration fee anticipated), it was agreed unanimously that the convention be hosted. President Dan Miller will inform NCRAL President Ty Westbrook of our decision to formalize our offer.

Attention then turned to options for a new observatory. A variety of options were considered (moving the dome to a lower level, installing a roll-off roof observatory, telescope hangars or small barn with isolated observing platforms). Mike will speak further with SGNC board members about the feasibility of the various options. Dan will sketch some plans based on the discussion, and will work with Jean Memken to “beautify” the plans for future presentation.

Mike will work on updating and visually improving the TCAA’s website. Dan will design a membership card to match the new website layout.

Carl will contact Sandy McNamara and Jim Baker in an attempt to flesh

out the history of the TCAA from its 40th through 45th years when the SGNC observatory was built, and there was major movement in the areas of working with SGNC and providing education and public outreach services.

Work then continued finding coordinators for the TCAA’s POS and MOOS activities with the following results:

May 27th, MOOS, Mike Rogers & Dan Miller

June 3rd, POS, Kevin Brown & Mike Rogers

June 24th, MOOS, Carl Wenning

July 1st, POS, Brian Barling & William Carney

July 22nd, MOOS with picnic – coordinators needed

July 29th, POS – coordinators needed

August 19th, MOOS with picnic – Mike Rogers & Jean Memken

August 26th, POS – coordinators needed

It was duly noted that all SGO keyholders are strongly urged to host at least one public or members-only observing session during a calendar year in exchange for the privilege of using in the observatory.

William spoke briefly about two eyepieces for the SGO, a 30mm and a 50mm Lanthium set costing \$180 and \$140 respectively. Duane moved to purchase the eyepieces; Kevin seconded. Following discussion it was agreed to purchase these two items at this time; no filters will be purchased at this time however. Mike will initiate the purchase and seek reimbursement from Duane.

Astronomy Day was addressed.

It will take place on May 13th, a mere four days hence. The event will be held at Barnes & Noble booksellers from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with set up beginning at 9 a.m. Dan will prepare a 4-foot by 6-foot felt board display unit. Various board members agreed to bring display items; there will be no outdoor viewing due to liability concerns of the host. Several members will print off color brochures for the POS; Mike will generate 300 of the club membership brochures. Dan will e-mail the TCAA membership through the listserv seeking support for this event.

The meeting drew to a close just after 7:30 p.m. The next meeting of the Board will occur on July 5th at 6:30 p.m. at which time the rest of the coordinators for the calendar year will be worked out, and other business attended to as may come before the Board.

Make a date with

StarDate

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Weekdays @ 6:58 AM & 6:58 PM

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TCAA Treasurer's Report – April 2006

OPERATING FUND BALANCE – March 31, 2006 - \$ 1,982.01

Income

Mark Cabaj (Dues Renewal) - \$ 50.00

Expenses

Rebecca Wenning (April Observer) - \$ 50.83

OPERATING FUND BALANCE – April 30, 2006 - \$ 1,981.18

OBSERVATORY FUND BALANCE – March 31, 2006 - \$ 1,349.08

Income

Interest - \$ 1.66

Expenses

None - \$ 0.00

OBSERVATORY FUND BALANCE – April 30, 2006 - \$ 1,350.74

TOTAL TCAA FUNDS – April 30, 2006 - \$ 3,331.92

Respectfully submitted,
L. Duane Yockey, Treasurer
Sugar Grove Observatory

Listing of Official Keyholders (Paid \$10 deposit/\$5 renewal)

Duane Yockey (April 2001, renewed through 2006)
Michael Rogers (August 2001, renewed through 2006)
William Carney (March 2002, renewed through 2006)
Carl Wenning (January 2004, renewed through 2006)
Brian Barling (February 2004, renewed through 2006)
Lenore Trainor (December 2004, renewed through 2005)
Kevin Brown (May 2005, renewed through 2006)
Sothilingam family (June 2005)
Christopher Franklin (July 2005, renewed through 2006)
Kal Kumar (renewed August 2005)
David Osenga (January 2006)
Gerry Schoeder (February 2006, renewed through 2007)
Karen & Ed Duran (February 2006)



*Astronomy Day
Celebration:*

May 13
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Barnes & Noble
Bloomington, IL



The OBSERVER
Newsletter of the TCAA, Inc.

Rebecca Wenning, Editor
21 Grandview Drive
Normal, IL 61761-4071

Are Your Dues Due?

The Dues Blues?

If you see a check in the box above,
it means your dues are due. To retain
membership, please send your dues
renewal to our esteemed Treasurer:

Duane Yockey
508 Normal Avenue
Normal, IL 61761