

KVAS Meeting Minutes – 11/21/14
Hansford Center, St. Albans, WV
Minutes Taken by John Willson, Secretary

Bob Frostick called the meeting to order at 7:35pm.

Observatory Report – Ed Connors

The group discussed heaters for the Observatory – we have one propane heater head and two tanks. We discussed whether to purchase a second single head or to purchase a two-headed burner. We decided to go with the single head. Bob will go to Harbor Freight to look for another single head.

Overall, the Observatory is in good shape. We discussed the issue of mice getting into the desk drawers, and proposed that we might want to get a metal container for papers. We also need to replace the tool box – Rodney has some ideas on this, so we decided to table the issue until the next meeting to get his input.

The scope is working well, but when using the go-to feature, objects appear slightly up and to the left of center as you look in the eyepiece and usually need to be re-centered. The written directions specify you should start the scope and then move it to the “east” as an initial move. Instead of doing this, search for and go-to any object that you are positive is high in the sky and it works fine.

Photo of Partial Solar Eclipse – Chuck Spann

Chuck shared that he was able to take a good photo of the recent partial solar eclipse, as it snuck out between layers of clouds. Hopefully he will bring it to a future meeting to share!

Celestial Alignment of Indian Mounds – Scott Blake

Scott updated the group on a mound he believes he may have located that is aligned between the Creel and Wilson mounds in South Charleston. He plans to monitor the sunset on December 21 to confirm. Scott did a presentation at a recent meeting on the subject.

Upcoming Meeting Plans – Bob Frostick

Bob asked everyone to bring an hors d'oeuvre or dessert to our Christmas meeting on December 19.

Our annual dinner meeting will be held at Ryan's on January 16.

Ideas to Increase Membership – Bob Frostick

Bob led a discussion on how we might increase membership. Many good ideas were proposed.

- Open the Observatory at least once / month
- John Wheeler suggested starting a club page on Facebook, and do frequent updates to keep interest.
 - John and Janet Willson will set up the page and get it started.
- Keep the KVAS website up to date.
- Chuck proposed making some 3 x 5 cards with a description of who we are, when and where we meet, what we do, website address, contact numbers, etc. We could leave the cards at the Clay Center, as an example, for people to pick up.
 - Chuck agreed to prepare a card. He asked members to submit any pictures of the Observatory – we'll pick a good one to put on the card. The aerial picture we have is a possibility.
- Support requests from school groups to visit the Observatory – but Bob cautioned that we need to be sure we have enough members to host groups such as this.
- Publicize in the newspaper – in the upcoming events section.
- Have 1-2 meetings per year geared toward kids. Maybe have separate sessions for the children and adults. Bob suggested we target our meetings to high school age and up.
- Scott suggested we might have a “meet and greet” at Taylor Books.

Presentation of Short Astronomy Videos – Bob Frostick

Bob presented several good astronomy videos on the following topics –

- How Many Stars Are There?
- How do we Measure the Distance to the Stars?
- How big is the Universe?
- A Guide to the Galaxy
- The Sun vs. an Atomic Bomb
- Two Moons Passing in the Martian Night

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Attendance:

Bob Frostick
John Willson
Janet Willson
Robert Dean
Ed Connors
Scott Blake
Carol Hilleary
John Wheeler
Chuck Spann