



# Mid-Hudson Astronomical Association

## October, 2013

Website: [www.midhudsonastro.org](http://www.midhudsonastro.org)

Yahoo Group: MHAstro

President : Willie Yee

Secretary: Jim Rockrohr

Newsletter Editor: Rick Versace

Publicity: Paul Chauvet

Parks Liaison:

Vice President: Joe Macagne

Treasurer: Ken Bailey

Membership Coordinator: Caryn Sobel

Webmaster: Sean Dague

College Liaison: Dr. Amy Forestell

Directors: Steve Carey, Dave Lindemann, Karl Loatman, & Tom Rankin

### Meeting Minutes

#### Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Mid Hudson Astronomical Association, September 17, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 PM by President Willie Yee in Lecture Center Room 104 at SUNY, New Paltz, NY.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as published in the newsletter.

**Officer's Reports:**

**Membership:**

Caryn Sobel was not present.

**Treasurer:**

Ken Bailey was not present.

(Submitted via email from the Treasurer)

**Treasurer's Report for the month of September**

Date: 10 October, 2013

Bank Balance:	\$2288.82
Outstanding Checks:	\$ 150.00
Outstanding Deposits:	\$ 0
Ending Bank Balance:	\$2138.82

Checkbook Balance:	\$2138.82
Balance with Bank: Yes	

Ending balance total: \$2038.82

Notes: One check for \$100 written since the bank's balance for Speaker Honorarium for the October meeting. Outstanding checks are all for Speaker's Honorariums.

Respectfully submitted: Ken Bailey  
Treasurer

**Outreach:**

Candace Wall

Upcoming events include:

- International Observe the Moon Night (IOMN) at the Smolen Observatory at SUNY New Paltz on October 12.
- (IOMN at Vassar Farm is unknown at this time.)
- Highland Rail Trail is looking for us to provide 'scopes for their "Moon Walk" on October 11. Rick Versace is coordinating.
- Walkway Over the Hudson has asked for 'scopes for their moon walk on October 16. (At least 4 people already interested.)
- Saugerties High School wants a presentation and star party on November 8. Paul Granich is coordinating.
- We will be giving a presentation at Olana on November 9. Willie is coordinating.

**Publicity:**

Paul Chauvet was not present.

**Webmaster:**

Sean Dague was not present.

**Upcoming programs:**

Joe MaCagne

- There is currently an opening for a speaker in September.
- November will be a presentation on filters.
- December will be the annual member's talks and Christmas party.

## Old Business:

### Video Library:

Ken not present to report.

### 13.1" Club Telescope:

Karl Loatman gave a detailed report reproduced here:

The 13.1" f4.5 Newtonian in Dobsonian mount is located in my basement home office at 31 Bushwick Road Poughkeepsie, NY (845)473-5872, Karl Loatman

After working on the scope and consulting with Gary Seronik, of Sky & Telescope, the scope is now functional. In a one night test without a finder scope, I was lost in only a small chunk of northern sky by Hercules. There were too many stars and not enough sky to get oriented without a finder. Now that the Telrad is working I look forward to finding more objects. Compared to my 8" f7.5 it reveals many more faint stars and nebula. It is heavy and cumbersome to move but worth the effort if the night makes for good viewing.

The following steps were taken:

- 1: The Mirror was removed and cleaned. It was discovered that there are voids in the coating but no flaring scratches. Gary said that would reduce the light gathering function to 4% in those spots but would not adversely impact image quality.
- 2: The mirror mounting side felts and screw system was replaced with a ball head hex head system and new felts.
- 3: A missing base foot was replaced .
- 4: The Mirror box was retightened and repaired.
- 5: The Mirror Box Cover was repaired.
- 6: Mirror cell has been collimated.
- 7: Missing Truss Bolts were replaced
- 8: Bolts holding ring were tightened.
- 9: The Telrad Finder was rebuilt , two wires soldered and made to work again.

#### ----Gordon Waites contribution to the club---

\* Scope: 13.1" f4.5 Truss Dobsonian  
10" side Bearing  
3.1" secondary  
weight approximately 77-80 lbs +/- 3 lbs  
home made focuser  
home made mirror cell  
Telrad finders scope  
An assortment of eyepieces and Cheshire collimation tool.

In the discussion Karl noted that there were no significant expenses incurred in the repair of the 'scope. It is now available to anyone who wants to use it.

### **8" Dynamax SCT:**

Joe Macagne has it for now and is using it

### **Other Club telescopes:**

Paul Chavet has the 4" and is using it. There is a 10" home built Dobsonian available to be donated to the club if the club is interested.

### **New Business:**

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to authorize Ken Bailey to order more small and large t-shirts to be available. (We have sufficient XL, 2XL, and 3XL sizes.)

### **Visitors/New Members:**

No visitors introduced themselves. There were a total of about 16 people present for the meeting.

### **Observing Reports:**

**Black Forest Star Party** – 1 good night, 1 "so-so".

**Impromptu Club Star Party at Lake Taghkanic on September 6** – Several attendees. Saw LADEE launch from Virginia. Seeing was pretty good.

There will be a **triple shadow transit** on Jupiter on October 11-12.

**Astronomy nights at the Kirk Planetarium** will resume on the first and third Thursdays of each month. They are free and open to the public and have been "selling out" both shows recently, so get tickets early from the web site.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

The program that followed was a talk by Tarun Biswas titled "Singular Nature of Singularities in Physics".

Submitted by James Rockrohr, October 12, 2013.

## **From the President:**

### **Who is Charlie Bates?**

Another site that is listed as a "Sponsor" on our Meetup page is the Charlie Bates Solar Astronomy Project. Its nature and mission are fully explained on the CBSAP site <http://www.solarastronomy.org> but I will summarize here, and briefly discuss solar astronomy.

It has been almost a year since I got my dedicated hydrogen alpha solar telescope, a specialized instrument that allows only one wavelength of light to get through, making it possible to safely view many features of the sun that cannot be seen in a white light filter.

[Mandatory Safety Warning: Never look directly at the sun or attempt to view the sun directly through anything except specialized solar viewing equipment. Viewing the sun directly can cause permanent loss of eyesight.]

I became aware of the Charlie Bates Solar Astronomy Project at NEAF a couple of years ago, where the founder and director, Stephen Ramsden of the CBSAP had a booth featuring his decked out vehicle, where you could get a free pair of solar sunglasses.

I checked the CBSAP site shortly after getting my solar telescope, and found support and encouragement to do solar outreach.



In addition, the site supports a solar astronomy forum called SolarChat: <http://solarchat.solarastronomy.org>  
Solar outreach has one obvious clear benefit to those of us who are doing outreach: it is done during the day. This makes it accessible to schools and events that otherwise might not have access to astronomical activities. The Charlie Bates Solar Astronomy Project has provided materials for a number of solar astronomy events with MHAA over the past year.

So, who is Charlie Bates? Charlie Bates was an air traffic controller who was a friend of Stephen Ramsden, and an extremely kind and generous person. When he died in 2008, Stephen was inspired to stop pursuing "money and things," and set up the CBSAP in his honor. Stephen is also an air traffic controller, and got the National Air Traffic Controllers

Association to help sponsor the CBSAP. Unfortunately, due to the federal government sequester of 2013, the furlough of air traffic controllers, including Stephen has resulted in decreased financial support for CBSAP.

Solar astronomy has added another dimension to my astronomical passion. In addition to outreach, I am working on the solar astronomy programs of the Astronomical League, and recently received the Sunspotters Award and am presently working on the Hydrogen Alpha Solar Program.



In addition to the Charlie Bates sites, my favorite sites provide real time information on the sun to augment my observations, or to get a dose of intellectual sunshine on cloudy days:

Photos and data directly from the Solar Dynamics Observatory: <http://sdowwww.lmsal.com/suntoday/#>

A summary of solar events: <http://sdowwww.lmsal.com/suntoday/#>



Dr. Willie K. Yee, President MHAA



## Nothing This Month

Thanks to the House of not-really-Representatives.

### Directions To The Star Party Site—

[Lake Taghkanic State Park](#) is in the town Ancram, NY. The park entrance is on the Taconic Parkway 10 minutes north of the exit used for Wilcox park.

Star Parties at Lake Taghkanic are held in the West Parking lot, next to the beach. The skies are darker than in Wilcox, with less stray light to deal with. The horizon is also much lower, especially to the south and east, making many more targets possible.

**IMPORTANT:** all events at Lake Taghkanic State Park require an **RSVP** which includes license plate number of the car you are bringing (please do so via [Meetup](#)). The park is patrolled by state police, and all non registered cars will be ticketed and risk our use of the park.

### General Information:

- ♦ For the foreseeable future, all indoor meetings will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month in Coykendall Science Bldg., SUNY New Paltz (directions above) at 7:30 PM. All indoor events are FREE! All are welcome. The presentations are generally geared towards teenagers and up. For more information, call the Club Hotline.
- ♦ Dates listed for star parties are the primary dates. The rain date is the following night unless otherwise noted. Only one session is held for a given weekend, usually on the primary date, Friday, unless postponed (usually due to inclement weather) to the backup date, Saturday. Exceptions to this are noted in the “Scheduled Events” section above. Call the Club Hotline for updated information. Everyone should meet at the gate at the scheduled time. The gate will be closed after that time.
- ♦ All outdoor events are FREE! All are welcome. If you bring small children, it is your responsibility to keep a close eye on them. Please do not bring white-light flashlights. Instead, bring a red astronomer’s flashlight or an ordinary flashlight covered with several layers of red cellophane. If in doubt about the weather, check the status of the event at [www.midhudsonastro.org](http://www.midhudsonastro.org).