Meteors for July/August/September 2001

Steve Barkes
Sep 15, 2001

The Newsletter of the Greenbelt Astronomy Club
Volume 8, Issue 102 July/August/September 2001

* The Meteor is the official publication of the Greenbelt Astronomy Club, Greenbelt, Md. and is distributed monthly as a privilege of membership. Articles and other contributions are welcome. Membership in the Greenbelt Astronomy Club is open to anyone interested in astronomy. The club meets on the last non-holiday Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the H. B. Owens Science Center. Meetings for 2001 are scheduled for: 1/25, 2/22, 3/29, 4/26, 5/31, 6/31, 7/28, 8/23, 9/27, 10/25, 11/29 and 12/20.

* The Greenbelt Astronomy Club is a not for profit community based organization with the goal of encouraging public interest in science and education in general; astronomy in particular.

* More detailed information on our club activities and organization can be found at our web site. The Editor of this newsletter, Steve Barkes, can be contacted at: barko@...

* The Club's location on the world wide web is:
http://lheawww.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/outreach/gac/GAC.html

TWO CLUB MEETINGS IN SEPTEMBER

For your increased enjoyment and education, a second regular club meeting has been added for September. Our members have been so active we just can't fit it all in one! Russ Waugh will give a practicum on star charts on Sept. 20th at the Owens Science Center using the planetarium and attendees will be able to practice finding their way about the heavens under the planetarium dome. On the 27th members can share some of their really impressive personal projects at the Greenbelt Community Center. Details on both meetings are below. Hope to see you at both.

September 20th Club Meeting 7:30 to 9:00 PM
Main Presentation: Night Sky Practicum
Location: H.B. Owens Science Center

Presenter: Russ Waugh, Planetarium Director
Russ will present a brief talk on the history of constellations followed by an extended period of practice using star charts under the planetarium sky. Members are encouraged to bring their own planispheres or star charts. Free charts will be provided to anyone who needs one. Please bring a flashlight covered with red paper or cellophane, so that observing can be conducted without disturbing light.

September 27th Club Meeting
Main Presentation: Astro-Imaging & Your Introduction to the Universe Slide Show
Location: Greenbelt Community Center, Seniors Classroom Meeting Room 7:30 to 10:00 PM Ish
Thursday September 27th 7:30 PM to 10:00 PM. The ending time flexible.
Presenter: Ed Abel and others
Ed Abel and others will have astro images they have made using digital video, digital still, Webcams and 35mm to
display on the centers wide screen TV and city's LCD projector via laptop.

Additionally, an introductory level slide show from the Astronomical League entitled "Your Introduction to the
Universe" will be presented.

A quorum being present, unfinished business will also be addressed.

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Club Members,
The Labor Day Festival Committee expresses its gratitude and appreciation to all the club members who assisted in
the making GAC Labor Day booth a success this year. Thanks goes to the members who contributed in creating a
unique design for the booth, as well as the members who donated their time and expertise while working at the
booth during the holiday weekend. Thanks also goes to all of the club members who thoughtfully formulated
questions for the "Who Wants To Be An Astronomer?" game. By these and other combined efforts, we were able to
reach out to the community to educate and inspire an interest in astronomy.

Thank-you,
Valerie O'Brien, Matt Elliott, and Ratna Sengupta

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HOPEWELL OBSERVATORY FALL 2001 OPEN HOUSES/STAR PARTIES
SATURDAYS, SEPTEMBER 15 AND OCTOBER 20

Hopewell Astronomical Observatory, located at the top of Bull Run Mountain near Haymarket, Virginia, invites you to
its Fall 2001 Open Houses / Star Parties, scheduled for SATURDAYS, SEPTEMBER 15 and OCTOBER 20. The observatory
will open about 6 pm, and will remain open until everyone leaves; come whenever you like, and stay as late as you want.
Permanent equipment at the observatory includes a 12" homebuilt Wright-Newtonian, a 14" Celestron, and a
6" Jaegers refractor. If you have a scope too, by all means bring it along; there's a grassy field with plenty of room to
set up, and electricity is available (bring your own extension cord). You are welcome to bring a picnic (but be aware
that there is no water supply and sanitary facilities are primitive); we will provide coffee, tea, and cocoa. Dress
warmly, since it can be significantly chillier than in town; and because the site is a clearing in the woods, sturdy shoes
are suggested. The event will be canceled in the event of hopeless cloudiness (although someone's likely to be there
anyway, unless perhaps if it's actually raining). Hopewell is a private, independent observatory association, not
affiliated with any astronomy club.

Sept. 15: Sunset 19:19 Twilight ends 20:49 Moonset 18:38

DIRECTIONS: (1) From the Beltway, take I-66 west about 25 miles to
Exit 40 (US 15) at Haymarket, and turn left/south onto US 15.
(2) Go 0.25 mi, turn right at the light onto VA Rt. 55, then after 0.7 mi turn right onto Antioch Rd., Rt. 681.
(3) Follow Antioch Rd. until it ends (3.2 mi), then turn left onto Waterfall Rd. (Rt. 601), which becomes Hopewell Rd.
(4) After 1.0 mi, bear right onto Bull Run Mountain Rd., Rt. 629 (_not_ onto Mountain Rd.).
(5) In 0.9 mi, enter the driveway at the orange pipe gate on the right; there is a stone gate on the left, opposite the
entrance.
(6) Follow the narrow road up the ridge to the microwave relay station. You can park here and proceed on foot, or...
(7) Proceed around to the right of the station, and continue through the white gate behind it a few hundred feet to
the observatory. Park among the trees near the observatory.
The drive takes about 45 minutes from the Beltway. For a .gif map to the site, contact Jeff Guerber or Bob Bolster. The phone number at the observatory is 703-754-2317.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, including a map to the observatory, contact Bob Bolster at 703-960-9126 or RBolster@...; Jeff Guerber at 301-614-5915 (GSFC), 703-281-4980 (home), or jeff.guerber@...; or Ken Short at 703-478-0051.

Nova Sgr 2001 No. 3 (V4740 Sgr) and Cosmos 756
By G.W. Gliba

The second nova in Sagittarius within a month has been discovered, this time by two amateur astronomers independently. First Alfredo Pereira of Cabo da Roca Portugal saw it visually with 14x100 binoculars at 7th magnitude on September 5th, then it was found on a photograph taken September 3rd by William Liller of Vina del Mar, Chile at 10th magnitude, and later on the 6th at 7th magnitude. The nova reached 6.8 magnitude visually on September 6th. I first saw it still around 7.5 magnitude on the 11th from Greenbelt with my 12x63 binoculars, the next night it was around 8th magnitude, but brightened to 7.5 mag. again on the 13th. There may be a rapid decline in brightness soon, or it might be a slow nova. It is located near the star Gamma, which is at the end of the spout of the teapot asterism of Sagittarius at: RA 18h 11m 46s Dec. -30 deg.30.8 min. There is a good star chart on the AAVSO website at: http://charts.aavso.org/standard/SGR/V4740_SGR/V4740SGR-B.GIF

On the morning of September 6th, many people in the Washington D.C. area and up along the eastern seaboard were startled by the appearance of a very bright fireball around 5:54 am EDT. Later it was identified as an old Soviet SL3 rocket booster launched in 1975, known as Cosmos 756. This was one of the estimated 8,300 man-made objects, or pieces of space junk, the NORAD U.S. Space Command at Colorado Springs, Colorado was tracking. Most of this space junk will experience orbital decay and someday also re-enter the atmosphere, causing more light shows. Most of the time they will be re-entering over the ocean or unpopulated areas. It is thought that there were no pieces of Cosmos 756 that had survived the plunge back to Earth.

August Star Party
By Ed Abel

The clouds afforded just enough cover so that we could leisurely spend hours working on bettering the equipment and not worry about missing a perfect seeing moment. Old friends were there.

Doug brought his scope which he had made as an eighth grader (??) in the early 60s. It was the first time I had seen the plexiglass reflective finder. Line up the red bulls eye and the scope's on target.

George Gliba and Lynn brought a refractor he had received from an ?old? NASA scientist. George launched into, for me, a technical description of why this was a great scope (flat filed acromatic without much aberration). George was on a roll and my hand on his shoulder slowed him down so that I could at that moment catch a few thoughts, as well as truly enjoying his excitement.

Martha Gay worked for hours on adjusting and readjusting her collimation. When Steve Barkes, joined they discovered a problem with the Bob's Nobs which were interfering with the process. After more than an hour of adjusting, they resorted to re-installing the original three Phillips-head secondary bolts and trying again. More work in the daylight.

Cliff and Pam Gordon worked at visual seeing. Object after object was tracked down. I could hear the pages flip as they searched for the objects in the night's hunt which Cliff had that day developed.
Steve Barkes was in the hunt for collimating his scope and I was extremely interested. After the ?large? doughnut shape was eyepiece centered he indicated that the smaller diffraction rings could be ?tweaked? ?just a little? for the perfect view. He upped the power and ever so slightly adjusted his ?Bob?s Nobs? and the diffraction rings sparkled in brilliant concentric circles. ?See, just takes a second or so to tweak it; the crisp image is really worth it.? His satisfaction could be heard in his broad smile.

Steve Lesnik initially garnered and arranged his newly acquired equipment: his two inch diagonal and eyepiece, his Barlow, etc. Here was a proud ?pappa?. He then launched on his Philips Vesta camera and laptop exercises. First the moon. How crisp the edges of the craters and the light contrast between the crater floors and the maria. Adjust the shutter speed, adjust the gamma, adjust the brightness and gain. All the while the image came alive on the screen. No Michaelangelo has ever captured such reality. And it was done with a mere few dollars and a few moments of field adjustment. VEGA software first then onto Astrostack. Steve had about 10 images to load and watch as he adjusted the images? alignment and their combination. Details were emerging. He enhanced their contrast and sharpness by trying in sequence several combinations of the software?s image processing elements. He loved it: ?Save that result! On to Mars!? A quick adjustment to some of the software settings and Mars was being stored on the harddrive. The equipment was beginning to tire as the laptop battery screamed to be allowed to rest for the evening. It could rest holding a first night?s series of sky images.

Kevin Balch chased a number of objects with his refractor and wowed onlookers with the scope?s contrast.

Newcomers wondered in, had a curiosity, and then couldn?t pull away without seeing ?what?s up in the sky?. One gentleman pulled in too closely and was captured for the evening: a newcomer who was so excited about the possibility of a club. The excited questions and comments were forthcoming faster than any 800 MHZ chip could process them! Here was excitement: ?BUT, the baby and wife are in the car!? ?Here, feed them a few cookies and stay. ?I can?t do that?can I?? He was hooked! ?I?ll drive them home and come back. What time are you all leaving?? Steve ?B? had earlier said that he wanted Jupiter and Saturn around 2 AM! So I nodded to Steve that he was going to stay till then. The newcomer?s eyes popped open and away the baby and wife were taken. I assume that he put them in the house before he arrived back with his own scope and attached his video camera. I don?t recall him saying anything more about the baby and wife that evening.

For myself, I enjoyed others? enjoyment. From Doug?s walking up to the hoped-for home of the observatory and measuring where things could best go; and Steve B?s and L?s collimation and CCD images. It is a shame that I had to leave around 10:30 to have dinner. I would have loved to hear what stories were being concocted for the baby and wife: ??but it was Jupiter and Saturn, honey?look at these wonderful images.. ? It?s 4AM and you?re just getting in! ....the images really ARE fantastic?thank you.?

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Comet C/2001 A2 (LINEAR) and the Milky Way
By G.W. Gliba

It has been fun to watch comet LINEAR A2 as it has been heading north into our skies in July. I first spotted it on July 3rd, when it was in Cetus and was about 4.5 magnitude. I still couldn't see it with the naked-eye because it was low and due to the light pollution in Greenbelt. I continued to watch it as it went thru the circlet of Pisces and on into Pegasus as it continued to fade to around 6th magnitude by July 12th. My hopes of seeing it with the naked-eye were gone by then, but I had forgotten that this was no ordinary comet. When I got up to see it on the morning of Friday the 13th (who says Friday the 13th is bad luck) I was lucky to see the comet having an outburst. What's more, is that I could see it with the naked-eye from downtown Greenbelt! I estimated it to be around 4.5 with the naked-eye, and about 4.8 with my 8x50 binoculars. Due to the light pollution, the comet seemed fainter than it really was, but what a wonderful surprise to see it having an outburst!

This is an interesting comet, because it rose from 12th to 7.5 magnitude in early April, when it split in two, and then it flared up from 4.5 to 3.5 magn. from June 6th to June 11th, before it came north and flared again on July 13th. We should keep an eye on this comet as it may still flare again. I saw it with the naked-eye again at around 5.5 magnitude when I was up at Mountain Meadows on the morning of July 15th. It had faded about a magnitude by then, but a nice
1.5 degree tail was seen with my 8x50 binoculars. Lynne got a good look at the comet with our 15x70 binoculars and also saw the tail that night.

It was a good night at Mountain Meadows, West Virginia. There were some scattered clouds, but it cleared up beautifully between periods of cloudyness. The Milky Way was awe inspiring. I also saw several meteors, and may have seen by first Perseid for this year. However, I limited my meteor observing to only one hour so I could tour the Milky Way with our 20-inch F/5 Dobsonian. It was one of those special nights to remember, under the sweet Summer Sky.

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Greenbelt Astronomy Club, Inc.
2001 / 2002 Elected Officer Spending Authority
Approved 8/23/2001

1. Maximum monthly expenditure from the operations account on check that can be written on the Treasurer's signature: $250.00

2. Maximum quarterly expenditures from the Capital account which can be written on the Treasurer's and President's signature: $2,000.

3. Maximum quarterly expenditures which can be approved by vote of the Board of Directors: $4,000.00

4. Interpretation of the spending authority limits: these limits are cumulative. Example: Maximum expenditures per quarter would be limited to $6,750.00. ($750 on the Treasurer's sole authority from operations / $2,000 on the Treas.-Pres. Joint authority from Capital. $4,000 by Board vote from account appropriate to the nature of the expenditure.)

Expenditures in excess to the amounts above would need to be approved by the membership.

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Greenbelt Astronomy Club Board Meeting of June 21th, 2001
By Valerie O'Brien

The Board of the Greenbelt Astronomy Club met on Thursday, May 17th, 2001. The Board met in the Dining Room of the Greenbelt Community Center at 7:30 PM. All officers were present. The meeting was called to order by Club President John Settle. John Settle requested that Valerie O'Brien read the minutes to the May Meeting. The minutes having been read, the floor was open for new business.

* Observatory Project
  - The cost for advertisements for donations to the Observatory Fund so far for have been $108.54.
  - Doug Love is now in charge of fundraising and project management. He may wish to recruit members and/or Greenbelt residents to assist him. (Board members are off limits.) The project is now a much larger investment in time, money and effort than originally anticipated. The club needs to demonstrate that the citizens of Greenbelt (not including City Council and Staff) are willing to invest their time, money and effort into realizing this goal. There need to be more public outreach efforts in Greenbelt.
  - There is an alternative home for the dome should the membership decide not to proceed with the project.
  - The proposed site for the observatory (at Northway Fields) is currently designated as Open Space?

* Labor Day Festival Planning
  - Valerie O'Brien asked members to contact her regarding assistance at the Labor Day Festival the year which will take place from Friday, Aug. 31 to Monday, Sept. 3. (obrien@...)
  - The application has been submitted to the Labor Day Festival Planning Committee. The club will have a single booth this year and will not be sharing it with any other organization (eg. GAIC or GATE).
  - Volunteers are needed to sign up for 2 hour blocks in running the games at the booth.
- The booth will consist of 2 games: the ?Go Cassini?? game as well as the ?Who Wants To Be An Astronomer? game. There will be a raffle for the donated Meade ETX-60AT. Members are encouraged to bring slides, photos, books and accessories to the booth for display (as well as telescopes for solar observing).
- RIGHT NOW, members are needed to formulate questions and answers for the game entitled ?Who Wants To Be An Astronomer?? Please write out the question and have 4 multiple-choice answers in which only one is correct. E-mail these to Valerie (obrien@...) and they will be compiled in the game notebook.

* Club Business
- MEMBERS NEEDED: All club members are asked to increase their involvement in the club's activities by pledging either 5 hours of their time toward some project (eg. Labor Day Booth, Raffle Ticket Sales, Observatory Project, etc.) or to make a monetary contribution ($100.00 or more). Please contact Valerie O'Brien (obrien@...) or one of the board members for more details.
- Voluntary Contact List: The club may set up a Voluntary Contact List which would include the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses for any members who wish to contact other club members or be contacted by other members for unscheduled observing sessions. Please contact Valerie O'Brien (obrien@...) or one of the board members if you would like to be added to the list and have access to the list.
- Income / Expense Considerations: The current income structure does not provide sufficient funding to enable the organization to pay necessary operational expenses. Items to remedy this are:

> A. Reduce expenses by allowing Astronomical League membership to lapse when next due ($230.50 per year).

> B. Increase income by raising dues to a flat $12.00 membership dues fee (Individual or Family) including and e-mail subscription to the Meteor. Hard copies may be picked up at meetings or if first class mail required, provide it for an additional $5.00 surcharge.

- It was decided not to establish a second checking account to be used for Capital expenditures.
- Treasurer's Report: Bill McHale reported that the club has $4551.47 in the Capital Account and $230.40 on the Operations Account.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50pm.

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Greenbelt Astronomy Club Regular Meeting of June 28th, 2001
By Valerie O'Brien

The members of the Greenbelt Astronomy Club met at 7:30pm on Thursday, June 28th, 2001. The meeting was held in the Planetarium of the Owens Science Center. There were 25 attendees.

* Main Topic: ?My Cheapo Astro Imaging Rig? by Geoff Chester, Public Affairs Officer, USNO

* Observatory Project
- Discussion was opened up by Club President John Settle regarding the status of the observatory project.
- At least $10,000.00 will be needed for preliminary work before any construction can begin.
- Approximately $2000.00 is needed for the soil test.
- Approximately $2000.00 is needed for the site survey.
- Approximately $2000.00 is needed for the architectural design.
- Approximately $4000.00 is needed for the Special Exemption.
- The club needs to consider whether it wants to continue with the observatory project at Northway Fields or to consider other options.
- John Settle stated that the dome could be donated to Northwestern High School in Hyattsville, MD.
- Steve Barkes made a motion to abandon the observatory project and donate it to Northwestern High School. The motion was seconded.
- Steve Lesnik made a motion that we try to find a new location for the dome other than Northway Fields. The motion was seconded.
- Matthew Elliott, Sue Bassett and Bill McHale urged the club to withhold from any decisions at this meeting. The fact that many members were not present to vote was brought up and the entire club should have the opportunity to participate in the decision making process. Members were urged to recall the goals for having the observatory and the opportunity that it would give to educate and inspire club members as well as the surrounding community.
- Tom Teutsch moved to table the (above listed) motion for a month. The motion was seconded by Doug Love. The motion was voted upon and carried.

* Treasurer?s Report : Bill McHale stated that the club had $439.02 in the operations account and $4744.92 in the capital account.

* Business Item: Club Officer spending authority was voted upon. The membership approved passage of a "Continuing Resolution" giving officers the same authority to expend club funds for 2001/2002 as they had for 2000/2001.

* Labor Day Festival Planning
  - Valerie O?Brien asked members to contact her regarding assistance at the Labor Day Festival the year which will take place from Friday, Aug. 31 to Monday, Sept. 3.
  - Volunteers are needed to sign up for 2 hour blocks in running the games at the booth.
  - The booth will consist of 2 games : the ?Go Cassini? game as well as the ?Who Wants To Be An Astronomer? game. There will be a raffle for the donated Meade ETX-60AT. Members are encouraged to bring slides, photos, books and accessories to the booth for display (as well as telescopes for solar observing).
  - RIGHT NOW, members are needed to formulate questions and answers for the game entitled ?Who Wants To Be An Astronomer?? Please write out the question and have 4 multiple-choice answers in which only one is correct. E-mail these to Valerie (obrien@...) and they will be compiled in the game notebook.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50pm.

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Greenbelt Astronomy Club Board Meeting of July 12th, 2001
By Valerie O'Brien

The Board of the Greenbelt Astronomy Club met on Thursday, July 12, 2001. The Board met in the Dining Room of the Greenbelt Community Center at 7:30 PM. All officers were present. The meeting was called to order by Club President John Settle. John Settle requested that Valerie O'Brien read the minutes to the June Meeting. The minutes having been read, the floor was open for new business.

* Observatory Project
  - At the upcoming Greenbelt City Council meeting (July 16), the council will be taking a vote on having the city own the observatory and have the Greenbelt Astronomy Club operate it. This will save the club money by having the city responsible for the planning and site survey. It will also speed up the approval process. The club will still provide the funds for the actual construction of the observatory.

* Labor Day Festival Planning
  - Valerie O'Brien asked members to contact her regarding assistance at the Labor Day Festival the year which will take place from Friday, Aug. 31 to Monday, Sept. 3. (obrien@...)
  - The application has been submitted to the Labor Day Festival Planning Committee. The club will have a single booth this year and will not be sharing it with any other organization (eg. GAIC or GATE).
  - Volunteers are needed to sign up for 2 hour blocks in running the games at the booth.
  - The booth will consist of 2 games : the ?Go Cassini? game as well as the ?Who Wants To Be An Astronomer? game. There will be a raffle for the donated Meade ETX-60AT. Members are encouraged to bring slides, photos, books and accessories to the booth for display (as well as telescopes for solar observing).
- RIGHT NOW, members are needed to formulate questions and answers for the game entitled ?Who Wants To Be An Astronomer?? Please write out the question and have 4 multiple-choice answers in which only one is correct. E-mail these to Valerie (obrien@...) and they will be compiled in the game notebook.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20pm.

Greenbelt Astronomy Club Regular Meeting of July 26th, 2001
By Valerie O'Brien

The members of the Greenbelt Astronomy Club met at 7:30pm on Thursday, July 26th, 2001. The meeting was held in the Planetarium of the Owens Science Center. There were 25 attendees.

* Club Activity Opportunities Topics :
  - Club member Matt Elliott reviewed what is planned for the upcoming Labor Day Festival. The club will be presenting 2 games to the public. The first is the ?Go Cassini? game which is essentially a game of skill. The second game is entitled ?Who Wants To Be An Astronomer?? and is a game designed to test knowledge. All members are asked to formulate 25 questions with answers and send them to Valerie O?Brien at obrien@.... All members are encouraged to donate time to assist at the booth during the Labor Day weekend. Please contact Matt Elliott at mattel@... or Valerie O?Brien.

* The Greenbelt Astronomy Club has an opportunity for a ?Public Outreach? Program in conjunction with Goddard Space Flight Center. Matt Elliott spoke about this possibility of this happening within a year?s time and the idea was well received by the club.

* Presentation ? The Telescope Project by Ken Durkin : Club Member Ken Durkin gave a presentation on amateur telescope making. He brought the dobsonian telescope that he recently made to the club and described step by step what he did to construct it using instructions on the internet.

* Main Topic : Reaching Consensus on Our Observatory Project
  - The Greenbelt City Council voted in favor of having the city own the own the observatory at the last Greenbelt City Council meeting held on 7/16. The observatory can remain at the Public Works Department ?indefinitely?.
  - The rules for debate were motioned and passed.
  - The motions that were tabled at the June 28 meeting were re-stated.
  - There was limited debate on how we should proceed with the observatory. Suggestions were made of having an observing park.

* Business Item : It was proposed that the club change it?s membership dues to a flat $12.00 per individual and family. Also, the club could save $230.00 per year by cancelling its membership in the Astronomical League.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Board of Directors Meeting - 16 August 2001
By Valerie O'Brien

Members of the Greenbelt Astronomy Club met at 7:30pm on Thursday, August 16, 2001. The meeting was held in the Greenbelt Community Center. There were 15 attendees.

The meeting was called to order by Club President John Settle. John Settle requested that Valerie O?Brien read the minutes to the July 26 Meeting. The minutes having been read, the floor was open for new business.

* Business Item : Telescope Committee Report ? Bill McHale
- The work continues on the 17.5? mirror for the club?s dobsonian telescope and there is a possibility of a dobsonian-drive system for the telescope.

* Business Item : The Observatory Project Update
- Doug Love Reported that he and John Settle meet on 8/14 with Kristen Jalo of the Greenbelt Planning Board, Hank Irving, the Head of the Recreation Department, and Ken Hall, PWD Head. They met at Northway fields to make the site assessment for Observatory Hill. The city of Greenbelt is expected to pay for the costs associated with the site plan. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2001.
- Matt Elliott reported that George Gliba of the Goddard Astronomy Club is working on the donation of a 14? Dal-Kirkham scope to be donated to the Greenbelt Astronomy Club for the telescope in the observatory. There is also the possibility of a 12? scope being donated.
- Ed Abel Reported that we may have the 14? scope donated to the GAC from Montgomery College.

* Treasurer?s Report : Bill McHale stated that the club had $795.25 in the operations account and $5695.39 in the capital account.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 pm.

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Greenbelt Astronomy Club Regular Meeting of August 23, 2001
By Valerie O’Brien

The members of the Greenbelt Astronomy Club met at 7:30pm on Thursday, August 23, 2001. The meeting was held in the Owens Science Center. There were 18 members present.

The meeting was called to order by Club President John Settle who requested that Valerie O’Brien read the minutes to the August 16 Meeting. The minutes having been read, the floor was open for new business.

* Main Presentation : Why We Should Teach About Creationism in Astronomy and Physics Classes
  Presenter : Dr. William T. Bridgman

* Announcements :
  - LDF Booth Painting Party is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 25 at Valerie?s house at 1-G Northway Road.
  - Observing is scheduled for Saturday, August 25 at Northway Fields, beginning at dusk.

* Business Item : Telescope Committee Report ? Bill McHale
  - The work continues on the 17.5? mirror for the club?s dobsonian telescope and there is a possibility of a dobsonian-drive system for the telescope.

* Business Item : The Observatory Project Update
  - Doug Love Reported that he and John Settle meet on 8/14 with Kristen Jalo of the Greenbelt Planning Board, Hank Irving, the Head of the Recreation Department, and Ken Hall, PWD Head. They met at Northway fields to make the site assessment for Observatory Hill. The city of Greenbelt is expected to pay for the costs associated with the site plan. The PWD will cut construction a road, remove ditch and berm, has an alternative for the compost piles, and will grade access path to the site for handicapped access. Geo-technical Services cost estimates $2,500 to $3,000. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2001.

* Business Item : Spending Resolution
  - All members approved the new spending resolution for 2001/2002.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.

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Clear Skies!!
Steve Barkes, Editor, The Meteor
The Greenbelt Astronomy Club, Inc.
e-mail: barko@...