



MBC Sky Watches

President's Message

One can't miss the extra volume of summer sky watches this year, thanks to **Marc Stowbridge** we are having a weekly sky watch this summer at the MBC Camp in Contoocook on Wednesdays, plus two favorites are coming up, Goffstown and Madison. Stellafane is almost here too. I urge those who are not going to Stellafane to please support our First Friday sky watch with CMP on Friday, August 1.

There is a lot of effort being put forth to enhance our sky watch experience for our "customers". Our new equipment will certainly be a huge factor, but it is the energy of the people involved that makes the thing happen. I am amazed and very grateful for the amount of time our members spend giving so that others may enjoy. My personal thank you to all those who give so generously of themselves to our outreach program! Thank you NHAS!

★ Gardner Gerry
NHAS President 2008

Highlights for this Month

We are booked for a series of sky watches for the MBC Summer Camp in Contoocook, NH, over six weeks spanning July and August. The first few of these events have been very successful.

Unfortunately, most of this month has been rainy and overcast.

The Goffstown Public Library annual summer sky watch, which has been on our calendar for more years than most members can remember, is also coming up. Be sure to bring mosquito repellent.

Our annual pilgrimage to the Stellafane ATM event is in its planning stages. Volunteers are needed!

The Madison Old Home Week Sky Watch, now become a much-anticipated annual event for us, is also coming up. Don't miss the fun, and the really dark skies.

I also hope you enjoy the reports of various random acts of public observing by our fellow members that I've reported here.

★ Paul Winalski
NHAS Secretary 2008

Membership and Astro 101/201

In June we had three Educational Workshops.

Paul Winalski presented both "Deep Sky Objects" and "Carbon Stars" at YFOS.

John Blackwell presented "Stellar Evolution" at Grainger Observatory.

There are no Astro 101/201 workshops scheduled for July.

Chase McNiss will give his popular presentation on "Lunar Observing" on 16 August 16 at YFOS.

We have had three new members since last meeting: **Scott McCartney** of Concord NH, and **Stan Klemczak** and **Wendy Flagg** of Salem NH.

I am also looking for presenters for any of the other Astro 101 topics that haven't been given this year. If you have presented in the past and have an opening in your schedule, please let me know.

★ Alan Shirey

Astro Photons

The intrepid NHAS imaging corps continue to work in producing wonderful images. Please feel free to visit the NHAS pictures forum to see the latest postings.

I would like to organize a meeting of the committee for June or July, feedback on possible dates is encouraged.

★ Gardner Gerry

MBC Summer Camp

We are scheduled to put on a series of six sky watches in July and early August for the MBC Summer Camp in Contoocook, NH. The first couple of these events have already taken place.

The campers (about 100 in all) are organized by age into four groups of about 25 each, ranging from 6-18 years old. I have presented a "what's in tonight's sky" slide show to the younger crowd (who have asked a lot of **very** intelligent questions!), followed by observing in turn by each group in an open field on the camp grounds. The skies are very dark here, but tall trees surrounding the clearing prevent good horizon viewing.

The presentations and sky watches so far have been very well received by both campers and staff, and apparently our events have already become a legend passed down from one week's group of campers to the next.

Given this summer's unusually wet and cloudy weather, this event so far has been blessed with clear skies. The youngest group

Unfortunately has only gotten to see the Moon and some bright stars in twilight, but we've been able to show Jupiter and a heap of deep-sky objects to the older groups of campers and staff.

Here, courtesy of the cameras of **Joe Derek** and **Gardner Gerry**, are some photographs of NHAS participation at these events.



Getting ready to observe through Mr. T.



... and Ken Charles's Soulshine



Joe Derek's scope was very popular



Getting Obby ready for action



Happy campers!

I hope to see more of you at the remaining events we have scheduled here.

★ Paul Winalski

Sidewalk Astronomy

(Sort of...) Tamworth has a "Family Day" on the 4th of July, and I received permission to set up a solar telescope in the middle of the festivities. I had a PST mounted on a LX90 with a solar filter. As there were zero sunspots, the LX90 served only to track the PST. Lots of folks came by and took a look at some prominent prominences and everyone gave at least a "Wow!" Each child was warned not to try this at home and received a card from NASA with a nifty solar picture.

★ Marc Stowbridge

NHAS June 2008 Business Meeting

ATM

Larry Lopez reports that the mirror from the donated telescope has been tested, but the results are inconclusive.

YFOS

Larry Lopez reports that Chase McNiss cleaned out YFOS, and he (Larry) mowed the place. The door needs replacing (Tom Cocchiaro possibly has a door). Thanks to Bill

Steele, the light is back on in the porta-potty. The Mosquito Magnet is at Country Stores for repairs.

Membership

Alan Shirey reported on the course schedule for the next several months: Astro 201: Stellar Evolution (several times postponed, but now scheduled for 21 June) by John Blackwell; Astro 201: Carbon Stars, by Paul Winalski, scheduled for 27 June; Astro 101: Lunar Observing, by Chase McNiss, Astro 101: Collimation, by John Bishop, scheduled for 10 October.

Welcome to new member Scot McCartney, who owns a Meade LX200.

Astrophotography

No activity to report. At the meeting, we received the donation of a 35mm camera from Victor Thibeault.

Radio Astronomy

No report.

Public Observing

Marc Stowbridge reports that we have the annual Goffstown Public Library sky watch (one of our longest-standing and most popular events) scheduled for 23 July. Other public sky watches are in the pipeline.

Tom Cocchiaro reported on our participation in Portsmouth Market Square Day (see the June 2008 NHAS Observer). There were over 90,000 people. We passed out over 250 brochures. Marc set up an analemma display and a PST. Ken Charles, Bill Steele, and Mike O'Shaughnessy all participated. The public were really enthralled. Our participation was written up in *Foster's Daily Democrat*.

Webmaster

No report.

Book of the Month

Larry Lopez brought the book *Telescopes* (1960), a book on all sorts of subjects astronomical.

Scope of the Month

Rich DeMidio presented his TeleVue 102 refractor. The Starbeam finder has a pop-up mirror

so that you don't have to crane your neck. It is on the well-designed and sturdy Gibraltar mount. Rich got hooked on wide-field observing with his Pronto while Obby (his 18" Obsession dob) was having its mirror recoated.

will use the remaining part of the grant to purchase a H-alpha telescope?

★ Chase McNiss

Stellafane Planning

This is the annual convocation of the Springfield Amateur Telescope Makers, at the end of July. We need a Stellafane coordinator, and someone to bring the NHAS canopy up. Contact Gardner Gerry if you can participate.

Miscellaneous Business

John Bishop and Chase McNiss are both going to the Black Forest Star Party. They, and others, may want to think about coordinating travel.

Marc Stowbridge presented the annalemma that he constructed at NEAF.

Now that we have the resources, NHAS will be forming an Educational Outreach Committee to organize our activities with teachers and other educators throughout the state.

Evening Program

R. P. Hale gave a talk on the Mayan calendar.

★ Paul Winalski

The Bottom Line

Starting Balance:	\$5314.95
Deposits/Credits:	0.00
Accounts/Paid:	0.00
Net Account Balance:	\$5314.95
Petty cash drawer:	\$100.00
Cash Balance:	\$5414.95

2008 Membership: 132

Donations: \$0.00
Balance of Grant Funds \$809.70

Of the \$5000 grant money we received from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, we have spent \$4190.30 on equipment from PC Connection (Shaun Ballou from PC Connection was present at the meeting). We bought two Lenovo laptops (one for the Treasurer, one for our outreach activities), and a Sharp LCD projector. Possibly we



2008 Officers
President: Gardner Gerry
VicePresident: Mike Townsend
Treasurer: Chase McNiss
Secretary: Paul Winalski

DEADLINE August 2008 Issue: 5 PM August 13

E-mail articles to the Editor.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS – Notify the Treasurer of changes to postal or e-mail address.

How to Join N.H.A.S.

Write to us:

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P.O. Box 5823
Manchester, NH 03108-5823
Attn: Treasurer

Send E-mail to:

info@nhastro.com

Use our web site:

<http://www.nhastro.com/>

This month's contributors:

Gardner Gerry, Alan Shirey, Joe Derek, Marc Stowbridge, Chase McNiss

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NHAS Upcoming Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Goffstown Public Library Sky Watch	July 23	8:30 PM	Cemetery Field, Goffstown, NH
MBC Summer Camp Sky Watch	July 30	7:30 PM	Contoocook, NH
Start of Stellafane	July 31	3:00 PM	Springfield, VT
Stellafane	August 1	All Day	Springfield, VT
Coffee House Night	August 1	5:00 PM	YFOS
CMP Public Sky Watch	August 1	7:00 PM	Christa McAuliffe Planetarium
Stellafane	August 2	All Day	Springfield, VT
End of Stellafane	August 3	12:00 PM	Springfield, VT
Madison Old Home Week Skywatch	August 6	7:00 PM	Madison, NH
MBC Summer Camp Sky Watch	August 7	7:30 PM	Contoocook, NH
NHAS Business Meeting	August 15	7:30 PM	Christa McAuliffe Planetarium
Astro 101: Lunar Observing	August 16	7:00 PM	YFOS