



2010 Perseid Meteor Shower

President's Message

I write this report from the family room at my summer home in the Adirondacks, gazing out at the lake and planning to go fishing during my lunch hour ☺ I also write it being quite drowsy from trying to get a glimpse of the Perseids but unfortunately, clouds ruined both nights. Even though peak has occurred, there still might be residual over the several days provided the skies clear.

The Q3 officer meeting was held on July 28th and several topics were discussed as follows:

Annual Financial Review—Better than forecasted at the beginning of year due to an increase in anticipated membership numbers. No dues changes are required for 2011.

Email Distribution List—The policy was approved to limit access to paid members starting in 2011. There will be specific correspondence issued to the membership regarding the details.

Astronomy League—The officers voted to add optional membership for NHAS members. Separate correspondence will also be sent out describing this along with changes to the membership form to accommodate the change. In short, members will be able to their **optional** membership with their annual NHAS renewal.

Web Site—Discussion and planning for changes to incorporate Facebook and Twitter.

Fall Messier Marathon—We talked about this and suggested

October as the target month. Larry will take the lead and report back at a later date. As always, please contact myself or an officer if anyone has questions.

For the August business meeting, **Ed Ting** will be our guest speaker on a topic called "Telescope Tales". He is purposely being vague but assures me that the membership will enjoy his talk so it should be quite entertaining.

From the preliminary reports, it sounds like Stellafane was fantastic with great weather. I was at the lake and equally enjoyed a fabulous weekend. I am looking forward to hearing about the details in various communications either in the newsletter or forums.

As summer winds down, I would like to remind everyone that it is not too early to think about two major topics. The first topic is elections in which nominations can start at the October meeting. Please think about either serving or nominating someone who you believe would serve NHAS well. Several important positions are open this year due to term limits including President, Vice President, and one board position. The second area is award presentation to be held in December. Please submit your nominations to me for anyone you believe deserves recognition describing what they did and the value it added to our organization.

Clear Skies,

★ Rich DeMidio
NHAS President 2010

Highlights for This Month

July and August tend to be quiet months as public observing goes. But this month we have reports on our annual club visit to the Stellafane amateur telescope making convention, and also observing reports of the 2010 Perseid meteor shower.

We also have observing reports from a new member who joined because of our sky watches at the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery center.

Coming up on 18 September we will participate in International Observe the Moon Night with a lunar observing session at the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center. Hope to see you there!

★ Paul Winalski
NHAS Secretary 2010

YFOS Observing Report, 7 August 2010

Polly and I went up for a few hours to watch meteors. Sky conditions were good but it was pretty cool. Quite a few meteors from the Perseid radiant and lots of satellites. I just brought binoculars so I did not do anything more than that.

★ Tim Printy

Observing Report, Bristol NH, 7 August 2010

I set up my OA-6.5 in a field near Bristol, NH. The sky was clear with good transparency but only fair seeing. I could see the mag 5-ish stars in the Little Dipper (Ursa Minor) and the Milky was visible to

the horizon, including the extension into Ophiuchus.

Jupiter was up. The seeing was not good enough to resolve the moons to disks or to show lots of detail on the planet, but I could easily see what other observers have reported: the South Equatorial Belt is no longer a twin of the North Equatorial belt as it had been for years; it has dramatically faded. The SEB wasn't visible to me at all.

It was dark enough that galaxies and nebulae showed up in my 9x50 finder but the seeing was poor enough that the outer stars in M13 didn't resolve. It was a good night for the "fuzzies"!

★ John Bishop

Stellafane 2010 Reports



View South from the NHAS tent, showing some members' scopes (Joel Harris photo)

It was a great weekend at Stellafane. The weather a bit cooler than we had during the week and also much drier.



The NHAS tent (Joel Harris photo)

This was great for the astronomers and our club members to finally see the sky, the way it was meant to be. The cookout was a success, did not run out of food this year.

★ Joel Harris

Linda had a lot of commitments at work and we couldn't leave until

about 12:30 AM on Friday. We didn't want to get up at 5AM and drive to Springfield in one hop in the morning so we drove to Brattleboro, VT and stayed at the Motel 6.

After breakfast we drove to Springfield in a pretty leisurely fashion Friday Morning. The line was pretty short and we were able to find a nice spot in the Pine Forest area to pitch our tent and we were set up aided by the fantastic weather.

Linda was using her Lunt telescope Friday and gathered quite a crowd. Gary Hand and Tim Chen stopped by and at that point feverish eyepiece evaluation started for several hours.

The winner was the Vernon Scope 16mm.

★ Larry Lopez

2010 Perseid Meteor Shower Reports

I saw one whole Perseid last night, not having just a whole lot of time to look, but it was a good one—long, bright, and had some "splash". Not being a morning person I didn't get up at o-dark thirty to see what was out there. Anyone else look?...

★ David Gilmore

I was out taking some pictures of luminescent mushrooms the other night, and while waiting for my exposures I kept an eye on the sky. The time was around 1am on the 11th, and I was seeing 1 every minute or so between breaks in the clouds, all originating right out of Cassiopeia.

★ Keith G.

We went outside and started observing. I saw about four meteors in half an hour and perhaps two bats.

Linda saw a Perseid ending at Delphinus. The trail was two fists long and very bright, persisting for fifteen seconds. The total count was eight for half an hour (3:30-4:00 AM). No bats seen.

★ Larry and Linda Lopez

I was at the ATMoB observing field from 11:45 PM to 4:50 AM. I saw a bunch meteors but didn't count them. Much of the time I was sitting in a reclining lawn chair. The temperature got down to 52 F. It was weird seeing Orion in August, but with the cool temperature it felt more like Fall which made seeing Orion seem less weird, it just didn't feel like August.

ATMoB member Al Takeda was there all night imaging the swan nebula and the crescent nebula using a telescope with a digital camera as well as a guide scope with another digital camera, both cameras connected to a laptop with a red filter on the screen and a red back lit separate keyboard.

ATMoB member Ben Gomes-Casseres was also there all night simultaneously imaging two slightly overlapping wide fields of the sky using two digital cameras connected to a laptop on a tracking telescope mount.

Someone else was there briefly taking photos of with a stand alone digital camera on a tripod.

A group of people with sleeping bags showed up to observe the meteor shower. They left after about an hour and half.

★ Michael Aramini

After a fun day of work, I cut the tall grass and moved a couple of reclining chairs out back where we could see NE. I set up my ICOM R7000 receiver at 28.070 MHz to try and hear meteor skip but I think the omni directional antenna wasn't sensitive enough.

Put out the ThermaCell and one OFF lantern to ward off the mosquitoes, climbed into sleeping bags for warmth and began the observation around 11:30. Nice and warm we waited, but not for long. A bright green meteor on a line from Cassiopeia shot through Pegasus along the western side of the great square. Several yellow meteors shot in various directions all radiating from the Cass/Perseus region. Odd that one very bright yellow one shot from the NNW toward Perseus. I thought the

radiant was where the came FROM not TO.

I probably saw 15+ in the two hours we were out. All were definites and there were many undecided sightings. Not too bad given the light pollution we have here now. Since both of us were warm and falling asleep in the backyard to the sounds of falling apples (thunk), I figured it a good idea to move inside for the night. Wouldn't want a deer or skunk to cuddle up for the night.

And, was that a coyote?

★ Rich Schueller

I went out for 45 minutes, 4:00 to 4:45 am. Lots of clouds Early on, saw three small ones and one medium size. Nothing for 20 minutes. Then about 4:30 fairly bright one passing by Jupiter. At 4:38 a real bolide with a terminal flash appeared, heading towards the SE. It left a smoke trail which was visible for about 10 seconds, illuminated by the early Sun way up there. Enjoyable time.

★ Ted Blank

MSDC Sky Watch Observing

A newbie's visits to the Concord Skywatch.

Last Christmas my wife gave me a book titled Turn left at Orion. Little did she know that this would open the floodgates to a new time-consuming hobby. As a chemist/physicist I have always been interested in theoretical astronomy, but had never spend any time looking up at the night sky. This changed with the reading of Turn left at Orion and several visits to the Concord sky watch.

I already owned a good pair of binoculars and a decent spotting scope and used those to become more familiar with the night sky at first. My spotting scope has an aperture of 60mm and my eyepieces for it top out at 60X. This gave me some nice views of the moon, Jupiter and Saturn as well as some double stars and open clusters. Pretty soon however, aperture fever struck me. I wanted more so I

started browsing the astronomy forums on the internet. No shortage of good advice there, but the best advice was: go visit a sky watch and look through some telescopes.

In March the weather was finally clear on the night of the Concord sky watch and despite the cold I went over to the McAullife-Shepard Center. First impression: there are a lot of different scopes out there. I was looking for something reasonably priced (about \$400-500 max), not too heavy (back problems) and still capable of showing me a nice variety of objects.

The advice given: get a 6 or 8 inch dobsonian. This matched the advice from the forums so I then had to decide on the brand. I chose the collapsible 8-inch Skywatcher, because of the good reviews it had received online and because the collapsible tube would allow me to store and transport it more easily. After another visit to the sky watch in April I bought the scope in May. Having owned the scope for a few months now, I am very satisfied with this purchase. It came with a 8x50 finder scope and two eyepieces.

In June I brought the scope to the sky watch because I did not know how to collimate it properly. **Paul Winalski** showed me the Orion Lasermate Deluxe that he uses for collimation. Collimation seemed pretty straightforward with this tool, so I quickly ordered one of these. After a few trials I am now able to collimate my scope in a few minutes. To my beginner's eyes star-testing shows that the collimation with this laser is pretty good.

On this June visit I also received two extra eyepieces from a very generous gentleman at the sky watch. He noticed that I had a new scope and asked: "Would you like some extra eyepieces?". "eeehm, sure.", was my eloquent answer. He then gave me 6mm and 17mm eyepieces. These very nicely complement the 10mm and 25mm eyepieces that came with the telescope. The 6mm gives me 200X

and has been great on the moon, the 17mm gives me a nice field of view at a decent magnification and has been great with deep sky objects like the Ring and Dumbbell Nebulae.

Since then I have added a few other things to my accessory kit. The first thing I added was Bob's Knobs for my secondary. I was very nervous about using an Allen wrench with the potential of dropping it, so for 20 dollars I erased this problem. Now I just have to twist 3 little knobs to align the secondary.

I also bought the *Sky & Telescope* Pocket Star Atlas. This has been a great addition. Star-hopping with the 8x50 finder scope was a bit of a challenge at first since all the images are inverted. I ended up looking over the scope to aim it at roughly the right area and then randomly moving the scope to hopefully find things in the eyepiece. Needless to say, this was not ideal and I was not able to find the Dumbbell Nebula, for example. With the Star Atlas I can now move from one star to the next and actually get to my targets. The Dumbbell Nebula took less than a minute to find like this.

Next on my list are a light shroud to keep stray light out of the mirrors and some sort of zero-power finder (Telrad or something similar) to make star-hopping even more convenient. Also on the to-do list: visit the sky watch at the club's Hillsboro site. So far it has been cloudy every time that I was able to go, but I am keeping my fingers crossed for September or October.

Thanks to all of you for your friendly words of wisdom at the sky watch and I look forward to seeing you soon again.

★ Stijn Brand

NHAS July 2010 Business Meeting

The July business meeting was held at St. Anselm College on 23 July, our President, **Rich DeMidio**, presiding.

President's Report

A financial review will be conducted at the Q3 Officers Meeting.

The new NHAS website has been deployed. Website projects are ongoing—fine tuning, and an online database of club assets.

Astronomy League membership: we can, as a club, join the AL and offer a reduced rate for NHAS members. This will be discussed at the Officer's Meeting. Whatever we do, AL membership will be optional for NHAS members.

NHAS recognition awards will be given out at December's Business Meeting. It's time to think of nominees. Send suggestions to Rich DeMidio.

Nominations open at the October Business Meeting for 2011 officers and a member of the Board of Directors. Because of the term limitations in the club constitution, the positions of President and Vice President will be vacant. It's not too early to think about serving, or about nominating someone else.

Board of Directors

The Board is working with the web team on automating online access to the club assets database. This includes automating the bailment process.

The board is in the process of conducting its annual financial review. The results will be presented at the Q3 Officer's meeting.

Educational Outreach

Rich Schueller reporting. Advance planning for AeroSpaceFest 2011 is already underway. A first meeting with Jean from the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center (MSDC) will take place in November.

September's EOC meeting will be a *post-partem* of the 2010 event, discussing NHAS's marketing, and NHAS's position on what this event means to the club and how best to communicate this to MSDC to avoid any misunderstandings. Anyone interested in these issues is invited to the September EOC meeting.

We need a web page dedicated to the Library Telescope Project. **Ted Blank** said that he can do the web voodoo if a written work-up of the program can be done.

MSDC and NHAS jointly want to offer a quarterly astro-imaging workshop to the public. We are targeting Friday 1 October as a first date. **Matt Amar** will talk to **Dave McDonald** to arrange the details. This event would be free to NHAS members and open to the general public who pay general admission to MSDC.

Nashua High School South has a planetarium on their premises and they are looking to us for advice on how to use it. Hopefully in August we can meet with them to establish an Astronomy Club at the school to teach students how to operate the planetarium so that they can put on shows during the school day.

Marc Stowbridge is going to contact the LIDAR observatory. An extra hand for Marc on this and other public outreach events would be nice.

Rich Schueller made a visit to a newly opened observatory at the Dublin, NH school. He met with the building director and with the observatory supervisor. They would love for us to help and advice in running the observatory. There is great potential for EOC to help design community and school events in a similar fashion to what we are providing at MSDC, and plan to provide for the Nashua South planetarium.

The observatory has a 14" Celestron Edge scope on a Paramount. They are considering offering the scope for use by members of the public.

Nantucket Island Star Party

Ted Blank reports that this event will take place on Saturday 11 September (no rain date) at the Nantucket Youth Hostel, Surfside, Nantucket MA. This will be the best observing weather of the year, and the summer tourists will be gone. Thirty-five Girl Scouts and their chaperones will be attending. Eight NHAS members have already signed up for the event and more are

welcome. There is a mixed dorm room available at the Hostel, \$32 per night including breakfast. Arrange your own transportation to Nantucket. Arrive as early as Thursday; leave as late as Tuesday. Ferries leave from Hyannis.

Website

Matt Marulla reports that the new NHAS website is up and running, including the redesigned forums. Matt is working with the Board of Directors on automating NHAS asset management.

Matt is also working with EOC on a web page for the Library Telescope Project.

Matt gave a demo of the new website.

If you have PowerPoint or other materials for Astro 101/201 courses, please get these materials to Matt so that he can put them up on the website.

We are working on interfacing to social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook.

Membership

Bill Steele reports that the new website has already generated four new membership inquiries.

A message to the general membership concerning the email list cleanup will be drafted this month.

Astro 101 and 201 presenters will be requested to pick a month to present a topic. This would be used to schedule courses on a yearly basis.

The Membership Committee is looking for local libraries willing to host member-only Astro 101/201 presentations. Let Bill know if you have any contact names/phone numbers/email addresses of potential sponsors for this type of event.

YFOS

Larry Lopez reported that the annual YFOS cleanup event has started. The Mosquito Magnet is running, but not many bugs have been collected. **Steve Forbse's** mower is working OK, but the starter switch needs repair. We

need a work session in September to repair the folding panel on the observatory.

Astrophotography

We held a beginner's deep-sky Astrophotography 101 session at YFOS on 19 June. Attending were **Don Byrne, Brian & Joyce Icaza, Vince Quarterano, Melinda Lutz Sanborn, Steven Tosi, and Paul Winalski.** **Gardner Gerry** gave a presentation and conducted a group discussion on telescopes, mounts, cameras, and software. Attempted practical imaging by the newbies was cut short by clouds moving in, but not before several attendees made some nice images of the first quarter Moon (some of which were posted to the NHAS website). Follow-up classes on image processing are planned.

Miscellaneous Business

Rich is working on lining up guest speakers for the second half of the year.

One jacket (size XL) is left from the initial NHAS attire purchase. There has been a recent price reduction, particularly if we pool orders. **Ken Charles** has the details and some samples.

Joel Harris is organizing our participation in 2010 Stellafane, August 5-8. You can register online. NHAS will have a tent and barbecue at the event.

In the Sky

Astrophotos from the website (**Keith Berson**—Milky Way; **Al Navarro**—Sagittarius; **Dave Weaver**, lighting, clouds and the Moon) were presented.

Book of the Month

Bill Steele presented I-Pad Astronomy applications.

Scope of the Month

A large Vixen refractor on a SXD mount with Starbook

Thing of the Month

Rich Schueller presented the ThermoCell mosquito repellent device, with several club members attesting to its effectiveness.

Evening Presentation

Rich DeMidio gave a talk and slide show on his and **Jean Buckley's** experience at the 2010 Deepest South Texas Star Safari (DSTSS) in Coonabarabran Australia (I tagged along, too). This is an annual event put on by the Three Rivers Foundation—an organization based in Texas and Australia dedicated to public outreach in the natural sciences, including Astronomy. Rich had serious discussions with the 3RF folks concerning our own outreach efforts, especially the Library Telescope Program.

DSTSS is aimed at offering Northern Hemisphere amateur astronomers the opportunity of a lifetime to observe the wonders of the Southern Sky under ideal observing conditions, using large optical telescopes.

I went in 2009, and gave a presentation to NHAS last year, mainly focusing on technical details. Rich's talk this month focused more on the nature and tourist aspects of the experience. Jean, Rich, and I all recommend this emphatically as an excellent way to observe the Southern Hemisphere skies. We're all intending to go back again. In all likelihood I'll be back in 2011 (but don't let that discourage any of you from attending). Contact Jean, or Rich, or me if you want details and advice concerning this wonderful event.

★ Paul Winalski

The Bottom Line

Starting Balance:	\$7117.90
Deposits/Credits:	
Membership:	120.00
Bank interest:	1.48
Total :	121.48
Accounts/Paid:	
Insurance:	435.00
Pro-Portsmouth dep. refund	75.00
Total:	360.00
Net Account Balance:	\$6879.38
Petty cash drawer:	\$100.00
Cash Balance:	\$6979.38

Membership: 141

New Members:

David Belisle, Claremont NH
Jeff Binckes, Washington N H
Langdon Library, Newington NH
Glenn Meyers, Deerfield NH
Tim Sagear, Brookline NH

★ Ken Charles
 NHAS Treasurer 2010



2010 Officers
President: Rich DeMidio
Vice President: Mike Townsend
Treasurer: Ken Charles
Secretary: Paul Winalski

DEADLINE September 2010 Issue: 5 PM September 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:

NHAS
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:

Rich DeMidio, Tim Printy, John Bishop, Joel Harris, Larry Lopez, David Gilmore, Keith G., Linda Lopez, Michael Aramini, Rich Schueller, Ted Blank, Stijn Brand, Ken Charles

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NHAS Upcoming Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Nichols Memorial Library Sky Watch	August 19	8:00 PM	169 Main St, Kingston NH
NHAS Business Meeting	August 20	7:30 PM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH
Discovery Center Sky Watch	September 3	7:00 PM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH
Educational Outreach Committee Meeting	September 9	6:30 PM	Ralph Pill Building, 22 Bridge Street, Concord NH
NHAS Coffee House Night	September 10	5:00 PM	YFOS
Nantucket Star Party	September 11	7:00 PM	Nantucket Island, MA
NHAS Business Meeting	September 17	7:30 PM	St. Anselm College, Manchester NH
International Observe the Moon Night	September 18	6:00 PM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH
Cub Scout Pack 610 Sky Watch	September 24	7:00 PM	35 Keyes Hill Road, Pelham NH
Discovery Center Sky Watch	October 1	7:00 PM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH
Nashua High School North Sky Watch	October 6	6:30 PM	10 Chuck Druding Road, Nashua NH
Educational Outreach Committee Meeting	October 7	6:30 PM	Ralph Pill Building, 22 Bridge Street, Concord NH