



Sidewalk Astronomy

President's Message

This will be my last message to everyone as President of this wonderful organization. Even though it is my last, I knew what I wanted to say months ago. It can be summed up in a single word—

Gratitude.

It is this word, which best represents how I feel about the club and the membership. My eternal gratitude for the contributions so many people have made over the past two years. We have so much to be proud about and the best is still yet to come. The accomplishments and advances made in the past two years can be measured in magnitudes. I want to take a few moments and highlight some key areas.

Library Telescope Program

(LTP) – From vision to reality by a few members spearheaded by **Marc Stowbridge**, this program has become a showcase icon for NHAS. But vision is not enough and must be followed by implementation and our membership has really come through supporting the vision by participating as foster parents for each LTP engagement. We are currently up to eighteen locations with more in the works. Finally, the program has expanded visibility to outside the State of New Hampshire with other club interactions and with an article to appear in the January, 2011 edition of *Sky and Telescope*.

Public Outreach – We increased our presence for several events including activities around Astronomy Days, School Events, and Sidewalk Astronomy events. The last has become a mainstay

now for NHAS, on par with events that we typically do each month. For me personally, it has been a very enlightening experience and something for everyone to enjoy.

NHAS Infrastructure – Public outreach and external facing communications go hand in hand. One cannot exist without the other. For NHAS, our expanded outreach has directly resulted in the need to update our website to support the business model. Many NHAS members have contributed in terms of content and technology. The result is a very professional looking and easy to use website for the public to find, to learn, and to request our assistance. It's directly resulted in increased frequency of events and new members to NHAS. We were also able to address our financial status by providing stability and a capability for growth. Finally, we were able to streamline some of the business processes to reduce the time it takes for certain tasks. As a volunteer organization, anything to make it easier for officers to get their job done is a win-win.

We will celebrate as a group all these achievements, and have the opportunity to network, with our social event at the December business meeting. The formal agenda will be very short so that we can quickly enjoy our event. I will also take the opportunity to present awards to folks nominated by the membership for outstanding contribution.

It has been a true privilege and honor to serve this organization. A leader can only be as good as the

people surrounding him or her. I would like to personally thank the officers, board, and a few trusted advisors who were always willing to listen and provide sound advice. Everyone made my job easy because our people are the most important asset we have; and great people are what NHAS is all about.

With warmest regards,

★ Rich DeMidio
NHAS President 2009 and 2010

Highlights for This Month

Sidewalk Astronomy takes front and center of our public outreach events this month. Foremost was our second, and much larger, participation in the annual Nashua Holiday Stroll, where hundreds of the public looked through our scopes.

We also have the inauguration of our second permanently scheduled monthly event—sidewalk Astronomy in downtown Portsmouth.

We will elect the 2011 officer corps, and a member of the Board of Directors, at the December business meeting. The floor is still open for nominations for all the officer positions and the three-year term as Director. If you wish to serve, please place your name in nomination (note that you can nominate yourself—although someone else has to second the nomination). Don't be shy.

★ Paul Winalski
NHAS Secretary 2010

2011 Officer Elections

Election of NHAS officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) to serve a one-year term, and a Director (to serve a three-year term) will take place at the December NHAS business meeting.

These nominations were made and seconded at the October business meeting. **Tom Cocchiaro**, who had been nominated for President in October, has due to personal circumstances withdrawn his name from consideration.

President: **John Bishop**
Vice President: **David Gilmore**
Secretary: **Paul Winalski**
Treasurer: **Ken Charles**
Director: **Jean Buckley**

The floor will be open for further nominations at the December business meeting, and then we will hold the vote.

Because our current President (**Rich DeMidio**) and Vice President (**Mike Townsend**) have served two consecutive full terms in their respective offices, the club constitution prohibits them from standing for re-election to their current office. They are eligible for nomination to any other office, however.

Members in good standing as of the December business meeting are eligible to vote. You may vote either in person at the meeting or by proxy (see Article IX in the club constitution, posted on the web site). You may designate any member attending the meeting as your proxy, or you may send your proxy form to the club Secretary. Write-in votes are permitted.

★ Paul Winalski

Winter Holiday Stroll, Nashua NH, 27 November

I want to thank all the members that helped out last night. We must have had over 1000 people stop by and look through our scopes. That's a sidewalk astronomy event unlike most others. The weather stayed favorable most of the evening, and all the people stopping to view seemed to enjoy it. The reporter I

talked to early on did a write up in the Nashua Telegraph.



Everyone wants to see the view through Joe Derek's EQ mounted big reflector. (Ted Blank photos)



Observing through Ken Charles's 'Soulshine'



And now it's dad's turn....

A very big thank you to those that helped out: **Ted Blank, Herb Bubert, Rich DeMidio, Joe Derek, Gardner Gerry, David "Rags" Gilmore, Melinde Sanborn, Rich Schueller, Mike Townsend, Chris White, and Paul Winalski.**



Gardner shows why there's nothing better than the view of Jupiter through his refractor.



Except maybe for the view through Mike Townsend's refractor.



Aperture rules! Enjoying the view through Rich DeMidio's 18" Obsession reflector, 'Obby'.

If I missed anyone, I'm sorry, but I must not have seen you due to the crowds. We had 10 scopes, and some binoculars, and several "floaters" helping out. It worked out great. Thanks to Rich S. for the hot cocoa, I think we all appreciated it. For those that missed it, put it on your calendar for next year, the Saturday night after Thanksgiving.

★ Ken Charles

Sidewalk Astronomy, Portsmouth NH, 11 December

NHAS has a new monthly event. From now on, we will present Sidewalk Astronomy in Market Square, downtown Portsmouth, on the Saturday nearest first quarter Moon. 11 December was the second in the series of events. We hope to see you there in the months to come!

★ Paul Winalski

We had three telescopes for the sidewalk event in Portsmouth. **Ted Blank** brought a C8, **Tom Cocchiaro** brought an 80mm refractor, and **Rich DeMidio** brought Obby. Dwarfed only by the city Christmas Tree, Obby naturally

stole the show. In fact, with a few colored lights it could have easily been mistaken for a second Christmas tree. (Note to Rich: red lights would work best).



Jupiter in Market Square (Ted Blank photos)



Tom Cocchiario shows off the sky.



Rich DeMidio offers the superb view through Obby.



Ted Blank shows how fine the view can be through a C8 Schmidt-Cassegrain.

High haze and some serious clouds in the afternoon gave way to mostly clear skies, which got more and more hazy as the night went on. Jupiter and the 6-day moon were the targets for the evening. We had several hundred visitors, many of

whom made a donation into the “donate-a-scope” totaling over \$65 for the night. We also passed out numerous membership applications. Several people explained that were going to buy memberships for themselves and for family members for Christmas, so we hope that comes to pass. The building clouds allowed us to pack up early enough to grab a bite at a local restaurant before heading home.

★ Ted Blank

Broken Ground School Sky Watch, Concord NH, 14 December

This is always one of the annual mainstays of our public outreach calendar, and an event that I always look forward to because of the hospitality and enthusiasm of the students, parents, and our hosts at the SEE Center.

As usual, **Ed Ting** gave an afternoon presentation at the school. Alas, the evening sky watch was clouded out. Ed and our hosts were able to entertain the students who showed up using the Starry Night software to show what we might have seen if it weren't overcast. Better luck next season.

★ Paul Winalski

Total Lunar Eclipse, 21 December 2010

A total lunar eclipse will be visible in the early morning of 21 December. Partial eclipse starts at 1:32:37 AM Eastern Standard Time. Totality begins at 2:40:47 AM. Totality ends at 3:53:08 AM, and partial eclipse ends at 5:01:20 AM. Here's hoping for clear skies.

★ Paul Winalski

NHAS November 2010 Business Meeting

The November business meeting was held at St. Anselm College on 10 November, our President, **Rich DeMidio**, presiding.

We held a moment of silence in memory of Dr. Brian Marsden, for many years the chairman of the Minor Planet Committee of the

International Astronomical Union. Many of us will remember his excellent presentation for NHAS on the Pluto controversy. Dr. Marsden will be sadly missed.

President's Report

Membership renewals for 2011 are in progress.

Elections for 2011 Officers and a Director will take place at the December business meeting. Nominations can be made at the November or December meetings.

The Q4 officer meeting was held on 30 October. Actions taken at that meeting:

- Passed: proposal by the EOC to arrange for online donations to NHAS.
- Passed: elimination of the \$15 membership after June. New members will now pay the full \$30, but renew the following year (e.g., a new member joining in July 2011 will get a membership good until October 2012). This applies to new members only; renewals always will be good through next October only.
- Defeated: use of PayPal to pay for NHAS membership.
- The proposed new monthly commitment at the Rey Center will be written up and distributed to the membership.
- The Board of Directors will draw up a formal procedure for use of loaner scopes.

There will be an article on our Library Telescope Program in the January issue of *Sky & Telescope*.

Board of Directors

John Bishop reports on the status of the club's loaner scopes. The Board is working on a process for club members to get a loaner scope without a lot of overhead but without the BoD losing track of where scopes are.

The club asset list has been updated with all email received so far regarding where club assets are.

Educational Outreach

Ted Blank and **Rich Schueller** report that the Rey Center wants NHAS to present a public sky watch

each month at Waterville Valley. They will provide free lodging for the official NHAS presenter. We are trying to fill the first six months of commitments. After that, there will be an assessment to see if this fits their and our requirements. There has been good response to the request for volunteers so far.

There was discussion of Astronomy Day. The conclusion is that NHAS will plan to host our own event in addition to our participation in the Discovery Center's AeroSpaceFest. There will be a meeting with MSDC in December to finalize our plans for participation in AeroSpaceFest 2011. This will take place on 7 May (as will a Rey Center event). We currently plan to hold our own, additional Astronomy Day event in the fall. Our event will be an afternoon of solar observing, followed by an evening sky watch. Our inaugural monthly Sidewalk Astronomy event in downtown Portsmouth was held on 13 November. 500 people viewed Jupiter and the Moon between 6 and 10 PM. There were four scopes, manned by **Don McDaniels**, **Tom Cocchiaro**, **Ted Blank**, and Harvey Lipman (of the ASNNE). These events are scheduled for the Saturday nearest First Quarter Moon; see the club calendar at the website for details. The next event is planned for Saturday 11 December.

We are booked as an "event" for the Nashua Holiday Stroll, on the Saturday evening following Thanksgiving. **Ken Charles** is organizing this event. We will set up in Bicentennial Park, next to the Nashua River on Main Street. Thousands of people are expected for this event, and hundreds likely will stop by for view through the scopes.

Library Telescope Program update: we now have eighteen scopes installed. We are looking to upgrade some of the older scopes to the current standard.

Membership

Bill Steele reported that **Paul Winalski** presented Astro 101:

Navigating the Night Sky at the Nashua Public Library, Thursday 21 October from 7-9 PM. Attendance was low, but there was very good feedback. The Nashua Library venue is very promising for future presentations.

Bill Steele presented Astro 101: YFOS Orientation.

Bill also presented a talk on "How To Buy a New Telescope" at the Goffstown Public Library.

We are still looking for other venues for presentation of Astro 101/201 talks.

Ted Blank and **Paul Winalski** will be presenting a talk on Amateur Astronomy at Franklin Pierce University.

YFOS

Larry Lopez reports that the main heater is up and running. Everything is ready for winter. We have a cache of small propane tanks ready if they run out.

Astrophotography

Gardner Gerry reports that while there have been no AP Committee meetings lately, many members have been active and taking advantage of some great clear nights. The results of those sessions can be seen in the pictures forum on our website. Please take a moment to see what club members have been imaging this fall.

Website

Web team resources were discussed at the Q4 officers meeting. Currently our website skills are limited to **Matt Marulla** and we wish to get more people involved. Please contact Matt if you are interested and have the necessary technological skills.

Miscellaneous Business

We have no scheduled guest speakers for 2011 yet.

The 2011 business meetings at the Discovery Center are locked in for the third Friday of each month. We have provided proposed dates to St. Anselm for the first half of 2011.

The 2010 NHAS member awards will be presented at the December

meeting. Send nominations to Rich DeMidio.

Jean Buckley is coordinating the NHAS social event following the 17 December business meeting. The Discovery Center has graciously offered us use of their function room. We will have a pot luck meal following the meeting, and will have tables set up for books, equipment, and other such displays. This is a chance to socialize and chat about your favorite topics. If you plan to bring anything, please see the topic under the "Meetings" area of the website forums, or contact Jean.

In the Sky

Rich showed excellent images of the Crab Nebula by **Bob Gillette** and of the Horsehead region by **Herb Bubert**.

2011 Election Nominations

The floor was officially opened for nominations for the club Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer), all of whom serve a 1-year term, and for a Director (who will serve a 3-year term).

Rich DeMidio and **Mike Townsend**, our current President and Vice President have both served two consecutive terms and therefore cannot be re-elected to their current offices. However, they can be nominated for positions other than those they currently hold.

Tom Cocchiaro withdrew his nomination (at the October meeting) for President.

Nomination of **John Bishop** for President was made and seconded.

These are the nominations so far made and seconded:

President: John Bishop
Vice President: David Gilmore
Secretary: Paul Winalski
Treasurer: Ken Charles
Director: Jean Buckley

Book of the Month

Barrie Sawyer presented *Sky & Telescope's Pocket Sky Atlas*. It is compact, and the charts by declination take some getting used to. It shows stars to 7.6 magnitude. Plusses are several items included

you wouldn't normally expect to find; stick figure outlines of the constellations; overlapped charts.

Barrie also presented Heral Bnarbroff's sky atlas, which has six series of charts (bright objects; broad sky charts; B-series large swath of stars; charts with just stars with magnitude; main body of charts give lots of detail (down to magnitude 9).

Scope of the Month

Barrie Sawyer presented three eyepieces:

14mm Explorer Scientific: 100° field of view, which is a bit much—you have to roll your eye around to get everything. The wide field helps to find things, and is a plus when your scope is unguided.

31mm Nagler: Barrie uses this mainly with his 14.5" Obsession. It is great for finding things, but has a 7-8mm exit pupil. The views are very sharp. Recommended if price is not an issue.

Orion Stratus 5mm. This has a 68° field of view at 343X in a 15" scope. It is not as sharp as a 9mm Nagler; it isn't baffled as well.

In Barrie's opinion, anything over 68° has a diminishing rate of return.

Evening Presentation

Ted Blank gave an excellent update on the current status of the Cassini Mission to observe Saturn. We have learned a tremendous amount about the moons and rings of the planet. Ted presented some amazing images taken by the Cassini and Huygens spacecraft, including images of the surface of Titan that show a remarkably Earthlike topography.

The Bottom Line

Starting Balance:	\$6969.77
Deposits/Credits:	
Membership Renewals:	1140.00
New Memberships:	210.00
Donations:	311.95
Bank Interest:	2.76
Calendars:	133.00
Total :	1797.71
Accounts/Paid:	
United Site Services:	54.30
Kalmbach Publishing:	310.80

Rymes Propane:	145.33
Sir Speedy Printing:	300.00
Total:	1220.48
Net Account Balance:	\$7547.00
Petty cash drawer:	\$100.00
Cash Balance:	\$7647.00

Membership: 87

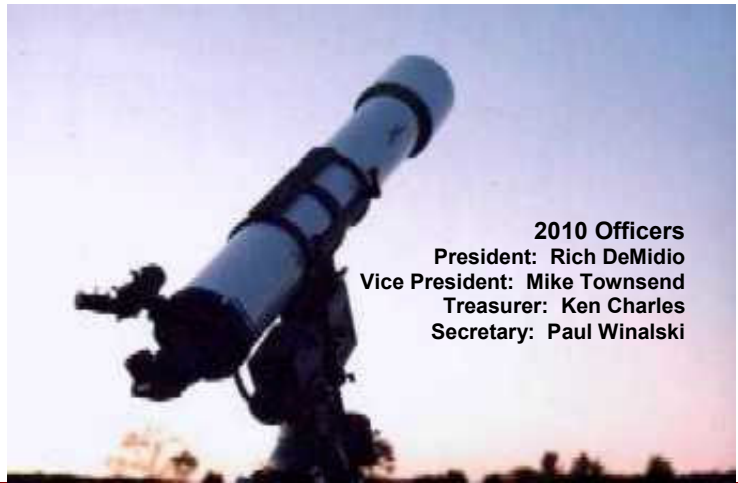
Donations:

Ed Ting (LTP)	50.00
Marc Stowbridge (LTP)	90.00
Tim Sagar	30.00
Dave Weaver (LTP)	100.00
Rich Schueller (LTP)	60.00
Paul & Carol Howard	40.00
Duncan Coolidge (LTP)	10.00
Miscellaneous	8.95
Total:	311.95

New Members:

Elsbeth Nichols, New Boston NH
John Cox, Nashua NH
Ralph Bennett, New London NH
Todd Kozkowski, New Boston NH
Chris Sullivan, Stratham NH
Richard Parker, Greenfield NH
J Duncan Coolidge, Andover NH

★ Ken Charles
 NHAS Treasurer 2010



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

DEADLINE January 2011 Issue: 5 PM January 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, Ken Charles, Ted Blank

New Hampshire Astronomical Society
P.O. Box 5823
Manchester, NH 03108-5823



NHAS Upcoming Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Broken Ground School Sky Watch	December 14	6:30 PM	SEE Science Center, Concord NH
Sandwich Central School Sky Watch	December 15	6:00 PM	Sandwich Central School, Sandwich NH
Nottingham West School Sky Watch	December 16	6:00 PM	10 Pelham Road, Hudson NH
NHAS Business Meeting	December 17	7:30 PM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH
Goffstown Sky Watch	December 29	6:00 PM	Goffstown, NH
Salem High School Sky Watch	January 6	7:00 PM	44 Geremonty Drive, Salem NH
Discovery Center Sky Watch	January 7	7:00 PM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH
Educational Outreach Committee Meeting	January 13	6:30 PM	Ralph Pill Building, 22 Bridge St, Concord NH
Sidewalk Astronomy	January 15	6:00 PM	Market Square, Portsmouth NH
NHAS Business Meeting	January 21	7:30 PM	St. Anselm College, Manchester NH
Discovery Center Sky Watch	February 4	7:00 PM	McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center, Concord NH