



# News from The Society- for Astronomical Sciences

Vol. 4, Number 3

## Planning stages for the 2007 Symposium Under- way

The planning stages for the upcoming 2007 Symposium are well underway. We have a commitment from Dr. Ron Kaitchuck to give our keynote address Thursday evening. Most of you will remember or even possess the book Ron wrote with Arne Henden on photometry. As in the past years we will also be having workshops on the Tuesday before the Symposium. We have two currently planned. Richard Berry has committed to give a workshop on the use of AIP4WIN in scientific applications. In addition we are planning a workshop on spectroscopy. This later one is currently in the planning stages but will include Gary Cole (historical perspective), Dale Mais (spectroscopy demonstration, where you will actually see lines form using a diffraction grating) and either or both Valerie Desnoux and Olivier Thizy giving software demonstrations on the use of Vspec (which Valerie wrote) in reducing actual spectra obtained with the SGS, DSS-7 and the new high resolution spectrometer being sold by the French group.

Important upcoming dates in 2007 are as follows:

- March 16: Abstracts for Symposium are due
- March 19: Acceptance notice
- April 20: Papers due for Proceedings

## Symposium Proceedings Available on ADS

By Brian D. Warner

The proceedings for the annual Symposium on Telescope Science have become quite a collection of technical and general interest papers, giving evidence to the level of work that SAS members, and amateurs in general, can and are doing. However, some might feel that publishing a paper in the Proceedings will not get much recognition or exposure beyond those who receive the Proceedings at the meeting or in the mail. That is no longer the case.

Last October, I met with representatives of the Astrophysical Data System (ADS), which is a joint project of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory and NASA. This service archives hundreds of thousands of scientific abstracts and even full articles. At that time, I got the details on how to include the Proceedings in the ADS with the result being that in mid-November, the abstracts from the 2006 Symposium were available on the ADS. The full papers have also been submitted and should be available in the near future (late 2006, early 2007). [Continued on pg 2](#)

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Dr. Ron Kaitchuck of Ball State University in Indiana has agreed to deliver the Keynote address at our 2007 Symposium. Many of us learned photometry through the book Arne and Ron published

### Committee:

- Lee Snyder — Co-Chairman
- Robert Stephens — Co-Chairman
- Robert Gill — Audio Visual Webmaster
- Dave Kenyon — Program Co-Chairman
- Dale Mais — Program Co-Chairman, Newsletter editor
- Brian Warner — Program Co-Chairman
- Jerry Foote — Program Co-Chairman

### Advisors:

- Arne Henden
- Dirk Terrell
- Alan Harris



*News from The Society  
for Astronomical  
Sciences*

## Call for Nominations for SAS Board of Directors

The time has come for the members of the SAS to place nominations for the SAS Board of Directors, whose term expire in June. There are seven members of the Board of Directors. They comprise the officers and committee who perform various functions to insure the continued functioning of the SAS and its annual Symposium. The terms are for three years.

So with that in mind, we are having a call for nominations for Boar Members. You may send your nominations to any-time up to the next Newsletter which will come out in late March, at which time, nominations will be closed. You can nominate yourself. The elections will take place at the 2007 Symposium.

### ADS, cont from page 1

What this means is that if you have a paper in the Proceedings, anyone can find the abstract and full paper, when available, by doing a search in the ADS on your name. Now the whole world is your audience, not just those who attend the meeting.

The ADS web site is at [http://adsabs.harvard.edu/ads\\_abstracts.html](http://adsabs.harvard.edu/ads_abstracts.html). The bibliographic code for the 2006 proceedings is 2006SASS. The Proceedings from 2002 through 2005 will be submitted late 2006 or early 2007 and should be available before next May's annual Symposium.

## Membership Information

*Membership in your new Society for Astronomical Sciences (SAS).*

As was pointed out with the last issue, it was felt that a modest membership fee would greatly help SAS to produce a better product for its members. This fee will be \$25.00 per year. What will this membership fee provide? Well for one thing it WILL NOT go to any committee members as part of their efforts within SAS. We volunteer our time for The Society.

Members will receive a discount for the registration fee each year for the Symposium at Big Bear. It will assure you that you will get a copy of the published proceedings each year, even if you do not attend the Symposium. It will help defray costs in bringing in outside speakers (professionals) to the symposium.

Membership is annual and runs from July to June of the following year. To become a member, send \$25 to: Society for Astronomical Sciences, 8300 Utica Avenue, Suite 105, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730. You may also join online at the registration page of the web site. Membership dues are tax deductible.

We currently have 82 members with many renewals due in by June 1.

The SAS is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.



## Your Participation Wanted!

As I have mentioned in previous Newsletters, we need your participation in the Newsletter. We don't want this to become a one person or just a couple person show. If you have an article which can cover a variety of topics, please put it together for a future Newsletter. Work in progress is always welcome. In addition, we have started a "letters to the Editor" section where we would like to add 2-3 letters from the members/participants. We had no letters to incorporate into this Newsletter edition. Constructive comments are always welcome as we are always looking for ways to improve not only the quality of the Newsletter but also the quality of the Symposium. We want the SAS to become a year around organization not just a once a year group.

### Okie-Tex Star Party Dale Mais

I had the opportunity to attend the Okie-Tex Star party in September. This event is held annually in the western tip of the Oklahoma panhandle and claims to have some of the darkest skies in the USA. With this I agree! It had been years since I had observed under such dark skies. Day events included talks and field trips to collect petrified wood and see dinosaur foot prints along ancient stream beds. We also got to observe numerous Indian petroglyphs. Pictures below show panoramic views of the site. The two flamingos are known as Okie and Tex. I plan to attend again next year!



## Lew Cook and Nick Dunckel

I suffer from "aperture fever." From a 3 inch Moonwatch telescope to an 8 inch, to a 17.5 inch mirror to one of the few 29 inch Coulter f/4.5 mirrors. In the mid-eighties I picked it up at the Coulter shop in Idyllwild, CA, after two years of waiting. Both the 17.5 and the 29 were mounted as a fork-on-disk equatorial mount, undriven, and used for visually observing AAVSO stars.



In my mind, the term "observatory" conjures up a dome, or at least a permanent building. I have neither. My California site, known as CBA Concord, has a blue tarp covering the telescope. I converted the mount to an English cradle mount that has a tripod at the North end and sits on a short platform. Tweaking the alignment consists of shimming the south pier and moving the tripod a minimal amount east or west. The optical configuration was changed to prime focus. This telescope can even image the North pole through obstructions, in contrast to most other English cradle mount telescopes.

I converted the 17 inch to an English cradle mount also. I tested it out at Concord before shipping it over to Hawaii, where the "observatory" is known as CBA Pahala. I shortened the legs of the tripod to accommodate it to the latitude there, and had the help of a friend, Roger Rittenhouse, proprietor of Moki's coffee farm in Kona, to jack up the south end of the framework. There we built an additional support for elevating the drive frame. In Pahala, we do have a roll-off building over the telescope when it is not in use, but a tarp covers the

telescope during the day when we are there.



Both telescopes are in use in cataclysmic variable studies of the Center for Backyard Astrophysics. Despite the difference in aperture, the performance of the two telescopes is quite similar, as the skies in isolated Pahala are much darker than in Concord, a San Francisco suburb.

Lew Cook, CBA Concord & CBA Pahala

<http://www.geocities.com/lcoo/cbacal.htm>

<http://www.geocities.com/lcoo/pahala.htm>

I designed this roll-off roof observatory to blend into the surroundings and not stand out. It contains a 12.5 inch telescope from RC Optical Systems on an Astrophysics 1200 mount. The location is about 700ft in altitude, far enough above the valley floor to permit fairly good seeing, especially in the Spring and Fall. Observing to the South, where I have a pretty clear view, permits me to evade the lights of the Bay Area.

I was retired when I conceived the observatory but shortly after it was completed I went back to work. Since I have continued working until recently, I have not used it as much as I had anticipated. However, I enjoy observing and processing the results and am looking forward to using the equipment to observe asteroids and other phenomena of interest.

Nick Dunckel

### Contact Information

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