

Notes from the UACNJ Board of Directors Meeting

February 3, 2007
at Jenny Jump

- The freeze alarm at the house proved its worth when it went off on January 31, 2007. Karl Hricko (AAI) and Gil Jeffer (NWJAA) received the call when the furnace shut down. Gil responded and was able to restart the furnace, averting a potential disaster!
- Diane Jeffer (NWJAA) created a revised public sign-in sheet based on a suggestion from Alan Midkiff (NWJAA) to include check boxes where visitors can indicate their interest in finding out more about the amateur astronomy clubs near them.
- The lawn mowers, tractor, weed-whackers and other maintenance equipment have been winterized.
- The Park was kind enough to help Observatory Chair, Gil Jeffer to further remove rocks and level the observing field, allowing for more parking areas for the upcoming 2007 public season.
- The UACNJ's website is now back up after having to switch providers (see article on other side).
- Sherwood Waggy (NWJAA) has agreed to become the UACNJ Light Pollution Committee Chair (see article at right).

Contribute to This Newsletter!

What's your club been up to you? Have events coming up? The Focus wants to hear from you! Contact Gordon Bond at:
tpoastro@yahoo.com

UACNJ's Meteorite Display Installed



Photo by Kevin Conod



Photo by Kevin Conod

by Gordon Bond (AAI)

The UACNJ's meteorite collection has been installed in a new display, taking the exhibits area a major step in its recovery from the flood which devastated it over two years ago.

Alan Witzgall (AAI) has kindly donated a number of meteorite specimens to the UACNJ, including samples believed to be from the Moon, Venus, Mars, the solar nebula and several asteroids. There is also a chunk of the Nantan, China fall of 1516. Al was instrumental in providing technical advice and proofreading for the display text.

Gordon Bond (AAI) designed the display and produced the graphics.



Photo by Gordon Bond

Al Zuckerman (AAI) designed and installed the interior lights inside of the case.

The three-dimensional display boards mounted above the case and around the room were donated by

Kevin Conod (NJAG) from a previous exhibit at the Newark Museum. Kevin is the Director of the Dreyfuss Planetarium there.

Kevin Conod, Dale Gary (AAI, NJIT), Warren Westura (SHAA) and Mike Colonna (NWJAA) further cleaned up the displays area, making it ready for the opening of the public season.

Sherwood Waggy New Light Pollution Chair & IES Meeting

Sherwood Waggy (NWJAA) has volunteered to serve as the UACNJ's new Light Pollution Committee Chair.

The Illuminating Engineering Society of New Jersey has contacted the UACNJ, expressing an interest to work with us on the issue of light pollution.

A fruitful meeting was held with the

Illuminating Engineering Society of NJ on March 20, 2007 in Eatontown, NJ. John Batinsey gave an interesting talk on Eatontown's highly successful light pollution ordinance which has been in place since 1993. The UACNJ looks forward to working with IES-NJ in the future to improve lighting and reduce waste.

UACNJ Website Back Up

Members who tried to access the UACNJ website recently found the site unavailable due to a miscommunication with the hosting company regarding our account. Due to a rate hike, it was decided that a new host should be found.

Kevin Conod (NJAG) reported at the February 3, 2007 Board of Directors meeting that he had successfully switched over our site to GoDaddy.com on the recommendation of Barry Malpas. The new host costs just \$3.59 per month for 5 GB of space.

Alias email addresses that will automatically forward email to officers' and committee chairs' personal

emails have been established. Any committees who would like an email alias should contact Kevin at Web@uacnj.org.

Three members currently have access to edit the site, Barry Malpas (AAI), Kevin Conod (NJAG) and Ed Carlos (AAI). The "UACNJ Notebook" page needs to be updated with the events planned for 2007. If your club has an event you would like included, contact Web@uacnj.org.

The overall site is in need of reorganization and we are looking for suggestions for improving its content and ease of use.

The UACNJ's site remains available at www.uacnj.org.

Monitors Donated to UACNJ

Gil Jeffer (NWJAA) helped to facilitate the donation of twelve NEC Multisync 1560V+ LCD monitors and three Ergotron stands by Kevin Hall of Hadrian Partners of New York, NY.

These monitors will be used along with the computer network Gil is installing and may have applications in later display installations.

UACNJ Telescope Making Course

Jim Norton (NWJAA) is offering the UACNJ's first telescope making seminar at Jenny Jump. Meetings will be at 7:30 PM on Fridays beginning May 18th, 2007.

Each participant can determine his/her own project, but an 8-inch Dobsonian will be the central focus. Anyone who has begun but abandoned their project is also encouraged to renew their efforts with us.

The twelve week program includes, project selection, mirror, and mounts.

See UACNJ web page, or Email norton@optonline.net

Nantan Meteorites for Sale as UACNJ Fundraiser

In May of 1516, a nickel-iron octahedrite meteor broke up over the village of Nantan, China, leaving a strewn field some 17 miles long and 5 miles wide. It was described at the time that "stars fell from the northwest direction, five to six fold long, waving like snakes and dragons. They were as bright as lightning and disappeared in seconds."

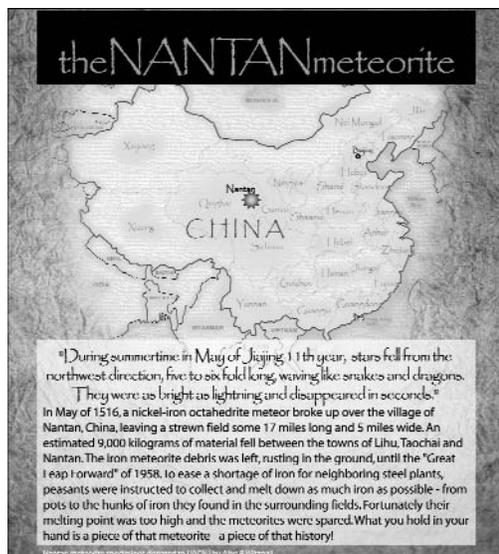
An estimated 9,000 kilograms of material fell between the towns of Lihu, Taochai and Nantan. The iron meteorite debris was left rusting in the ground until the

"Great Leap Forward" of 1958. To ease a shortage of iron for neighboring steel plants, peasants were instructed to collect and melt down as

much iron as possible - from pots to the hunks of iron they found in the surrounding fields. Fortunately their melting point was too high and the meteorites were spared.

Al Witzgall (AAI) was kind enough to donate a nice size piece of one of these meteorites for the UACNJ's display. Since this iron meteorite is naturally rusting and flaking, it was suggested that we collect the pieces and package them for sale to the general public - a chance to take home their own genuine meteorite!

Gordon Bond (AAI) designed and assembled twenty packages that will be on sale at the sales desk at Jenny Jump for the new public season at \$5.00 a piece.



2007 UACNJ Officers

The following Officers were nominated and confirmed at the February 3, 2007 Board of Directors Meeting to serve for 2007:

President

Karl Hricko (AAI)

Vice President

Dale Gary (AAI)

Treasurer

Diane Jeffer (NWJAA)

Recording Secretary

Gordon Bond (AAI)

Trustee

Warren Westura (SHAA)