

KAA Monthly Business Meeting Summary
Friday July 17, 2026

Location: Sullivan observatory
Time: 7pm to 9:30pm

Present: Susan Rolke, Ed Lotkowski, Jeff Luebkmann, Eric Meijers, and Bob Taylor.

Secretary's Report: The June business meeting minutes were accepted as submitted.

Upcoming events:

- * Our next business meeting was scheduled for Friday August 7th at 7pm at the Sullivan observatory followed by observing, weather permitting, however several members will not be available so it has been rescheduled for Friday August 21st.
- 8 The Stellafane Convention is Thursday August 13th thru 16th in Springfield, VT.

Old Business:

- * Observatory work items needing to be completed is the replacement of the rotted sill plate at the observatory entrance, removal of the remaining trees on the south barrier, painting a second coat of paint on the observatory trim, fixing the roof nail leak on the west side, removing a couple of rocks and a tree root from the driveway and filling in some low spots in the driveway with dirt from the south side dirt mound. **The south barrier trees have been removed or lowered. Bob to contact Dan to finish the observatory work and the rock and root removal to be looked at at our July meeting.**
- * Bob submitted the 2026 business and observing schedule, which will be attached to this report. **Bob has updated the missing convention dates and will be submitted in the report.**
- * Susan Rolke recently started an astronomy face book page titled "Keene Astronomy" and to date has 100 followers. She is going to have it linked to our website so we can also receive the latest astronomy news. **The link is missing to the website and Susan will check into what needs to be done to make it happen.**
- * Junie Esslinger feels the 15" Obsession Telescope is only performing at a 13" level. Therefore we will be gathering information Junie has requested so he can determine how to advise us as to what corrections or modification are needed to achieve the 15" design, if he feels it's possible. **Jeff and Bob determined the focal length to be 66" vs the calculated length of 67.5". Junie indicated based on this finding he will need to do a Ray Trace to determine if a larger secondary mirror is required or the primary mirror needs to be moved closer to the secondary. Note: the primary mirror was reconfigured by the factory after it was determined by Junie that it was warped.**

Old Business, continued

- * In an effort to consolidate all our archival material in one place so it's accessible to all members the Observatory is the logical location, but how to store them safely from critters and the elements is the next question. We first need to determine how much needs to be stored and then determine a containment system for it. **Bob has contacted Junie to see how much material he has and Junie will contact Bob when he has it ready to submit. Once all the archival material has been gathered it needs to be sorted and a master list of the items in the container generated so members will know what material is available and be able to quickly locate the item(s). Bob has brought a plastic bin to store the material, but there are concerns that rats or mice might chew through it. Therefore we are going to try and find a more secure container for the archive material. There are also concerns about the material getting musty and moldy. A couple of members have books they would like to donate to the club. At this time we do not have a place for them.**
- * Susan Rolke gave her Chile talk at the Moore Free Library in Newfane, VT on Thursday June 25th at 7pm. **Her talk was very successful with great attendance and audience participation. The library has request KAA to conduct an observing session in October.**
- * Susan has submitted the July newsletter, which lists a number Messier and NGC objects to view this month and a list of up coming astronomy retreat conventions and a look at the Tropical Solstice Shadows. Check out also the monthly "What's UP" video for the July night sky., which features detailed July sky maps to help guide you to these objects. Susan is requesting everyone to send in any observing photo's you have taken recently and/or an astronomy topic you found interesting or a topic you would like to know more about, please send them to her at "susanrbr@hotmail.com"
- * It was decided to purchase a new mount rather than trying to find a pinion gear to match the clock drive for the 4 ½" telescope. Jeff Luebke to look into purchasing the mount possibly from "Cloudy Nights". Other suppliers are listed on our website if that supplier does not have one. **Jeff has come up empty finding a new mount so far. The gear we need has to fit a tapered shaft of 0.2: to 0.23" that is ½" long. The number of teeth required has not been determined at this time. Once that is determined it may be possible to have it 3D printed.**
- * Jeff Luebke to contact Cole Mills to set up a time to help him set up his new Celestron SE 6 telescope.
- * It was decided to make a designated spot on our website for the Seestar S50 photo's titled "Seestar S50 photo Gallery"
- * The Taft Hill Farm in W. Townshend, VT has an observatory, which has an 8 ½' refactor telescope built in 1860 by Thomas Cooke in England, which is now available to the public for observing for \$45.00/person. To guarantee clear sky viewing the owner will accommodate last minute viewing requests. Contact Robert Dugrenier at 845-630-3556 to make an appointment.

New Business

- * Susan has submitted the July newsletter, which lists a number of up coming astronomy retreat conventions. Check out also the monthly “What’s UP” video for the July sky., which features the summer triangle, the northern cross and much more as well as detailed July sky maps to help guide you to these objects. Susan is requesting everyone to send in any observing photo’s you have taken recently and/or an astronomy topic you found interesting or a topic you would like to know more about, please send them to her at “susanrbr@hotmail.com”
- * An observing session at the Frost Free Library in Marlborough, NH will take place Monday September 14th at 7pm with a rain date the next evening.
- * An observing session will take place for the Moore Free Library in Newfane, VT in October. No date has been set yet.
- * Possible observing session with the 4H club in the fall.
- * Katelyn Brooks will be using our loaner 4 ½” equatorial mount telescope to get familiar with operating a telescope and finding objects in the night sky. Jeff and Bob will provide training on the use of the telescope during the last week of July.
- * Thank you Mike Books for mowing the observatory field before our meeting. It really looks great.
- * Bob to contact Amy at the Keene Public library about the International Moon event September 19th at the Ashuelet Park.
- * Bob presented a couple of astronomy news items. One on the 10,000LY distance our solar system traveled from near the center of our Galaxy to our present location, Reflect Orbital’s space mirror project to light up the night sky and a sun shield called the “Storm Wall” to block dangerous CME’s heading toward earth.
- * Several members of Jeff’s family arrived just in time to enjoy an evening of observing.