

KAA Monthly Business Meeting Summary
Friday October 23, 2026

Location: Keene State College
Time: 7pm to 8:30pm

Present: Jeff Luebke, Susan Rolke, Ed Lotkowski, Bruce Norlund, Nathan and Dominic Heath, George Masters, Muriel and Bob Taylor.

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

Upcoming events:

- * The November business meeting has been Canceled. The next business meeting is now scheduled for December 4th at 7pm at Bruce Norlunds home at 267 Gilsum St. Keene. An observing session is scheduled for Saturday November 14th at 7pm at the Sullivan observatory, weather permitting.
- * Erik Schmitt will be conducting an observing session November 11th at 57 Emerson Brook Drive in Gilsum with a rain backup of his talk on the "Edge of the Universe". Bob tried to get to the location but found the road too difficult for him to drive on and turned around when the dirt road turned to gravel. This event was a request from Valarie who owns the building where the event is to take place, whom we met at the Frost Free Library event.

Old Business:

- * An observing session at the Frost Free Library in Marlborough, NH took place Monday September 14th at 7pm.. **Under clear skies on the 14th there were 8 people in attendance to view through 4 Newtonian reflector telescopes and one deep space smart telescope to look at the crescent moon, the Hercules cluster, the dumbbell nebulae and double stars.**
- * The International Moon event September 19th took place from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at the Ashuelot Park in Keene, which is Hosted by the KPL and Co Hosted by KAA. **The library set up a crafts table and it's 4.5" reflector telescope and Susan Rolke setup her 8" reflector tracking telescope. Under in and out thin clouds to view the moon there were a dozen people in attendance, with 75% of them being kids that really enjoyed the astronomy crafts table and were surprised to see the moons has creators and how big the moon looked through telescopes.**
- * An observing session took place for the Moore Free Library in Newfane, VT Sunday October 18th from 7pm to 8:30pm at the top of Cemetery Hill Rd, in Newfane, VT. **The event was a huge success with 20 plus attendees to look through 3 big mirror telescopes ranging in size from 10" to 12" to look at the Moon, Saturn, the Andromeda Galaxy, the Hercules Cluster, the Dumbell Nebulae and double stars. A deep space smart telescope was also in operation to view star clusters and nebulae on your cell phone and then record the object**
- * Jeff Luebke to contact Cole Mills to set up a time to help him set up his new Celestron SE 6 telescope

Old Business, continued:

- * Observatory work items needing to be completed is the replacement of the rotted sill plate at the observatory entrance, 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. addition **After the 4" of rain we received in July Bob found 4 additional roof leaks and that the north west corner has leaked again causing carpenter ant problems. Bob to contact Dan to finish the observatory work. Bob met with Dan during a rain storm and he figured out where the corner leak is coming from and will fix it. Dan will finish the observatory work as his work load permits. The big tree branch that fell in the entrance of the driveway was removed by Mike to the field, which we need to cut up and discard sometime.**
- * 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 peimary 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.**
- * 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.**

New Business:

- * Susan has submitted the October newsletter, which has a really great detailed article about the Milankovitch Cycle. There is a lists of Messier and NGC objects to view this month and a list of up coming astronomy conventions. Check out also the monthly "What's UP" video for the October night sky and Susan's detailed October 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"**
- * KAA wants to welcome our newest member George Masters.
- * The election of officers took place and the results are as follows: Bob Taylor president, Susan Rolke Vice President, Bruce Norlund Secretary and Ed Lotkowski Treasurer.

New Business, continued,

- * Our next work session was scheduled for October 24th from 9am to noon at the observatory, which was canceled. **The next work session will be next spring.**
- * Jeff Luebke gave a detailed report on the huge gift the club received of telescopes, eye pieces and many other astronomy equipment from Alan Rushmore in Hinsdale, NH.
- * Erik Schmitt informed Bob that our club now has access to the Dublin School as Erik's top student when he was teaching there is now the director of the observatory.
- * Gail Zackeria, who was the events director at the Keene Public Library is now the Director of the Vernon Library in Vermont and is looking to have astronomy events at the library. Bob indicated to her that Vernon was out of our club range, so he gave her Erik's Schmitt's contact information as he lives in Brattleboro, VT.
- * Bob gave a short report on reflecting mirrors a company in CA is scheduled to put in space next year to reflect sun light back to earth at night. They want to put up 36,000 of them. Bob also mentioned one of Russia's spy satellites coming within 300 meters of a starlink satellite for monitoring ground conditions for Ukraine. Bob also mentioned on October 23rd and 24th Venus would be at Inferior Conjunction with only 0.7% of Venus visible, and warned that looking at it through a telescope could blind you.
- * October is the end of KAA's fiscal year, which means the 2027 dues are now due at this time. They are the same as last year as indicated below.
- * Single/family membership - \$20.00.
Single/family membership including the Astronomical League membership is \$29.00.
The AL membership allows you to receive awards (certificate and pin) for completing an astronomy program and to receive their quarterly "Reflector Magazine".

Please make checks out to the "Keene Amateur Astronomers, Inc."

Please mail to:

Ed Lotkowski

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