

Fairfield County Astronomical Society



STAMFORD MUSEUM AND NATURE CENTER • 39 SCOFIELDTOWN ROAD • STAMFORD, CONN. 06903

www.Stamford-Observatory.com

MEETING NOTICE

The public is invited to attend.

Date: Tuesday May 12, 2009

Time: 8:00 pm

Place: Stamford Observatory

8:00 pm Brief business meeting. **This is our Annual Meeting, bringing elections. The slate is included in the Minutes, attached.**

8:15 pm Our new member Gordon Myers will tell us all about Comet Holmes. In October 2007 the comet astonished astronomers by brightening overnight by over 13 magnitudes! That is over 200,000 times! The comet has a unique history, having been discovered in 1892, and since then it has been “rediscovered” several times and missed on other returns. It has had one other strange brightening episode. Using a remote telescope in New Mexico to make the observations, Gordon took photos of the comet over a two month period when it was at its brightest. The presentation will discuss the comet’s history, and discuss theories of the cause of the unusual brightenings.

Refreshments will be available.

If the weather is clear we may get in some observing after the meeting. Saturn has returned to the evening sky. with the rings nearly edge-on – a rare sight.

SPECIAL NOTE: The Museum is seeking closer ties with us, and is requesting that we return to a practice we had many years ago, of keeping the Observatory open the afternoons of their special events such as Spring on the Farm (Due on May 17th) and possibly every Sunday. We will need volunteers! Here is your chance to learn how to use the 22-inch telescope to view the Sun. If you can help out, but won't be at the meeting Tuesday please send an email to me.

NOTE: This year's Convention of the Astronomical League will be held at Hofstra University, in Hempstead, Long Island, NY. Dates are August 7 & 8. Check out the details at: www.alcon2009.org.

Minutes of the Tuesday April 14th, 2009 Meeting of the FCAS

Business Meeting:

In the absence of the Secretary the President will again write the minutes:

I called the meeting to order at 8PM, after calling John Griese on a newly installed Speaker Phone. We could hear him very well and he contributed several comments during the meeting. I made announcements of a couple of lectures in the next few days, one at the local UConn branch, and one at Wesleyan Univ. I also mentioned the upcoming NEAF meeting in Suffern, NY and later the ALCON 2009 Convention in Hempstead, NY which was announced in the April Meeting Notice.

I noted that the telescope display on the ground floor was supposed to be finished this week or next, depending on Museum staff time available. The four photos that are to be mounted on the walls were on display next to the telescope case. The large planisphere has been mounted on the rear wall of our auditorium, but much too low. A table in front of it could be pushed against it and cause damage. Similarly, chairs either set up to sit in, or leaned against it for storage could damage it. The Museum is supposed to also correct this.

Two new members submitted applications which were handed over to Treasurer Nick Gallo. Nick will be resigning next month and handing over the duties to Mark Marcus. Nick reported a bank balance on hand of \$2,135.27, to which I commented that it was the largest balance we had ever had, and Mark Marcus commented that due to inflation it was about the same as we had 30 years ago when we limped along with about \$700.

I noted that, at long last, the Museum had agreed to start paying me in answer to my plea which I had mentioned back in January. They will be inviting me and other officers or Board Members to meet with their Finance committee to discuss the situation and to initiate further cooperation between the FCAS and the Museum.

Since we were clouded out on our proposed dates in early April, we had missed having any open house for 3 weeks. In spite of the poor weather there were 4 visitors, all from the Magnet School now occupying the old UConn campus further up Scofieldtown Rd.

The following slate is to be elected at the next meeting:

President	Charles Scovil
Vice Pres.	John Griese
Treasurer	Julius "Mark" Marcus
Secretary	Bill Bambrick
Board members	Martin Hamar
	Bob Meadows
	Howard Nusbaum
	Gil Weingarten

Main Program:

The evening's program was viewed on the large TV set since there was a problem with the LCD projector, which would not accept the video signal from the VCR. There were several favorable comments from the group after the showing. The group finally included 13 members and 1 visitor, plus John Griese by phone.

The meeting was adjourned at ~ 9:45 PM. Refreshments were served.

The weather was poor so no observing was possible.