

Newsletter of
The Black River Astronomical Society

Guidescope

Lorain County, Ohio
Website: blackriverastro.org

November 2016
Newsletter submissions: [Editor](#)

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- Wednesday, November 2, 7 p.m.: Regular meeting, Carlisle Visitors Center. Program: "Amateur Telescope Making and Astronomy: My 50 years of Astronomical Fun" by Diane Lucas
 - Friday, November 4, 7-9 p.m.: Public observing, Nielsen Observatory (cloud backup date November 5)
 - Thursday, November 10, 7 p.m.: Board Meeting, Blue Sky Restaurant, Amherst
 - Friday, November 18, 7-9 p.m.: Public observing, Nielsen Observatory (cloud backup date Saturday, November 19)
 - Friday, December 2, 7-9 p.m.: Public observing, Nielsen Observatory (cloud backup date Saturday, December 3)
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Visit Our Website

Explore if you will the informative BRAS [website](#) and all its interesting, timely [links](#), and join the interactive members-only [BRAS Forum](#) to better keep in touch.

Diane Lucas and her November 2nd Presentation

Diane's presentation, "Amateur Telescope Making and Astronomy: My 50 years of Astronomical Fun" will cover Diane's activities in astronomy since she was in college, including lots of photos of her 'scopes and her observatory, info about variable star observing, radio observation of sudden ionospheric disturbances, and a bit of her botany studies. Diane has co-authored books on telescope making, testing, and design, has won awards at Stellafane for her telescopes, has contributed thousands of variable star observations to the AAVSO, and is one of the original members of the Black River Astronomical Society.



Diane H. Lucas, Wellington, OH, with the Porter folded refractor at the 1974 Stellafane Convention.
Photo from the Stellafane Archives by Walter Scott Houston

BOARD SUMMARY

October 13, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. with nine directors present. Secretary Bill Ruth presented the minutes of the September meeting that were approved as was Treasurer Dan Walker's report. Committee reports followed with the *Guidescope* stated as status quo by editor Bill Ruth. The Website committee head, Lee Lumpkin, reported that he had added a small blurb about the upcoming visit to the NASA Plum Brook facility. Under Instrumentation, John Reising reported on the recently donated 16" Newtonian and Jeff Walsh discussed the 8" Dob that was also recently donated. The 8" appears in excellent shape and Jeff will bring it to the Nielsen for our next observing session. The 16" is at John Reising's house where he will install a 2" focuser that he is donating and he will also install the secondary mirror and start putting together the equatorial mount and encoders. The OTAA committee head reported that our OTAA convention for 2017 is tentatively set for Sept. 16th. We will check on other large star parties such as Hidden Hollow, Black Forest, and Cherry Springs, and we will also communicate our date to the other clubs so as not to conflict with each other. (Update: here are the dates we have so far: Cherry Springs June 22-25, MVAS Aug. 12, CAA Aug. 19, BRAS Sept. 16, Black Forest Sept. 22.) The Metro Parks Liaison had no report.

Programming was next discussed, and the list appears below:

Nov. Center	Diane Lucas	ATM and Astronomy	Carlisle Visitors
Dec. Creek	Everyone	Christmas Party and pot luck	Amherst Beaver
Jan.	Greg Zmina	Astronomy video	Carlisle
Feb.	Dave Lengyel	Using the Sky and Telescope Sky Almanac (tentative)	Carlisle
Mar.	John Reising	Messier Marathon	TBD.

The rest of the year is open. Any club member who is interested in producing a program should contact Steve Schauer (BRASPres@gmail.com) or any Board Member.

Next came Old Business with Schauer reminding the Board that our last solar observing session of the year was Sunday Oct. 16th from noon to 4:00 at Sandy Ridge. He also mentioned that next year we will do solar observing starting at 1:00 rather than noon.

The Diane Lucas presentation at our November General Meeting was discussed next. To accommodate this program, we are going to skip doing a constellation of the month, the astronomy news of the month and the observers calendar. Members should note that we are in the larger meeting room at Carlisle for this meeting. This room (the Firelands Room) is at the end of the hall from our usual room. Lee is going to record Diane's talk and is working on a remote mic for her as well as the best place to position the camera. We plan to put this video on our website.

Next Schauer thanked Lee Lumpkin for presiding over the November elections and for giving the presentation. Schauer next reported that the Telrad finder and the four thumb screws that we ordered from Scope Stuff have arrived. Finally arrangements have been made to pick up the 6" f8 telescope that has been donated to us, on Oct. 25th at 2:00. Jeff Walsh was kind enough to volunteer to pick it up.

Under New Business, Schauer reported an email contact from the Planets Foundation. This is an organization that is trying to find extraterrestrial life by studying the atmospheres of exoplanets. They want to construct several large telescopes for this purpose. This is an organization administrated by several universities and they get most of their funding from government grants. To supplement this income, they are also trying to crowdsource and are contacting astronomy clubs nationwide. The Board decided not to donate to this cause.

The last item of new business was a discussion of housing the newly donated 16" Newtonian telescope. The tube is very heavy and when attached to its equatorial cradle mount, it is difficult to remove. The mount is 32" wide and the doors to the observatory are 33" wide so moving the scope in and out would be very difficult with a real chance of damage if the tube or mount are bumped. At the same time, the scope is so large that using it inside will be difficult as there simply isn't room. Thus, the Board is considering constructing a building next to the current observatory to house the 16" and to also store several of the other scopes currently housed in the Nielsen. A series of measurements of the observatory area will be made and a CAD drawing will be created to show possible locations for this building to ensure that it doesn't impede sight lines for the scopes in the building or block views from the pads outside. Once this is done, we will contact the Metro Parks for permission to build the building and to inquire if they would provide a concrete pad for said building.

Dates for November were set, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

~Steve Schauer



After appearing to go behind the Sun for a while, Jupiter has emerged as a morning planet. Mercury was at its best early October, and is now getting lower in the early morning sky. I took this photo the morning of October 14. Jupiter is higher up, and Mercury is only about one degree above the horizon in this image, almost directly above the artificial light below the tree line. It was a very clear, frosty morning.

~Dave Lengyel

6 Foot Fiberglas Dome on Offer

There is a 6 foot diameter gel-coated Fiberglas dome available locally for pick-up. It's a Technical Innovations HD6, dome-only designed to place on top of a wall of your own construction. It is very well made, and appears to have all parts for motorized rotation and operation of a 30 inch wide shutter that opens 12 inches past the zenith. The dome is in parts (the ring will need to be disassembled with 6 bolts) and could be hauled by pick-up or van in one or two runs. Information can be found at:

http://www.homedome.com/store/product_6ft_%20domes.htm

and

<http://www.homedome.com/documents/hd6.pdf>

Please contact Lee Lumpkin at llumpkin@gmail.com if you have a serious interest in this dome. It is offered for pick-up at no charge. However, this is offered by the same person who donated the Meade 16" Newtonian and EQ mount to BRAS, and was purchased by her late husband, who was unable to put it to use before his death. Please don't take it if your only goal is to sell it at a profit. If you do take it, it would be nice to offer some reasonable compensation. Depending on circumstances, I might be willing to help with hauling the dome to your location. ~Lee Lumpkin

