

Harford County Astronomical Society

Bel Air, Maryland
www.harfordastro.org



Volume 32 Issue 5

May 2006

General Meeting: Saturday, May 13, 2006 7:30pm (19:30)

John Dobson Visits HCAS, May 3, 2006

Public Star Party (Open House), June 3, 2006 at dusk

Club Calendar for 2006:

Meeting Night

June 10, 2006
July 8, 2006
August 12, 2006
September 9, 2006
October 7, 2006
November 4, 2006
December 2, 2006

Open House/Public Star Party

June 3, 2006
July 1, 2006
August 5, 2006
September 2, 2006
October 28, 2006
November 25, 2006
December 30, 2006

Meeting time is 19:30 (7:30pm) unless noted otherwise. Dates and times are taken from the HCAS website.
Please check the website for possible schedule updates and changes.

<http://www.harfordastro.org>

Check the HCAS website for other club events.

Treasurer's Report for May, 2006:

Balance after disbursements and income: \$5,121.40

Income (membership):	\$140.15	
Disbursements:	\$200.00	Dobson Honorarium
	\$17.75	Postage for Dobson event
	\$67.70	HCAS archive supplies

Minutes of the May 13, 2006 HCAS Meeting:

1. President Monroe Harden opened the meeting at 7:45 PM. The April meeting minutes were published in the newsletter, and they were approved as printed.

2. Treasurer: No report.

3. Observatory operations: The club sponsored an open house on Astronomy Day, May 6th. This included the observatory. Only a few people attended the event. There were many other community events that day, such as the Havre de Grace Decoy Festival, so many potential visitors may have been unable to come.

4. Outreach:

a. Tom Rusek reported that he gave a presentation to a group of scouts on Sunday, April 23rd. He said it was well received.

b. About 40-45 people attended the club's open house observing session on May 6th. The weather was nice and several telescopes and binoculars were available for the guests to use.

5. Old business:

a. The John Dobson visit on May 3rd went well. About 20 people attended the morning lecture at HCC. The club then took him to lunch, and afterwards they came back to the observatory for more discussions. Joe Manning provided Mr Dobson's transportation, and the club paid him a \$200 honorarium. Several attendees said they would write up a more detailed account of the visit as a newsletter article.

b. Due to problems obtaining the mailing list, the ballot mailing for this year's elections was postponed a month. The ballots will be mailed out later this week. Irv Koplovitz withdrew his name from nomination as secretary, and Monroe Harden nominated himself for that office.

6. New business:

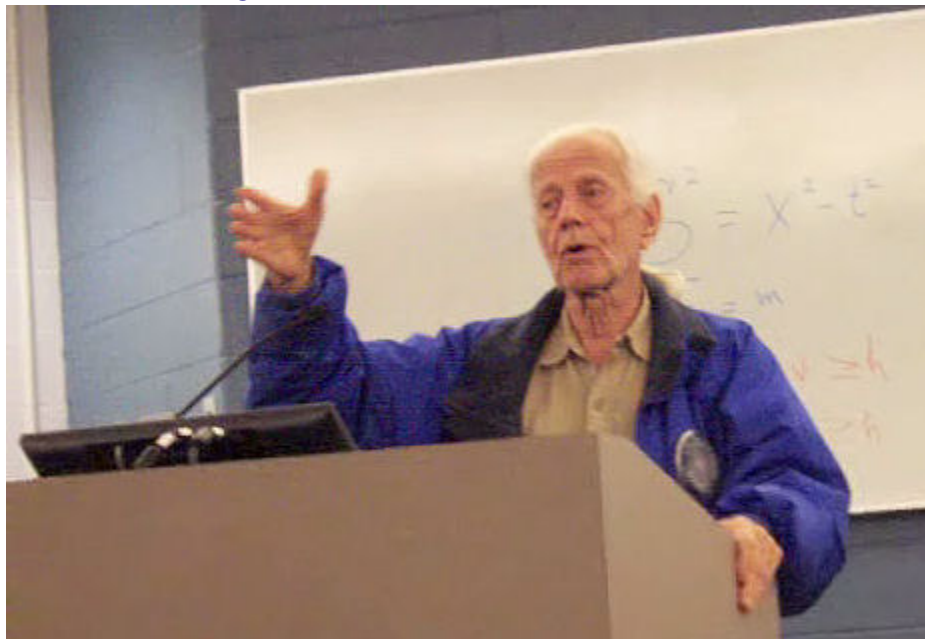
a. Tim Kamel placed a \$20 bid on the 6 inch f10.4 reflector OTA and a \$5 bid on the 8x50 Celestron finder in the classroom closet. The club voted to announce this in the next newsletter, and if no higher bids are received by the next meeting, Tim would be able to purchase these items at this price.

b. The VCR in the classroom was found to be defective during the John Dobson visit. Tom Rusek agreed to contact Sal Rodano to see if the school could replace it with one that works, along with a DVD player. If he is not able to do this, we will vote on purchasing these items with club funds.

7. The next open house (public observing session) will be on June 3rd at the Harford Tech High School parking lot. The next club general meeting is on June 10th.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

John Dobson Visits HCAS



The famed astronomer, telescope-maker and inventor of the Dobson mount spoke with members of HCAS on Wednesday, May 3, at Harford County Community College. The main topic of Mr. Dobson's presentation was cosmology, in which he resolutely expressed his doubts about the Big Bang theory of the universe's creation. Needless to say, this elicited many questions from the audience of 40.

Dobson's career in astronomy began during the 1950s while he was a monk at the Vedanta Monastery in San Francisco. A government employee during World War II, John had become interested in Eastern mysticism and joined the monastery in 1945. His job there was to reconcile the teachings of religion with science, or more specifically astronomy. It was at this time that he made his first telescope from a glass porthole, grinding it into a parabolic mirror. (He even prepared his own jeweler's polish, thanks to his degree in chemistry.)

By 1968, he had made dozens of telescopes and had taught others to do so as well. The monks, however, had become angered with the time he had spent doing this "hobby" and expelled him from the monastery. Initially distraught over the monks' decision, Dobson founded his own organization, the *Sidewalk Astronomers*, which has become nationwide. For almost 40 years, he has travelled the world with his telescopes, from state parks to Indian reservations, from Liverpool to Irkutsk.



Dobson at HCAS Observatory.

Dobson (cont.)

To learn more about John Dobson, visit his web site at:

<http://www.johndobson.org/jarticles.html>

To learn about the Sidewalk Astronomers, visit:

<http://sidewalkastronomers.com/>

Editor's Comment:

By way of introduction, I'd like to say that I'm the new editor of the newsletter, and am also a new member, having joined HCAS in March. Astronomy and telescopes have been a lifelong interest of mine, even if I haven't always been "focused". This year, I was able to leave the bright skies of the city and move to Harford County where I can see the Milky Way for the first time in decades. I have recently retired from the computer industry and am active with the Cornell Club of Maryland.

....Roy Troxel

Classifieds:

I need to thin my telescope collection a bit and offer the following for sale. I used each of them for many years but not recently. They would be happier gathering photons under a dark sky than dust in my basement.

No, I am not getting out of astronomy. I still have scopes which I do use when the sky permits.

1. OTA

Criterion Dynascope 8" f-8 Newtonian (RV-8)

SOLD

2. OTA

Celestron C-11 (11" f-10 SCT), circa 1986, ribbed back with crinkle finish.

SOLD

3. Complete scope and mount, ready to use.

6" f-6 Edmund Scientific Newtonian, red tube, circa 1975

Massive cast aluminum tripod mount, motorized.

JMI focuser, curved vane spider with enhanced 18% diagonal, original diagonal and cell.

No diffraction spikes, very good planetary and double star performance. I completed the Messier list with this scope.

\$250.00 pickup

4. OTA

Celestron "Cometron" 60mm refractor.

Good, small refractor starter scope. PVC tube, 0.965 focuser with hybrid 0.965"/1-1/4" diagonal to accept 1-1/4" eyepieces.

Lucy photographed the Venus transit with a similar scope a couple of years ago.

\$35.00 pickup

If anything interests you, please call me at 410-561-0973 or e-mail at izar21093@verizon.net

Thanks for looking.

Bill Geertsen

Classifieds:(cont.)

HCAS currently has two items up for auction:

1. A 6" f/10.4 reflector OTA with equatorial mount. *Current Bid: \$20.00*



2. An 8 x 50 celestron finder. *Current Bid: \$5.00*



To make your bid, please contact Mark Kregel at markd@kregel.net or Grace Wyatt at dgracew@comcast.net

There are mail restrictions (number of pages) on the snail-mail version. To get the most out of your Astro Views, you are encouraged to subscribe to the e-mail version. This is easily done by contacting Roy Troxel at rtroxel@comcast.net.

Astro Views is the official publication of the Harford County Astronomical Society, P.O. Box 906, Bel Air, MD 21014. For the year 2005 any items for publication in any issue are due to the editor by the 15th of the preceding month. Please send all contributions (electronic format is STRONGLY encouraged) to Roy Troxel at [:rtroxel@comcast.net](mailto:rtroxel@comcast.net), regular mail at: 301 Tiree Court #403, Abingdon, MD 21009. Permission is not necessary for non-profit use of this material, although proper acknowledgement is required. Address changes should be brought to the attention of the editor at the address given above.

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HARFORD COUNTY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 906
Bel Air, MD 21014

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