Minutes of the 94th Spring Meeting of the AAVSO, Held March 25–26, 2005, Las Cruces, New Mexico

Gary Walker
179 South Main Street, Sherborn, MA 01770

The 94th Spring Meeting of the AAVSO was held in Las Cruces, New Mexico, March 25–26, 2005, at New Mexico State University. Our hosts were Dr. Tom Harrison and Astronomy Department colleagues.

The meeting was immediately preceded by the Third High-Energy Astrophysics Workshop for Amateur Astronomers, March 20–23, also held at New Mexico State University, and sponsored by the AAVSO, New Mexico State University, NASA's Swift and GLAST missions, Sonoma State University, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, and the Curry Foundation. The workshop was opened by President William G. Dillon. Arne A. Henden, the new AAVSO Director, gave a Welcome to all. A broad array of talks and workshops on high energy objects, data analysis, and photometry by experts in the fields followed over the three days, and many excellent papers were presented. Most of the presentations and papers are posted on the AAVSO website. Evening talks on "Pueblo Indian Skywatching" and "Seven Ways a Black Hole Can Kill You" were enjoyed by attendees and the public, as was a Wednesday night star party with the Astronomical Society of Las Cruces (ASLC). Over fifty observers attended the workshop, and all found it exciting, informative, and inspiring.

On Thursday, March 24, a day trip was held to the Very Large Array (VLA) facility west of Socorro, New Mexico. The site was interesting and impressive, and the several hours spent on the buses were used to good advantage by attendees to share stories and to teach and learn.

The Spring Meeting opened on Friday, March 25. The Council meeting took place during the day. From 2:00 to 5:00 pm, the first scientific paper session was held and the papers on the accompanying list were presented. In the evening, NMSU planetary astronomer Dr. Reta Beebe presented a fascinating talk on the NASA-ESA Cassini-Huygens mission to Saturn and Titan. Another enjoyable star party with the ASLC followed.

The Membership Meeting was called to order by President Bill Dillon at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 26.

Minutes of the 93rd Annual Meeting in Waltham, Massachusetts, on October 30, 2004, were read by acting Secretary David B. Williams.

Director Henden read a summary of Treasurer Louis Cohen's report.

The following committee/group reports were presented:

Charge-Coupled Device (CCD)	Gary Walker
Eclipsing Binary	Marvin Baldwin
Nova Search	given for Kenneth Beckmann

RR Lyrae	Marvin Baldwin
Solar	Richard Kinne (for Carl Feehrer)
Supernova Search	Gary Emerson (for Robert Evans)
Chart Team (New and Preliminary Charts)	Aaron Price, HQ liason
Comparison Star Database Working Group	Vance Petriew, Group leader

Director Henden reported that 45 new members were approved by the Council for the first half of the 2004–2005 year; their names follow these minutes. He also reported that members and friends of the Association deceased during this interval were Hans Sorensen and Noel Peattie. Attendees stood for a moment of silence to honor these member observers.

Director Henden then presented his semi-annual report. Highlights included completion of the two-year NASA-funded Validation Project on time and on-budget; website activity continuing to rise, with over 755,000 pages downloaded, over 111,000 visitors logged, light curve generator access increasing, much new material placed online, including two Variable Star of the Season articles; many new charts created; over 1,500 requests for AAVSO data filled; online Thursday chat room initiated; Automated Chart Plotter project begun; Comparison Star Database project nearing completion of Phase I; a successful Third High-Energy Astrophysics Workshop held; AND the hiring by the AAVSO Council of the fourth AAVSO Director, Dr. Arne A. Henden!

Director Henden announced that the 94th Annual Meeting would be a full meeting, with scientific paper sessions, an open house at Headquarters, and a banquet, and that it would be held in Cambridge and Newton, Massachusetts, October 14–15, 2005. He also announced locations under consideration for the 95th Spring Meeting.

The meeting then adjourned for the group photograph and lunch.

The second scientific paper session convened at 2:00 p.m. The papers presented are given in the accompanying list. The session adjourned at approximately 5:15.

Attendees gathered in the evening for the closing banquet. After dinner, awards were presented. AAVSO Observer Awards were presented to variable star observers who had reached certain milestone totals; the list of awardees accompanies this report. The AAVSO Director's Award, chosen this year by Interim Director Elizabeth Waagen and Director Arne Henden together, was presented to Michael Simonsen of Imlay City, Michigan, in recognition of his valuable contributions of variable star observations during campaigns and a cumulative total of nearly 42,000 visual observations since 1998, his extensive contributions to AAVSO charts and his leadership of the AAVSO Chart Team, and his fostering of variable star observing through his mentoring new observers, creating online utilities to facilitate observing, and advocacy for excellence in observing. Arne presented President William Dillon with the first Order of the Orange Award (creating him William of Orange), both in humor and in all seriousness, for his work as President—orders of magnitude

more difficult and demanding than imaginable when he agreed to serve—during the eighteen-plus months from the onset of Janet Mattei's final illness to the beginning of Arne Henden's tenure as Director and to the present. An award of thanks was also presented to Elizabeth Waagen in recognition of her work as Interim Director during the same eighteen months. Following the awards presentations, Elizabeth spoke about her recent visit to New Zealand on behalf of the AAVSO to attend a celebration honoring Dr. Frank M. Bateson, OBE, on his retirement after seventy years as founder and Director of the Variable Star Section of the Royal Astronomical Society of New Zealand; her presentation also included a summary of the history of the relationship between the AAVSO and the RASNZ and the important role the AAVSO played in the Variable Star Section's founding and development. The meeting was adjourned by President Dillon around 10:30 p.m.

Papers and posters presented at the Scientific Paper Session on Friday, March 25, 2005

Rodney Howe	Gamma-Ray Bursts and X-ray Transients Recorded with Very Low Frequency Radio Telescopes
Gary Billings	Period Change of the Eclipsing Binary V442 Cas
Russell M. Genet Thomas C. Smith	Within-Season Changes in the Periods and Light Curves of W UMa Binaries
Pebble Richwine Timothy Slater	Building Community: International Conference on the Emerging EPO Profession (poster)
Mark B. Vincent	The MRO 2.4m Telescope Advanced Camera/ Spectrograph (poster)
Matthew Templeton	Period Changes in δ Scuti Stars
Paula Szkody Arne A. Henden	Cataclysmic Variables from the SDSS
Wayne P. Johnson	2004: A Good Year for Bright Supernovae

Papers and posters presented at the Scientific Paper Session on Saturday, March 26, 2005

Dirk Terrell	Understanding Overcontact Binaries
David B. Williams	NSV 11749: Slow Nova or FU Ori Variable?

Gary Emerson Stephanie McLaughlin Luch McFadden	The Small Telescope Science Program for the NASA Deep Impact Mission
John Toone	The International Chart Working Group
Pamela L. Gay	IRAF: the Power, the Pain, the Zen
Jerry D. Horne	Using a Small Telescope to Detect Variable Stars in the Globular Cluster NGC 6779
David H. Levy	Portrait of a Variable Star: The Tombaugh Star Outburst Movie

New Members Accepted at the Spring Meeting, March 25, 2005

Berg, Richard, DC
Bolster, Larry, CA
Brady, Steve, NH
Butterworth, Neil Douglas, Australia
Cacace, Ben, NY
Calvert, Fred Arthur, KY
Cavanaugh, Matt, CT
S Chandler, Dean, TX
Clark, Gilbert, CA
Dale III, Horace A., GA
Douvris, Athanasios, Greece
Elias, Olav P., CO
Gonzalez-Herrera, Alfredo, Spain
Guagliardo, John, CA
Gualdoni, Carlo, Italy
Huziak, Richard, Canada
Jack, Cameron Allan, New Zealand
Jun, Yin, China
Kelly, Mark, CO
Kerr, Stephen, Australia
Kirby, Carl D., NM
Kiskaden, Douglas E., OH
Licchelli, Domenico, Italy
Lierl, Michelle B., KY
McMahon, Tom, CA
Megson, Ian Stanley, England
Miles, Richard, England
Mojica, Hector, IA
Oatney, Susan, KS
Owens, Larry T., GA
Perkins, William Karl, TX
Rogers, Carl John, CA
Rogers, Jason C., MO
Rutheford, Thomas Preston, TN
Sanchez Lopez, Joaquin, Spain
Schenke, Wolfgang, Germany
Schlotman, Keith, AZ
Shida, Raquel, Brazil
Thompson, Michael, CA
Trinity College, Australia
Tsamis, Vagelis, Greece
Turner, Margaret Helen, Australia
Whitehead, David, NV
Wilkerson, Jeffrey A., IA
Wooley, George L., MD

S = sustaining membership

Deceased Members, Observers, and Colleagues

Sorensen, Hans, Denmark Peatie, Noel, CA

AAVSO Observer Awards

Presented at the 94th Spring Meeting, Las Cruces, New Mexico, March 26, 2005

Over 100,000 Observations				
Lewis M. Cook	USA	1974–2004	121,326	
Over 50,000 Observations				
Eddy Muyllaert	Belgium	1986–2004	64,774	
Tonny Vanmunster	Belgium	1976–2004	54,744	
Frank Vohla	Germany	1990–2004	52,897	
Harald Marx	Germany	1969–2004	50,891	
Attila Kosa-Kiss	Romania	1976–2004	50,798	
Sandor Papp	Hungary	1983–2004	50,410	
Over 10,000 Observations				
Neil D. Butterworth	Australia	2002–2004	18,351	
Thomas J. Richards	Australia	1992–2004	15,166	
Eric Morillon	France	1988–2004	12,101	
Wolfgang Kriebel	Germany	1989–2004	11,866	
Istvan Kovacs	Hungary	1981–2004	10,834	
Christopher W. Hesseltine	USA	1975–2004	10,710	
Alexandre Amorim	Brazil	2000–2004	10,250	
Erwin Van Ballegoij	Netherlands	1984–2004	10,228	
Tom Kracji	USA	2002–2004	10,207	
Etsuiku Mochizuki	Japan	1964–2004	10,000	
*Over 100,000 PEP/CCD Observations**				
Lewis M. Cook	USA	1974–2004	114,956	CCD
*Over 50,000 PEP/CCD Observations**				
Gerard Samolyk	USA	1975–2004	50,182	CCD
*Over 25,000 PEP/CCD Observations**				
Shawn W. Dvorak	USA	1981–2004	31,771	CCD
Tonny Vanmunster	Belgium	1976–2004	25,080	CCD
Robert A. James	USA	1953–2004	25,078	CCD
*Over 10,000 PEP/CCD Observations**				
Neil D. Butterworth	Australia	2002–2004	18,351	CCD
Thomas J. Richards	Australia	2004–2004	15,091	CCD

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AAVSO Observer Awards, cont.

*Over 5,000 PEP/CCD Observations**				
Tom Krajci	USA	2002–2004	8,112	CCD
Michael Koppelman	USA	2001–2002	5,116	CCD
*Over 2,500 PEP/CCD Observations**				
David Boyd	England	2003–2004	4,661	CCD
David P. Messier	USA	2003–2004	4,165	CCD
Keith A. Graham	USA	1981–2002	3,875	CCD
Mark J. Munkacsy	USA	1997–2003	3,519	CCD
Charles Pullen	USA	1999–2002	3,480	CCD
Gary Walker	USA	1994–2002	2,786	CCD
*Over 1,000 PEP/CCD Observations**				
Liebert (Berto) Monard	South Africa	1992–2004	2,668	CCD
Alexandru Corlan	Romania	2001–2004	2,420	CCD
Radu Corlan	Romania	2001–2004	2,405	CCD
Walter J. MacDonald II	Canada	1982–2004	2,267	CCD
Michael Nicholas	USA	2001–2004	1,818	CCD
Stephen E. Robinson	USA	2001–2004	1,813	CCD
Scott Jamieson	USA	2001–2004	1,434	CCD
Bernard Heathcote	Australia	2002–2004	1,366	CCD
William J. Aquino	USA	2000–2004	1,348	CCD
Arne A. Henden	USA	2000–2004	1,291	CCD
Gary W. Billings	Canada	2000–2004	1,266	CCD
Bruce L. Gary	USA	2001–2004	1,249	CCD
Ronald R. Royer	USA	1954–2004	1,035	CCD

* Years include total AAVSO observing interval (not only PEP/CCD observing).
Total includes PEP and/or CCD observations only (not observer's visual contribuitons).

AAVSO Director's Award

The AAVSO Director's Award was presented at the 94th Spring Meeting, Las Cruces, New Mexico, March 26, 2005, to Michael A. Simonsen, Imlay City, Michigan.