Minutes of the 95th Spring Meeting of the AAVSO, held May 4–6, 2006, Rockford, IL

Gary Walker
AAVSO Secretary, 179 South Main Street, Sherborn, MA 01770

Our hosts for the meeting were AAVSO members Barry and Carol Beaman (Barry is currently on the AAVSO Council) and the Rockford Amateur Astronomers.

On Thursday, May 4, the AAVSO Council met all day. For early arrivals, tours of Rockford were made available by our hosts. After supper, observing was offered at Lockwood Observatory.

Friday, May 5, was a full day. From 9:00 to 12:30, a Workshop on Writing and Publishing Scientific Papers was held, with presentations by Paula Szkody, John Percy, David Williams, Arne Henden, Pamela Gay, and Aaron Price. After lunch, AAVSO Scientific Paper Session I was held from 2:30 to 5 pm; the papers on the accompanying list were presented. From 6 to 10 pm, attendees enjoyed an Open House and StarBQue at Lockwood Park Observatory, and a very enjoyable and informative talk by John Percy entitled "Variable Stars - Gee Whiz!"

The Membership Meeting was called to order by President David B. Williams at 9:05 a.m on Saturday, May 6, 2006. The Minutes of the 94th Annual Meeting were read by Secretary Gary Walker and accepted.

AAVSO Treasurer Lou Cohen read the Treasurer's Report. He reported that the Association is on track in its budget for the year. He also reported that to date we have regained 20% of the money lost from the Endowment in the "Internet Bust of 2000."

Committee Reports were given as follows:

CCD Committee	Gary Walker
Chart Distribution	Mike Simonsen
High Energy Network	Aaron Price
Eclipsing Binaries	Marvin Baldwin
RR Lyrae Stars	Marvin Baldwin
Solar Committee	read by D. Williams for Carl Feehrer and Mike Hill
Nova Search	read by M. Motta for Rev. Kenneth Beckmann
Education and Public Outreach	John Percy

Director Arne Henden presented the membership report. 34 new Membership applications were received for the first half of the year, and were approved at the Council meeting. AAVSO membership now totals 1161.

The Director gave the Deceased Members and Friends Report. In the first six months of the year, longtime member William B. Whiddon, San Pedro, CA, died. At the time of his death, William was Chief Engineer on the James Webb Space Telescope. He was also a serious photographer of solar eclipses and other astronomical phenomena, and had traveled to Antarctica more than once for eclipse and meteorite work. Everyone stood and observed a moment of silence in memory of William.

The Director then announced plans for future meetings: the 95th Annual Meeting: Newton, Mass, October 27 and 28, 2006; 96th Spring Meeting: a joint meeting with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada and the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, June 29–July 1, 2007. Potential future meeting locations include: 96th Annual Meeting in Fall 2007 at Maria Mitchell Observatory on Nantucket; 97th Spring Meeting in Spring 2008 as a joint meeting with the British Astronomical Association in England; 100th Spring Meeting in 2011 in Boston as a joint with the American Astronomical Society. Gary Billings then gave detailed information the the Calgary meeting.

The Director gave his Semiannual Report [a POWERPOINT presentation is available on the AAVSO website via the link http://www.aavso.org/aavso/meetings/spring06sched.shtml, click on AAVSO Membership Meeting]. Highlights included:

- 19,000 historical observations from Lennart Dahlmark added to the AAVSO International Database
- AAVSO International Database converted to MYSQL relational database (alpha version)
- AAVSO PEP database re-processed and partially merged into the AAVSO International Database
- Automated Chart Plotter, Variable Star Index, Blue & Gold section of website completed (beta versions)
- 891 requests for AAVSO data fulfilled
- DVD on Third High-Energy Astrophysics Workshop for Amateur Astronomers created and distributed AAVSO website access increased—1000 visitors/day, downloads of 1.3 million pages, 51,724 charts, 77,006 light curves
- AAVSO Education and Public Outreach Committee created
- Many AAVSO publications published
- New AAVSO Brochure for amateur events/general public created
- AAVSO Visual Observing Manual translated into Spanish, Greek, Japanese
- Several papers using AAVSO data submitted to professional journals
- Many observing campaigns initiated

- Progress made on robotic telescopes connected with AAVSO and research results described
- Arne attended meeting of the British Astronomical Association, Variable Star Section, in Northampton, England in November 2005

AAVSO Observer Awards were announced for 30 observers who had reached various visual, CCD, and PEP observing milestones, and presented to observers Marvin Baldwin, Robert Hays, Vance Petriew, Richard Huziak, and Christopher Hesseltine, who were in attendance.

President Williams adjourned the meeting at 11:32 am.

After lunch, AAVSO Scientific Paper Session II was held; papers on the accompanying list were presented.

After the paper session, attendees travelled by bus to the Burpee Natural History Museum for tours, a delicious closing banquet, and an after-banquet lecture by Karen Meech on "Observing a Lunar Impact". The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone! President Williams then closed the meeting at about 10 pm, and everyone returned to the hotel for more conversation and some rest.

Papers presented at the Scientific Paper Session on Friday, May 5, 2006

Gary Billings	Period Changes of the Algol-type Eclipsing Binary LS Persei
Paula Szkody	Using XMM and Optical Photometry to Figure out CVs
Matthew Beaky	Detecting Extrasolar Planetary Transits Through Photoelectric Photometry
Pebble Richwine James Bedient Timothy F. Slater	Uncovering High School Students' Initial Understanding and Beliefs about the Nature of Science Prior to Studying Variable Stars
Mario Motta	Update on a New 32-inch Telescope
Jerry Horne	Automated Extraction of Photometric Data: A demonstration project using MAXIMDL on CV images
Karen Meech	Observing a Lunar Impact

Papers presented at the Scientific Paper Session on Saturday, May 6, 2006

Vance Petriew Aaron Price	The Comparison Star Database and the Automated Chart Plotter
Aaron Price	Preparing For the NGC 6811 AAVSO Deep and Wide Field Campaign
Aaron Price	SS Cyg Like You've Never Seen Her Before
John R. Percy Rohan Palaniappan	Analysis of AAVSO Visual Observations of T Tauri Stars
Christopher L. Watson	The International Variable Star Index (VSX)
Walter MacDonald II	A Dome on a Home: The Story of Winchester Observatory

New Members Accepted at the Spring Meeting, May 4, 2006

Alton, Kevin, NJ
Auclair, Raymond, Canada
Babbage, Craig M., KY
S Bailey, Jim, Scotland
Bialozynski, Jerry, AZ
Crook, Mick J., England
Eramia, Bob, WA
Forsythe, Sean Robert, PA
Gomez, Tomas L., Spain
Gross, John, AZ
Haley, Tracy, RI
Hardies, Mark, FL
S Harlington, Caisey, England
Hecht, Peter, Germany
Seong, Jo Jae, South Korea
Jaoui, Laura, CA
Keller, Elizabeth, MA
S Keller, Shaun, MA
McCandless, Brian, MD
McDaniel, Ronald E., TX
Mikolajczyk, Dean B., IL
Moon, Terry, Australia
Nedergaard, Stig, Denmark
Pedersen, Poul, OH
Prineas, Matthew L., MD
Rios, Rick J., CA
Rippel, R. Charles, VA
Robnett, Allen V., TN
Rogers, V. Daniel, IN
Schumann, Andreas, Germany
Siliprandi, Paolo, Italy
Smith, Jerald A., CA
Templeton, Matthew, MA
Whelan, David N., RI

S = sustaining membership

Deceased Members, Observers, and Colleagues

Whiddon, William B., CA

AAVSO Observer Awards

Presented at the 95th Spring Meeting, Rockford, Illinois, May 6, 2006

Over 200,000 Observations (visual only)

Wayne M. Lowder	USA	1949–2005	209,439	

Over 150,000 Observations (new category, visual only)

John E. Bortle	USA	1963–2005	171,352	
Marvin E. Baldwin	USA	1961–2004	175,481	
Edward G. Oravec	USA	1943–2003	170,552	
Thomas A. Cragg	Australia	1945–2005	151,735	

Over 100,000 Observations (visual only)

Albert F. Jones	New Zealand	1960–2005	105,524	

Over 50,000 Observations (visual only)

Gunther Krisch	Germany	1969–2005	52,378	

Over 25,000 Observations (visual only)

Maciej Reszelski	Poland	2000–2005	39,751	
William Goff	USA	1981–2005	33,028	
Laurent Bichon	France	1986–2005	27,466	
Robert H. Hays, Jr.	USA	1977–2005	25,428	

Over 10,000 Observations (visual only)

Stephen Kerr	Australia	2001–2005	17,833	
Andrzej Markiewicz	Poland	1999–2005	11,737	
Hiroshi Matsuyama	Japan	1978–2005	11,596	
Hartmut Bretschneider	Germany	1993–2005	10,087	

*Over 50,000 Observations PEP/CCD Observations**

Robert A. James	USA	1953–2005	71,432	CCD
Tonny Vanmunster	Belgium	1976–2005	62,317	CCD
Vance Petriew	Canada	2001–2005	60,390	CCD
Shawn W. Dvorak	USA	1981–2005	50,489	CCD

*Over 25,000 Observations PEP/CCD Observations**

Neil D. Butterworth	Australia	2002–2005	41,358	CCD
Richard J. Huziak	Canada	1980–2005	37,162	CCD
Peter Nelson	Australia	1990–2005	28,830	CCD
Donn Ray Starkey	USA	2001–2005	25,833	CCD

*Over 10,000 PEP/CCD Observations**

Richard Miles	England	2004–2005	17,975	CCD
David Boyd	England	2003–2005	14,539	CCD

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AAVSO Observer Awards, cont.

James L. Jones	USA	2003–2005	11,651	CCD
Christopher Hesseltine	USA	1975–2005	11,392	CCD
Timothy Crawford	USA	2001–2005	10,892	CCD
Libert A.G. Monard	South Africa	1992–2005	10,398	CCD

Over 2,500 PEP Observations (CCD no longer awarded at this level)*

Raymond W. Jones	South Africa	1989-2005	2,671	PEP

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

Note: As of these awards, the CCD 1K, 2.5K, AND 5K awards have been discontinued, and the 150K award level added. If a CCD milestone is reached, no corresponding cumulative award is given. A cumulative award no longer includes CCD/PEP—it is visual only.