

ASTRONOMY CLUB

Meeting on February 28th, 2019

West Woods Nature Center

Attending: Heidi O'Neill, Sue Lundstrom, John Kolar, Chris Mentrek, George Trimble, Marty Mullet, Jann Glove, Richard Glove, and Dan Galdun

Summary:

- Minutes from the last two meetings were distributed and Heidi asked if there were any discrepancies to please let her or Sue know so they could be corrected. There were no exceptions noted. A roster sheet with contact information for the group was distributed. Three new members were enthusiastically welcomed to the group.
- Heidi began the meeting with her observation that the group's discussions have evolved into three distinct aspects, and each could be worked on independently:
 1. telescopes for lending in the libraries which would be available for all age groups
 2. classes/club – with a target audience of middle school/high school students approximately 11-17 years
 3. fulfilling requirements for badges/certificates, etc., by completing or displaying “levels of knowledge” by club members.
- It was emphasized that this was to be a collaborative effort between the Foundation for Geauga Parks, the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society, the Geauga Park District and the Geauga County Public Libraries. This collaboration is necessary in order to share responsibilities and tasks, but also to benefit from the depth of knowledge/experience/facilities each organization can bring to the table.
- Lively discussion focusing on a name for the group. Some suggestions were:
 - Geauga Galaxy Guards
 - STAR - Stargazing Telescopes Astronomy Reading
 - GALAXY - Geauga Astronomy League And Xploring Youth
 - NEXT - Night sky Enthusiasts Xploring Team
 - Stargazer Gang
 - Starburst Bunch
 - Skywalkers
 - Starlight League
 - Geauga Stargazers Club
 - Geauga Skywatchers Club
 - Sky Watchers
 - Orion's Swords
 - Big Bear Astronomy Club
 - Astrocliptic Club
 - Space Nuts
 - Star Scopes Amateur Astronomy Club
 - Star Scopes Astronomy Club
 - Space Scopes Astronomy Club

Star Scopes Junior Astronomer's Club
 Star Gazers
 Dark Sky Club
 Geauga County Astronomers
 Geauga County Stargazers
 Star Gazers of Geauga County
 Geauga County Astronomy Club
 Geauga County Amateur Astronomers
 Out of This World Astronomy Club
 Telefolks
 The Big Dippers
 Planetoids
 Asterjoyeds
 Meteor Powers
 Supernovas
 Sunteens & Moonbeams

- It was decided that we would each choose three favorite names to be submitted prior to the next meeting, at which time the favored name would be decided. Heidi offered to send out the list prior to the next meeting. Once a name has been chosen, we can then create a website and create promotional materials.
- Heidi discussed the need for a charter or mission statement for the organization. This would include our objectives (such as what we would like to accomplish), target audience of 11-17 year olds, benefits of the program, methods by which we feel we will be successful, our roles, budgetary information and how decisions are made. George offered to work on this important task for the next meeting. As a group we can discuss the charter at the next meeting.
- George emphasized outreach as part of the mission of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society. He is enthusiastic about bringing more youth into their organization.
- Sue and John shared with the new members the items discussed at the meeting with Kris Carroll the previous day, and the support and willingness she displayed.
- Funding was discussed, and we shared that we have approximately \$4500 to start our project, and hopefully will have some funding provided by the Lubrizol Corp. One of the Foundation for Geauga Park's board members is a regional business manager with the company, Keith Corkwell. Heidi and Sue offered to look into potential funding for the group from this organization for the next meeting.
- It was decided that we would begin with one telescope, and work towards providing one for each library. More telescopes could be added if the program proves successful. Marty mentioned he would also like to see a telescope in the Burton Library which is not associated with the Geauga Public Library System.
- Marty offered to buy one of the telescopes to start, with the understanding the Foundation would reimburse him. He also said he would look into a type of case to carry/protect the scope, such as one with wheels to limit damage and ease transport to and from the library. He also

showed us a simplified, homemade telescope which could possibly be a model for a future project for the club members.

- George said that he recommended an “Acknowledgement sheet” being filled out after viewing the video, and passing a test as a requirement for signing out the telescope. This would acknowledge cost of replacement in case of damage, safety information, and acknowledgement of return date. A test to be administered by library personnel in written or verbal form would need to be completed after watching the video. The test should be designed to be difficult enough that a young child could not pass. This is important, in that anyone with a Geauga County library card is allowed to check out materials regardless of age. Sue offered to look into whether there is some provision in the library’s borrow policy to protect us in case a child borrowed the \$400.00 plus telescope. Parents would ultimately need to be responsible for monetary collection, as the library could not collect from a child. It was also discussed once the Acknowledgment form and the test were passed, some sort of flag would be added to the library card to allow borrowing in the future.
- It was suggested by Jann that books and other materials relating to astronomy be displayed on the days that George is presenting in the libraries.
- George suggested that the meetings be placed on a www.meetup.com which would provide a broader reach in the county.
- Deadlines for the GPD newsletter as well as the deadline for the library’s newsletter were discussed. June 20 is when the next flyer will come out for the park district, with the deadline for submission likely to be early May. The earliest advertised class could be in July.
- Three of our group members will be presenting already scheduled classes in June- George on June 29th at Geauga West Library, Jann on June 19th at Burton for the GPD, and Marty at Middlefield and Bainbridge (dates not noted). These could help provide a springboard as well as an opportunity to advertise our club. It was decided classes already offered by the Library System or the Park District would be in addition to the classes offered by the group. George said he would like to have (12) scheduled classes per year – one per month. The group decided July would be a good target start date with the opportunity to advertise in the Geauga Park District’s summer newsletter. We would also advertise hopefully on a website, www.meetup.com and with signage. George and Marty will start working on possible curriculum and topics for the first years classes so they can be advertised in advance. Heidi said it is also important to schedule both the space and time at both the Geauga Public Libraries and the Geauga Park District so they could be included in advertising and for planning purposes. It was decided no food would be offered at the classes.
- Jann offered to research badges and the possible “level of knowledge” aspect for the group. A booklet of the Boy Scouts of America Astronomy badge requirements and example of written requirements was shared with the group as an example.
- John and Chris from the Park District are willing to put information about the sessions on their website.

- Chris and John agreed to help create the instructional video for the telescope geared towards 11-17 year olds and a written or oral test to be administered by Library personnel.
- It was discussed to take videos or photos of the classes to be used in future promotion. If a waiver form is needed for any publicity photos, Sandy from the Park district can provide. It was discussed that a waiver form including this information and possible other information be signed by club members and possibly the parents of the students taking the classes or belonging to the club. Sue offered to look into this.
- Requirements for borrowing the telescopes should be on the instructional video, as well as consequences for damages. In addition, each telescope will have a warning posted on the side, which states that the observer is not to look directly at the sun. Dan felt this was very important. Possibly some of the badges or levels of accomplishment might need the use of the telescopes to complete the task.
- It was recommended that we have two adults at each session, especially when using the telescopes or the portable dome. All adults helping at the classes will be required to have a background check, possibly provided by the Geauga Park District via becoming a Park Volunteer. There is currently a system in place to provide a background check for every new volunteer.
- It was suggested by Dan and George that we have an attorney peruse our plans in order to be sure we are compliant with all aspects of this venture, especially with four different groups collaborating. It was decided to initiate this task after the group's charter/mission statement was completed.
- The meeting closed with the date of March 19 at 3PM at the West Woods proposed for the next meeting. Sue said she would reserve the room.