



2007 Election Results

President's Message

Welcome to a New Year and new NHAS officers! It is an honor to be your president for 2007. I knew after a year or so of membership that I would get involved more with the operation of the club, but I never expected this so soon!

I hope everyone had a chance to catch Comet McNaught, I saw it on the 9th in Nashua with binoculars and then naked eye before it sank into the seemingly ever-present New England clouds. Hopefully the New Year will bring us better observing weather!

∩∩ Gardner Gerry
NHAS President 2007

Highlights for this Month

The 2007 election of officers occurred at the December 2006 meeting. The photo committee group met at the Grainger Observatory at Phillips Exeter Academy for a detailed discussion on CCD imaging by **John Blackwell**. A very bright comet, McNaught, appeared low in the sunset in early January. A couple of sky watches for Scouting groups took place.

Unfortunately, this was not a very good month for visual observing, so I'm afraid we'll be a bit short on observing reports this month.

∩∩ Paul Winalski
NHAS Secretary 2007

2007 NHAS Election Results

Elections were held at the December 2006 meeting. Your 2007 officers are:

<i>President</i>	<i>Gardner Gerry</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Mike Townsend</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Paul Winalski</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Chase McNiss</i>
<i>Board Member</i>	<i>Mike O'Shaugnessy</i>

Bob Sletten had been nominated for Junior Board Member, but declined the nomination. Others ran unopposed.

Newsletters for 2007

Hello from your new club secretary. First let me thank Rich DeMidio for the fine job he's done as our Secretary over the past two years. My hope is that I can continue the good work that Rich has done to make the newsletter informative and interesting.

To repeat Rich's words from last January, upon which I can't improve: "First and foremost, the NSL is *our* publication so I always want to give members the spotlight with articles, observation reports, and other interesting news. This means that any contribution no matter how small or insignificant is worthy of publication." Please send to me, or direct my attention to, anything you find that deserves our club's attention, or to any observing or other events you wish to share. The more the merrier, when it comes to items for the Newsletter.

I'm a newbie at this, so please do let me know what you do or do not like about how I handle the Newsletter. I'm here to serve you.

Clear skies!

∩∩ Paul Winalski
NHAS Secretary 2007

NHAS Dec 2006 Business Meeting

Matt Marulla noted that 2006 was the 6th warmest year on record. In celestial news, it has apparently been verified that liquid water does flow on Mars, and some new craters have been discovered. Matt also showed a picture of a mountain range on Titan (100 miles long, 19 wide, 1 mile high) with a shape and profile similar to the Sierra Nevada range. The Stardust mission recovered material from within a comet, and confirms that the material was stellar in nature. The question is how it got there. The scientists believe it is from our own Sun.

ATM

Larry described the crude way of making a mirror with sand and pine tar.

YFOS

The site has been staked out for snow plowing. The Porta Potty has been salted and there is sand available for when snow finally arrives.

Membership

We have had a request from Amherst, NH to hold an Astronomy event, but it might require that NHAS members pay to attend. Welcome to new members Leonard Russo, Freddie Hillhouse, Thomas Peterson, and David Morrison.

Public Observing

A busy month in terms of emails for our Chairman. Sky & Telescope magazine will be sending us 100 issues of the (now defunct, alas) magazine NightSky. There is no word from Astronomy Magazine as yet.

We had scheduled a sky watch for Cub Scout Pack 166 in Greenland, NH, before the tragic accidental death of Scout Thomas Fogarty. On Marc's advice, the Pack picked Thomas's birthday star—Sirius—as a way of celebrating Thomas's life, and that star has been adopted at CMP in his memory. Dave McDonald, on behalf of CMP, presented a framed certificate, which Marc gave to Thomas's family at the sky watch. Sirius will be presented as Thomas's star at CMP over the year. It was a very emotional sky watch. I had the privilege of showing the Scouts where to find Sirius in the sky, and of showing it to Thomas's family in my 14" reflector.

We received this thank you from the members of Cub Scout Pack 166:

13 January 2007

Cole, Jeff, Cam, Lucian, Joseph, Will, Ian, Matt, Nick, Daniel, Lucas, Andrew, Robbie, Will M., John, Riley, Nickolas, Isaiah

Thank you so much for the wonderful sky watch presentation that you and the NHAS did for us. We really loved learning about the night sky and seeing all the awesome stars in the telescopes! Please thank all of the astronomers for us. And, thank you for remembering our friend and fellow scout, Thomas. We will always view the star Sirius with much adoration.

Thank you very much. Sincerely, Pack 166

Web Administration

The online documents have been updated to reflect the amendment to the club constitution to allow proxy votes by email.

Astro Photons

As previously reported, John Blackwell presented a detailed discussion of CCD imaging at the Grainger Observatory. There is nothing planned due to the holidays, so enjoy the time off. ☺

Radio Astronomy

The big event planned to observe the Leonid meteors concurrently via radio signals, acoustics, and visually was unfortunately postponed due to bad weather. We will try again for another meteor shower. The objective is to listen for meteors on radio and then correlate those signals with visual and

perhaps acoustic observation. The antenna that's been constructed is 8 feet on a side, with about 2000 feet of wire wrapped around it, and it goes down to 10KHz. Now we need a computer sound card that can handle 4 channel recording. The final recording device is still under design and construction.

Book of the Month

John Bishop described the huge coffee table book **Postcards from Mars**. This is a book with many fold-out images taken by the Mars rovers, showing incredible detail of the wild landscapes: rolling, barren desert rocks, lonely lines of caterpillar tracks from the Rovers themselves. It's sort of what would happen if Ansel Adams went to Mars. The book costs about \$50 and is available from Borders and elsewhere. Well worth a look.

Ed Los showed a book containing some of the images from the Harvard Observatory stacks. As previously noted in our Newsletter, Ed is involved in a project to digitize the Harvard Observatory plate collection. The first phase is complete, with 300 M44 plates scanned. A project is underway to search them for variable stars. A proposal to extend the federal funding beyond its current July '07 date has been submitted.

Comet McNaught

Comet C2006/P1 McNaught had great potential, as it would come very close to the Sun in the perihelion of its hyperbolic orbit. It exceeded all expectations and turned out to be the brightest comet in the past 30 years. This brightness was unfortunately achieved very low in the sky and close to the Sun for northern observers, so this comet did not rival the spectacular show put on by the Great Comets of 1996 and 1997 (Hyakutake and Hale-Bopp).

But McNaught achieved something that neither of those Great Comets did—naked eye visibility in full daylight. As it swung around the Sun at perihelion, the comet also appeared on the C3 LASCO

coronagraph at the SOHO orbiting solar observatory. Viewing from New England was difficult due to clouds, but **Tim Printy** was able to take this photograph near sunset on 9 January:



McNaught is now headed for Southern Hemisphere skies and, alas, will no longer be visible from New England.

— Paul Winalski

The Bottom Line

Starting Balance:	\$4742.11
December Deposits:	\$223.00
(membership, calendar sales, interest)	
December A/P:	\$288.33
(Marsden dinner, Staples, Peerless)	
Petty cash drawer:	\$195.75
Cash Balance:	\$4969.91

2007 Membership: 110

New members:

Leonard Russo, Nashua, NH
Freddie Hillhouse, Manchester, NH
Thomas Peterson, Epping, NH
David Morrison, Gilmanston, NH

Donations: None

— Chase McNiss

Freeze Your Buns Off

Next month on February 9th is our annual "Freeze your Buns" Coffeehouse...

As a primer for new members, "Freeze

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your buns" is normally our coldest Coffeehouse of the year. Its so special it has its own name.

Dress very warmly, Insulated Coveralls are highly recommended. Warm boots, Gloves and Hats are a must. YFOS is typically 10F colder than Nashua/Manchester.

Nights that are good for observing are typically cold.

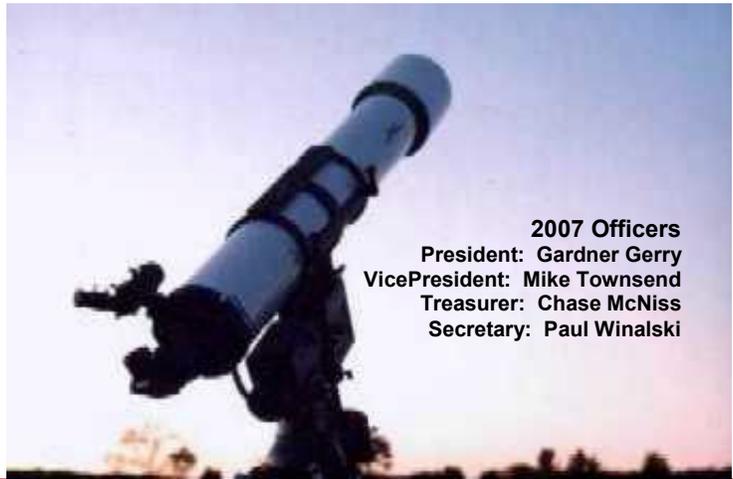
Bring your favorite snack with enough to share.

The warming room gets a workout with more socializing than typical, (depending on the outside temps). Shared snacks are artfully displayed on the table and counters, and everybody digs in...

If the fields are icy, do not leave the cleared area with your vehicle. Try not to park on the downhill side of the parking lot.

If you are among the last couple of observers there, try to make sure that no one needs assistance to exit the lot.

~ Alan Shirey



2007 Officers
President: Gardner Gerry
VicePresident: Mike Townsend
Treasurer: Chase McNiss
Secretary: Paul Winalski

DEADLINE February 2007 Issue: 5 PM Feb13

E-mail articles to the Editor.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS – Notify the Treasurer of changes to postal or e-mail address.

How to Join N.H.A.S.

Write to us:

NHAS
P.O. Box 5823
Manchester, NH 03108-5823
Attn: Treasurer

Send E-mail to:

info@nhastro.com

Use our web site:

<http://www.nhastro.com/>

This month's contributors:

Gardner Gerry, Mathew Marulla, Larry Lopez, Alan Shirey, Marc Stowbridge, Bob Sletten, John Bishop, Ed Los, Tim Printy, Rich DeMidio, Paul Winalski

New Hampshire Astronomical Society
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NHAS Upcoming Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Jan Business Meeting	Jan 19	7:30 pm	St Anslem College
Feb Coffee House Night (Freeze Your Buns Off)	Feb 9	Dusk	YFOS
CMP Skywatch	Feb 2	7:00 pm	Planetarium Concord, NH
Feb Business Meeting	Feb 16	7:30 pm	Planetarium Concord, NH
March Messier Marathon	Mar ??	??	We are looking at potential dates