

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NEKAAL Members,

I'm taking the opportunity of this President's message to both address the current needs of NEKAAL and also share some interesting opportunities for our league.

First of all, I would like to once again express my sadness at the passing of our dear friend, Walter Cole. Walter served for years as a board member and treasurer of NEKAAL. As I'm sure many of know well, Walt was a warm and personable man who invariably wore an infectious smile. Walt always seemed to enjoy just about any activity of NEKAAL and I think his obvious interest inspired the inquisitive nature in many of us. Your board of directors voted to appoint Walt's wife Nancy to serve as treasurer and thankfully she has agreed to step in and serve. Please take any opportunity to thank her for this.

Next, I'd like to address some interesting upcoming events for NEKAAL. I'm sure every serving President of NEKAAL has had at least one overriding goal in mind for the term of his/her sentence... err... presidency. Mine is simply that I would like to see the membership of NEKAAL grow rather than shrink in 2008. To that end another board member, Bryant Hertel, has secured a spot for NEKAAL to set up a booth at the Farmer's Market in downtown Topeka. The first Saturday we will be setting up is April 12th from 7:30am until noon. If anyone would like to join us and help others pique their interest in astronomy, please contact myself or any board member for more details. In addition, I've put forth the idea and the board has agreed to have a rather special Open House on July 12th. I would like this open house to be a "Friends at Farpoint" night. I would like each and every member to clear their calendar, plan to be at Farpoint and come up with at least one good friend that you would like to share the wonders of the night sky with! We're still working on details, but at least plan on a social dinner prior to a night of observing.

Finally, I have to share some rather urgent needs. On the afternoon of April 12th, we will be having our annual spring cleaning/fix up day at Farpoint. Please join us along with your tool box and elbow grease to keep our fine observatory in good shape. My last issue is that of topics for our general meetings. Unfortunately you've probably noticed a lot of TBD's for our topics and speakers on the web site. Frankly, this is because I've essentially run out of ideas and possible speakers. To be honest, my fellow members of NEKAAL are the only astronomers I know. I've planned a presentation on Gamma Ray Bursts for April, but after that, there are no ideas, no suggestion and no plan. Unless you want our general meetings to turn into "Brian Martin's vacation slide shows", I need some suggestions and help. Volunteer to speak, ask someone you know to speak, offer a topic and a possible speaker, etc.

Thanks,

Brian Martin