

## **Oracle Dark Skies Committee Minutes January 8, 2015 - Kannally House OSP - 6:30 pm**

### **Attendance:**

Mike Weasner  
Evaline Auerbach  
Jennifer Rinio  
Charlotte Poole  
Stan Bembenek  
Wendy Ostrander

Weasner proposed a meeting with Supervisor Rios regarding compliance with the Pinal County lighting code. Bembenek and Poole volunteered to accompany him.

Weasner announced:

- The billboard on Highway 77 which was previously discussed as possibly not meeting certain light codes/ requirements had its lights off, then on, then off, then on. The light on now seem to be new and brighter. Apparently nothing happened following the meeting of Weasner and Auerbach with the Oracle Inn manager. So now it is time to submit a complaint under the Arizona Highway Beautification Act with Arizona Department of Transportation. Weasner will track down the requirements for a complaint.
- The Ford dealership lights were briefly back on, but it was a mistake. The owner said that he had simply forgotten to turn them off after a test. They are off again now.
- Brochures from International Dark Skies Assoc. have been delivered to the zoning compliance office at the Justice Building in Oracle. The director has said that she will take some around to other places.
- There is a new manager at Circle-K. Weasner talked to him and will continue to do so - to see whether he will continue the plans that had been agreed upon by the old manager regarding non-compliant lighting at that place of business.
- On December 10, Weasner was a science fair judge at the Mt. Vista school - grades two through eight. The 400 exhibits were divided among several judges, so he judged about 30 in half a day. Some were very successful. But he pointed out to those who had failures that failure was not bad because you could learn something from it.
- On December 11 Weasner was interviewed for an upcoming issue of *Phoenix Magazine* article about Oracle State Park as an International Dark Sky Park. The reporter has done other dark-sky related articles.

Arizona State Parks news:

- ASP is working on new brochures. (Prompted by Stan asking why OSP as Dark Skies wasn't in the old one.?)
- They have a new Group Volunteer Service agreement which provides a small stipend for volunteer groups. If the group members complete a log sheet for each event, they get a \$50.00 stipend. It will be put in a new Paypal account for the ODSC. A brief discussion was held whether ODSC needed a treasurer. Weasner said not at this time.

A South Korean group interested in attaining a dark sky designation is coming to OSP on January 10 at about 3:00 to 4:00. They are first going to Kartchner Caverns where they will have a tour, presentation, and lunch. John Hernandez of the Miner has been invited to OSP. Weasner will contact Tina Acosta at the Firehouse to put a Welcome message on the digital

sign. Friends of Oracle State Park is paying for a catered lunch from Patio Cafe. The count is 25, so there's a limit on who can attend and eat. Four Board members had put in a reservation. Weasner will talk about how we got to the point of designation. The mock-up of the poster for the ODSC will be presented and the first donated telescope will be there for use, if possible.

#### **The Jan. 24th Star Party was discussed:**

- A Grant from Arizona Humanities Council and \$100.00 from Friends will pay for the speaker: Ken Zoll speaking on cultural astronomy: "Ancient Native American Astronomical Practices".
- State Representative Frank Pratt plans to come.
- We have lots of telescopes promised (Saddlebrooke Skygazers Club) plus one of the donated telescopes all ready to go, with the 2nd one received.
- Hot chocolate, tea and coffee can be heated in the Keurig machine.
- The Patio Cafe will donate a dish via Jennifer Rinio.
- \*Insurance agent may donate drinks (Wendy) - water?
- Auerbach sent around a sign-up sheet for food for the pot-luck for the committee, which will be at 3 - 5 pm.
- Public Schedule:
  - 3-5 pm. Live music in the living room by Oracle's own "Drumension". During that time, people can learn more about the efforts of the Oracle Dark Skies Committee, informally.
  - 5-6 pm. AZ Humanities Council cultural astronomy guest speaker, Ken Zoll "Ancient Native American Astronomical Practices".

#### **March 21 Designation Celebration.**

- Patio Cafe is interested in being a vendor and interested in supporting the Park.
- Vendors of donated telescopes may be there.
- Weasner introduced the new donated Vixen telescope. It will be stored at the Park. He demonstrated taking the telescope off the tripod. (We did not get the battery pack - \$30.00. As of now it is manual only. Jennifer will order one.)
- The second donated telescope has arrived: a LightBridge 10" f/5 Truss-Tube Dobsonian, a very fast system - for planets, deep sky objects.
- Need training session to show volunteers how to use the telescopes. Mike and Stan know how to use them.
- There was a discussion of getting the invitations out. State Parks doing it but will use list from this committee. Weasner will send a list to ASP. Letters of Support writers and those who have changed lighting, like Oracle Ford, should get recognition.
- Haas needs to start pushing to have a sign out at the gate showing the dark skies designation. Weasner agreed to draw up a concept.

Weasner presented a full size print out of the proposed dark skies display.

Many on the committee discussed the placement of various items. It was noted that we need permission from ASP to use the OSP Logo. The IDA IDSP logo belongs to this park now. Mike will rearrange the poster. But will show the current one as a work-in-progress at the Korean delegation meeting.

The next meeting of the ODSC will January 22 at 6:30. Same place.

Signed,

Evaline J. Auerbach, Recorder

Signed,

Mike Weasner, Chair