

MHS Observatory Due By End Of This School Year



McAlester Teacher of the Year is Phillip Scott, Science and Astronomy instructor at McAlester High School. Scott shows here his telescope, which he has used to have "Star Parties" for over 3,000 area students and teachers, since he became the Science teacher at MPS 10 years ago.

He had worked 20 years servicing copiers and microfilm equipment in this area, for a supply company in Tulsa.

Scott recalled that he had planned to go to a National Science Teachers Association convention two years ago, but he found that he had cancer, and needed cancer surgery.

He recovered completely from the cancer, he stated.

So when he was named McAlester of the Year, he won a 5-day trip to this year's National Science Teachers Association Convention in Boston. His wife is a science teacher at Kiowa, so he paid her way and the two went together.

"It was like a science teacher's dream vacation," Scott said. They saw Sally Ride, the first woman astronaut, who now is the head of Women in Science. They also visited with Barbara Morgan, who was the backup for Kristy McCulough, who died in the crash of the Challenger shuttle. Scott has his own telescope, and has offered "star parties" for students and teachers in the area to see comets and

Phillip Scott, McAlester Public Schools Science and Astronomy Teacher and "McAlester Teacher of the Year" told members of the McAlester Rotary Club last week that the high school should have an observatory by the end of this school year.

Scott said his seventh-grade teacher had two telescopes and he "got hooked" as an amateur astronomer. He said he was 47 years old when the high school here needed a Science teacher, and he applied for the position.

view the sky when viewing is favorable.

There was no Astronomy class when he became a teacher 10 years ago, so Scott got one started two years later. When the new Math/Science Addition to the high school was being planned four years ago, the astronomy classroom was originally to be on the front side of the building, next to the parking lot lights. Scott suggested that his classroom be "on the back" so that an observatory might be added later.

A 12-inch Meade telescope with digital camera, color filter wheel and adaptive optics unit are being funded by Indian Education Title 7 funding. A grant for \$16,000 from the McAlester Public School Foundation is paying for the cost of the building, fiberglass rotating dome, software, the automation equipment and an on-site weather station.

Most of the labor is being provided by school maintenance personnel and Scott.

It has an "automatic override" so that it turns off if left on, Scott said.

The trip to Boston was "a lot of fun." And the teacher said he is "really proud" to be working in the McAlester School system.



McAlester High School is building an observatory for the Astronomy Class, Phillip Scott told members of the McAlester Rotary Club last Tuesday. Scott is the Science and Astronomy teacher. He said the observatory should be completed by the time school is out, later this month. It is located behind the new math-science addition. Scott is also McAlester Teacher of the Year this year.

Roth Gives 'State of City' Talk

Rotarian Mark Roath, as McAlester City Manager, gave us a "State of the City" talk March 18.

Roath said an audit for 2006 and 2007 had been completed, which should show "every transaction in the last 14 months."

Mark said he hopes to have a "CIP Program," and said a "few sticking points" with the firemen's union would go "to arbitration."

The new program will "separate out" Engineering, would have some new departments and other changes in an organizational chart.

The City Airport and the Expo Center will be under Community Services under Mel Priddy, Mark said.

The Municipal Court will be under Finance, he added.

He introduced David Burke, a CPA from Fort Worth, and said that "Info-Technology" with municipal government on the Cable TV should be helpful to Economic Development.

"This needs to be emphasized," he said, "and we feel this is the way to go."

David Medley will be director of Public Works. Other offices are being moved around, to give "a little better flexibility," he stated.

The city still needs to "get the right person" to come in and help with housing, the city official said.

And Mark said he expects the city to "look at" positions that are not needed.

A city study of "wages compared to other cities" also is expected. Mark said. "We are hoping to address that issue very shortly."

Good Citizens' for the Month from MHS

The "Good Citizens" from McAlester High School this month are Sarah Brueggeman and Tiler Wilson.

Ms. Brueggeman is the daughter of Mark and Sadie Brueggeman.

Her class schedule includes Band, Yearbook, "Advisory,"

Pre-Calculus, AP, Spanish II, English IV, Physics, and Economics.

She says she enjoys "playing my clarinet, reading Lurlene McDaniel books, walking my dog, Maddie, hanging out with my friends and working with the little kids at my after-school job."

After high school she plans to attend Southeastern Oklahoma State University and get a degree in Math Education.

Tiler Wilson is the son of Lindell and Donna Wilson. His class schedule includes Band, Buff TV, Advisory, English IV AP, Math Finance, Psychology, Physics, and Economics.

He likes Band, where he plays the trumpet, Buff TV, basketball, reading, and "working at Wilson Transfer, (My dad's business.)" Tiler is vice-president of the Senior Class.

After high school, he plans to attend Oklahoma State University and major in Business Administration. Then he plans to attend Law School and become a lawyer.

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McAlester needs to "improve its image" Mark admitted, in order to hire or attract personnel, and to help economic development.

Part of that would be a city "clean-up" that is ready to start.

A program has been worked out for 20 to 25 houses to be built on property that has had liens filed and had been through the jury system.

McAlester is "on the right track" and is "doing a lot of good things," Mark said.

"I'm proud of our community and we have lots of good people on board," he added.

Asked about a recent story in the "Daily Oklahoman," about a crisis in finances of city government, in McAlester, the city manager said the city sought two legal opinions on the matter. One was from the original bond company and the other was from a second bond firm. The city took the more conservative approach, and "segregated that money out," effective July 1.

McAlester is trying to come up with a balanced budget... "We are doing everything we can."

Although the two bond officials were looking at the issue "in two different ways ... I don't differ with either...."

"I think McAlester should go forward, not go back," he concluded.

Sorry, Mar.25 Program 'Bleeped'



Jim Bob Miller

EDITOR'S NOTE-When I started looking over my notes on the program two weeks ago, I first thought I would write the story for the newspaper, because as the speaker said,

"Needless to say, it was quite interesting."

But as the speaker said, some of the information was presented to the jury and some was not. Charges are still

pending against one family member., "And the phrases he used and quoted the defendant as using, are not only "quite interesting" (unless you feel you don't want to watch programs on TV that uses such phrases, or read media stories which use them.) But they also

are quite libelous if they are written about a defendant and have not been proven, or even presented in a trial.

And the newspaper officials for some reason, did not send a reporter to the meeting.

Anyway, I decided not to write it for the newspaper. When I mentioned it to a member of my family, she said I should "be careful too."

That will make you think also.

So rather than taking out all the possibly libelous parts, or putting "bleep" or leaving as blank space, with the advice of club officials, I did not write up the program for that week.

Sorry. If you think that sort of thing is interesting, and if you missed it, YOU MISSED IT.

Talk to someone who was there, or ask the speaker about it. (Don't ask me. -Fred Turner)

Attendance, Visitors, Handshakers Plus the Big Bucks

There were 45 present last week, and no visitors other than the "Good Citizens" from McAlester High School, Sarah Brueggeman and Tyler Wilson.

The previous week there were 40 present.

On March 18, there were 34 present. City Council Member Sam Mason was present, as were David Medley and David Burke.

HANDSHAKERS-Last week Wayne Hanway gave the dollar to Randy Saunier. Wayne drew the Big Money card for no money.

Two weeks ago, Nobel Miller gave the buck to Greg McNall. Jim Henley drew the wrong card.

Three weeks ago Waye Hanway had the dollar again, and we don't know what happened, except that the Big Pot is growing and it's still there.