

BBAA Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2010

The March meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM in the TCC planetarium, Virginia Beach campus, by president Mark Gerlach.

Those in attendance were Christina Anderson, Kenny Broun, Larry Channel, Bryan Condrey, Nick DePaulo, Stephen de Veer, Courtney Flonta, Tony Flonta, Mike Galvas, Mark Gerlach, Dave Hales, Chuck Jagow, Karen Jagow, Georgie June, Garry Mitchell, Bill Newman, John Norman, Bill Powers, George Reynolds, and "Bird" Taylor.

Reports: It was moved, seconded, and approved that the reading of the February meeting minutes be waived, since they are posted on the BBAA Web site, www.backbayastro.org. Treasurer Chuck Jagow reported that as of the meeting date there is \$3228.07 in the Scholarship Fund and \$3805.28 in the General Fund, for a total of \$7033.35. Expenses the past month included renewing the club's liability insurance policy. Scholarship chairman Ben Loyola reported that BBAA scholarship information has been sent to all the schools in the area, and the amount of the award is to be \$1000. Vice President Courtney Flonta reported on upcoming outreach events. She also reported on the 1 March Fourth Grade Science Fair night at Deep Creek Elementary School. At least four members were there to represent BBAA with an indoor display and scopes outdoors. Students and parents enjoyed seeing the Double Cluster, Orion Nebula, Mars, and the Moon, among other sights. ALCOR Georgie June mentioned that Cliff Hedgepeth had earned the Galaxy Observer/Local Galaxy Group award, and had his name in the quarterly *Reflector* newsletter of the Astronomical League. Cliff received applause "in absentia".

A welcome was given to visitors Christina Anderson, Dave Hales, and Stephen de Veer. Stephen joined the club at the meeting.

Old Business: Chuck Jagow followed up on the hosting of the VAAS conference. BBAA is now in the rotation, and will host the 2011 conference. A committee is to be assembled to begin planning for the event. John Norman reported that the YMCA's bid to build a youth center at Northwest River Park has been withdrawn.

New Business: President Mark Gerlach asked if the club had ever looked into incorporating. Ben Loyola replied that it was brought up a couple of years ago, but the leadership at that time elected not to pursue the matter. A discussion of the benefits of incorporation ensued, focusing on the question of liability. Chuck Jagow stated that we have a liability policy, but could not remember the exact coverage. [Secretary's note: See addendum below.]

Schedule: Skywatch is ON for tomorrow night, 3/5. Georgie will call the park to verify. Saturday, April 10 is Yuri's Night at the Virginia Air and Space Center, Friday, April 23 is Mount Trashmore stargazing, and Saturday, April 24 is National Astronomy Day. Anyone wanting to participate in Yuri's Night, contact Bird Taylor. Anyone wanting to participate in the Mount Trashmore event, contact Chuck Dibbs and give him your name, address, phone number, email, T-shirt size, and type of scope (if any).

President Mark Gerlach mentioned that the annual "Globe at Night" sky quality survey was being conducted 3-16 March. For more info, go to the Globe at Night Web site. Also, good sky maps/charts are available from the Hawaii Astronomical Society, www.hawastsoc.org. John Norman mentioned that a shortwave receiver tuned to 2.7 MHz can be used to listen to the Aurora Borealis. There have been sunspots now for 41 days, "crackling like popcorn" in the shortwave band.

After the business session, Ken Broun gave the group a sky show in the planetarium. He showed how he can make the constellations appear more "normal-sized" on the planetarium dome. He showed us some of the tricks he can do with the planetarium projector. He then presented the prepared show, "The Origin of Life", showing how scientists think our solar system was formed.

The meeting was adjourned about 9:00 PM.

ADDENDUM: The BBAA club general liability insurance policy renewal was received in the mail. The specifics were sent to the BBAA officers.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Reynolds
Secretary