

## **BBAA Astronomy Club April 1, 2021 (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)**

**Shawn Loescher** (President)

Called meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

**Vice President Events Report** (read by George Reynolds):

### **April 2021**

- BBAA Club Meeting via Zoom 4/1
- Corn Watch @ Cornland Park, 4/2
- Skywatch @ Northwest River State Park, 4/3
- Corn Watch @ Cornland Park, 4/9
- Nightwatch @ Chippokes Plantation State Park, 4/10
- Garden Stars @ NBG, 4/20
- American Heritage Girls/Trail Life Family Camp, 4/23
- Saturday "SUN"day@ Elizabeth River Park 4/24

### **May 2021**

- Skywatch @ Northwest River State Park, 5/1
- BBAA Club Meeting via Zoom 5/6
- Corn Watch @ Cornland Park, 5/7
- Nightwatch @ Chippokes Plantation State Park, 5/8
- Corn Watch @ Cornland Park, 5/14
- Garden Stars @ NBG, 5/18
- Boardwalk Astronomy #1 5/25 (Tentatively)
- Saturday "SUN"day@ Elizabeth River Park 5/29

## **Secretary's Report**

A motion was made to dispense in the reading of the minutes, which was approved.

**Treasurer's Report** (Richard Roberts):

- General Fund: \$6,413.70
- Primary Scholarship Fund: \$1,770.29
- GJ Scholarship Fund: \$1,604.00
- Total Funds: \$9,413.01
- Expenses: \$374.98
- 131 Dues paid in full members
- 4 Honorary Members
- 13 Associate Members w/AL
- 2 Associate Members
- 115 Regular Members
- 134 Total Members on Roster

## **Scholarship Report (No Report)**

## **Alcor Report (No Report)**

## **RRRT Report (No Report)**

### **Old Business:**

Rich is still looking for input for the BBAA newsletter and as of this meeting, has not received any. Please support the newsletter by forwarding your stories to our newsletter editor at [editor@backbayastro.org](mailto:editor@backbayastro.org).

We are looking for a new newsletter editor, so if you know somebody that is interested, let Rich know.

Still waiting on the city of Virginia Beach as to when boardwalk astronomy can resume, but no word as of today.

### **Observing Reports:**

George Reynolds reports that he has successfully completed the requirements for the Urban list award given by the A.L.

James Council reports that he is attempting to view and “split” double stars as of late but is having a difficult time of it. Several members were able to give James some advice on techniques and filters that could help.

Eddie Parris reports that he has been viewing nebulous lately and getting some good views in the Sagittarius constellation, particularly of the Eagle and Trifid nebulas.

### **Program:**

Samantha Burris on light pollution. Samantha is a senior at Princess Anne High School, and this is one of her presentation projects.

The title is light pollution: astronomical problems of the modern world.

The presentation addresses the history of artificial light and why people fear it. Some of the material used in this presentation was found from the book nightfall by Isaac Asimov. It's a 1941 short story that describes a planet called Lagash that has never experience night because of the planets six suns until an eclipse plunges the planet into darkness. The people were so afraid of the dark, they set the planet on fire and as a result, the planet was destroyed. This is not so far-fetched and Samantha pointed to the 1994 Los Angeles blackout as a example. The residents started calling the emergency numbers to report a thin cloud of light stretching across the sky because most of the people had never seen the milky way and though an invasion was happening.

This is just some of the problems facing us astronomers in regards of light pollution. In 1998 the International dark sky association was formed to address this problem and to educate the public

about the value of the night sky. As a result of this, in Arizona, there are now light pollution laws. for example, the streetlights must be shielded at night, in order to mitigate light pollution.

Samantha ended the presentation with this quote from Fabio Falchi “It is possible to imagine two scenarios for the future, perhaps the current generation will be the final generation to experience such a light polluted world. As light pollution is successfully controlled, alternatively, perhaps, the world will continue to brighten with nearly the entire population never experiencing a view of the stars as in Isaac Asimov’s nightfall novel and short story.” But obviously it's up to us to make that decision.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM**