

BBAA Minutes (February 2026 Monthly Meeting)

Date: 02/05/2026 @TCC Virginia Beach

In attendance: Gabriel Dandrade, Joseph Brown, Eddie Parris, Jonathan Scheetz, Barry Bryant, David Shouldice, Nolan Kok, Matt McLaughlin, Tom Flatley, George Reynolds, Evan Stallings, Mark Wilson, Shawn Loescher, Richard Thiemann, Irene Schindler, Jeremy Mitchell, Ben Loyola, Kent Blackwell, Jeremy Mory, Andrew Kok, Miko Clendenin, Caroline Hendrick. **On Zoom:** Rich Roberts, Jeff Goldstein, Bruce Powers, Roland Downing, Will Kiff, James Hall

7:30 pm: The BBAA February 2026 meeting was called to order by Jeremy Mitchell.

Refreshments Committee (George Reynolds): 7:31 pm

Refreshments were back after being absent last meeting and are available any time during the meeting.

REPORTS:

VP Report (Jeremy Mitchell): 7:32 pm. Jeff was out of town, so Jeremy took over in person since he had access to the calendar.

Calendar of events for February:

Club Meeting (Feb 5th @7:30 pm).

Cornwatch (Feb 6th, Feb 13th, Feb 20th, Feb 27th @6:00 pm).

Skywatch (Feb 7th @5:30 pm).

ADL PTA Star Party (Feb 10th @5:30 pm).

Nightwatch (Feb 14th @5:00 pm).

Stargaze at VLM (Feb 14th @5:30 pm).

JEBLC Star Party (Feb 20th @6:00 pm).

Trail Life Stargazing (Feb 23rd @7:30 pm).

Garden Stars (Feb 24th @7:00 pm).

Astronomy 101 KVRRC (Feb 25th @7:00 pm).

Saturday Sun Day (Feb 28th @10:00 am).

Planetarium Shows (Will be happening Friday Feb 13th @7:00 pm, Feb 21st @2:00 pm and 7:00 pm, and Feb 28th @2:00 pm and 7:00 pm).

Calendar of events for March:

Club Meeting (Mar 5th @7:30 pm).

Total Lunar Eclipse (Mar 3rd @2:44 am).

Cornwatch (Mar 6th, Mar 13th, Mar 20th, Mar 27th @6:00 pm).

Surry ES Astro Classes (Mar 10th @5:30 pm).

Skywatch (Mar 14th @5:30 pm).

Churchland Primary (Mar 19th @5:30 pm).

Nightwatch (Mar 21st @5:00 pm).

Garden Stars (Mar 24th @7:00 pm).

Astronomy 101 KVRG (Mar 25th @7:00 pm).

Saturday Sun Day (Mar 28th @10:00 am).

Planetarium Shows (Not yet on the schedule).

Treasurer's Report (Rich Roberts): 7:42 pm

213 total members on the roster. The club is doing very well financially, since membership dues have been ongoing since January. 61 people have not yet paid their dues, though.

Scholarships are doing well, the main scholarship is fully funded, Georgie June is well underway.

Treasurer's Report was accepted at 7:49 pm.

Secretary's Report (Gabriel Dandrade): 7:49 pm

-Jeff did last meeting's presentation, which was at Kempsville Rec Center since TCC was still closed for the holidays. He presented on the SeeStar S50, the current raffle prize for the Georgie June Scholarship fund and discussed all of its ins and outs.

-Minutes were accepted at 7:51 pm.

ALCOR Report and East Coast Star Party (Bruce Powers): 7:51 pm.

-It's highly rewarding to become a member of the Astronomical League, as you get access to observing programs, Reflector magazine, and astronomy-related news.

-Observing programs are a great way to explore the night sky and achieve certificates and pins. There are also monthly sky charts that are available for members who are curious. They're very beginner-friendly and show how to star hop and navigate the sky.

-Jonathan Scheetz was able to obtain the globular cluster certificate, and Ben Loyola received the Near-Earth Objects certificate for his work.

-The East Coast Star Party is coming April 16-19, and the following star party will be held November 5-8. It's been scheduled to avoid the Staunton River Star Party, being held on March 16-22.

Scholarship Committee (Ben Loyola): 7:59 pm.

The city is funding the third major scholarship, the Nick Anderson scholarship, that the club distributes. The club is also moving to do two main scholarships along with Georgie June, so we'll be awarding an amount of money in the five figures. All three scholarships are being awarded in the beginning of June.

Observing Reports: 8:06 pm.

-Kent Blackwell went through a list of good double stars in view right now for people in the city, including Castor, Rigel, the Trapezium, and more. Recently, he split Sirius. B is 11 arc seconds away currently, but Sirius A is 10,000 times brighter. Kent, using a tape partially covered eyepiece with a Barlow lens, was able to reveal the tiny white dwarf for a split second.

-Regulus was occulted by the moon earlier this month. Several members saw it or attempted to see it, despite the frigid temperature.

-George, at Garden Stars, was able to get the Pleiades, despite the waxing moon being out.

-Bruce tested out his Celestron Origin Astrograph telescope. His very first shot was of the Orion Nebula, and after a five-minute exposure, was able to bring out some amazing detail.

-At Cornwatch last month, Gabriel was able to view the center of the Fornax cluster, something that's hard to do here in Virginia since its so low to the horizon. Six galaxies were visible in a single eyepiece.

-David Shouldice suggested trying to split Antares, since the primary is orange but the secondary is blue.

Old Business: 8:23 pm.

-No real old business tonight.

New Business: 8:23 pm.

-RASC handbooks are still available. Let Jeremy know if you're interested.

-The first order of BBAA merch came in through the website. Shirts, hats and jackets are available on the webstore, and more are being considered. Fleece are being debated to be added to the webstore. We can reach out to our company and see if there's anything else that can be added.

Special Program: Numbering the Stars (Jeremy Mitchell): 8:27 pm.

-Tonight's presentation was all about the star catalogs, presented by our lovely president Jeremy Mitchell. This was about the catalogs beyond the 110 Messier objects, such as the NGC, Caldwell, and others. Each catalog expanded upon the ones that came before, with object catalogs quickly growing into the tens of thousands by the mid-1900s. The star catalogs like the Bayer and Flamsteed, were created to help create a universal system for recognizing stars in constellations, by brightness or by right ascension. Then there are deep-sky object catalogs like the Messier and New General Catalogues. The Messier catalog was created as a list of objects to not view, while the first true compilation of deep-sky targets was the list created by the Herschel family. The NGC was finally created to be the final catalog to end all catalogs, including every single object previously discovered by astronomers. The IC catalog was developed to supplement the NGC objects when astrophotography became popular. Then as photography got better, Barnard created his own catalog for dark nebulae. Then, the Caldwell list was created as Sir Patrick Moore's favorite list of objects. The main point of all of this is

that there are too many catalogs to count, and they all overlap and create a lot of confusion.

Next meeting is on March 5th, 2025.

Meeting was adjourned at **9:15 pm.**