

BBAA Minutes (April 2026 Monthly Meeting)

Date: 04/02/2026 @TCC Virginia Beach

In attendance: Gabriel Dandrade, Sam Elrad, Chris Ward, Will Kiff, Jeff Goldstein, Jeff Thornton, Mike Chesson, George Reynolds, Linda Reynolds, Eddie Parris, Nick Stewerd, Montel Chiles, Dennis Rowley, Barry Bryant, Irene Schindler, Jonathan Scheetz, Patrick Vartuli, Bruce Powers, Shawn Loescher, Jeremy Mitchell, Michael Hall, David Shouldice, Ed Marciano. **On Zoom:** Joseph Brown, Rich Roberts, Kevin Brooks, William Reed, Roland Downing, Sandy Paxson, Abe Casarez

7:31 pm: The BBAA April 2026 meeting was called to order by Jeremy Mitchell.

Refreshments Committee (George Reynolds): 7:31 pm

Refreshments, including coffee and cookies, are up for grabs in the back of the room.

REPORTS:

VP Report (Jeff Goldstein): 7:34 pm.

Calendar of events for April:

Science in Sci-fi (Apr 1st @6:30 pm).

Club Meeting (Apr 2nd @7:30 pm).

Deep Creek Elementary STEM Day (Apr 3rd @8:00 am).

Cornwatch (Apr 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th @6:30 pm).

DCE Steam Day (Apr 3rd @8:00 pm).

Skywatch (April 11th @6:30 pm).

East Coast Star Party (Apr 16th – 19th @2:00 pm).

Garden Stars (Apr 21st @8:30 pm).

Malibu Elementary School STEM night (Apr 22nd @6:00 pm).

Astronomy 101 @KVRRC (Apr 22nd @7:45 pm).

Statewide Star Party OBX (Apr 24th @6:30 pm).

Saturday Sun Day (Apr 25th @10:00 am).

Science in Sci-fi: PHM (Apr 28th @6:30 pm).

Saint Patrick Catholic School Earth Day (Apr 29th @9:00 am).

Woodstock Elementary STEM night (Apr 30th @5:30 pm).

Planetarium Shows (Apr 10th @7:00 pm, Apr 18th @2:00 pm and 7:00 pm, Apr 25th @2:00 pm and 7:00 pm).

Secretary's Report (Gabriel Dandrade): 7:48 pm

-Bruce did the last meeting's presentation on the Astronomical League and on observing programs. It was a large, well-attended meeting with a ton of members, including some new faces. Kent told a whole short story about observing on cruise ships, and there were lots of happenings related to East Coast Star Party. A great meeting for sure.

-Minutes were accepted at 7:50 pm.

Scholarship Committee (Ben Loyola): Out of town

All of our scholarships are funded, Georgie June raffle drawing is tonight, with a SeeStar S50 and Nagler Tele Vue eyepiece as the two prizes.

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. You automatically become a member when you join the club.

-The East Coast Star Party is THIS MONTH, April 16-19, at Chippokes Plantation State Park. Registration is still open to anyone, but is closing very soon, so hurry to sign up. The schedule was handed out at the meeting tonight to help attendees get ready, including all of the details, from check-in, dinnertimes, and nearby stores if you need anything extra while camping. There is a public observing night Friday after the spaghetti dinner. If cloudy that night, Bruce will instead give an astronomy talk in the nearby conference tent.

-As mentioned last meeting, Bruce was able to go ham with raffle prizes for this year's star party, several hundred dollars' worth.

-Jeremy presented an award for outreach to Jeff Thornton, the silver level of the award. He received a pin and two certificates for his outreach.

-Several members received outreach awards for participating in outreach events, including Kent Blackwell, Steve Bellavia, Joseph Brown, Sylvio Canu, Barry Bryant, Gabriel Dandrade, Roland Downing, Jeff Goldstein, Will Kiff, Shawn Loescher, Jeremy Mitchell, Eddie Parris, Sandy Paxson, Bruce Powers, and more.

Observing Reports: 8:08 pm.

-Gabriel saw the Leo Quartet and 3C-273 at the Staunton River Star Party. It was a wonderful event, tons of amazing people and guest speakers.

-Jonathan saw the Whale Galaxy in a friend's telescope, and it looked like a literal blue whale. He also bought a moonscape at the event, a 12-inch.

-This was Bruce's 7th Staunton River Star Party and was able to look through the fainter constellations like Hydra and Corvus. He used the new Celestron Origin and shot 30 images and added ten globular clusters to his observing program. In particular, the Intergalactic Wanderer was a noteworthy highlight.

-Jeff Goldstein saw Jupiter and Venus at an outreach event.

Old Business: 8:15 pm.

-RASC handbooks; distribution has finally been completed.

-Club apparel interest is still up in the air, so message Jeremy if you want any article of clothing, be it a hat, a light shell, a shirt, or something else.

-The Georgie June Raffle winners were drawn tonight. The winner of the SeeStar S50 was Jeff Edmondson, and the recipient of the Tele Vue Nagler 17mm was Irene Schindler.

Treasurer's Report (Rich Roberts): 8:24 pm.

-Slight decrease from last month, thanks to some East Coast Star Party and bulk T-shirt expenses, but shirt orders did help balance that out. Rich was having some issues so this was a concise summary.

New Business: 8:24 pm.

-Shawn talked about the website, and its security fees are about to expire. They're asking for a large upfront fee to cover the website cost and extra security

measures. The question is do we stay with the old provider or move to a new one that might potentially be cheaper but make moving all of the club's information a hassle. Right now there is a push to look at alternatives, but we only have until August to renew or the website will go O-dark thirty.

Special Program: Outreach Activities (Jeff Goldstein): 8:30 pm.

-Tonight's presentation was about outreach events and participation, with our illustrious vice president Jeff Goldstein. He started his presentation by using a 6-foot long piece of receipt paper to illustrate the scale of the solar system, by continuously folding it and labeling it with the planets, Sun and Pluto. Barry also demonstrated Bode's Planetary Law to determine the AU distance of each planet up to Saturn. These were both demonstrations of outreach when clouds thwart the observing plans. Since clear skies are not always guaranteed, having activities like this are a big help. Night Sky Network has several examples that the club can use when doing outreach.

Next meeting is on May 7th, 2026.

Meeting was adjourned at **8:47 pm.**