

## BBAA Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2010

The January meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM at the Virginia Beach City Public Schools Planetarium by new president Mark Gerlach, who recently had suffered a collapsed lung and had just gotten out of the hospital. His daughter Katie accompanied him to the meeting as his "designated driver".

Those in attendance were Neill Alford, Jordan Bramble, Brenda Butler, Dale Carey, Gerry Carver, Cheryl Colvin, Zachery Colvin, Richard Cooper, Courtney Flonta, Tony Flonta, Ted Forte, Mark Gerlach (and daughter Katie), Jeff Goldstein, Chuck Jagow, Karen Jagow, Georgie June, Greg Nottingham, Bill Powers, Kevin Rasso, George Reynolds, Kevin Swann, and "Bird" Taylor. Chuck Dibbs, the VBCPS Planetarium Director, was our host.

Outgoing secretary Matt McLaughlin read the minutes of the December meeting. They were accepted as read. Outgoing treasurer Neill Alford gave the Treasurer's Report. As of the meeting date there is \$7,582.84 in the treasury, of which \$3,206.05 is designated for the Scholarship Fund.

There was no Old Business.

New Business: Much discussion was conducted concerning the schedule, not just for this month, but on into the summer.

Skywatch: Tomorrow (1/8/2010). Most of 2010 Skywatch dates will be the Friday following the BBAA monthly meeting. Skywatch dates are listed on the BBAA Web site and on the Backbayastro Yahoo group calendar.

Nightwatch at Chippokes Plantation State Park in Surry: Saturday, 1/16/2010. Chuck Jagow reminded us that the 2010 permit is posted on the BBAA Web site, [www.backbayastro.org](http://www.backbayastro.org), and that a copy must be present with someone attending Nightwatch. He also reminded us to register at the park gate and deposit the nominal fee (was \$3.00 last year). It is also a good idea, he said to place a placard saying "BBAA" in the car window.

Garden Stars for 2010 will be a rain-or-shine event, reported Matt McLaughlin, as opposed to 2009, when most of the dates were canceled on account of bad weather. The 2010 dates so far are Feb. 19, Mar. 26, May 21, and Jun. 18. The start times will vary, depending on sunset times and Daylight Saving Time. Additional dates will be posted on the BBAA Yahoo group calendar. The cost to attend Garden Stars is \$16 per person, or \$10 for NBG members. BBAA members bringing telescopes get in free.

Night Hike dates for Northwest River Park, as coordinated by Ted Forte, will be May 28, Jun. 18, Jul 16, Aug. 13, and Sep 24.

Mount Trashmore: Friday, April 23 will be another Star Fest at Mount Trashmore. Last year's event was a part of the IYA "100 Hours of Astronomy", and drew large crowds.

National Astronomy Day this year will be the very next day, Saturday, April 24. As in the past, telescopes will be set up at the Virginia Beach Central Library. Kevin Rasso commented that his South Carolina astronomy club got together with local colleges for Astronomy Day and had events with special speakers. He suggested we look into something like that.

Boardwalk Astronomy is coming up again in 2010. After a brief discussion of possible dates it was decided for the officers and Dale Carey to come up with six possible dates for Chuck Dibbs to present to the City of Virginia Beach to choose from. It was suggested that some of the dates include a Full Moon.

VAAS Conference: At last year's VAAS Conference (Virginia Association of Astronomical Societies), BBAA was volunteered to host the annual event in 2010 or 2011. Chuck Jagow will find out which year it is, and the date, so we can start planning. The suggestion was made to coordinate with Kent Blackwell and try to arrange an observing session at Hampton Lodge Campground in Coinjock, North Carolina.

Yuri's Night: Lawrence "Bird" Taylor mentioned that Yuri's Night is scheduled for the evening of April 10 at the Virginia Air and Space Center in Hampton.

Chuck Jagow stated that if anyone learns of a public astronomy event or request, to get the information to Vice President Courtney Flonta, since a duty of the VP is to coordinate outreach events.

Green Run Elementary School is holding their Science Night on Thursday, February 4. That is a BBAA meeting night. Volunteers need to be recruited and coordinated before then with Courtney.

Georgie June mentioned that BBAA has a page on Facebook, for those who are interested. This is the link: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=164636817828&ref=ss#>

President Mark Gerlach asked for suggestions of what we can do new or different this year. Someone suggested we have a workshop for "newbies" – novice amateur astronomers (who might have just received a telescope for Christmas) for them to learn what to do. Others expressed an interest in learning how to collimate their telescopes. Mark announced that a collimation "class" will be held at the Feb. 5 Skywatch.

Jeff Goldstein mentioned that he has a rocketry club at Princess Anne Middle School. He gets together with the Boy Scouts for a rocket shoot at Fentress Field in October, and that BBAA may want to participate and show the Scouts some stars. Ted Forte outlined the steps needed to become a merit badge counselor for the Boy Scouts.

After the business session, Chuck Dibbs presented an animated presentation about Galileo Galilei.

The meeting was adjourned about 9:00 PM.