

BBAA Meeting Minutes 5/5/2011

The May, 2011 meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by President Mark Gerlach. Those in attendance were Bruce Bodner, Dean Brauer, Kenny Broun, Bryan Condrey, Elizabeth Dougherty, Kevin Dougherty, Courtney Flonta, Tony Flonta, Ted Forte, Amy Koenig Gardner, Mark Gerlach, Jeff Goldstein, Erich Hoffer, Bill Holmes, Curt Lambert, Ben Loyola, Matt McLaughlin, Bill McLean, Bill Newman, George Reynolds, Bernie Strohmeier, Kevin Swann, "Bird" Taylor, and Larry Wade.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Jim Tallman was not at the meeting, but he sent in the Treasurer's report. General Fund, \$3205.25; Scholarship Fund, \$3700.12; total, \$6905.37.

Secretary's report: The April minutes were read and accepted as read.

Vice-President Courtney Flonta reported on June outreach events. On Friday, June 10, BBAA will support two elementary School field day events. Indian Lakes E. S. is providing a schedule of speaking times for their second and third grade field day event. Lunch will be provided. Tallwood E. S. is having an "Air and Space" field day theme that day. Mark Gerlach will be there in support of his twin nephews.

Also, a request has come in to support a Cub Scout event on Saturday, 21 May at Trav-L-L Campground off General Booth Blvd. in Virginia Beach. BBAA participants are asked to be there before dusk to teach the belt loop requirements, and show the sky at night through telescopes.

Guests and new members present at the meeting: Dean Brauer, who owns a "homebrew" 8" scope; Bill Holmes, who has "a few scopes", and Erich Hoffer, an astronomy student of Kenny Broun. Dean and Bill were at the mount Trashmore Star Party April 15.

Schedule of events:

Saturday, 7 May: National Astronomy Day. BBAA will have telescopes and an info table at the Virginia Beach Central Library.

Friday, 13 May: Garden Stars, 8:30 p.m. at Norfolk Botanical Garden

Tuesday, 17 May: First Boardwalk Astronomy event (rain date Thursday, 19 May)

Friday, 20 May: Night Hike at Northwest River Park

Friday, 27 May: Skywatch at Northwest River Park

TCC will not be available for the June BBAA meeting. That day, Thursday, June 2, will also be the first day of Kent Blackwell's East Coast Star Party at Hampton Lodge in Coinjock North Carolina. After some discussion, it was decided to hold the June meeting at the ECSP at Hampton Lodge Thursday night, June 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Observers' reports:

Mark Gerlach and Ted Forte reported on their trip to the Tuckahoe star party.

Bruce Bodner gave a brief report on his trip to NEAF (Northeast Astronomy Forum). He attended the imaging conference, where he saw a low-cost spectroscopy device, with which amateur astronomers can do real science.

Ted reported that he had signed up the BBAA for "Discover the Universe" with *Astronomy* magazine. Our Mount Trashmore Star Party has already been reported to the magazine. They have provided a large quantity of astronomy handouts for public outreach.

Kevin Daugherty reported that he was able to observe "earthshine" of the one-day-old crescent Moon on Wednesday, May 4 from his 13th floor apartment in Virginia Beach Town Center.

Old business: No update was available on the status of VAAS, since Chuck Jagow was not at the meeting.

New business:

Mark Gerlach stated that since the BBAA is not incorporated, the officers (and members) could be held individually liable in any suit brought against the club. Incorporation would limit the liability of club members and officers. Discussion ensued, concerning incorporation. Ted said that the club would have to reorganize, and establish a board of directors, and keep the IRS informed of our reorganization, since BBAA is a 501(c)(3) Educational and Science organization. Although the subject of incorporation has been brought up in the past, it had not been pursued. Time and effort were cited as reasons. An estimate for lawyer's fees for incorporation would be about \$1,000. Larry Wade said he has been through this type of exercise before, and that eleven separate documents are needed. He suggested getting a corporate attorney who knows how to do it. Bruce recommended that members attach an "umbrella policy" rider to their insurance policy for protection. Ted agreed. Ben Loyola said he has been through incorporation with his business, and it is not that difficult. Rather than "re-invent the wheel", he and Bruce recommended finding another incorporated astronomy club in Virginia and copying their documents. A motion was made and seconded that a committee be established to investigate incorporation and come back to the club with a recommendation. More discussion. Matt McLaughlin was concerned that it is hard enough to come up with four candidates for the elected offices for the club, and that it would be difficult to get someone to be on a board of directors. Larry and Ben said the "board" could consist of just one or two individuals. Annual filing of a report of organization is required. The motion was carried. A committee will be established.

Bill McLean stated that he needs an electronic membership list to submit to the Astronomical League. Secretary will prepare one.

The subject of the annual July BBAA family picnic was brought up, but no one present knew whether the shelter at Northwest River Park has been scheduled. The Secretary will contact Georgie June, who is the usual coordinator of the picnic.

The August meeting needs a location, since TCC will not be available. Chuck Dibbs' VB Planetarium and Norfolk State University were suggested as possible meeting sites.

The meeting feature was a video of an old black and white "Flash Gordon" television episode from the 1950s. It was a science fiction classic, in which Flash, Dale, and Dr. Zharkov went back in time 1200 years using Dr. Zharkov's time travel device that looked like an illuminated music box. They found a "duranium" bomb with a 1200-year detonation cycle, planted in the past by a time-traveling terrorist. It was hokey, but entertaining.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. by President Mark Gerlach.