

Rappahannock Astronomy Club

Minutes, October 4 2011 meeting

In attendance:

- Scott Busby
- George Clarke
- Brenda Conway
- Joe Fordham
- Leigh Gettier
- Glenn Holliday
- Michael Masters
- Javier Valverde
- RubyValverde

The meeting was opened shortly at 7 p.m. by President Michael Masters.

Program

Brenda Conway presented an update on recent science returned by the Messenger spacecraft, now six months after its insertion into orbit around Mercury. Brenda brought information from NASA briefings she has attended.

Old Business

Mike presented the Treasurer's Report in the absence of Treasurer Tim Plunkett.

Equipment manager Joe Francis was not present to present an equipment report. Brenda Conway reported no new progress on the effort to replace the missing slow motion control knob that is missing from the club's Orion EQ-2 GEM.

Librarian Tim Plunkett was not present to present a library report.

Star parties, events and meetings: Our scheduled events September 24 at Caledon and October 1 at Stratford Hall were cancelled because of bad weather forecasts. We expected a group of Girl Scouts on September 24; Glenn expects them to come on another date.

We currently have scheduled an outreach event for Northern Neck Montessori School at Westmoreland State Park on October 19. However, the part will not decide until October 14 if they are able to reopen after suffering damage from Hurricane Irene.

We currently have scheduled our October star party at Caledon on October 22. Glenn expects a Girl Scout troop to attend this event.

Hartwood Elementary School PTA approached us about doing astronomy at their Fall Festival on October 28, but they have not contacted us with details. We will assume we are not supporting that event.

We currently have scheduled a public outreach star party at Lake Anna State Park on October 29.

Our next club meeting will be our annual officers' election on November 9. Leigh volunteered to bring drinks. Mike took orders for 1 veggie pizza, 1 cheese pizza, 2 supreme pizzas, and 2 sausage, onion, and pepperoni pizzas.

Glenn reported on arrangements for the Heart of Virginia Star Party on November 18-20. He will send directions to the location (T. Brady Saunders Boy Scout Camp, west of Richmond).

Mike has sent our draft 2012 star party schedule to Caledon Natural Area, Westmoreland State Park, and Lake Anna State Park.

Ruby Valverde reported that the Pizza Hut location she investigated does not meet our meeting needs.

Mike has drafted a schedule of programs for next year's club meetings. He solicited volunteers. 10 months of the year now have programs scheduled.

Mike reminded the club of the work of the equipment upgrade committee. They have no recommendations to report yet.

After new business, Scott drew winners for two raffle prizes that were not awarded at the club picnic. Javier Valverde and George Clarke won them.

New Business

Mike introduced a discussion on green lasers, asking if the club should have a policy to prohibit their use at club events. A general discussion surfaced questions of responsibility and club liability. No motions were offered for action on the question.

Mike presented a slate of nominees for our annual election of officers and solicited additional nominations. Motions were offered and passed to nominate the following names for club offices:

President: Leigh Gettier and Ranny Heflin

Vice President: Jerry Hubbell and Brenda Conway

Secretary: Bart Billard

Treasurer: Tim Plunkett

Scott said he will not resume the 50/50 raffle until January.

Members present discussed their current astronomy activities, news, and interests.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 9 2011, 7:00 pm, at [Central Rappahannock Regional Library Headquarters, Fredericksburg, Virginia](#).

Submitted by Glenn Holliday in the absence of Secretary Bart Billard