

Rappahannock Astronomy Club

Minutes, November 16, 2016, Meeting

In attendance:

Bart & Linda Billard
Don Clark
Glenn Holliday
Jerry Hubbell
Scott Lansdale

Payal Patel
Tim Plunkett
Ryan Rapoza
Taylor Rapoza

The meeting began a little after 7 p.m. Ten members were present.

Old Business

- Treasurer's Report—Tim Plunkett's report had no dues or expenditures for October. The number of 2016 paid club members remained 27.
- Communications Committee Update—Glenn Holliday said we should use <https://www.raclub.org> to go to the club website when we need to log in because otherwise WordPress would not supply a secure login page. He was planning to ask Terry Barker if he knew a way to fix that.
- MSRO Update—Jerry Hubbell said an MSRO commission meeting took place on October 28. One of the subjects was finding a fix for the ancient hand controller for the telescope mount. The plan chosen was to install Jerry's G11 mount as a substitute for the Meade mount, which would also allow Jerry an opportunity to test the G11. However, an alternate controller that Myron had ordered might be delivered before Jerry has the G11 ready. He had succeeded in getting the TDM working with it but still had a few other tasks to complete before it would be ready. Jerry showed the MSRO page that was added to the club website, along with the application members could fill out to use the MSRO or request images. He said those who would like to get remote access should install TeamViewer. Ryan asked about Minor Planet Center (MPC) certification. Jerry said he took the data over a few observing nights last spring and submitted it. There was a delay in the MPC getting to it because of upgrades they were doing. MSRO recently received the certification and has been assigned the observatory code W54. Jerry said he could teach observing techniques for submitting asteroid data. (He would review submissions before sending to the MPC.)
- Events Held—Glenn said the star party at Caledon October 22 did not last very late because of wind. Bart and Linda Billard were there with him, and a large group showed up for an Owl Prowl event scheduled for the same night. He stopped by the visitor center to tell them we might have to leave early because of the wind. Unfortunately, the Owl Prowl did not end before the wind persuaded us to pack up and leave. Scott Lansdale said we had a good evening October 12 for the Ferry Farm outreach. About 30 guests, including a city councilman, stopped by for views. Scott was not sure how many visitors went to the other activities going on that evening. The weather was cold, but the seeing was fantastic. Jerry gave a talk to a Mt. San Antonio College (located east of L.A.) class the night before the club meeting. He had met the teacher on his travels this past summer.

• New Business and Astronomy News

- Next Caledon star party and schedule for 2017—The next star party date is December 10. Glenn said he would be late arriving. Scott and Bart and Linda thought they could be there. Glenn said he created a tentative schedule for next year by choosing up to day 4 of the Moon's cycle or one of the last days. The Moon would be either a not-too-bright object for early observing before it sets or rising well after midnight. He brought up the other events we have already committed to and noted attendance has been dropping at Caledon. He asked whether we should be committing to two events in a single month or should not schedule a Caledon event in a month with another commitment. We discussed the issue and arrived at a consensus that we should only give Caledon dates we know we (usually meaning at least Glenn) can cover. We then talked

a bit about the phenomenon of people who join the club and then disappear after a few meetings. Jerry wondered whether we could explore some teaming arrangements with Myron's Culpepper group. Ryan said he would try advertising the next Caledon event on Facebook. Payal Patel suggested showing views locally and explaining they are like previews of what people could see at Caledon. We recalled we were able to do something like that when we had outreach events at Border's. We also agreed the Marine Corps event would be a good opportunity to follow her suggestion.

- Programs for Club Meetings—Linda volunteered Ryan for one on his recent travel to the southern hemisphere, and he agreed. Scott asked him to take the December meeting and let Scott move his Pluto talk to January.
- Officer Elections—The floor was opened for additional nominations as Bart listed the nominations from the October meeting. No nominations were added to the October nominations of Scott Lansdale as President, Glenn Holliday as Vice President, Tim Plunkett as Treasurer, and Bart Billard as Secretary. Nominations were closed after a motion by Linda seconded by Payal. The nominations were then accepted by acclamation.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Wednesday, December 21, 2016, at the Central Rappahannock Heritage Center.