

Rappahannock Astronomy Club

Minutes, November 15, 2017, Meeting

In attendance:

Jean Benson
Bart & Linda Billard
Don Clark
Glenn & Mariann Holliday
Jerry Hubbell

Scott Lansdale
Payal Patel
Tim Plunkett
Ryan Rapoza & daughter
Matt Scott
Tom Watson

The meeting began with pizza instead of a program. Twelve members were present.

Old Business

- Communications—Payal Patel said she had worked up a couple of designs for postcard-sized handouts also suitable for posting on bulletin boards. Scott Lansdale asked whether she could make some slides to show them at the next meeting. Glenn Holliday showed her a RAC business card based on the club logo available in the files section of the club's Yahoo group website ([here](#)). Ryan Rapoza said he has a targeted ad on Facebook that he used a gift card to cover initially. It now has a balance due to keep it running. Jerry Hubbell suggested we should vote on reimbursing Ryan. Linda Billard said the latest *Stargazer* went out at the beginning of the month. She thought it was a fun read. Jerry noted it was a good use of the newsletter, capturing historical information about members' activities. Linda said she had some volunteers for writing articles for the next issue.
- MSRO—Jerry said the MSRO dedication ceremony was held on October 21. He said the SBIG camera had needed drying out because of frost buildup and was now back in service. Jerry said Myron Wasiuta started an MSRO Facebook page. Ryan thought he could link to it from the RAC Facebook page. Jerry also reported that another telescope, a C14, is getting up and running. Its application would be imaging planets and small deep-sky objects. Jerry said he was now testing an Explore Scientific prototype mount with it.
- Recent Events Held—Scott said David Abbou, Mark Burns, and another member supported Meet the Moon Night at Wilderness Elementary School. He said he supported Meet the Moon Night at Porter Library. It was clear but with poor seeing. Many small children attended.
- Treasurer's Report for October 31, 2017—Tim Plunkett said he received dues from April Peterson and Venita Johnson and also recorded the payment of Astronomical League dues. He added the two new members to the list of members with dues paid for 2018, bringing the number to 3. The total membership for 2017 remains at 34 (28 families). Tom asked about what the Astronomical League was. Tim said they send him some news and other items of interest that maybe he should forward to our list. We told Tom about the quarterly *Reflector* magazine RAC members who join receive and about the observing programs available for learning about various types of objects. Someone suggested writing a newsletter article about what the Astronomical League offers.

New Business

- Nominations for club officers—Scott asked about the results of the officer nominations at the October meeting. Bart confirmed that the nominees were Scott Lansdale for president, Glenn Holliday for vice president, Tim Plunkett for Treasurer, and Bart Billard for secretary. Scott opened the meeting for additional nomination from the floor. Tom asked Ryan whether he might like to be vice president. Ryan felt his ability to attend enough meetings was in doubt. Tom said he thought he could possibly try it a year from now. No other members expressed an interest in being nominated. Tom moved to close the nominations, with Linda seconding the motion. Linda then moved to vote by acclamation for all the nominees. She was seconded by Tom and the motion passed without objection. Scott announced the results: he would be president, Glenn vice president, Bart secretary, and Tim treasurer.

- Upcoming Events—Glenn showed the proposed Caledon star party schedule he had sent out. He noted no event scheduled for November because we have a Stratford Hall outreach that month. Glenn said he was still waiting to hear from Caledon about the schedule because of a change in the Caledon point of contact. He said he had programs planned only for warm months. They start at sunset, using about an hour of twilight before it gets dark. Tom said he had gone to this November's Caledon event at about 8 p.m. and found no one there. Glenn said about 15 people came for the program he gave earlier in the evening. Because the skies were overcast, almost all left when the program ended. A couple of visitors stayed on a little longer to talk with Glenn about telescopes. Apparently, Tom and Glenn missed each other.
- Additional Program Ideas for 2017—Tom said he would be available for a program on his spectroscopy for January. He said he would like to try to correlate what his equipment recorded with Scott's SIDs recordings. Jerry suggested another MSRO session as the program for February. Tim suggested we should have an early meeting to help people who get new equipment. Tom indicated he was willing to move to March to allow equipment help to be in January (or February if a switch with the MSRO session is desirable). Another suggestion was to make equipment help part of a Caledon event. Jerry suggested making it start 2 hours before sunset. Someone suggested arranging to have a fire in the pavilion fireplace and serve coffee. Tom said he thought he could provide a lamp with red light and coffee if someone lets him know.
- Other Topics—Scott said he went to the dedication of the new observatory at Randolph-Macon College. He showed a picture of the new telescope, a 40-cm RC telescope and mount by ASA. He said he got permission to organize a visit on a weekend for the club if we have at least 5 people interested in going to Ashland. (Public viewing is on Wednesday nights.) Scott suggested December 2 or December 9 as possible dates and got a preference for the former. Scott said his aunt was a member of a master naturalists group that was interested in having us give a program at the church where they meet. (It's on the left as you go under Route 1 on Caroline.)

Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Wednesday, December 20, 2017, at the Headquarters Library on Caroline Street, downtown Fredericksburg. We will be in room 2.