

# Rappahannock Astronomy Club

Minutes, July 20, 2022, Online Meeting

In attendance:

Bart and Linda Billard

Glenn Faini

Jeff, Librarian from RAS

Mark McDonagh

Troy Major

John Maynard

Rolando Pancotti

Matthew Scott

The meeting began at about 8:05 p.m. Seven members and a visitor attended. We began with introductions for Jeff, the visitor from Richmond Astronomical Society. Glenn Faini also mentioned an email to clubs from the Night Sky Network (NSN) about availability of NASA presenters for clubs with active NSN status. A club member who can sign in to NSN can find out the club's status. We concluded John Maynard would have to dig through what he got from Don Clark and try to find out our active status info. Glenn F. said he would forward the NSN email to John.

## Old Business

- President's Report—Glenn F. said he had received an email from someone at Porter Library about participation in their program for Meet the Moon night. Linda Billard said David Abbou had been involved with it, and the club did it, perhaps 4 years ago. Glenn F. said he would forward the request to David.
- Treasurer's Report—Matt Scott said that incoming funds comprised two Astronomical League (AL) dues payments, one student membership, and one full membership, for a total of \$42.50. We paid for AL \$92.50 for 11 members to participate and receive the quarterly *Reflector* magazine. Glenn F. asked about what payments were made with the PayPal account and what were made via check from the bank account. Matt said right now only our Zoom subscription was paid via PayPal and that it works out about even between the two methods right now.
- Vice President's Report—Glenn F. concluded that the last star party was the June 4 star party which was already covered in the last meeting. The July star party is scheduled later in the month.
- Secretary's Report—Bart Billard reported writing up the minutes for June, sending them out for comments, and that he posted them a couple of weeks ago.
- *StarGazer* Report—Linda said the next issue would be going out in a little over a week. She said she was still interested in submissions. She suggested a submission could be about new equipment or a book, for example. She said if anyone does not feel up to writing, she could rework whatever notes the contributor can put together, or she could interview him/her to work it up into an article.
- MSRO Report—Glenn F. noted Jerry was absent and asked Matt what he knew of the observatory status. Matt said his impression was all the stations were operational, and that Myron had been active with observing and posts, especially with the 10-inch telescope. When Glenn F. asked about StationFOUR, Matt said it was operational but still required Myron to manually open and close the enclosure lid.
- Communications Committee Report—
  - John said the four videos that were posted last month had had some looks, but so far, our usage was low enough to qualify for a year of Amazon's free tier. If we start to get more usage and go above the limit for free usage, there would start to be some nominal charges. He had not cashed the check and suggested that he could probably return it and we could discuss it again when there start to be charges. John confirmed that Don Clark's transfer of the Webmaster duties was completed. Glenn reiterated that he would forward the NSN email about presentations for "active" clubs so John could look into our status. Someone might need to consult Don about what needs to be done to maintain active status.
  - Glenn said our groups.io was still working well and that only six club members have not signed up to get messages. He said that other than the invitations for the monthly club

meetings that he sends directly to members, they would be missing out on images and other news from the club.

- Equipment Inventory Report—Glenn F. said Scott had told him that the Brandon refractor on loan was due to be returned on Saturday. He added that the club had a variety of telescopes in the equipment inventory that are available for loan to members. It can provide members with a way of trying out different telescopes before deciding on a purchase of their own.

## New Business

- Annual Club Picnic September 3—Glenn F. said this year the picnic would be on September 3. He hoped that would get us better weather than last year when it was dreadfully hot with a thunderstorm. He has had some inputs from people about how many in their groups were coming and what foods they would contribute. As we get closer to the date, he would send out reminders with information on what contributions were still needed. He would also remind everyone to wait to purchase supplies until close enough to the date and his confirmation that the picnic is a go, which is dependent on the weather.
- Other Items—
  - Glenn F. asked whether anyone else had something to bring up. When he asked about any imaging, Troy Major said he was doing the Needle Galaxy last month and wound up forgetting about the meeting. He was using the new pier he had installed and said he leaves the mount attached and covered but removes the telescope if there could be bad storms or excessive heat. He mentioned he was looking for a hand controller for an Atlas EQG.
  - Rolando Pancotti arrived in time to ask whether anyone could visually see the comet that some members had imaged recently. Bart thought it was visible with a telescope, but Rolando had not been able to see it with his. After some discussion, the consensus was Rolando had enough light pollution to make the M10 cluster hard to see, and that probably meant the comet was not visible.
  - As the meeting was wrapping up, John was able to report that in May, June, and July there were 304, 128, and 83 requests for videos, so far. It suggested we might not need to worry about excess usage once the year of free usage ends.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Wednesday, August 17, 2022, at 8:00 p.m. It is planned as an online meeting.