

Rappahannock Astronomy Club

Minutes, June 21, 2023, Online Meeting

In attendance:

Bart Billard, Secretary

Linda Billard, *StarGazer* Editor

Glenn Faini, President

Andy Hulon

Troy Major

Matthew Scott, Treasurer

The meeting began at about 8:07 p.m. Six members also attended. There was no presentation this month. Scott Busby had joined the social hour before the meeting, but could not maintain his connection for the meeting because of storm-related technical difficulties.

Old Business

- **President's Report**—Glenn Faini said Bowling Green would now be our official primary star party site. He said Belmont would be available by reservation for members only, and we would no longer include it as a star party site. He talked about needing to get people to start thinking about running for President and Vice President, assuming Bart would continue as Secretary and Matt as Treasurer. He said he would be sending out a message to members urging them to consider running for those offices to assure we would have candidates for the nominations in October and elections in November.
- **Treasurer's Report**—Matt Scott said there were no incoming funds or expenditures for the month. He said the Astronomical League (AL) has brochures providing an introduction to astronomy that could be handed out at star parties. He said the initial price was \$12 for 100 brochures, including shipping. Also, he said we had 1,400 packages from NASA with 7 different reports about aspects of astronomy that we could pass out. He suggested that probably was sufficient, but that we could talk about getting some of the AL brochures for Corey Dallmeyer or other members to hand out at events. Glenn F. asked for clarification, and Matt said that AL was just offering packages of 100 for now but would make more available later, and that RAC had not purchased any. Glenn offered a motion to purchase a package. It was seconded by Linda Billard and passed unanimously.
- **Vice President's Report**—Glenn F. asked whether Myron Wasiuta had reported on the April 22 Natural Bridge State Park outreach at the last meeting. Linda said he had written a report that was in the latest newsletter. He said he thought Myron also did the James River State Park outreach held in May, as well as one at Big Meadows in Shenandoah. Glenn said Corey did a James River State Park outreach this month, and he thought Corey's email reports covered the event well. Glenn also mentioned the York County Astronomical Society's radio telescope project but said he did not have any new information on it to report.
- **Secretary's Report**—Bart Billard said he was behind on writing up the minutes, having just posted April's. Glenn F. mentioned not remembering a comment Bart attributed to him and said that was why he suggested it was Glenn Holliday. Linda suggested it was just trouble remembering back to April, and Bart said Glenn H. had not attended that meeting. Glenn F. also asked whether there was some requirement for minutes to be read and approved at a subsequent meeting, perhaps for tax-exempt organizations. No one knew whether that was the case. Bart suggested it might be in *Robert's Rules*.
- ***StarGazer* Report**—Linda said she did not have any submissions for the next issue yet, but she had an unusually generous number of promises. They included reports from two students Myron had mentored on high school projects involving observations with MSRO telescopes. She said she also hoped Troy Major could do a report on his new camera if he could get a chance to try it out. Troy said needed to fix a backlash problem with his mount to be able to try the camera out.
- **Communications Report**—Glenn said that John Maynard had told him he did a backup of the website and also deleted all the references to star parties at Belmont from the Night Sky Network calendar. Glenn F. said John had been good about updating the status of our monthly star parties on our website when Glenn's email goes out. Glenn said he had nothing to report on Groups.io, which was still running smoothly. He did mention five members had not accepted the invitation to join and were not getting the Groups.io emails. That reminded him of problems Myron mentioned

about getting emails from the MSRO email account on his phone. He said he had problems with messages sent out from his computer using either the MSRO or RAC easymail server that were rejected as spam by any gmail accounts among the addressees. He said he had a gmail app on his phone that he preferred to use, and it did not cause emails to get rejected.

- Equipment Inventory—Scott Busby was not at the meeting, but Glenn F. did not think Scott had anything to report. He said he thought there was little demand for equipment loans because most members had their own equipment. He also thought star parties were becoming mainly outreach events, perhaps because many members with their own equipment were satisfied observing from their own yards.
- Dark Sky International—Glenn skipped this topic because Eilene Kragie was not present to give a report.

New Business

- Belmont Observatory Star Parties—Glenn F. said Scott did not want Belmont listed as a star party site any more because of lack of participation. Belmont would still be available to members. Interested members could contact Scott to arrange a visit in advance and get directions, if needed. Glenn F. said we would no longer list Belmont star parties or send out status for Belmont on star party dates.
- Teaching Materials from AL—Matt clarified that the brochures from AL were 8 pages on beginning astronomy for \$12 (with shipping and handling).
- Night Sky Network (NSN) Pins—Glenn F. said we talked about these before. He was not sure what they were for, or where they are now. They had been sent to Don Clark when he was our webmaster. Glenn F. said NSN now had our current address, so we would get them if they send us more.
- Embrey Mill Pool and Rec Event Today—Glenn said he received an invitation to participate in their event today, and he said we could not because of our meeting (we doubted we could, based on the current weather as well).
- Asteroid Day—Glenn said he received an email about Asteroid Day on June 30 asking whether we had any events planned for it. He and the members present had not known about Asteroid Day. He found the email again and told us it indicated Asteroid Day was proclaimed by the United Nations and that the global topic would be “Thank you DART.” He concluded it was not necessary for us to respond to the email.
- Night Sky Festival at Shenandoah National Park—Glenn F. had an email from one of the park rangers about this event, inviting astronomy club members to participate. Those present were not aware of it, so he said he would forward the message to RAC members, if he hadn't already, and check with Myron to find out what he knows. He said he went ahead and forwarded the Park email, and that members interested in going could contact the Park and let them know whether they would take a telescope.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Wednesday, July 17, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. It is planned as an online meeting.