

19:03 - meeting started (Randy Hemann)

Meeting Attendees

19 present:

Randy Hemann, Michael Currie, Rebecca Bomgaars, Larry Mascotti, Luka Bajzer, ([umbia@att.net?](mailto:umbia@att.net)), Bill Davidson, John Attewell, Josef Chlachula, Mike Carlin, Jerome Taubel, Bob Fealey, Mike Quirk, James Benthall, Jeff Newland, Karl Shidler, Jay McLaren, Noel Taylor, and Brandon Wyman.

Treasurer's Report

- 2 new members: \$60. Donations: \$80.
- Expenses: \$225 Astronomical League dues.
- Balance: \$6500.24 (\$100 in second checking account)

Observing Notes

- Luka, ?, and Jerome were out. Jerome looked at Mars through a brand new 6-inch reflector a guy at work gave to him. Mars was a little orange dot.
- Bob Fealey also saw Mars, in his 10-inch, several nights. It was bigger than a dot, but not much detail.
- Luka was also out to see the Perseid meteors with his son, Sunday night. Yesterday he was out with his telescope to see Mars (featureless), Saturn, and Jupiter (better).
- Randy was out with his 18-inch a couple times. He saw the polar caps of Mars, very clear. He said that Mars looks big to him, Jupiter sized, maybe, in that telescope.
- More on the Perseids. Mike (?) saw a couple, not very many, saw more fireflies. John Attewell saw two bolides, 1 east of Cygnus, straight south, the tail expanded, effervescent, tiny sparks. That was the night before ... Friday night. Luka said he saw two dozen or so, Sunday night at Keller, the crickets were deafening. Unfortunately it was a bit hazy, around 10 to 11 p.m. Luka also saw what he thinks was an Iridium flare around 10:14. Jay was out Saturday and Sunday, with the brightest one he seen was going from west to east (stray?). Josef mentioned that there is another meteor shower going on. Jay said that twice he just saw a flash, wondering if he really just saw something. Jerome indicated that it had Jay's name on it. Randy was up late, 2 o'clock or so Saturday, and then again Sunday when he saw about one per minute, in his backyard. Jay said he saw about four in 10 minutes around 2 a.m. Randy indicated that they were small and go very fast. Jerome was out Saturday and Sunday night, with Sunday being the clearer night when he saw 3 to 4 really bright ones. The first one Luka saw was about 0 magnitude, towards Perseus.
- John Attewell mentioned he is "clocking through" the Messier list, law as he can in the west, which is through the city from where he is. The alignment stars ar hard to find, eye on binoculars, some can be seen in binoculars. Mike Q. asked if he was sketching them, John said yes. He plans to share some kind of 110 page mail merge when done.
- Mike Carlin mentioned some good observing: half moon, Jupiter, Saturn, Mars when it came up. A lot of other people were there, so he showed some star clusters, nice to show them other things, and used his star pointer (LASER) to show where they were. Josef said that a LASER pointer is very helpful, especially at public events. Mike said that people tend to gather where most people are.
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News

- Julie indicated that the second library telescope is close to being done. The current telescope is long overdue, but they continue to try to get a hold of the person. There is maybe an option to put a lien on their tax return.
- Outreach meeting/events update. Josef said there is a event this week Friday at 9 p.m. Members should come about 30 minutes to an hour sooner. Spread the word that this is probably the best time, bright red Mars, with the dust storm calming down. Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter will be out. Neptune and Uranus during the second half. Bob, Jeff, Bill, and Josef plan on being there. When people from the public are asked why they came, Facebook is a common answer, so we are building a presence every month. Jerome asked about KTTC being at one of the events, Randy said that no, they just found us on Facebook. A sign-up sheet was passed around for the group that meets the week before events (GMail & Skype information optional). Travel time, and other concerns made it seem like it would be nice to have an online meeting, especially in the winter months. Jay asked what the purpose of the group was, Josef indicated that it was planning for the events, a week before, always on Thursday. It is a group effort, if you cannot do it, others can. Randy said there was a good looking forecast, he plans to look at Mars. There was a check on who had the phone adapters: Josef, Bob Fealey, Mike Carlin, and John Attewell.
- Josef had some materials to pass around for the next ALCON, which is on a cruise.
- Josef also mentioned the Night Sky Network. John Martin was not present to talk about registering, but Josef indicated that he had done that. It is much more than webinars, as there are resources, materials to get, supported by the JPL. Josef indicated that we need to pay attention to it more. Randy said that he has three to four kits at home. Randy also said that almost all materials are online now. Randy has used them a lot for little things to do. Posting our activity keeps us up to date and shows them they have support, people out there. Mike Carlin asked if someone had signed everyone up. Josef said there are coordinators, four of the RAC members. There are 11 members on the list. An e-mail was sent to Julie, membership tracking, etc. Julie and Josef need to talk more about it in person.
- Josef asked about pictures from recent ALCON. Randy said it went very well, good speakers. The main theme was "Communication". Jay gave his talk Friday morning, it went over very well, and there were lots of questions over the weekend. Randy also said that the facilities were quite striking. Josef showed some official photos.
- MAS - Eagle Lake Observatory, Baylor Regional Park.
<http://www.co.carver.mn.us/departments/PW/parks/baylor.asp>. MAS - www.mnastro.org (5 observing sites). Metcalf Nature Center. "Cherry Grove" in Goodhue County. 8485 520th Street, Kenyon, MN 55946. Bill expressed interest to have pictures and information in the next newsletter. Joseph J. Casby Observatory, Aflan, MN. 44.9245, -92.7924, 840'. Long Lake Conservation Center, Palisade, MN, 46.6470, -93.4650, 1275'. www.mnastro.org/sigs. First Thursday, 7 p.m., about 2 hours. www.skypub.com. www.opcorp.com.
- Bill Davidson mentioned a survey done at the wrap up. There are 1900 members, about 50 returned. Conference preferences survey. Requesting people to do the survey: <https://goo.gl/WEHeJf>.
- NCRAL 2019. May 3rd - 4th, 2019. Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center, Moline, IL. John Attewell is VP. Dean also has a position. Contact Bill Davidson if you want information to get to national. The regional website has some crude bylaws. Google NCRAL to find that website.
- Observatory Sites topic with Jerome Taubel. Jerome was out this weekend looking. Jerome mentioned that

the road to Eagle Bluff is now paved, but the parking lot is still gravel; people may be more inclined to go there now, so check it out. There was a spot checked that is 6 miles west, about 20 acres, \$120,000, with a blacktop driveway (Bob, Chris, and Julie went with), but it is now SOLD. Julie and Chris also mentioned the Root River Park, but it has a problem of being closed at 10 p.m. They have some thoughts about possibly approaching the farmer next to the park. If there is club interest in the Root River Park location, perhaps we can write to the Olmsted County Park Board, request an exception for the club, build a relationship, especially since the park seems quite under utilized. There is a port-a-pottie at the parking lot. The park is open 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. Jerome mentioned giving it a try.

- StarBQ Discussion. Dean is tied up in other things. Luka mentioned September 7th - 9th. October 7th - 13th was also brought up.
- It was also brought up that Austin, MN reached out to the club for help. The person at the observatory there is retiring. Randy e-mailed back, but no response yet. Jerome mentioned that they had a twice a month outreach program, but it is not a very dark sky, close to Austin. Jerome thought it would be worthwhile to drive down and have a look at it. Randy said that we will inquire as to what they need.

RAC Meetings/Calendar

- August 17th Public Sky Viewing. Watson Soccer Fields. 9 p.m.
- September 7th/8th Dark Sky Weekend
- September 11th RAC meeting - presentation TBD
- September 14th/15th Dark Sky Weekend
- October 5th/6th Dark Sky Weekend
- October 8th RAC meeting - presentation TBD.
- October 12th/13th Dark Sky Weekend
- October 13th National Astronomy Day

Other News/Notes/Announcements

- Okie-Tex Star Party October 6th-14th.
- Enchanted Star Party October 16th-20th.

Featured Presentation

“Exploring the Great Observatories” - John Attewell

- Next month.

21:09 – meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Brandon Wyman - Rochester Astronomy Club secretary