

19:04 – meeting started (Randy Hemann)

Attendees

14 present (+5 zoom): Randy Hemann, Larry Mascotti, Joe O'Brien, Jeff Newland, Michael Currie, Jay McLaren, Don and Jan Schlosnagle, Mike Benson, Luka Bajzer, Mike Quirk, Dale Niedfeldt, Julie Gawarecki, and Brandon Wyman. Zoom: John Tacinelli, John Martin, Josef Chlachula, Bill Davidson, and Jerome Taubel.

Presentation

- Cataracts and the Amateur Astronomer: A paper by Kathy and Jerry Olton
- Reviewed by Jay W. McLaren, Ph.D., Professor of Ophthalmology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota.

Business

Treasurer's report

Julie provided an update on club finances.

- Income:

Memberships (?):	\$?
Calendars:	\$140.00
Donations:	\$20.00
Patrons:	\$40.10
Total:	\$210.10

- Expenses:

Storage lock	\$?.00
New checks	?

- **Balance:**

Checking:	\$10,160.99
?	\$600.00
Newsletter fund:	-\$50.00
Total:	\$10,710.99

- Four additional members.
- We had to order new checks since we were two mergers/acquisitions behind.
- Purchasing of calendars, which occurred in December, are shown in the same year as the payments for them.
- A few calendars are left. The price has been knocked down from \$20 to \$10. Let Julie know if you're interested in getting a calendar.

Meeting minutes.

- January minutes are posted in the forum.
- August 2025 minutes disappeared and have been reposted.

NCRAL and Astronomical League

- Randy was not sure if John Attewell is or was on the line in Zoom. No update.

Astronomical League Outreach Award

- John Martin brought this to our attention a month ago.
- There is a bronze, a silver, or a gold outreach award one can achieve.
- Jay McLaren was presented with a certificate and pin for the bronze award. His Silver Award is coming.
- There is a sheet to fill out for the award. Randy reviews and sends those into the Astronomical League. Jay encourages others to fill out the form; he is certain that many other club members should qualify to receive an award.
- There were questions about records on outreach events. Luka suggested getting Dean's records as he kept meticulous outreach records. Luka also said that it would be amazing to digitize those and feed them to an AI and ask it questions

Member Observing Notes & Photos

- Luka gave his son, a freshman in high school, an Orion StarBlast for Christmas. His son has an astronomy unit class that got him interested. They have taken it out five or six times in the past month. They took it out to Keller to look at Jupiter, the basic Messier stuff, the Orion Nebula, Andromeda Galaxy, etc. His son's class is the last class of the day, so they sometimes talk about astronomy after school.
- Luka also talked about the E Star in Orion. It is sporadic to see the E & F stars in Orion. The seeing seemed more consistent with his 12-inch than it was with his 8-inch, but he thinks it has more to do with transparency and seeing than the telescope aperture.
- Larry Mascotti, as an armchair astronomer, saw what should be a rare event. He was referring to the TV reporting on the meteorite that fell through the roof of someone's house. Larry thinks there is only one other event like that in recorded history.
- Luka looked up, today, to see if T Coronae Borealis has exploded yet. It has not. Randy and Luka agreed that that was a “big miss”. It is a recurring Nova, the last three or four cycles of predictions were dead-on. It should become a naked eye visible object. The latest prediction was for 2026.
- Luka also mentioned that it was just found out that Betelgeuse has a companion star. Hopefully that was not made up. One might need to do some research on that.
- Randy talked about how Artemis II launch is being awaited. He did catch a Delta-9 launch recently. About 200 people were there for a 12:45 AM launch. It was pretty cool, but he was not

close enough for it to be really cool. It went over The Atlantic. Randy has a video to share at some later time.

- Joel O'brien mentioned just getting back from three months down in Arizona. He was working with a volunteer group of about 40 people. He talked with them about the lunar eclipse. About a half-dozen or so actually got up and saw it in the middle of the night. He also mentioned that he has done astronomy presentations in the past. He did not think there would be interest this year, but a couple people actually asked. So, he did an astronomy presentation, showing constellations and stars using binoculars as they did not have telescopes. That was fun. They hit it on a nice night where it was about 50 degrees at 8:00 PM. The other highlight from being down there was the ability to see Canopus. One cannot see it this far north, but down there it rides just above the mountains in a location just north of Tucson. It is one of the brightest stars.

Outreach

- Randy talked about outreach events. January was one that got postponed. Randy did a presentation on the topic of Aurora's out at Oxbow Park. Six members showed up for the event. The headcount of attendees was around 40, since all chairs were taken and lots of kids were present. People stuck around for quite a while with the telescopes that were out there. Mike Quirk said that it did get a little hazy. Randy agreed, but there were a lot of people asking a lot of questions.

Upcoming Events

- Lyrid Meteor Shower coming up April 22nd.
- Astronomy Day is April 24th - 25th. We will have a meeting before then to see if we want to do anything special.
- NEAF. Three members plan on attending and reporting back on that.
- NCRL: May 15th - 17th.
- Oxbow Outreach, March 27th (this Friday).

Things to park

- Storage Unit: team updates on that later, possibly the next meeting.
- Land site: Josef couldn't make it to the meeting.
- NCRAL or AL updates: Not sure if John is or was on the line in Zoom.

Parking lot/Meeting room

- Randy had a Q&A with security before the meeting. John Tacinelli needs to work out clarifying the meeting room usage. The previous facilitator retired last year, so some coordination is needed to work it out again.

April meeting location

- Randy had some concerns about the timing of travel to and from NEAF and the outdoor meeting at his place. It would be nice to bring out some of Kirk's stuff to see what works and what doesn't. It would also be nice to have a discussion and brainstorming on what to keep etc.

Next month's presentation

- Larry Mascotti, "The Heavenly Journey to Freedom"

20:46 - adjourned.