

BBAA Minutes (May 2025 monthly meeting)

Date: 05/01/2025 @TCC VA Beach Science Building

In attendance: Gabriel Dandrade, Eddie Harris, Shawn Loescher, Richard Thiemann, Jeff Thornton, Jas Brown, Kirt Kerr, Michael Hall, Jeremy Mitchell, Ben Loyola, Tom Flatley, Eric Fadely, Sylvio Canu, Ed Marciano, Jeff Goldstein, David Shouldice, Linda Hulbert, Kevin Heacy, Evan Stallings. **On Zoom:** Richard Roberts, Bruce Powers, Roland Downing, Dr. Charles Law, Richard Wertheimer

7:29 pm: The March 2025 meeting of the BBAA came to order. Recording started.

JA12 will be the new meeting room for the duration of the summer, since JC12 will be occupied by classes.

REPORTS:

7:31 pm: VP/Schedule Report (Jeff Goldstein).

-Calendar of events for May:

Monthly meeting (Thurs May 1 @7:30 pm).

Churchland Library Astro Day (Sat May 3 @6:00 pm).

Boardwalk Astronomy (Tues May 6 @6:00 pm).

Garden Stars (Thurs May 8 @8:30 pm).

Saturday Sun Day (Sat May 10 @10:00 am).

Corn Watch (Fri May 16 and May 23 @8:00 pm).

Portsmouth Lib Astro Day (Sat May 17 @10:00 am).

Skywatch (Sat May 17 @8:00 pm).

-Calendar of events for June:

Monthly Meeting (Thurs Jun 5 @7:30 pm).

Boardwalk Astronomy (Tues Jun 3 @6:00 pm).

Esther's Bat Mitzvah (Sat Jun 7 @7:06 pm).

Garden Stars (Thurs Jun 10 @6:30 pm).

Saturday Sun Day (Sat Jun 14 @10:00 am).

Skywatch (Sat Jun 21 @8:00 pm).

Corn Watch (Fri Jun 20 and Jun 27 @8:15 pm).

General Information/Events notes:

7:38 pm: Treasurer's Report (Rich Reports)

- Club finances are doing quite well right now (\$16k in the account).
- 181 members currently on the club roster. No new members joined in April.
- Treasurer's Report was accepted at 7:40 pm.

7:40 pm: Secretary's Report (Gabriel Dandrade): Was waived since technical difficulties prevented the April meeting minutes from being uploaded to the website. Waived at 7:41 pm.

7:41 pm: ALCOR Report (Bruce Powers).

- Fall ECSP dates are September 18-21, 2025. Dates were chosen to avoid conflict with SRSP.
- More tools are available on the Astronomical League website.
- Ben Loyola was recognized for the AL's asteroid observing program. This came with a certificate and a pin.

7:45 pm: Refreshments committee (George Reynolds):

- George was unable to attend, so no information here.

7:46 pm: Scholarship Report (Ben Loyola): This is the last week for all three scholarships available, totaling \$9,000 worth. At the June meeting, they will be invited here to read their essays and to receive their money.

Special Program (Dr. Charles Law, Hubble Ambassador at UVA; stellar chemistry and the formation of stars and planets):

-Dr. Law studies radio astronomy and the molecular structure of stars and planets. This division of astronomy is known as astrochemistry (study of the molecular behavior in any astrophysical objects). This field is important for studying how life originally formed, and for understanding physics in extremely

distant bodies like galaxies. Bodies that are studied using this field are planet-forming disks, comets, spiral galaxies, molecular clouds in the Milky Way, dying stars, including supernovas, and more. The presentation deals mostly with the interstellar medium, which is most gas but with trace amounts of interstellar dust. Not every area of the interstellar medium is equally dusty, as the field is very complex and stars ionize areas of the medium, which gives us nebulas. Over 90% of the interstellar medium's gas is hydrogen, most of the rest is helium, while the last 1% are heavier elements like metals (in astronomy, all elements besides hydrogen and helium are classified as metals). Massive stars deposit these heavier elements into the stars via fusion and then their eventual death. Molecular imaging of supernova remnants actually reveal the different elements being released into the interstellar medium. Since the first detection of molecules in the 1940s, over 330 molecules have been detected. Most contain hydrogen, carbon, nitrogen and oxygen. The dust in the IM helps to ensure that these molecules are stable. Most of these are detected in the radio and microwave spectrum.

8:54 pm: New Business:

- Bruce was given a budget for \$700 for the ECSP door prizes.
- Officers were discussing club lanyards for members.

Next meeting is June 5th, 2025.

Meeting was adjourned at **9:07 pm.**