

West Jersey Astronomical Society

Meeting Minutes for: September 7, 2018

Web Address: <http://wasociety.us>

Location: Virtua Moorestown

Members in attendance: 12

Visitors: 0

Officers present:

Pres.: Roger Cowley

Sec.: Paul Bender

Formal Meeting

VP **Steve K** was home with back pain, so **Paul B** spent some time trying to set up his computer to sync with house system WiFi and used a link provided by **Steve** (email) to test if links were active. The screen projection started a discussion on the equipment attached to a 3-1/2" Questar to capture sun spots and solar prominences (<http://www.astrophil.com/k>). Comments by Dave N: Need red energy rejection filter. Cumberland optics in Maryland makes the lenses, their commercial side keeps them in business.

Our president **Roger C** opened the meeting at 7:44PM. **Roger** commented that a good number of **Bernie K's** friends from the WAS attended his Funeral in Trenton on Sep 6th, and **Roger** requested that members who wished to send personal contributions toward **Bernie's** memory send them to **Roger** and **Wade** who would collect and send them to the Bucks Mont Astronomical Club Scholarship Fund, as **Bernie's** family requested. (**Roger** and **Wade** agreed post-meeting to use WAS funds to match member's contributions).

Dave N agreed to pull together an obituary for **Bernie**, and give it to **Joe S. Paul** asked for a volunteer to act as secretary for October, while he was away in Florida. **Dave N** volunteered to write the Oct minutes.

Paul mentioned that the last NEAF had an exhibit on solar astronomy and AP. Question was asked why the Scratch and Dent at NEAF had been discontinued. Several members answered that the S&D prices on equipment undercut retail sellers and to keep the vendor presence, S&D was discouraged.

Discussion on naked-eye visibility of low mag deep-sky objects in our home areas. **Joe S** mentioned this included the Double Cluster in Perseus, since mag 4.4 is easy NE object for the pines, but not for suburbia. **Paul** put **Jerry Lodriguss'** AP image of the Double Cluster on screen as a reminder. **Dave N** commented with his own personal anecdote that **Jerry** was a master at getting the most from astrophoto data.

Dave N had an image he took of Mars on 8/23 after midnight with FireCapture, taking 2,500 frames and using AutoStakkert (to assemble) and Registax (for color adjustment and noise reduction). Taken with 12" ACF using ZWO 178mm camera. Can take 6 min without much field rotation of the planet. Shot seven strips. Confirms some clearing of the Martian dust storm.

Dave also captured several sunspot images on 8/26 using a 3" refractor with Hershel wedge and polarizer, taking 3,000 frames. So sunspots are still occurring, though rare now.

Since we were discussing solar system images, **Paul** put the S&T image of Saturn on screen, shot on August 27 by Damian Peach using the Chilean 1 m scope, clearly showing details of its complex orbital ring system and many bands on the planet itself, as well as the North Polar Hexagon. While **Paul** thought this was a first for an earth scope, **Joe S** said he had seen others (**Joe** was right again, as **Paul** later confirmed; another 1 m scope in Australia, and a 14" Celestron in the French Pyrenees).

Howard S asked if Pluto is observable? **Joe S** answered that with his 12.5" it is borderline visually. Then **Howard** asked about finding Neptune w/binocs. **Joe S** said it might be visible for another month or two, but Uranus will be visible longer.

Pres Roger called the meeting to a close at 9:32 PM.

Submitted by Sec **Paul Bender** on Sep 15, 2018.