

West Jersey Astronomical Society

Meeting Minutes for: January 17, 2019

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

Location: Virtua Moorestown

Attendees: 14

Visitors: 0

Officers present:

President: Steve Kutoroff

Vice President: Ray Pape

Secretary: Arnie Rosemoff

Treasurer: Wade Evans

Informal Meeting

Steve calls the meeting to order at 7:55 pm.

We looked at pictures of the Chinese moon rover and its attempt to grow earth plants on the moon. The new rover, Jade Rabbit, sprouted a package of seeds. This rover landed on the far side of the moon and uses relay satellites for communication.

We examined comparisons between the Saturn V and the new NASA SLS, China's Long March and the BFR from Elon Musk's SpaceX Falcon rockets.

We talked about planetary observations. Venus and Jupiter are in a great spot for predawn observing. Joe spoke about new comets that are now visible. He mentioned that some have been found the old fashioned way, by private amateurs using visual observation. Joe discussed comet McNaught with its huge tail, the end of which could be seen from the northern hemisphere in January 2006, even though the nucleus was well below the horizon. He and Jerry L went to Cape May. Joe could not see any tail, but Jerry captured wisps of the tail end photographically from Sunset Beach. Joe showed S&T's comet projections for 2019. He has been looking for Iwamoto C/2018 Y1 at this time.

We discussed the upcoming opportunity for Messier marathon attempts. The night of March 9/10 would be the prime weekend night near new moon this year.

We brought up the upcoming total lunar eclipse around midnight Jan 20-21. We are hoping to see the stars in the darkened sky at the time of the eclipsed full moon. Of course, we are all hoping for clear skies Sunday night into Monday morning.

We looked at some of Joe's sky snapshots of solar system objects and tried to explain magnitude comparison on his photos.

We looked at Howard Schenk's photo of edge-on galaxy NGC 891 on the WAS home page and compared it to Dan M's shot of the same object in H-alpha monochrome. We had a discussion about transparency and the problems of turbulence in the atmosphere and its effects on visual observations and photography.

Joe shows photos of Bernie H's new Peanut (the dog)... Porsche.

We looked at our public star-watch schedule as of now. Batsto and Atsion are the events that we have scheduled. We have events every month planned.

We talked about the magnetic pole shift and its acceleration over recent years. Variations in earth's magnetic field were explained. There was a story about it at Spaceweather.

We are all warned about driving in the Pines during deer season. It's at its peak now and so is the damage resulting from deer accidents.

Meeting was adjourned a 9:35 pm... Further discussions continue during a snack at TGI Fridays.

Until next meeting, clear dark skies...