



# West Valley Astronomy Club

## Monthly Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2023

**Meeting:** Beardsley Recreation Center - 12755 W Beardsley Rd, Sun City West, AZ 85375 - #1 Chicory Room

**Board Members & Volunteers Present:** Bob Randle (President), Paul Bleikamp (Vice President), Bob Colvert (Treasurer & Program Director), John Hiatt (Secretary and Outreach Director), Janie Randle (Membership Director), ~~Peggy Ann Tweedy (Hospitality Director)~~, Larry Matney (Star Party Coordinator), ~~Amin Panani (Astro-photography Leader)~~, along with other volunteers, club members and visitors ( = **43 total present**).

**1 - Opening Remarks:** The regular meeting of WVAC was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Bob Randle. Bob Introduced himself and thanked everyone in attendance. In addition, new club members were recognized.

**2 - Speaker:** Bob Colvert introduced tonight's speaker, Mark Johnston NASA Solar System Ambassador (in person)

**Speaker Bio:** Mark has been fascinated by the night sky ever since he 'discovered' Saturn in his 60mm Tasco refractor at age 11. 12 telescopes later, he is a NASA Solar System Ambassador, an award-winning astrophotographer and astronomy speaker. He is also a certified cruise ship lecturer on astronomy and space science topics and has earned a Master of Outreach from the Astronomical League as well as Volunteer of the Year from the mayor of Scottsdale for his public astronomy events there. He is an early pioneer with Night Vision and EAA outreach technologies and now specializes in providing live color imaging of galaxies and nebulae during his star party events.

**Topic/Title:** NASA Ambassador and other Recent Activities

**Talk summary:** Mark will speak on his experiences as a NASA Solar System Ambassador and Astronomy speaker and outreach presenter. He will also discuss his experience with Electronically Assisted Astronomy (EAA) and Night Vision enhanced astronomy.

**3 - Future Meetings:** The May speaker is lined up.

### 4 - Future Outreach Activities

Peoria Library Star Party with Jennifer Gordon: WEDNESDAY April 26, 7:00 – 8:00 PM - DETAILS ARE CONFIRMED

Peoria Library - Late September / Early October solar viewing - both locations?

~~City of Surprise Harry Potter Festival April 29th at Mark Coronado Park, from 4:30-6:30 pm - TBD - CONFLICT WITH FIELD TRIP?~~

**5 - Future Club Field Trips:** Flagstaff, Arizona **MAY 26** (Lowell Observatory, 13/15 needed are already signed up), Very Large Array (Socorro New Mexico), Animas New Mexico (Dark Sky Site) , Kit Peak National Observatory (Tucson Arizona), Meteor Lab (ASU - Tempe Arizona), Mirror Lab (UA - Tucson), East Valley Observatory.

**6 - Other business:** The MAY meeting will be a picnic inside at the Beardsley Recreation Center. It will include a "bring your telescope" for help with using it. Luke Edens gave a brief update on the International Dark Sky Association. Locally, Cave Creek and Wickenburg are seeking dark sky designations for their cities.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by John Hiatt, via email on **APRIL 5, 2023**.

Minutes approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Bob Randle (WVAC President)