



West Valley Astronomy Club

Monthly Meeting Minutes

January 6, 2025

Meeting: Beardsley Recreation Center - 12755 W Beardsley Rd, Sun City West, AZ 85375 – Agave Room #4

Board Members and Volunteers Present: Bob Randle (President), Bob Colvert (Treasurer), John Hiatt (Program Director & Library Telescope Coordinator), Larry Matney (Outreach Director), Bud and Betsy Johnson (Secretary), along with volunteers, club members, and visitors (**Total Present: 51**).

1 - Opening Remarks: This meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Program Director John Hiatt, who introduced tonight's speaker, Mark Johnston. Mark is Vice President of the Phoenix Astronomical Society. In 2024, the National Science Foundation appointed him an ACEAP Ambassador to Chile. Based in Scottsdale, Arizona, he does over 100 Astronomy Outreach programs a year at schools, STEM camps, libraries, and corporate facilities. Mark (@azastroguy) contributes to social media on Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook, You Tube, and Threads.

2 – Presentation: In June and July he spent 10 days in Chile, visiting the largest radio and optical observatories there, getting access to the telescopes, control rooms, astronomers and more. The dark skies in the southern hemisphere are phenomenal. He described the spectacular capabilities of the telescopes, which help in understanding ultra faint galaxies, transients, dark matter and dark energy. The Vera Rubin Observatory telescope, one of many telescopes in this mountainous area, has a field view of 48 moons.

3 – Other Business: Bob Randle thanked everyone for coming tonight. He said WVAC has 85 paid members this year. We will use this Agave Room for our meeting room until Spring, and then, in the fall and Christmas we will meet in the Chicory Room again.

4 – Door Prizes: There were two prizes tonight, a book and a calendar.

5 – 50-50 Prizes: None tonight.

6 - Future Meetings: The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 7 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm. Minutes submitted by Bud and Betsy Johnson, via email, **January 6, 2026**.

Minutes approved by: _____ Date _____
Bob Randle (WVAC President)