



West Valley Astronomy Club

Monthly Meeting Minutes

April 7, 2026

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

Board Members and Volunteers Present: Bob Randle (President), Paul Bleikamp (Vice President), Bob Colvert (Treasurer), Larry Matney (Outreach Director), Josh Burtrom (Star Party Coordinator), Bud and Betsy Johnson (Secretary), & members & visitors **(Total Present: 45)**.

1 - Opening Remarks: This meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Bob Randle. Bob Colvert introduced tonight's speaker, Vannessa Gressieux, a NASA Solar System Ambassadors participant, currently working at NSF's NOIRLab, Kitt Peak National Observatory in Tucson. She guides audiences into closer understanding of science and discovery. The subject of her presentation tonight is "We Choose to go to the Moon." Her topics covered traveling and living in space. Scientists designed Skylab for both travel and living, studying radiation in space and on the moon, water detection, system performance, the importance of food, etc.; the longest stay was 437 days in space. She enjoyed talking about Artemis I (uncrewed, but with three mannekins for checking the effects of radiation in space) and then Artemis II, which is presently ongoing, with four crewmembers going around the moon and returning to earth on Friday. The priorities for Artemis II are a safe return and evaluating system performance, etc. Upcoming projects in process are the Gateway Lunar Outpost and the Space X Starship, a human lander. She also spoke of the International Space Station and all of its missions, with 280 people from 26 countries involved. After her presentation, she invited everyone present to come to Tucson to visit Kitt Peak.

2 – Other Business: Bob Randle talked about a museum in Hutchinson, Kansas, which has the Apollo 13 capsule for viewing, after one man rebuilt all the components that were destroyed. Bob also said that John Hiatt will be moving to Colorado, so WVAC will need a new Program Director and Library Telescope Coordinator. Please consider taking this position; see Bob if you are interested. Bob also said that there are now 30 people signed up for the Lowell Observatory trip on April 16, leaving on Thursday morning to check in at noon. Please bring your WVAC name tags! Next month's meeting is the last one until the fall; it will be a potluck picnic inside. John Hiatt won an 18' Dobsonian telescope; the need for an observatory building to house this telescope was discussed.

3 – Door Prizes: None tonight. **50-50 Prizes:** There were two \$13.00 prizes tonight.

4- Future Meetings: The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 5; time & specific room will be provided by email.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm. Minutes submitted by Bud and Betsy Johnson, via email, **April 7, 2026.**

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