

West Jersey Astronomical Society

Meeting Minutes for: August 3, 2018

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

Location: Virtua Moorestown

Members in attendance: 17

Visitors: 1

Officers present:

Pres.: Roger Cowley

Vice Pres.: Steve Kutoroff

Sec.: Paul Bender

Formal Meeting

Our president **Roger C** opened the meeting at 7:47 PM. **Chris Harden**, an officer 25 yrs ago, was visiting. Has a 6" quantum scope.

Web page announcements: the Rancocas star watch have been postponed till next Fri Aug 10. Tomorrow is Batsto star watch.

Roger asked what members have sighted recently. M31, M4, were looked at by **Ray P** and **Ken W. Paul R** looked at the Ring Nebula in Lyra.

Jim M sent **Bernie K** several shots of Mars at opposition, taken with his AT111 triplet refractor using an 11mm ocular for eyepiece projection with a canon T2i using 60 fps in 640 for 100 frames. **Jim** visualized both polar caps and the dark band of Solis Planum in these images.

Bernie K asked: Why are some oppositions good and others poor?

Mars has an elliptical orbit, earth less so. Mars period is 638 days. Any Martian diameter over 18 arc seconds is reasonable. **Bernie** had **Steve K** put up a great up-to-date chart of the orbits of Earth vs Mars, by **Dirk Mattusek** to schematically answer that question.

Spaceweather.com articles stated the "longest lunar eclipse of the century is about to begin." They expected the total eclipse on July 27, 2018 to last for almost 2 hr. **Alan D** addressed how long is a long lunar eclipse, and asked "was it really the longest in a century" (i.e., the past 100 yrs). There was some confusion caused by Spaceweather's use of both descriptions "of this century" (the 21st Century) and "in a century" (the past 100 years). There was indeed a slightly longer lunar eclipse in 2000, but that was in the 20th Century.

Alan mentioned that the sunspot frequency was still very sparse, **Steve K** put several live sun visualizing sites on screen. Only 1 sunspot, #2717 was identified clearly, but barely seen on SOHO black and white site. Looked back to solar eclipse on August 21 of last year, when many were easily seen and photographed. Spaceweather.com displays "sunspot number" and gives a formula for calculating of sunspot number. Divide number R by 15 to get approx number of sunspots.

Joe S asked **Steve** to put the WAS web site display of all shots of the Venus-Crescent Moon pairing from July 15 on screen. Nice collection of this event.

Roger concluded meeting at 9:18 PM.

Submitted by Sec. **Paul Bender**, on Aug 16, 2018.