

West Jersey Astronomical Society

Meeting Minutes for: March 16, 2018

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

Location: Virtua Moorestown

Members in attendance: 16

Officers present...

Pres: Roger Cowley

Vice Pres.: Steve Kutoroff

Tres: Wade Evans

Sec.: Paul Bender

Informal Meeting tonight

Roger began meeting [at 7:50PM](#).

Joe S., pointed out that: Venus and Mercury are now visible in evening sky, [April 2](#), Mars and Saturn will be very close, and Rittenhouse and Belplaine are starting their star watches this weekend.

Wade E., announced [next Friday 3/23](#) is a star watch at Atsion for girlscouts and WAS members [7:00](#) moon etc.

Steve K., announced that the Trenton Computer Fair [begins tomorrow](#), there will be instructional classes.

Val remarked that Stephen Hawking passed on the date 3.14 (pi date).

"The Black Hole War" by Leonard Susskind, "My Battle with Stephen Hawking to Make the World Safe for Quantum Mechanics", (Jul 2008).

March 3/15 will be the maximum elongation of Venus. **Alan D.**, commented Mira is decreasing in magnitude. Roger had Steve pull up AAVSO data on Mira which showed that the decrease was only just beginning. It will be 11 months for another max in Mira.

Roger reviewed the nuclear processes thought to power Mira.

H to He to Carbon (He + C to O).

Joe S., "humanity star" (dodecahedron?) satellite from Peter Beck, about mag 4.6. In sky and telescope. Joe said it was around mag 6 but it flared to ca mag 2 every once in a while. Will only be up for ca 6 months. Flashes for only a sec due to rotation of facets.

Thehumanitystar.com

Chinese space station is going to come down, but likelihood that a piece will cause injury is very low. (SkyNTelescope article.)

There are ca 13 named comets credited to Messier, who was called "the ferret of comets". Messier worked in Paris as a draftsman and lived in poverty. He fell through the floor at night and hurt himself badly. **Bernie K.**

Yerkes 40" 60 foot scope's tube made from many 55 gal drums welded together.

Sunday 3/18 night the crescent moon will join Venus and Mercury

Winter Hexagon: Wikipedia stars are parts of 6 constellations: Rigel, Aldebaran, Capella, Pollux, Procyon and Sirius.

Bernie K.,: Messier Marathon: TonightsSkyMaps

Http: sjastro.org/messier for Joe's sequence.

Joe S., found 103 Messier objects from Coyle Field in one night in [9 hrs till 5:12AM](#)

He used a recommended Marathon Log "Harvard Pennington's "The Year Round Messier Marrathon Field Guide". Joe used 12.5" Dob.

Dave N: added that Messier is reported to have used a 3" scope.

Omega Centuri Galaxy: **Joe S.,** used 200mm telephoto on his cannon 6D to capture it in sky.

The antenna was a landmark. Feb 13th got beautiful shot also included Centaurus A. He reviewed his shots of Venus and Mercury over last few months.

Bernie K., and **Dave N.,:** grinding and polishing with hex tiles embedded on 6" disc with plaster, used epoxy to fix them on, and a pitch lap on another plaster disc.

Alan D: 1 spot on the sun. 2701. Auroras: see Aurora Alerts, Oliver White, March 14th. For aurora colors, pink is nitrogen, and green is oxygen.

Roger called meeting to close [at 9:44PM](#)

Submitted by Sec. Paul Bender, March 20, 2018