

Oracle Dark Skies Committee  
Minutes November 3, 2016  
La Hacienda Club, Saddlebrooke Ranch

Attendees: Mike Weasner 520-289-3402, [mweasner@mac.com](mailto:mweasner@mac.com); Evaline Auerbach 520-610-8742, [evalineja@icloud.com](mailto:evalineja@icloud.com); Chip Parfet 303-257-9475, [cparfet@gmail.com](mailto:cparfet@gmail.com); Richard Spitzer 520-825-3116, [rspitzer@wbhsi.com](mailto:rspitzer@wbhsi.com); Vince Tammazzo 520-929-5583, [vincetra@centurylink.net](mailto:vincetra@centurylink.net)

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 pm.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer's report: See report attached. \$241.18 balance. Donations: Super Moon at OSP Event = \$5.00. El Rancho Robles star party = \$150.00 check. No expenses.

Report on previous events/activities

- Weasner: Oct. 15: The Super Moon event: Chris Mobley of Saddlebrooke brought three telescopes. About 100 people attended the event to enjoy music on the trail and then to see the moon coming up over the mountains. People who bring telescopes to OSP events are well received and gratitude is shown. One visitor was a photographer from New York who had just moved here and wants to get into astrophotography. A beginner astrophotography workshop is planned 18 March at the scheduled star party at OSP.
- Auerbach: Oct. 17: Steward Observatory: a new movie about the History of the Steward Observatory was shown, in honor of the 100th anniversary of the gift of Mrs. Lavinia Steward of Oracle which founded the Observatory. Cathy Ellis of Oracle, who had written an article about the Stewards, was on the panel and showed some related slides. The Observatory had copies of the Oracle Historical Society newsletter with articles by Ms. Ellis and by Evaline Auerbach available and Auerbach handed our fliers about the upcoming Celestial Concert, Dec. 18.
- Weasner: Oct. 26: Everybody at the El Rancho Robles event were "just dying to see" the stars, the planets, and so forth. This was a private party for the ERR guests from Lantana Co., a Medical IT Consulting Co. These guests were from all over the country, many in places without access to dark skies. One asked "What's that cloud?" It was the Milky Way, something many on earth cannot see from where they live. One thing that impressed them was the idea that if we waved at the Andromeda Galaxy (visible in the dark Oracle sky) from Earth, it would take 2.5 million years for anyone there to see that wave. The Oracle Dark Skies Committee has done three star parties at El Rancho Robles and received donations. In order to properly see at the skies, they have to unscrew some bulbs and turn out others.
- Spitzer: The viewing events at Saddlebrooke are still going on and have been moved around to different locations. The possibility of holding a joint Saddlebrooke SkyGazers Club and Oracle Dark Skies Committee star party at Saddlebrooke Ranch in 2017 was discussed. Weasner and Parfet will check out possible Ranch locations.

Upcoming Events

- December 18. Celestial Concert by the Oracle Piano Society at the Oracle Center for the Arts. The concert is at 3:00; a program about the "Bethlehem Star" at 5:00. Dark Sky viewing will follow. Weasner & Auerbach will be attending the Nov. 12 OPS Board meeting for details, including finalizing the telescope placements. People bringing telescopes won't have to pay for the concert. The Saddlebrooke SkyGazers Club and Weasner will be bringing telescopes.

- March 18 - Star Party at Oracle State Park which includes the third annual celebration of the dark sky designation.
- September 2017 - The second star party at Oracle State Park. The Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association (TAAA) has agreed to support the two events at Oracle State Park. Stellarvision in Tucson has a 16-inch telescope on a trailer and could be asked to come out.
- Rinio, Park Ranger, just got back from Australia.
- A possibility for 2017 is a camping star party event at OSP.

#### Other

- A proposal (see attached) to formalize a relationship between the Oracle Dark Skies Committee and the Friends of the Oracle State Park is to be presented at the FOSP meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 2:00 at Oracle State Park. Parfet said that interest is rising in the dark skies aspect of Oracle State Park and less in FOSP. He compared it to a “globular cluster”.
- At the Super Moon OSP event, Chris Mobley mentioned that he can repair a telescope that the park has. This telescope was originally donated by Vixen without a motor. When a motor and battery pack were finally donated and installed, the power likely “fried” the drive due to a wrong connector on the battery pack. Weasner asked Rinio if it was all right for Mobley to fix it and she was amenable. Steve Haas, park manager, needs to approve any money to fix it. Mike will take care of arranging it all, including getting a repair estimate from Mobley.
- Casey Eagan, a local former teacher, is interested in helping develop six programs about the impacts of light pollution in six areas:
  - Human Health
  - Astronomy
  - Safety
  - Wildlife
  - Energy Costs
  - Cultural Heritage

#### Adjournment & future meetings

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.
- The next meeting is Thursday, December 1, at Oracle State Park.
- Meetings in 2017, first Thursday of each month, 6:30pm:
  - Saddlebrooke Ranch, La Hacienda Club: Jan, Apr, July, Oct
  - OSP: Feb, May, Aug, and Nov
  - Saddlebrooke, Cactus Room: March, June, Sep, and Dec 2017  
(Spitzer will advertise Saddlebrooke meetings to the community; Parfet will advertise Ranch meetings to its community.)

Signed,

Evaline J. Auerbach, Recorder

Signed,

Mike Weasner, Chair



Proposed motion (or resolution) to be proposed at the Oracle Dark Skies Committee and at the Friends of Oracle State Park for adoption, or amendment

Whereas the Oracle Dark Skies Committee (ODSC) began with the support and virtual sponsorship of the Friends of Oracle State Park (FOSP);

Whereas ODSC and FOSP have similar if not identical missions to support Oracle State Park (OSP) and its Environmental Education programs;

Whereas ODSC and FOSP wish to continue their relationship and facilitate support for both organizations and for OSP;

Whereas FOSP is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization and an Arizona non profit corporation;

It is moved and seconded that,

1. ODSC continue to function and operate in conjunction with and like a committee of FOSP;
2. Members of ODSC are not required to be members of FOSP, but are welcome to join;
3. ODSC shall designate a member to be a voting member of the Board of FOSP, and the President of FOSP shall designate that person as an at-large member;
4. Donations to ODSC shall be made to FOSP and the FOSP Treasurer shall keep track of these designated donations, but shall not open any separate bank account;
5. FOSP shall make available funds derived from ODSC donations to support ODSC and other ODSC activities as designated by ODSC;
6. FOSP is not limited in its ability to support other activities of ODSC beyond the amount of its designated donations, but consistent with the mission of both organizations;
7. ODSC may support activities of FOSP that are consistent with its mission;
8. The FOSP Treasurer's regular reports at meetings of the FOSP Board shall specify the balance of any designated donations to ODSC.