

**Oracle Dark Skies Committee
Saddlebrooke Ranch
Minutes January 5, 2017**

Attendees: Mike Weasner 520-289-3402, mweasner@mac.com; Evaline Auerbach 520-610-8742, evalineja@icloud.com; Jennifer Rinio 520-896-2425, jrinio@azstateparks.gov; Vince Tramazzo 520-919-1183, vincetra@centurylink.net; Roddy Wilder 520-500-6077, roddywilder@gmail.com; Bill John 520-825-0488; Cheri Alfrey 816-812-0698, paintingsbycheri@gmail.com; Dean Alfrey 816-716-7436, deanalfrey@gmail.com; Rick Weiland 630-253-6285, wylanrickster@comcast.net

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer's report: Received donations of \$24.00 at the Oracle Piano Society "Dark Skies Celestial Concert". The money that ODSC takes in from now on will go into the Friends of Oracle State Park funds earmarked for the ODSC. All previous monies have been transferred to Friends.

Reports

- * Weasner has been elected vice-president of Friends of Oracle State Park.
- * The new regional manager for Arizona State Parks has worked to get OSP open seven days a week. In order to do this, they are in the process of hiring a park manager and others. The park manager was formerly shared with Catalina State Park. They will be getting cabins and an area for backpackers and overnights - astrophotographers and so forth.
- * Jennifer Rinio said that getting the cabins may take two years to five years. There is currently no infrastructure for them. Being open seven days a week is probably about three months out.
- * Two more telescopes have been donated to FOSP: 6" Dobsonian, 8" Dobsonian.
- * Various people have approached Weasner about how to control light pollution in their neighborhood —at the Celestial Concert for instance. Weasner offers to be a go-between if they contact him; so far, no one has contacted him with more details about their situation. In general it is better to approach the individual who may be in violation than report them to the County, where enforcement through the Sheriff is not available anyway.
- * The issue of local light pollution brings up the question of having a workshop about light pollution. A man near Phoenix makes shields that can be cheaply installed on lights. Something the ODSC membership should think about.
- * Weasner reported on the IDA annual general meeting Dec. 3:
 - * The Phoenix LED conversion was turned around, so much so that Phoenix may be the model for the way LED lighting should be done.
 - * Presentation by National Park Service.
 - * Beijing, China, has an IDA chapter inspiring attention to the dark sky by showing people what the night sky looks like. Greece is also doing something.
 - * Chicago is converting 3,000 lights. The mayor had said that they wanted to show a very bright city to "deter crime" (Chicago must have no crime in the daytime.)
 - * Pricing is getting better for the appropriate lights, though they are still slightly more expensive.

- * IDA presented an award to a 6-year-old: for his poem. Weasner read his impressive and expressive poem.
- * A bus tour that was sponsored by a lighting-consultant went to places with good and bad lighting. Many of the businesses around the airport are doing some smart lighting. A sports complex has upgraded lighting using proper LED technology. Driving past it one could hardly tell that the sports complex was there. On the field it's like daylight; off the field, it's dark.
- * Joshua Tree Astronomy Arts Theater was announced in California. It presents a live deep space viewing experience. Their business cards highlight an artist each month. Again, something the ODSC could think about.
- * Chris Mobley is still going to do repairs on the telescope at OSP. Visit to check out the telescope has not yet been scheduled.
- * Rinio is doing dark sky readings at the park. This is for the annual reports to IDA.
- * An "Arizona Illustrated" reporter came to the park on 3 December as part of a series being done on Oracle. He talked with Rinio, Vasquez, and Parfet. The reporter may want to do a story at a later date about astrophotographers in Southern Arizona.
- The Celestial Concert was presented at the Oracle Piano Society, December 18. It was developed jointly with the ODSC. The concert was the concluding part of several events devoted to the centennial of the gift of Mrs. Lavinia Steward of Oracle in 1916 which began the Steward Observatory. The concert itself contained live piano music by Steve Cook, with selections based on "celestial" themes. Adam Block's astrophotography was projected during the musical piece. Then Block talked about how the photos and music went together; Following the concert, Fr. Corbally of the Vatican Observatory gave a program about the "Bethlehem Star". He presented history of several times in which the birth of Jesus could have occurred and then laid out scenarios about what celestial events occurred during those periods to gain the attention of the Magi. Saddlebrooke Skygazers Club telescopes were set up for viewing afterwards. The total attendance was 84 people. The Piano Society contemplates doing that kind of event again.
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Upcoming Events

- **Feb. 11:** Dick Boyer is to give his talk about the moon at 7:30 at OSP. It would be good to have a table before the program. Saddlebrooke could do telescopes.
- **Early March** - An Adam Block art show is being planned at the Oracle Art Station. It is planned to have telescopes in use out by the American Avenue to catch people's attention. People who stop while driving by would be directed to the art show inside. There is a possibility of having a joint show with Dan Blanco's art. Blanco was a founding member of the ODSC who passed away in September.
- **March 18:** A star party is planned for the second anniversary of the designation of the park as an "International Dark Sky Park". There will be a talk on beginner digital astrophotography by Weasner. TAAA telescopes will be there along with tables and live music. The Saddlebrooke Skygazers Club is also invited to participate.
- **Sometime in 2017** - a camping event had been considered, but perhaps it should be on hold until the new additions to the park take place.
- A "Southern Pinal County Star Party" has been proposed at Saddlebrooke Ranch. Details To Be Determined.
- In planning is the development of specific programs for each "problem" caused by light pollution, perhaps with Casey Eagan, a local science teacher.

Adjournment & future meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm. The next meeting is at Oracle State Park, **February 2, at 6:30pm.**

Signed,

Evaline J. Auerbach, Recorder

Signed,

Mike Weasner, Chair

