

Black Canyon Astronomical Society (BCAS)

Monthly Meeting Minutes

Thursday May 27, 2021

7:00 to 8:10 p.m.

Online BCAS video meeting using Zoom video conferencing service

Prepared by Val Szwarc- co-Secretary

Note: **BCAS Business Topics:** Business was not be covered in this video conference.

16 logons via Zoom and 20 individuals attended online.

Minutes Summary:

Vice President Art Trevena opened the meeting, welcoming members. Astronomical News was mentioned by Art Trevena, Vice President and Val Szwarc, co-Secretary and included the recent landing of a China Mars rover, the identification of rapid radio bursts tied to spiral arms in 5 galaxies with the help of HST imagery, and the Lockheed Martin announcement of partnering with GM to design a lunar rover. The program for the meeting was the topic The Scientific Search for Extraterrestrial Life presented by Nancy McGuire, President of WCAS.

Program Presentation and Summary of Key Points:

Nancy presented a thought-provoking topic that ultimately tries to consider the question, “Are we alone in the Universe?” Historical efforts as far back as the 1800’s suggested scientific studies to search for extraterrestrial life was highlighted to the current SETI efforts, which are usually partnerships between organizations. Some of the key topics of the program included:

- Raised the question – what is life and what is intelligent life – we may have a myopic view
- The search for life is focused on life as we know it
- The use of Techno-signatures (such radio, microwave, or light signatures) to help identify intelligent life from a distance star system.
- The use of Bio-signatures to help identify possible microbial and or plant life in an exoplanet
- The concerns of the late Stephen Hawking were highlighted - where an advanced civilization meets a less advanced civilization

Many questions and comments were discussed including thoughts on the likelihood (statistically) that “We” are not alone in the Universe, including comparisons to some of the classic movies such as Andromeda Strain or Contact.

Art wrapped up the meeting and mentioned the next meeting will be Jun 24 with Hannah Ashley, NPS discussing the latest Dark Sky designated Parks.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 pm