

Upcoming Solar Eclipse

By Jim Di Paolo

The Moonstruck Astronomy Club held their monthly meeting on Thursday, March 14. The meeting started with Larry Isenberg presenting the club's financial report and informing members that the club roster is currently at 77

members.

Cammie Fairburn gave a presentation titled "Astronomical State Flags." Some of our state flags display astronomical features and she pointed out the flags for Alaska, Arizona, New Mexico, and South

Carolina.

Doug George did his monthly night sky report for March. He talked about the current position of the planets, Moon and the possibility that Comet 12P/Pons-Brooks may be visible with the naked eye by the end of March in the evening sky to the west. Doug reviewed some of the constellations that are currently viewable and showed members images of the figures they represent in

the night sky. He displayed a chart that listed upcoming International Space Station flyovers for the month.

Larry Isenberg, club vice president, did a presentation on how to build a Sun Funnel to safely view solar eclipses. He also shared photos of past solar eclipses he viewed over the years.

Larry informed members that the Moonstruck Astronomy Club invites residents to join the club in viewing the upcoming solar eclipse at the R/C flying field. Residents in Ocala will not be able to witness a total eclipse but will view the Sun being eclipsed to a maximum of 61%. The eclipse will occur on Monday, April 8, starting at 1:45 p.m., reaching maximum at 3:02 p.m. and ending at 4:17 p.m., a total duration of two hours, 32 minutes. The club will have over a half dozen telescopes set up to safely view the event. The club will have solar glasses to pass out to members for safe viewing.

Larry reminded everyone that you should never view a solar eclipse without the proper protection.

Club members are reminded to watch for emails announcing more evening observation sessions in the coming weeks and months. Sessions will be announced on any day that weather conditions allow for an open sky and club members are willing to set up their telescopes to share observations. Members are welcome to arrive and stay if they wish throughout the evenings. All sessions are held adjacent to the R/C flying field.

Regular meetings of the Moonstruck Astronomy Club are on the second Thursday of every month from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in the Hobby Building Event Room. All residents and Gateway of Services pass holders can join the club, and new members are welcome! Yearly club dues are only \$20 per year, and they include a subscription to the quarterly Reflector Magazine. For information or club registration, please contact club President Jim Di Paolo at moonastroclub@gmail.com. More information is always available at moonstruckastronomyclub.org.

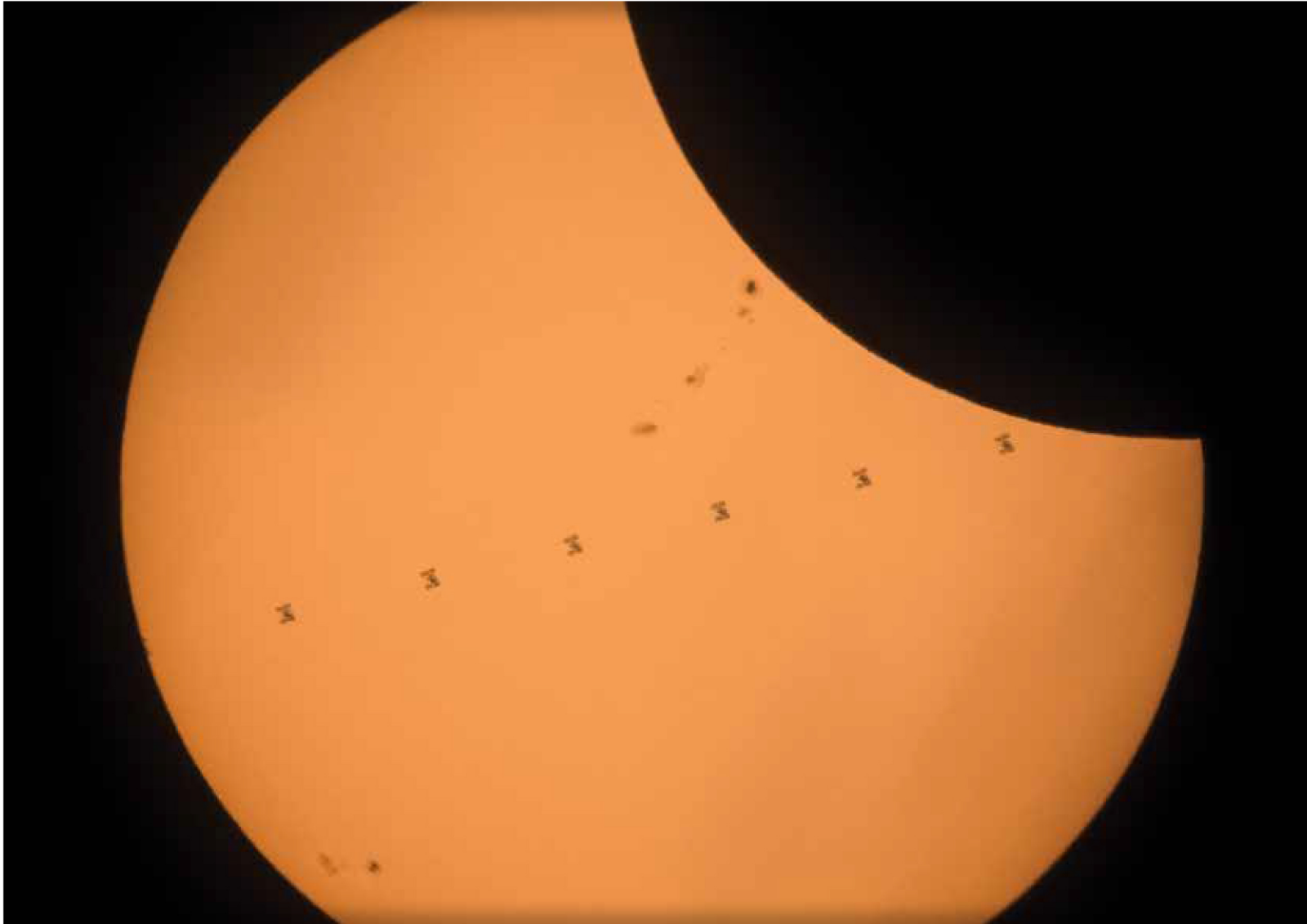


Photo courtesy of NASA/Joel Kowsky

International Space Station transiting a partial solar eclipse.