

The February meeting will be held on the 24th, at Nebraska Wesleyan University, Olin Science Hall, at 7:30 P.M. There will be a discussion of eclipse plans as well as the regular planetarium show.

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#### President's Report

The eclipse of March 7th is nearly at hand, and I have been quite busy getting my equipment ready. I plan on taking my 8" f/7.5 and my 2.4" refractor along. I have chosen Valdosta, Georgia as my destination. I had made a sun filter to fit my 6" f/4, but since I decided to take the 8" along I will have to rework the filter to fit the larger scope.

As for those who will be in Lincoln on March 7th, I urge you to take part in the public eclipse show at Gateway. Just follow the rules as outlined in the front page story of the latest Reflector Magazine.

I will present an open discussion on "The Astronomical Yardstick" at the meeting. See you there.

Earl Moser

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#### Damage to 107" Reflector

Dr. Smith, Director of the McDonald Observatory made this statement on the damage to the telescope. "In view of highly exaggerated and incorrect news stories of grave damage to the 2.7 meter McDonald Observatory reflector, a prompt summary of the facts may be of interest to the astronomical community. Shortly before CST midnight February 5th, a newly-hired employee fired seven pint-blank shots into the front surface of the fused silica primary mirror, using a 9-mm pistol apparently brought with him from his previous home in the north (Lincoln, Nebraska). He has been committed by local authorities to a state mental institution, on grounds of insanity. The harm suffered by the mirror from his bullets and his several preliminary blows with a hammer was extraordinarily small. The damage is limited to small craters about 3 to 5 cm in radius, which reduce the light collecting efficiency by about 1% and introduce a very small amount of diffraction. Surface and Foucault examinations by Mr. Donald Davidson and Dr. Robert Tull, the opticians responsible for producing the mirror, show that there is no change of figure. Astronomical observations of all types are essentially unimpaired by this tragic episode: the telescope resumed its observing program the following night, producing some of the best photographs (of quasar fields) so far obtained with this instrument in its first year of use."

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#### CLUB LIBRARY

As Club Librarian I would like to ask each club member to take the time to sort through his collection of books and papers for materials which could be donated to the library. I would also be interested in hearing which books you have that you would like to keep, but would not mind loaning out on occasion.

Brian Dodsen

Thanks goes to Jess for the recent bulletin on Comet Daido-Fujiharva. It was timely and important, and much appreciated.

Larry Stepp

### Comet Tago-Sato-Kosaka (1960g)

Date	Hr.	Min.	Deg.	Min.	Mag.
3-1	3	39	+44	01	8.4
3-5	3	49	+45	13	8.7
3-9	3	59	+46	13	9.1

See page 82 of the February issue of Sky and Telescope Magazine for a picture of this comet at its best. Magnitude 2.5. While only those at more southern latitudes were able to see it in all its glory an even better comet is coming which will be visible at our latitude. The observations made as of the end of January show great promise for a comet that could rival Ikeya-Seki back in 1967. Unfortunately this will be a morning comet which should be rising about two hours before sunrise on March 20th. On that date the comet will be .55 astronomical units from the sun and .69 astronomical units distant from the earth. The predicted magnitude is 1.6 and indications are that it should have a well developed tail by that time.

### Comet Bennett (1969i)

Date	Hr.	Min.	Deg.	Min.	Mag.
3-5	22	26	-43	06	3.1
3-10	22	16	-37	16	
3-15	22	08	-28	54	2.0
3-20	22	04	-17	19	
3-25	22	06	-02	50	1.6
3-30	22	15	+12	37	

While the comet is moving very fast it should be such an obvious object that it shouldn't be any problem to locate but its motion may make photography more difficult due to its large proper motion relative to the stars.

Rick Johnson

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### The Sky This Month

There will be a partial eclipse visible from Lincoln on the 7th, reaching a maximum of 50% coverage about noon.

MERCURY - On the 15th it is R.A. 23h 12m, Decl. 7° 24' South. Too close to the sun for observation.

VENUS - On the 15th it is R.A. 0h 24m, Decl. 1° 16' North. At magnitude -3.4, it is visible low in the west at sunset.

MARS - On the 15th it is R.A. 2h 13m, Decl. 13° 41' North. At magnitude 1.6, it is visible in the west at sunset.

JUPITER - On the 15th it is R.A. 14h 13m, Decl. 11° 52' South. At magnitude -1.9, it rises before midnight and is visible the rest of the night.

SATURN - On the 15th it is R.A. 2h 18m, Decl. 11° 30' North. At magnitude 0.6, it is visible in the west at sunset.

URANUS - On the 15th it is R.A. 12h 28m, Decl. 2° 13' South.

NEPTUNE - On the 15th it is R.A. 15h 56m, Decl. 18° 40' South.