

8-71

August 31, 1971

Phone: 489-7651

- - - THE PRAIRIE ASTRONOMER - - -

This month's meeting will be held in Olin Hall of Science at Nebr. Wesleyan University at 7:30 p.m. Nominations for next month's election of club officers will be the main item of business.

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--The President's Report--

At the meeting this coming Tuesday, the nominating committee will present a list of candidates--but the floor will be open at the meeting for any and all nominations during the meeting. It is requested that no spontaneous nominations be given in a spirit of harassment, reprisal, or levity. Also, if a member wishes to be considered for an office, he should arrange to have a friend put his name in nomination for him.

Serious consideration should be given by nominees before accepting a nomination for an office. In other words--don't accept a job and then fail to perform the duties of the office.

A new appointive post has been created in the club; that of Observing Chairman. Mr. Brian Rugg has consented to serve in this position to assist and encourage junior members to extend their observing horizons. For those among you who would like to take the first step toward some serious observing, feel free to contact Brian Rugg at 432-0463 for some personal individual assistance.

I had a great time at the National Convention in Memphis and hope to tell you more about it at the meeting--possibly with some interesting slides if they come back from the processor in time. See you there at the meeting.

Earl Moser

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--IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT--

Astronomers--man your telescopes! There is a Gateway Show for the public this coming Monday, August 30th, the day before our meeting. Get your scope and go tell the public about your club.

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In the absence of our elected program chairman, Mr. Larry Stepp has been appointed to complete the term of Richard Schellhouse.

Professor Moore has suggested that starting in September, he plans to present a 3 or 4 part lecture series of a somewhat advanced nature for the adult members and visitors utilizing the planetarium. This should be very good news to some of the older members of the club.

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THE SKIES THIS MONTH

- Mercury--Rises $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours before the sun in early September, mag. about 0.
- Venus----During the last week of September it will be visible in the western sky $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after sunset at magnitude -3.4. It is not in good observing position at all this coming month.
- Mars----Well placed for observation nearly all night. As it recedes from the earth this month, it will decrease in diameter from 23" to 18" of arc, decline in brightness from -2.3 to -1.5,

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- Mars-----Well placed for observation nearly all night. As it recedes from the earth this month, it will decrease in diameter from 23" to 18" of arc, decline in brightness from -2.3 to -1.5, and the south polar cap is tipped 15 degrees at midmonth.
- Jupiter--Visible in the southwest at sunset, sets about 3 hours later.
- Saturn---Visible in the east between Aldebaran and the Pleides, rising about 11 p.m. at magnitude plus 1.
- Uranus---Not visible this month.
- Neptune--Eighth magnitude planet in the southwestern sky, will be one degree north of Jupiter on September 17th. Disc is 2" diameter.

1971 National Convention

The 1971 national convention of the Astronomical League was held on Aug. 18,19,20,21,and22, in Memphis, Tenn, on the campus of Southwestern college. Three of our members attended, Earl Moser, Brian Dodson, and Prof. Moore. Another fellow from Lincoln attended, Phil Kelpon, whom many of you have seen at our meetings.

There were many excellent programs presented, along with some which were not so good, as is usual. Of particular interest were talks on Mars, by Charles Capen, on the blinking-dot test for mirrors, by Bill Vaughn, on new optical tests, primarily interferometric, by Bob Cox, and on a home built observatory. Robert Little gave an interesting talk on astrophotography, and your president, Earl Moser, gave an impromptu talk on alignment of the polar axis, which was well received. The exhibits included some good examples of amateur astrophotography, and also a display of instruments from Celestron Corp. Both the eight and ten inch Celestrons were shown.

The main disappointment of the convention is that we were not allowed to look through the 31 inch cassegrain, but merely to look at it. However, we had one good Mars party, through slightly murky skies, which more than made up for it. The most normal telescope there was a 12½" f/5, trailer mounted, with a torque tube mounting. Aside from this, there were two Celestron Eights, a 4¼ inch Kutter Schiefspiegler, a five inch Tinsley Maksutov-Cassegrain, a 4" f/15 refractor on a ridiculously stable mount and tripod, which emerged from the cramped quarters of a Volkswagen bug, and a homemade 5" Maksutov-Cassegrain. Many excellent views of Mars were obtained, on a night when third magnitude stars were barely visible.

All in all, we had a good time, with a few bull sessions lasting far into the night(one advantage of fewer star parties is that there is more time to visit), good food, and comfortable rooms. In spite of a few hitches during the program, I would have to give the Memphis club kudos for a job well done.

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Door Prize

A mention of the door prizes for the Memphis convention would normally belong with the convention report, but in this instance it was felt that it should be made more obvious to the club members. The main door prize, a set of optics for an 8" Schmidt-Cassegrain, donated by Celestron Pacific, were won by Phil Kelpon, from Lincoln. Although there were some dire threats thrown toward Phil during the trip back from Memphis, ranging from desertion in Fair Play, Mo., to being sent fishing from the bottom of some lake, I am happy(?) to report that he made it back to Lincoln alive, and with his possessions still safely in hand. He is now negotiating with Celestron for a deal in which he would send them back the optics with some cash in return for a complete Celestron eight. Good Luck, Phil. You may need it.

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Upcoming Conventions

The 1972 Mid-States regional convention is now officially being held, once again, in Fayette, Mo. The 1972 National Convention will be held in Seattle, on the second or third weekend of August. The 1973 National Convention will be held in Omaha, by our club and Omaha. We get to do some more work.

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1973 National Convention

The organization for our national convention has been pretty well worked out at this time. The executive committee will be headed up by Robert Allen, of Omaha, as general chairman, along with Brian Dodson as Lincoln coordinator, and Jerry Sherlin, of Omaha, as Treasurer. Bob will be an ex-officio member of all committees, and Brian will be an ex-officio member of the Lincoln committees, which are Printing, Mailing, program, and Proceedings.

If you have received your blue slip from Sky and Tel, please bring it and your dues to the meeting. Unless you are prompt on this, you may miss some issues of the magazine.

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FOR SALE

RV-6 Criterion, with 18, 16.3 Erfle, 12, 9, 6, and 4mm eyepieces, Moon filter, barlow and camera mounts-\$175

Some Darkroom accessories.

Atlas Coeli, Atlas of the Heavens, Burnhams Celestial Handbook, Hubble Atlas of Galaxies, Atlas of the Moon, some pamphlets, and 5 years ('65-'70) Sky and Tel* \$200 gets the telescope and all the books. Scott Coatsworth 488-0091.