

12-76

THE PRAIRIE ASTRONOMER

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TREASURER'S REPORT SHOWS CLUB'S NESTEGG SHRANK SUBSTANTIALLY IN 1976

As has become customary, the annual Treasurer's Report is released as a part of the last newsletter of the calendar year, following the November 1 conclusion of the outgoing Treasurer's term of office.

A few words of caution concerning the figures in this year's report seem warranted.

Note particularly that the club's treasury has diminished by \$147.07. There have been no more unusual expenses than would appear in a normal year. In fact, the only non-operating expense was the \$64.50 expenditure for the Community Observatory telescope project.

Expenditures increased in 1976 because of increased Sky & Tel subscription prices, postage costs (up \$39.98 from 1975), and increased printing costs (up \$62.18 from those of 1975). It is important to note, however, concerning printing costs that newsletter expenses prior to 1976 were not fully charged against the club treasury, and that a portion of expense charged to 1976 was for purchase of paper supplies, which will not be exhausted until mid-1977.

In any case, it is obvious that our expenses are beginning to eat into what was once a comfortable reserve. In 1977, we will be confronted with an already-announced increase in Astronomy League dues (\$1 per member, rather than the 50¢ we paid this year). It is perhaps time to consid-

er either a curtailment of some club services, an increase in dues, or an additional source of revenue.

Income

Membership dues.....	\$451.00
Observers Handbook Sales.....	35.75
Total Income.....	<u>486.75</u>

Expenses

Sky & Telescope Subscriptions	
.....	288.00
Refunds (dues overpayments)..	10.00
Community Obs. Telescope.....	64.50
Observers Handbook purchase..	35.10
Printing supplies.....	78.84
Postage.....	112.38
Astronomical League dues.....	33.00
Club star party.....	12.00
Total Expenses.....	<u>633.82</u>
Net Income (Loss).....	(147.07)
Bank Balance (12/20/76).....	\$281.14

Submitted by Lee Thomas, Treasurer

DECEMBER MEETING SCHEDULED FOR OLIN

At times in past years we have had to meet at places other than Olin Hall at Wesleyan during December. However, this year's December meeting will be at the usual place, 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, December 28.

The program will be presented by Curt Roelle, who will tell us about his trip to the Far East this past summer. Included was a visit

(Continued to Page 4)

SKY CALENDAR JAN

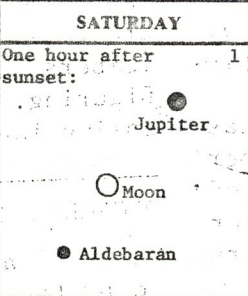
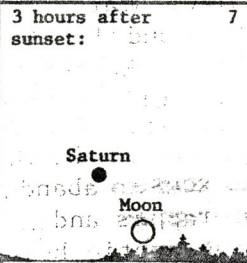
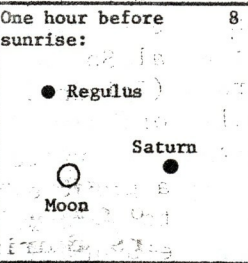
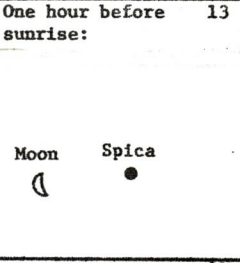
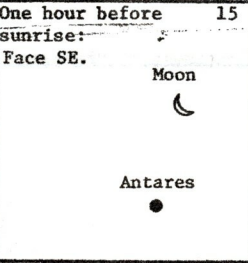
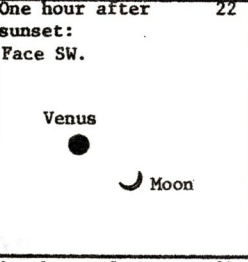
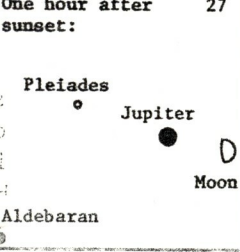


Information for helping teachers and students

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p><i>Planets: Venus, the brilliant "evening star", is 30° to 40° up in SSW to SW at sunset, and sets in WSW to W nearly four hours later. See next two blocks and Jan 24.</i></p>	<p>It is easy to see <i>Venus</i> in the daytime, shortly before sunset. Find it as soon as you can after sunset one evening, then look a few minutes earlier each day, and soon you will see it before sunset.</p>	<p>Through a telescope, <i>Venus</i> shows phases like the moon's. Evening observers will find <i>Venus'</i> phases very interesting to follow until early April. For details, see Sept 1976 <i>Sky and Telescope</i>, p. 197.</p>	<p><i>Jupiter</i>, next in brightness after <i>Venus</i> in early Jan is well up in ESE at dusk and is highest in S. about 3 1/2 hrs after sunset. By Jan 31 it passes due S 1 1/4 hrs after sunset.</p>
<p>One hour after sunset: 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jupiter Aldebaran Moon</p>	<p>With binoculars and telescopes: Early this evening satellites #2, 3, and 4 are all west of <i>Jupiter</i>, #3 and #4 appearing very close together. #1 is east of the planet. 1, 2, and 3 are near greatest elongation. 3</p>	<p>One hour after sunset: 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Castor Pollux Moon Betelgeuse 16° right of moon</p>	<p>2 hrs after sunset: 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Castor Pollux Full Moon Procyon</p>
<p>Now that moon rises late, look for the winter Milky Way, passing nearly overhead from SE to NW. Look 4° east of <i>Taurus'</i> northern horn, and you are facing directly away from the center of our Galaxy. 9</p>	<p><i>Jupiter</i>, now 10° southwest of <i>Pleiades</i>, passes due south 1/2 hour before that star cluster. See this month's map. 10</p>	<p>At the end of this week <i>Jupiter</i> is stationary and resumes direct (eastward) motion. Watch <i>Jupiter</i> pass within 5° south of <i>Pleiades</i> April 1. 11</p>	<p>One hour before sunrise: 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Last Quarter Moon Spica</p>
<p>One hour before sunrise: 16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moon Antares</p>	<p>45 minutes before sunrise: 17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moon Mercury</p>	<p>45 minutes before sunrise: 18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moon Mercury</p>	<p>19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">New Moon</p>
<p>One hour after sunset: 23</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moon Venus</p>	<p><i>Venus</i> at greatest elongation, 47° east (upper left) of sun in afternoon and evening sky. Watch <i>Venus</i> approach sun next 10 weeks. 24</p>	<p><i>Mercury</i> reaches greatest elongation this week, 25° west of sun in morning sky. Look 8° above south-east horizon 45 min before sunrise. After this apparition, next good chance to see <i>Mercury</i> in morning will be Sept. 25</p>	<p>26</p> <p style="text-align: center;">First Quarter (Evening Half Moon)</p>
30	31		

Magnitudes of the Planets: Venus -3.9 to -4.1; Jupiter -2.1 to -2.0; Saturn +0.3 to 0.0. Mercury brightens from magnitude +1 to 0 during January 14-31, and remains at magnitude 0 in early Feb. Planets against star background: Venus moves 3° eastward, passing through Aquarius and entering Pisces. Note Venus' changing position relative to Square of Pegasus last half of month. Jupiter, stationary Jan 15, moves very little this month (see Jan 10-11). Saturn retrogrades (moves west) 2.3°, moving from 9° to within 7° east of the Beehive cluster in Cancer.

JANUARY 1977

Amateurs observe the sky

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Saturn on Jan 1 rises in ENE within 3 hrs after sunset and remains visible rest of night. By month's end Saturn is visible all night. For position among stars, see this month's map. Mercury: See Jan 14, 17, 18, 25.</p>	<p>Jupiter's 4 bright moons are visible in binoculars and small telescopes. Look for #4 farthest west of planet on Jan 1, 2, 17, and 18, and farthest east on Jan 8, 9, 25 and 26.</p>	<p>One hour after sunset:</p> 
<p>6 Which star chart to use? Two hours after sunset tonight, use last month's map, December Evening Skies. 4 hours after sunset, use this month's map.</p>	<p>3 hours after sunset:</p> 	<p>8 One hour before sunrise:</p> 
<p>13 One hour before sunrise:</p> 	<p>14 Look for Mercury in morning sky. It now appears as 1st magnitude "star" 4° up in ESE 45 min before sunup. Rapidly improving next few days, Mercury remains visible 4 weeks. See Jan 25.</p>	<p>15 One hour before sunrise: Face SE.</p> 
<p>20 Look for 1 1/2-day-old thin crescent moon low in WSW 45 minutes after sunset. A beautiful sight! Tonight moon sets as evening twilight ends, about 1 1/2 hours after sunset.</p>	<p>21 Look for earthshine, "the old moon in the new moon's arms". It is the bluish light on dark part of moon, caused by sunlight reflected by the earth. Moon sets about an hour later each night.</p>	<p>22 One hour after sunset: Face SW.</p> 
<p>27 One hour after sunset:</p> 	<p>28 One hour after sunset:</p> 	<p>29 One hour after sunset:</p> 

East Lansing Sunrise: January 1 8:09 a.m.; January 16 8:06 a.m.; January 31 7:54 a.m. EST
 Sunset : January 1 5:14 p.m.; January 16 5:30 p.m.; January 31 5:50 p.m. EST

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(VERY BRIEF) REPORT ON THE CLUB MEETING FOR NOVEMBER

Your editor was off frolicking in Hawaii during the November meeting (and a few days either side of it), so a first-hand report of the proceedings is impossible.

Larry Stepp tells me that it was decided to order the minimum number of Observer's Handbooks (11) and of the Astronomical Calendar (10) for resale to club members. These orders have been placed, but allowing 3 to 6 weeks delivery, the publications will not be available for the December meeting. They should be here for January, though. Their arrival will be announced in the January newsletter.

Also discussed in the November

meeting was the formation of a class on mirror grinding, which would operate as a kind of sub-club for our members with an interest in optical figuring. More details will be upcoming in future meetings.

DECEMBER MEETING (From Page 1)

to the Taipei Observatory, operated by the Taipei Amateur Astronomers Association and the Astronomical Society of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Curt will show us slides of his trip and observatory visit.

Try to get to the meeting--it's a great excuse to abandon the house to gift wrappings and party revelers during a hectic holiday season.

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9/77