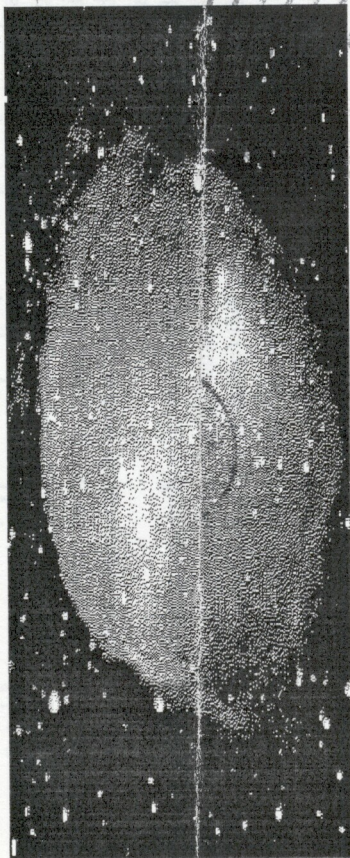


unusual friends who go nuts over seeing the faint glow of a new comet or a galaxy they have never glimpsed before. Sharing that feeling is what I get from the club, and that is worth far more than what I have given our group. I have visited other "societies", but the thing that brings me home is the friendly non-competitive way we interact with each other. As an example, one evening when we were putting the finishing touches on the forms for some concrete at the observing site, no one remembered to bring a telescope. The night was beautiful, and the lack of instruments was no handicap on our fun. We shared a couple of pairs of binoculars and sat out on the still warm silo doors to look up at the summer Milky-Way. We had a great time, and this was because of the people there rather than what instrument was available or what object was seen. We have FUN with Astronomy, and that is why I joined the club. That is also why I really do appreciate the certificate you all gave me. Thank you, Ron, Earl, and everyone else for keeping the fun in my favorite hobby.

Dave Knisely



The Prairie Astronomer

c/o The Prairie Astronomy Club, Inc.

P.O. Box 80553

Lincoln, NE 68501

First Class Mail



90/08 F
EARL MOSER
HICKMAN NE 68372

Next Meeting September 26, 1989



The Prairie Astronomer

Some Notes From Mr. Thomas...

Lee Thomas called me on the phone requesting that a few notes concerning magazine subscriptions and handbook ordering be passed on to everyone before the next meeting.

The subscriptions to Astronomy, Deep Sky, and Telescope Making magazines expire at the first of each year. However, in order for the club to receive it's discount, we must pre-pay for the subscriptions by October 6. Because of this, Lee asks that anyone interested in subscribing or renewing subscriptions to these magazines BRING YOUR MONEY to the SEPTEMBER MEETING, or SEND LEE A CHECK BY OCTOBER 1, 1989. The rates are:

Astronomy	\$14.00
Deep Sky	8.00
Telescope Making	8.00

Also, it's time to order the 1990 RASC Handbooks. If you are interested, again, bring your money to the September meeting or mail Lee a check for \$7.50 by October 1, 1989.

Officer Nominations at Sep. Meeting

Yes, it's time again to nominate your favorite astronomy people for the club offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and 2nd Vice-President. Nominations will be open until the October meeting, at which time the club will select it's new officers. The 1990 officers will take over in November.

Observing Chairman's Report

by Dave Knisely

THE NEXT SCHEDULED STAR PARTIES ARE ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29th AND OCTOBER 27th AT THE ATLAS SITE. Autumn skies show an interesting mix of galactic and extra-galactic objects for your observing pleasure. In western Pegasus is the tilted spiral galaxy NGC 7331, located 4.3 degrees north and one west of Eta Pegasi. It is small and faint for those of you with small (under six inches) apertures, but it does show some vague detail in larger instruments. An eight inch shows the galaxy as an elongated patch of light with a brighter center and hazy extensions of the ends, plus a marked dark drop off on the west side. A ten inch will show some vague patchy detail in the outer haze plus indications of a dark lane on the west side of the nucleus. There are a number of very small and faint galaxies in the area, but the most notable is a tiny group that lies just under a degree to the south and slightly west of NGC 7331, which is known as Stephan's Quintet. This group of galaxies is a target for ten inch and larger instruments, although on a good night, I have seen the brightest two members in an eight inch. Don't be afraid to use moderate to high powers on this group, since it cuts down on the sky background. About three degrees south of Alpha Pegasi is the faint barred spiral NGC 7479. A six inch will show it as a very faint fuzzy oval patch with a diffuse outer haze and brighter center, while an eight inch will reveal the center bar as a noticeable elongation in the nucleus. A ten inch will show hints of one spiral arm curving off one end of the bar, but the other one is extremely difficult.

In the northern part of Andromeda is a small but fairly bright planetary nebula, NGC 7662, also known as the "Blinking Eye" nebula. The best way I have found for locating this one is to go about half a degree to the south-east from the star 13 Andromeda and look for a fuzzy bluish 9th magnitude star. In apertures under six inches, the object tends to vanish when you stare at it, thus giving it the blinking-eye appearance, but larger instruments will reveal its

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delicate greenish-blue color and hint at a vague two-shell structure. If you like big planetaries, try the largest one in our skies, NGC 7293, also known as the Giant Helical Nebula. This one is out in the middle of nowhere, so guide stars are difficult to find. The closest bright star to the nebula is fifth magnitude Upsilon Aquarii. The nebula is about 1.25 degrees to the west of that star and can be seen in a pair of binoculars under good conditions as a faint fuzzy disk of light. Nebular filters and low power help a great deal when viewing this planetary. An eight inch so equipped easily shows the object as a very large dim fat glowing ring of light with hints of detail on the surface of the ring. A ten inch with the Lumicon OIII filter will give the nebula a hint of its helical appearance. Open cluster abound in the northern Milky-Way. In Lacerta is the bright group NGC 7296, located just over a half degree east of Beta. Small instruments show only a few stars in a fuzzy patch, but an eight inch makes it into a rich triangular group of stars. If you look 1.5 degrees west and 2.5 degrees south of Beta, you will find NGC 7243, a large irregular open cluster. An eight inch gives you the impression that there is a hole in the p73 group just west of center. A ten inch shows three or four sub-groups in the cluster and brings out many faint stars.

Another nice group is NGC 7209, located 4.5 degrees east and 3/4 north of Rho Cygni. It is visible in a three inch as a large group of very faint stars. An eight inch will show irregular sinuous star-chains with a prominent reddish star near the center.

The last cluster we will cover is known as the oldest group visible from Earth, NGC 188. It is faint and can be located by going about a degree south and slightly west of the faint star 2 UMi (which is really in Cepheus). A six inch will show it as a moderate to large roughly circular group of very faint stars, while an eight inch will reveal about 50 of its members.

A Thank-You From the Vice-President

Those of you who attended last months meeting know that I received a rather nice certificate from the club in recognition for those few things I do for our organization. At the time, all I said was a terse "thank you" because that award came like a bolt out of the blue. I probably should have known something was up when I saw Earl Moser's camcorder set up in the corner, but Ron Debus kept up his poker face when he saw me, so I had no idea what was about to happen. I think the reason I was so surprised was I am not used to being recognized for doing something that I really like to do. I like writing observing reports and book reviews. I like going to meetings and star parties and seeing not just the stars, but other people who like looking at them. I grew up in a town where there were few if any young people interested in Astronomy, and finding out about the club was an answer to my prayers. Over the years, I have gained a large circle of