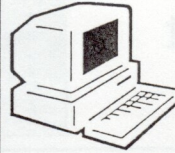


President's Report by Dave Scherping



If you have access to Internet, see the
Prairie Astronomy Club web page:
<http://infoanalytic.com/pac>
E-mail us at: pac@infoanalytic.com
Omaha Astronomical Society web page:
<http://www.top.net/cdcheney>

FEBRUARY/MARCH MEETING NOTICES:

GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 7:30 p.m.
at Hyde Memorial Observatory

STAR PARTY
FRIDAY, MARCH 15 at the Atlas Site
SATURDAY, MARCH 16 (Rain Date)

MESSIER MARATHON STAR PARTY
FRIDAY, MARCH 22 at OAS Site
SATURDAY, MARCH 23 (Rain Date)

NSP MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 7:30 p.m.
at Mahoney State Park Lodge

BRIEFS:

Several Saturdays ago, I called Toby Bowman and asked him to turn off his light (by the Atlas observing site) for me and he kept it off all night. - Erik Hubl

Kelly Erlandson, Liz Bergstrom, Brendan Goble and I gathered at my house February 3rd. It was an evening of astronomy conversations and new ideas! Four books from the club library were checked out, making a total of eleven. - Bryan Schaaf

Information packets for distribution to new members at PAC meetings are being prepared. - Kelly Erlandson

I'm moving to the east soon. In the meantime my new address is: 3303 Orchard, Lincoln, Ne. 68503
My phone number is: 466-2533 - Bev Hetzel

"The first 'Science Day at the Mall' is set for Feb. 24th, 10 AM - 6 PM at Gateway Shopping Mall". - Lincoln Journal - Star (Feb. 10th)

Sorry I missed you all at the January PAC meeting. I was under the weather. I can't believe it's nearly March already. I'm sure looking forward to warmer nights of observing. I just hope we have fewer clouds than last spring. As we approach the Spring Equinox, we are again reminded of this unique time of the year when we can observe all of the Messier objects during a single night. Yes, it's time for a Messier Marathon! And the Omaha Club has invited us to join them Friday, March 22nd at "Astro Park", the OAS observing site near Weeping Water, for that annual event. I hope we have nice weather and a great turnout. I'll put together some Messier Marathon information, including finder charts, tips, etcetera and have it available at the PAC meeting.

There are a few other items I'd like to comment on. First on the list is the Atlas Site. As we found out last year, the Beaver Crossing site becomes very popular with non-astronomers during the warmer months. During those months, we plan to have more of our monthly star parties at the Atlas site. Thanks to Erik Hubl and Randy Volk, Mr. Bowman has agreed to turn off his farm light whenever we want to observe at the Atlas Site. Erik has agreed to be the official caller for regularly scheduled star parties. On other nights, feel free to call Mr. Bowman at 791-2072 (home) or 466-8581 (work). Be sure to be polite and patient, so we do not lose this privilege.

Also, I recently spent a night observing at the Atlas site and found it was in dire need of a good old fashioned PAC work bee. The outhouse is tipped over and the shed is a mess. The weeds need trimming and the grass needs cutting. As mentioned at the last meeting, it would be great to plant some trees also. I plan to schedule the work bee for sometime in April. There's plenty of work to go around. As for the Beaver Crossing site, those who have been there recently undoubtedly noticed the bright strobe lights on the tower to the north. Though they cannot be seen directly, they are a nuisance and a major source of light pollution. Erik & I are investigating the situation and will keep you

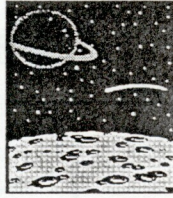
(Continued on page 8)

The Prairie Astronomer

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Observing Chairman's Report by Douglas Bell



Questions & Answers

I hope these
answers are correct.



Conducted by Astro-

February 26, for March Observing

Next star party: March 15
New Moon: March 19
Lunar object: Schiller Crater
Planet: Saturn
Messier monthly: M84
Top 40: M82
Deep sky: Realm of the Galaxies
Challenge: Venus in daylight

Tip of the month: Make a lens cleaning solution of 2 parts distilled water, 1 part isopropyl alcohol, and 1 small drop of liquid dish washing detergent. It works. (Thanks to Meade instruments)

Thought of the Month: Does Daniel Goldin ever say "It isn't rocket science"?

Lunar feature: Schiller Crater
How many craters are oblong instead of round? Here's one. My somewhat dubious sources tell me that a meteorite has to impact at less than 5 degrees angle to make an obviously deformed crater.

Planet of the month: Saturn
Bye bye big guy. Look quick for the last glimpse of a narrow ring. By next Summer it will look like the posters again.

Messier Monthly: M84
A galaxy (what else?) buried in the heart of the Virgo Cluster. Try to find it without having to identify the others.

Top 40: M82
This is weird. It doesn't take a rocket scientist or a massive telescope to see that this galaxy is not having a good day. My eight inch shows a blotchy, cigar shaped, "thing" in the same view as the wonderfully smooth M81. Maybe it says something about me, but I like the ugly one best.

Deep Sky: The Realm of the Galaxies
Have some fun. Get lost in the Virgo Cluster. Back off on the magnification and see how many you can get in a single field. My record is seven in an 8" SCT. A better observer, or a bigger scope, should get many more.

Challenge: Venus in the daytime.
Yes, Venus is a naked eye daytime object. While its not easy to find, once you've found it you'll be surprised how easy it is to see. Amaze your friends.

Astro trivia: Two dimes represent the sizes of the Milky Way Galaxy and Andromeda Galaxy. How far apart would the dimes have to be to represent the scale distance between the galaxies?

Last month's answer: Who cares what astrological sign Eisenhower

(Continued on page 5, column 1)

Q: What does RA mean and how do you find it?

A: Right ascension (RA) is one of the celestial (sky) coordinates used to define position on the sky. RA is the equivalent of longitude on the Earth but is measured in hours (h), minutes(m) and seconds(s) of time eastwards from a zero point called the first point of Aries located in the constellation Pisces. The Sun is at the zero point on the first day of Spring, also known as the vernal equinox.

The other celestial coordinate used is declination (Dec.), which is measured in degrees (deg.) and is the equivalent of latitude on the Earth. It is the angular distance measured north (n, +) or south (s, -) of the celestial equator. The celestial equator is like the Earth equator, except that it is extended out from the Earth against the sky. Keep in mind that the coordinate positions are fixed relative to the first point of Aries and the celestial equator, not to the Earth, so as the Earth rotates west to east, the stars and their coordinate positions drift east to west.

Coordinates can be found on star maps and in catalogues. For example: Sky Catalogue 2000.0 (by Sky Publishing Corp.) lists the coordinates of Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, as 6h 43m 08.9s -16o 42' 58". The first half is the RA and the second half is the Dec. A reputable star map will show Sirius at these coordinates.

Q: When you find a deep-sky object in the eyepiece, how do you know what it is?

A: There are different kinds of deep-sky objects like globular star clusters, galaxies, planetary nebulae, for example. Each object is unique in shape, brightness, and surrounding star patterns. The more you observe, the more details your eye and brain working together will detect and the easier it will be to recognize the appearance of a galaxy from say, a planetary nebula. When you find a mysterious object in the eyepiece, look at it very carefully. Try to see the details including surrounding (field) stars. At which constellation is your scope pointed? Refer to a star map or observing guide book to see if there is a galaxy, star cluster (or whatever) illustrated in it that matches the position of your found deep-sky object. If you can't identify the object, then write notes of your observations, draw it and include the pattern of the surrounding stars. You could later try comparing your drawing with photographs or star maps.

Q: What is a good software program for beginners to learn the constellations?

A: Sky Map and Sky Globe are excellent shareware programs. Sky Map can be downloaded from the link on the PAC web page. The Sky, by Software Bisque, is another nice program and is available through many vendors who advertise in Sky & Telescope and Astronomy magazines. MegaStar is definitely the best for making detailed finder charts, but could overwhelm some beginners. It's available from ELB Software.

Questions about astronomy or PAC, can be confidentially sent to Astro-man in care of Bryan Schaaf (see address and phone number below).

The Prairie Astronomer is published monthly by the Prairie Astronomy Club, Inc., and is free to all club members. Membership status and expiration date are listed on the mailing label. Membership dues are: Regular Members...\$15/yr; Family Memberships...\$17/yr; Address all new memberships, renewals, or questions to THE PRAIRIE ASTRONOMY CLUB, INC., P.O. BOX 80553, LINCOLN, NE 68501. For other club information contact one of the following: John Bruce (Lincoln) 483-0389, Jason Stahl (Lincoln) 423-4912, Bryan Schaaf (Lincoln) 438-4285. All newsletter comments and articles should be sent to: Bryan Schaaf, 1309 W. PLUM, LINCOLN, NE 68522 or E-mail to schaafb@aol.com (in plain text please) by the 15th of each month. Club meetings are held the last Tuesday of each month at Hyde Memorial Observatory in Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEETING ADJOURNED...

Secretary's Report by Bryan Schaaf



The January 30th PAC meeting at Hyde Memorial Observatory got underway shortly after 7:30 PM with V.P. Kelly Erlandson officiating.

There was a new comet discovered visually by Ed Sczepansky of Houston, Texas on the morning of January 27th!

Evidently no one attending the meeting had been to the Atlas observing site lately, as there wasn't any new news about it.

In 1995, Dave Knisely volunteered to be coordinator of this year's Astronomy Day. After some discussion at the meeting, primarily between him and Jack Dunn, April 27th was designated our Astronomy Day. The UNL Morrill Hall State Museum is the designated place.

Immediately on the heels of that decision, came a lively discussion of when to have the annual PAC picnic. Since the 3rd Nebraska Star Party is set for August 11-17th, it pre-empted the traditional time for the picnic. A July picnic date was briefly considered, followed by late August, and then September was mentioned. After several minutes of back and forth debate, it was agreed to schedule September 14th as the day for the picnic... tentatively. September is advantageous, because it is after NSP, so stories and photos of NSP could be shared at the picnic. Nightfall is also earlier in the evening and the temperature will likely be comfortable.

Kelly talked about the bill (HR 2644) that proposes the sale of lakes, including Merritt Reservoir, to area irrigation districts. The bill, if passed, could potentially ruin the future of annual Nebraska Star Parties. Del Motycka added that polite handwritten letters to our senators and representative can do a lot to sway votes in our favor.

NSP T-shirts are still available for sale. Contact John Bruce if you are interested, 483-0389 (He wasn't present at the meeting).

There was lengthy discussion about recent publicity for the upcoming NSP. Jason Stahl wrote an article about the last NSP for Amateur Astronomy Magazine and it appeared in the most recent issue. Jim Marsh, a well known amateur astronomer and connoisseur of star parties wrote a very positive and humorous account of NSP in the same magazine. There was mention of "raving reviews and fantastic photos" about NSP in the NEKAAL (Northeast Kansas Amateur Astronomer's League) Observer newsletter. With so many anticipating the next NSP, we can expect many participants!

New issues brought up before meeting adjournment were varied:

The 1st Midwest Light Pollution Conference will be held at Milwaukee, Wisconsin on Saturday, March 30, 1996. It is about the problem of light pollution and what steps can be taken to do something about it. The conference is co-sponsored by the Astronomical League, the publishers of Astronomy magazine, and the International Dark Sky Association. For more details call (414) 769-2100.

Magellan, which is a company that evaluates World Wide Web pages

on the Internet, recently awarded "three stars" to our PAC web page.

A get well card for Barbara Wilson was handed around and signed. She, a well known amateur astronomer and key-note speaker at the last NSP, suffered a lower back injury from a toboggan accident.

Bev Hetzel showed a NASA technical brief regarding recent research about sonic booms.

I presented the three volume set of Burnham's Celestial Handbooks from our club library for loan to any member that wants to read them (Liz Bergstrom took them home). I also expressed my concerns about encouragement for more members involvement in club activities and strategies to better welcome new members.

Jack Dunn presented the program. It was a video entitled "The Making of Apollo 13", about the movie "Apollo 13", and narrated by former

The 1996 Astronomy Workshop in Northeast Kansas, April 19-21

The workshop this year is again sponsored by B.C. Co., Brenda Culbertson. It will be held at Mission Valley High School in rural Eskridge, Kansas, which is about 40 miles southwest of Topeka. The workshop will provide more hands on learning this year along with talks and discussions of the hottest astronomical topics. Plan to attend for an informative (and enjoyable) three days and two nights of learning and observing. The observing sessions will be provided by the Northeast Kansas Amateur Astronomers' League (NEKAAL) at Farpoint Observatory, which is located on the grounds of the high school.

Presenters and programs include: keynote speaker **Fred Espenak**, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center (tentative); "Solar Observing" by **Vic Winter**, Astronomical Society of Kansas City; "CCD Imaging Applications" by **Gary Hug**, NEKAAL and Farpoint Observatory; "Variable Star Observing" by **Gary Fugman**, AAVSO; and a special presentation by **Star Hustler Jack Horkheimer**.

There will be door prize drawings of items donated by astronomical vendors.

The registration fee is \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door. Participants are welcome to bring tents, campers, motor homes, or to roll out a sleeping bag in the gymnasium of the high school. No hookups are available for campers, but electricity is available for astronomical equipment. Locker room showers are available at the school.

For your registration material, agenda, and map, please send a self addressed, stamped envelope to:

B.C. Co., PO Box 149, Harveyville, KS 66431

ASTRONOMY COLLOQUIUM AT UNL

There will be an astronomy colloquium in the UNL astronomy department on Thursday, February 29 at 4:00pm (cookies at 3:40) in Brace 211.

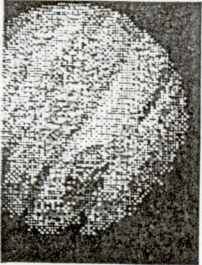
Dr. Beverly Wills of the University of Texas will be talking about quasar observations with the Hubble Space Telescope.

- *Martin Gaskell*

The International Space Station Exhibit may be coming to UNL, in late April or early May. This is a full-sized replica of the Space Station from NASA that is traveling around the country. Jack Dunn will have more to say about this event at the meeting.

The Prairie Astronomy Club

March 1996



Pioneer 10 photo of Jupiter, 1974

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<p>March 2, 1972- Pioneer 10 launched for 1st successful flyby of Jupiter</p> <p>March 16, 1926- Robert Goddard launches 1st liquid-fueled rocket</p> <p>March 16, 1966- Gemini 8 launched, 1st docking in space; malfunction of maneuvering thruster caused high rate tumble & emergency re-entry</p> <p>March 18, 1965- Voskhod 2, 1st 2-man crew, Alexei Leonov-1st</p>			<p>10th anniversary craft flybys of Comet Halley:</p> <p>March 6-Vega 1 (Soviet Union)</p> <p>8th-Suisai (Japan), 9th-Vega 2 (Soviet Union), 11th-Sakigake (Japan), 13th-Giotto (ESA), 28th-International Cometary Explorer (USA)</p>		<p>1 Venera 3, 1st craft to impact Venus, 1966</p>	<p>2 Pioneer 10 launch, 1st craft to fly by Jupiter, 1972</p>
<p>3 Apollo 9 launched, 1st test of LM in Earth orbit, 1969</p>	<p>4 Mars in conjunction with Sun 8 AM</p> <p>Voyager 1 discovered rings of Jupiter, 1979</p>	<p>5 Full Moon 3:23 AM</p>	<p>6 Vega 1, 1st flyby of Comet Halley, 1st close-up images of a comet, 1986</p>	<p>7 John Herschel, b.1792</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9 Voyager 1, discovered active volcanism on Io, 1979</p>
<p>10 Rings of Uranus discovered, 1977</p>	<p>11 Expected maximum (3rd) mag. of Mira this week</p>	<p>12 Last Qtr. Moon 11:15 AM</p>	<p>13 P. Lowell, b. 1855</p> <p>Uranus discovered by William Herschel, 1781</p>	<p>14 Moon 5 degrees north of Jupiter</p> <p>Albert Einstein, b. 1879</p>	<p>15 STAR PARTY AT ATLAS SITE</p>	<p>16 STAR PARTY AT ATLAS SITE (RAIN DATE)</p> <p>Moon is at Perigee</p>
<p>17 St. Patrick's Day</p> <p>Saturn in conjunction with Sun 1 PM</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 New Moon 4:45 AM</p> <p>Young moon visible shortly after sunset?</p>	<p>20 Vernal equinox 2:03AM</p> <p>1st day of Spring</p>	<p>21 STS-76 launch</p> <p>Atlantis (3rd Shuttle-Mir mission)</p>	<p>22 MESSIER MARATHON STAR PARTY AT OAS SITE</p> <p>Gemini 3 launched, 1965</p>	<p>23 Mercury 0.3 degrees north of Saturn 5 AM</p> <p>1st photograph of Moon, 1840</p>
<p>24 31</p> <p>Venus at greatest eastern elong. 46 deg.</p> <p>Luna 10 launched, 1st lunar orbiter, 1966</p>	<p>25 Christiaan Huygens discovers Titan, moon of Saturn, 1655</p>	<p>26 PAC MEETING 7:30 PM AT HYDE MEMORIAL OBSERVATORY, 1st Qtr. Moon 7:31 PM</p>	<p>27 Moon is at apogee</p>	<p>28 NSP MEETING 7:30 PM AT MAHONEY STATE PARK LODGE</p>	<p>29 Heinrich Olbers discovers Vesta (asteroid), 1807</p> <p>Mariner 10, 1st flyby of Mercury, 1974</p>	<p>30</p>

EPHEMERIDES (COORDINATES) OF FOUR BINOCULAR COMETS!

from "Comet Comments", by Don Macholz on AOL

C/1995 Y1 (Hyakutake)

DATE(6 PM CST)	R.A. (2000)	DEC	El.	Mag
02-22	18h47.5m	+05o23'	55o M	8.2
02-27	19h12.4m	+09o05'	54o M	8.3
03-03	19h36.5m	+12o33'	53o M	8.3
03-08	19h59.8m	+15o44'	53o M	8.5
03-13	20h22.0m	+18o35'	52o M	8.6
03-18	20h43.1m	+21o07'	51o M	8.8
03-23	21h03.1m	+23o20'	50o M	9.0
03-28	21h21.9m	+25o17'	51o M	9.2

C/1995 O1 (Hale-Bopp)

DATE(6 PM CST)	R.A. (2000)	DEC	El.	Mag
02-22	19h26.1m	-22o14'	43o M	9.0
02-27	19h28.8m	-21o55'	47o M	9.0
03-03	19h31.4m	-21o36'	52o M	8.9
03-08	19h33.9m	-21o16'	56o M	8.8
03-13	19h36.1m	-20o56'	60o M	8.7
03-18	19h38.2m	-20o36'	65o M	8.6
03-23	19h40.0m	-20o15'	69o M	8.5
03-28	19h41.6m	-19o54'	74o M	8.4

C/1996 B1 (Szczeponski)

DATE(6 PM CST)	R.A. (2000)	DEC	El.	Mag
02-22	11h56.5m	+41o31'	142o M	7.9
02-27	11h25.2m	+35o51'	151o M	7.8
03-03	10h56.7m	+29o11'	158o M	7.9
03-08	10h32.0m	+22o04'	160o M	8.0
03-13	10h11.8m	+15o08'	157o E	8.1
03-18	09h55.8m	+08o51'	150o E	8.4
03-23	09h43.6m	+03o24'	143o E	8.6
03-28	09h34.5m	-01o10'	137o E	8.9

C/1996 B2 (Hyakutake)

DATE(6 PM CST)	R.A. (2000)	DEC	El.	Mag
02-22	14h47.3m	-24o06'	106o M	7.9
02-27	14h50.1m	-23o22'	111o M	7.3
03-03	14h52.5m	-22o11'	115o M	6.6
03-08	14h54.3m	-20o10'	121o M	5.8
03-13	14h55.3m	-16o25'	127o M	4.8
03-18	14h54.5m	-07o54'	134o M	

(Observing Chairman's Report, continued from page 2)

was? Ike didn't. However, he was vitally concerned that his paratroopers had enough moonlight to land, and that his assault troops landed at daybreak at low tide. Accordingly, the D-day invasion had to go on June 5th, 6th. On the other hand, Rommel was convinced that Eisenhower would land at high tide and was in Germany when the "Great Crusade" began. If you must know, Eisenhower was born on October 14, 1890. His sign? Look it up.

A SEVERE STRAIN ON THE CREDULITY

"I have kept it all these years, 'cause I like the irony"- Erik Hubl

As a method of sending a missile to the higher, and even the highest parts of the earth's atmosphere envelope, Professor Goddard's rocket is a practicable and therefore promising device. It is when one considers the multiple-charge rocket as a traveler to the moon that one begins to doubt ... for after the rocket quits our air and really starts on its journey, its flight would be neither accelerated nor maintained by the explosion of the charges it then might have left.

Professor Goddard, with his "chair" in Clark College and countenancing of the Smithsonian Institution, does not know the relation of action to re-action, and of the need to have something better than a vacuum against which to react ... Of course he only seems to lack the knowledge ladled out daily in high schools.

--- New York Times Editorial, 1920

FIREBALL!

by Dave Scherping

I saw a great fireball on the way to the NSP meeting tonight (Feb. 8). I was about 5 miles west of Mahoney State Park and it appeared in the east below Gemini, heading straight toward the ground. It had about a 5 degree tail. The meteor grew very bright white, reminding me of magnesium burning. When I turned the corner and could see Venus, I estimated the meteor at about 8 to 10 times the brightness of Venus, placing it somewhere around -7 to -8 magnitude! It seemed like it landed around Mahoney, but I'm sure it was alot farther off. Dave Hamilton and Kelly Erlandson also saw it on their way to the meeting. They claimed it had showed some signs of green and red color. I thought I saw a little bit of yellow, but then, I'm partially color blind. Did anyone else see it?

JUST A "HI" FROM RUSS GENZMER

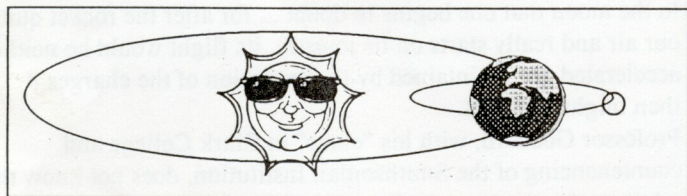
Hello PAC. As I was surfing the net I noticed the PAC sites and information. I was with the club from 1978 until several years ago. Kid's activities and other night time commitments told me to prioritize some things. I hope, now that the kids are heading towards cars and college soon, I'll be able to get back into things. I was club president several times in the 80's as well as newsletter publisher. I see things have really changed: PAC on the net with Web page sites! Mahoney star parties for the public, new 13" club scope, finally got some light pollution [city ordinances] (I remember those initial meetings years ago with Rick Johnson, Ron Veys, Dave Knisely, Carroll Moore and others. Thought the city would never move on it). Well, my 10" equatorial mounted scope is now apart in boxes. I better begin to get it out again. Hope the future frees up some time to look into and through the sky again. Good luck, Russ Genzmer, RGenzmer@aol.com

LUNAR OBSERVATIONS

by Bev Hetzel

You work for the Seismic Geologic Institute and have been assigned to spend one month on the outpost at Orientale Basin on the Moon. As you make plans to spend the month (28-31 Earth days), you ponder the following information to learn what to expect after you arrive on the moon.

All time allotments are according to Earth time (hours, days, weeks, etc.).



You picture the relationship of the Sun, Earth, and Moon and imagine how the moon looks from Earth and how it rotates as compared to Earth's rotation.

After arriving to the outpost, you stand briefly in front of your lunar home. You notice your home is in the center of a crater and the rim is easily visible in the distance. The sun is in front of you, low on the western horizon and setting. Earth is behind you just above the eastern horizon.

Questions:

1. What color is the sky right now?
2. How long does it take the sun to set?
3. What is the phase of Earth?
4. What does the illumination on the wall of the crater look like?
(Hint: There is no atmosphere on the moon.)

Two days later (48 Earth hours) you put on a space suit and go outside for a walk.

5. Where in the sky is the sun right now?
- 6.a. Where in the sky is Earth?
b. What is the phase of Earth?
- 7.a. What color is the sky right now?
b. What else might you see in the sky?
(Hint: By now the sun has set and is below the horizon.)

8. What does the illumination on the wall of the crater look like?

You take a helium balloon outside with you, but your heavy gloves make you forget the balloon, and you let it go.

- 9.a. What happens to the balloon?
b. What is the final outcome of the balloon?

Just before sunrise you go outside for a star party.

10. How long has the night been?
- 11.a. Where is Earth in the sky now?
b. Where is the sun relative to Earth?
c. What is the phase of Earth?
12. Assuming total cloud cover on Earth (maximum reflected light), what does the illumination on the wall of the crater look like?

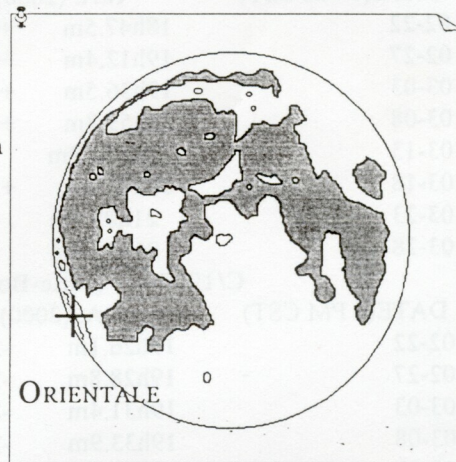
Your telescope does not have a clock drive.

13. How long will the exposure have to be to show star-trails?

After sunrise you go outside to watch a total solar eclipse. On Earth this will be a total lunar eclipse.

14. How large is the apparent size of the sun relative to the apparent size of Earth?

- 15.a. Will you see Earth during the eclipse?
b. During totality which of the following phenomena will you see? corona, diamond ring, zodiacal light, baily's beads
c. How long will totality last?



16. What does the illumination on the crater rim look like during totality?

After the eclipse you take another look around.

17. a. Where is the sun relative to Earth?
b. What is the phase of Earth now?
18. Will you notice if the earth glows with the light reflected from the full moon?
19. What does the illumination on the crater rim look like?
20. What does the shadow of your home look like?
(Remember: There is no air on the moon).

You'll have to wait until next month for the answers.

We will be holding Astronomy Day on Saturday, April 27th, 1996 at the Ralph Mueller Planetarium on the UNL city campus (14th and "U"). Set up will begin at 8:30 a.m., with the display to be running from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. David Knisely is the chair, and will be sending around a sign-up sheet at the February and March meetings. We will need telescopes of all types and sizes, computers, pictures, books, signs, and, most importantly, PEOPLE! If you can't make the meeting but wish to volunteer, contact Dave (402)-223-3968 or e-mail him at dk84538@ltec.net.

BEAVER CROSSING TOWER UPDATE:

The nuisance strobe lights by the Beaver Crossing Site were not on the nights of February 16th & 17th. The tower is located near the intersection of 434th & Alvo, which is 4 miles north and 1 mile west of I80 exit 369. The tower is in construction and is about 1/2 done. I suspect it's a tower for the new TV station (channel 8).

As for observing on Saturday night, it was mediocre at best. It started out looking promising, but transparency dropped off steadily, until the stars disappeared around 10:00pm. - Dave Scherping

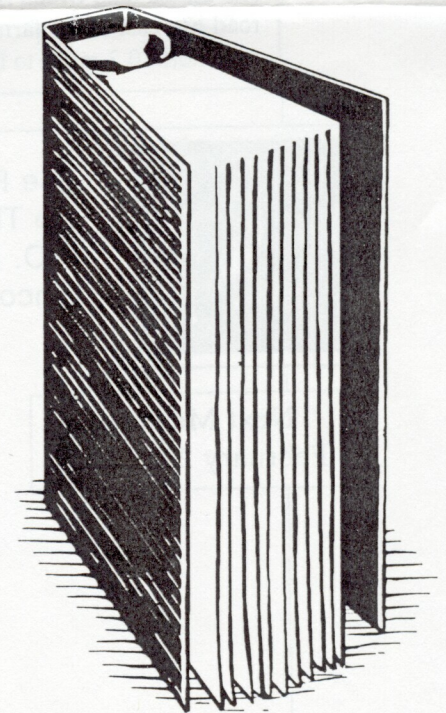
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BOOKS

Amateur Telescope Making / Scientific American / 1955
Ascent to Orbit: The Technical Writings of Arthur C. Clarke / Arthur C. Clarke / 1984
Astronomy and Telescopes / Robert J. Traister, Susan E. Harris / 1983
Astronomy: A Guide to the Stars and Planets / Iain Nicolson / 1983
Astronomy for Everybody / Simon Newcomb, Robert H. Baker Ph.D. / 1942
Astronomy Made Simple / Meir H. Degani / 1963
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Beyond the Moon/Paolo Maffei / 1978
Black Holes and Warped Spacetime / William J. Kaufmann, III / 1979
Burnham's Celestial Handbook, Volume One / Robert Burnham, Jr. / 1978
Burnham's Celestial Handbook, Volume Two / Robert Burnham, Jr. / 1978
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Comet / Carl Sagan, Ann Druyan / 1985
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Fractal Geometry of Nature, The / Benoit B. Mandelbrot / 1977
From Falling Bodies to Radio Waves / Classical Physicists and their Discoveries / Emilio Segre / 1984
From X-Rays to Quarks: Modern Physicists and their Discoveries / Emilio Segre / 1976
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Mission to Mars: Plans and Concepts for the First Manned Landing / James E. Oberg / 1982
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Other Worlds in Space / Terry Maloney / 1957
Pictorial Guide to the Moon / Dinsmore Alter / 1973
Report of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident / 1986
Skyguide: A Field Guide for Amateur Astronomers / Mark R. Chartrand III, Helmut K. Wimmer / 1982
Skysighting-Photography For Amateur Astronomers / R. Newton Mayall, Margaret W. Mayall / 1968
Space Shuttle Operator's Manual, The / Kerry Joels, Gregory Kennedy, David Larkin / 1982
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To The Ends of the Universe / Isaac Asimov / 1967
Universe, The / David Bergamini and The Editors of LIFE / 1966
Webb Society Deep-Sky Observer's Handbook, Volume 1, Double Stars / Webb Society / 1986

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— Bryan Schaaf —
402-438-4285, schaafb@AOL.com



MAGAZINES

Sky & Telescope magazine issues: August 1982-July 1984, November 1984-October 1987, December 1987-July 1992
Final Frontier magazine bi-monthly issues: April 1988-February 1991

POSTCARDS

Voyagers at Saturn-Astronomy Postcards / Hansen Planetarium, JPL

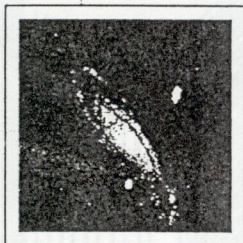
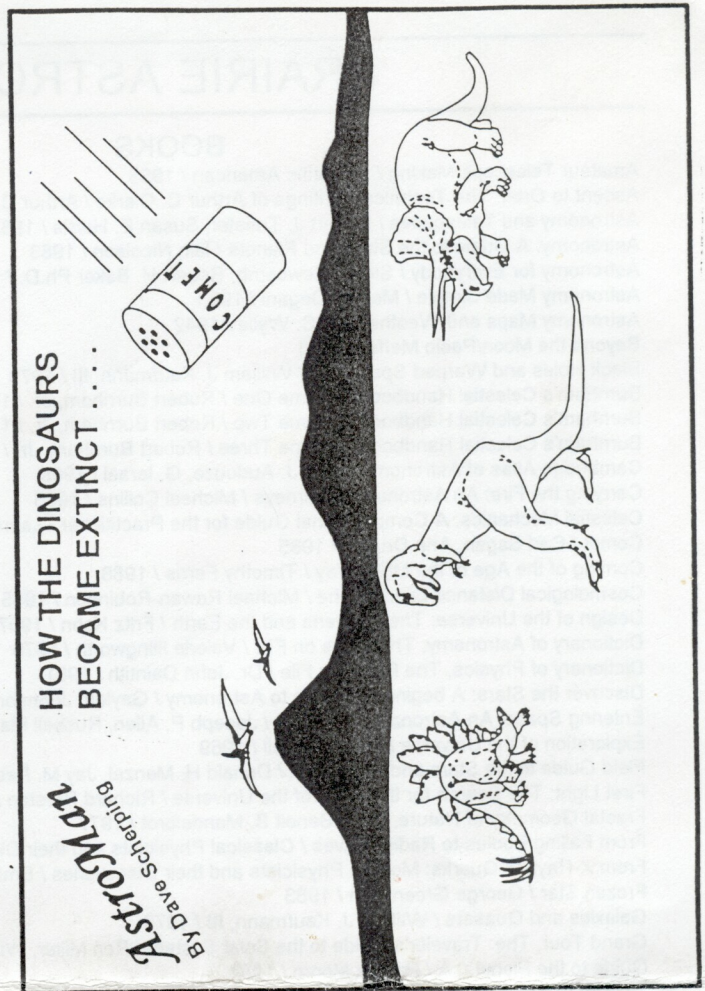
(Continued from page 1)

posted on any new developments. Hopefully we can get the intensity turned down (see update on page 6).

My last topic is upcoming events. Astronomy Day is scheduled for April 27th at Mueller Planetarium in Morrill Hall. This is always a great time and I hope everyone can make it. We also have the upcoming Mahoney Park public star parties beginning in May. We need to show the Omaha club that we still know how to observe! Last year, they out-numbered us every month. Now they think the "P" in PAC stands for "Passive"! Let's prove them wrong. Another upcoming event is the NEKAAL Astronomy Workshop, which will be held April 19-21 near Topeka, Kansas. Everyone is invited and I'm sure it'll be a great time. I plan to attend (and give a presentation). Contact me if you'd like additional information. See you at the meeting.

DIRECTIONS to the Omaha Club's observing site from Lincoln:

Take Hwy 34 (O St.) east about 30 miles to Hwy 50. Continue east another 4 miles. Turn north on 120th St. (gravel road). Go north 2.5 miles. When the road turns to the left (west), turn onto the OAS site access road which is on the north side of the road just east of the farmhouse. Take the access road north 0.3 miles to the observing site.



The Prairie Astronomer
c/o The Prairie Astronomy Club, Inc.
P.O. Box 80553
Lincoln, NE 68501



Next Meeting
February 27, 1996

FEB 96

Mr. Earl Moser 9/96
P. O. Box 162
Hickman NE 68372