

Harford County Astronomical Society

NEWSLETTER
Number 6

September 1970

SEPTEMBER PROGRAMS

Tuesday - September 8, 1970.

Mr. Norman Dean, former Director of the Edgewood Junior High School Planetarium, will tell about the construction of a planetarium at our first September meeting. This meeting will be held in the partially completed planetarium in the new Junior-Senior High School in Bel Air at 7:30 PM.

Mr. Dean is currently the President of the Middle Atlantic Planetaria Society (MAPS), and is working on his Doctorate in Educational Astronomy.

This meeting should prove to be interesting, so try to attend.

Directions to the new school in Bel Air may be found at the end of this Newsletter.

Thursday - September 17, 1970.

Two U.S. Army films, "Army Explorers in Space", about the Explorer Program, and "Signals in Space", the story of the U.S. Satellite Communications Program, are the features of this meeting. This meeting will be held in the Edgewood Junior High School at 7:30 PM.

September Observing Night Scheduled for the 25th.

The September observing night will be held on the 25th, weather permitting. This date is three days after the last quarter moon. Should the weather ^{be} unsuitable for viewing, the observing night will be held on October 2. Starting time is 7:30 PM and observing will be done in Harford Glen.

Saturn, Venus and all of the autumn constellations will be in view on both of the above dates.

The above observing night will offer the Observing Committee its first chance to provide the membership with a detailed observation plan. If you wish to serve on the Committee, inquire at the September 8 meeting.

For more information contact Jeff Coomer, 679-8433.

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AUGUST OBSERVING GROUP NUMBERS IN THE 20s. (Jeff Coomer)

More than 20 persons attended the August 21st star party held at Harford Glen. Many of those present were non-members who had little knowledge of astronomy, but still found the night very enjoyable and worthwhile.

The sky was perfectly clear and still, there was little moisture, as telescopes were trained toward such objects as Venus, Jupiter, M13, M8, and M20 and several other objects. The various rifts and dark gaseous clouds of the Milky Way were clearly visible to the naked eye, along with Mizar, Alcor, M13 and many other interesting heavenly objects.

Among the telescopes used was an 8 inch, a 6 inch, and a $4\frac{1}{2}$ inch reflector with several small refractors also set up around the grounds.

The night proved to be very educational and enjoyable to all those who were there. Show your support for this program by attending our September 25 meeting.

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OUR NEW EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM. (Lewis Berman)

One purpose of any astronomy club is to provide an astronomy education for its members. This education is acquired by various means, including club sponsored lectures, actual observation, meeting others in the field of astronomy, etc.

In addition, some clubs try to provide a means to give members a more complete knowledge of astronomy. This is usually accomplished by having courses or lecture series. We feel that our system, described below, is quite unique.

In our system, long-term committees will be established to cover broad areas (i.e., Observational Astronomy, Astrophysics, etc.). In the research of their particular area, they prepare and present short papers (15 minutes to one half hour in length) on specific subjects included in their specific field. These papers accumulate over the months until one large summation of that field can be assembled.

For reference, or in case committee members are replaced, the papers will be kept by one person acting as the "librarian".

When all topics are covered, the summaries are revised and the committees assemble their work into one large volume. This volume may even be published in book form.

In the use of this method, members learn from each other as the papers are presented.

All of this is to be supervised by a master committee which has already been formed. This committee consists of Lewis Berman, Jeff Coomer, and Sean O'Brien. Sean has taken the post of Librarian.

Last month the master committee held its first meeting and established the general topics for the committees. They are:

1. THE SOLAR SYSTEM (Excluding the Sun).
2. INTRAGALACTIC ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS (Includes the Sun).
3. GALACTIC AND EXTRAGALACTIC ASTRONOMY (Including formation of the Universe, etc.).
4. OBSERVATIONAL ASTRONOMY.
5. EXOBIOLOGY.

The following is a brief synopsis of material included in each field, it is by no means complete.

1. The Solar System - includes all objects found within the solar system, their orbital mechanics, detailed study of each planet.
2. Intragalactic Astronomy and Astrophysics - Includes everything in our galaxy, stars, nebulae, novae, etc., and production of energy inside the stars and the sun.
3. Galactic Astronomy - The external galaxies, formation and development of these galaxies, galaxy clusters, development of the universe as a whole, and cosmological theories.
4. Observational Astronomy - Earth's atmosphere and how it causes distortion; constellations, other aspects as seen from earth. This group will have use of the planetarium under the direction of Mr. Dean.
5. Exobiology - Life on other worlds, flying saucers, little green men.

If a member wishes, he may be on more than one of the committees.

The short papers will be presented at the meetings occurring on the first Tuesday of each month. (Don't worry; we'll keep showing plenty movies as also). Before presentation, the papers must be reviewed by the master committee.

If you're interested in being on a committee and doing some research, inquire at the next meeting.

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AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKING CLASS (by Mr. Les Hepner)

Those attending the telescope making class are making good progress on their mirrors. Two 8 inch and two 6 inch mirrors are being worked on and are in various stages of completion. One 8 inch already has a good polish, and the other is in the grinding stage. One of the 6 inch mirrors has the pitch lap formed and the polishing started. The other is still in the coarse grinding stage.

The class was to have ended on August 21st but will continue in order to allow completion of the mirrors. Classes are currently being held in the Science Building, Room 113.

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ASTRONOMICAL EVENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 1970. (David Thomas)

All times given will be EST unless otherwise noted.

MERCURY - is at inferior conjunction, between earth and sun, on September 12, only 59,000,000 miles away. It reaches its greatest western elongation September 28, only 28 degrees, when it rises at about the beginning of twilight.

VENUS - is at greatest eastern elongation September 1, 47 degrees. It is 2 degrees south of the crescent moon September 4 and 5 degrees south of Jupiter on September 14.

MARS - By mid month is rising about 4:30 A.M. It appears as a second magnitude star less than 1 degree northwest of Mercury September 27 in Leo.

JUPITER - is 6 degrees north of the crescent moon September 5, and 5 degrees north of Venus on September 14. It sets about 7:00 P.M. at the end of the month.

SATURN - Rises about 8:00 P.M. by the end of the month.

MOON - 1st Quarter, Sep 8 - Full Moon, Sep 15 - Last Quarter, Sep 22 - New Moon, Sep 30. Perigee - Sep 14. Apogee - Sep 27.

September 23 - Sun crosses Equator southward at 5:59 A.M. - Autumn begins.

PLANETARY CONFIGURATIONS - September

Day	Hour	Min	
AM 1	02		♀ gr. elongation
AM 2	06		♂ ♀ 2° S.
PM 4	09		♂ stationary in R.A.
AM 4	11		♂ ♀ 2° N.
AM 5	11		♂ ♀ 6° N.
PM 12	01		♂ ♀ inferior
AM 14	05		♂ ♀ 5° S.
PM 19	01		♂ ♀ 8° S.
21	00		♀ stationary in R.A.
AM 23	05	59	♂ enters ♎ (Libra) AUTUMN
AM 28	09		♀ gr. elongation W. 18°
PM 28	06		♂ ♀ 3° N.
PM 28	09		♂ ♀ 8° S.

The NCAS wishes to extend its deepest thanks to Dr. Yurov for presenting his interesting lecture on Astrophotography at our August 20 meeting.

CONTRIBUTORS

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EDITOR

Jeff Coomer

The Editor is not responsible for the contents of any article submitted for publication. Articles may be submitted to PO Box 3, Aberdeen, Md. 21001 and should be in the hands of the Editor not later than the 21st of the month.

DIRECTIONS to Bel Air Jr. Sr. HS. (From Bel Air) Take Route 22 to Moresmill Road, turn left on Moresmill Road to the school.