



THE ATLANTA ASTRONOMY CLUB, INC.

December, 1979



MEETING NOTICE

Two treats are in store for those attending the December meeting of the AAC (a week earlier this month) on Friday the 14th at 8 p.m. in Bradley Observatory. First, members will be able to participate in a "show and tell" type program. Bring anything which illustrates your accomplishments or interest in the field of astronomy: photographs, equipment, slides, etc. You might even consider bringing your pet rock, providing it is of the extraterrestrial variety. Moon rocks are extremely welcome, although I dare say the chances against one showing up are literally astronomical.

The other goodie is the Christmas party. Mary Calabro, in charge of refreshments, is asking for edible contributions to the cause and those who can should bring their items about one-half hour before the meeting. I hope that many of you who haven't been to a meeting in a while will take advantage of this fine opportunity to renew acquaintances and enjoy the spirit of the season.

OBSERVATORY REPORT

Power is now connected to the observatory, with outside receptacles for the three cement portable 'scope pads on the lower level of the field. A cord of at least 25 feet and preferably 50 feet is required to reach the lower pads. Access by car to this area should now be easier.

Since the moon will be new on the 19th, there will be two consecutive weekends of dark skies for observing in Villa Rica — the 14th-15th and the 21st-22nd.

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THE COSMOS — NEW QUESTIONS ABOUT OLD THEORY

Hubble's shift measurement concept and the "Big Bang" theory are basic to most of the conventional theories about the formation of the universe. Recent work by a number of astronomers and scientists has brought out new information that challenges the foundation of these theories. Significant modification of these concepts appears to be in store. The next few years promise to be very interesting. Here, in brief, from a recent *New York Times* newspaper article are some of the developments that are beginning to shake the foundation of a half century of cosmic theory.

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The discovery of a faint radio background noise that is presumably left over from the Big Bang serves as the foundation for that theory. This radio echo is supposed to be constant in all directions; however, recent work by Edward S. Cheng and colleagues at MIT and Princeton University shows that this background noise is stronger in one direction than it is in the opposite direction. This doesn't match up very well with the conventional understanding of the expansion of galaxies.

D. Falik and R. Opher of the Israel Institute of Technology at Haifa have made some calculations showing that massive red shifts could be caused by gravitation alone. This could modify Einstein's General Theory of Relativity.

Halton C. Arp of the California Institute of Technology says he has made photographs of some galaxies that have quasars nearby with which they are associated through connecting filaments of gas and other visible signs, yet the galaxy-quasar pairs show completely different red shifts. He also says that he has observed similarly associated galaxies that show different red shifts. All these findings are in conflict with the red shift theory as established by Edwin Hubble in the 1920s.

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I find all of this very exciting; great minds are at work. I feel that giant steps into space are going to be made on the winds of these new theories about what is really out there.

contributed by — lee wilson

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May I wish you all a Merry Christmas,
Al Beales
Corresponding Secretary

