

ATLANTA ASTRONOMY CLUB NEWSLETTER

MEETING

Don Hall 938-8139

The March 1985 meeting will be held at 8:00 P.M. on Friday, March 15 at the Bradley Observatory of Agnes Scott College.

PROGRAM

Dennis Holmes 926-1142

"BRIGHT STARS AWARD CONTEST", a total participation program along the lines of the "Star Bowl" of previous years. This year, all members present will be divided into two teams and compete for the "cherished" Bright Star Award. Please plan to join us in an evening of participation and enjoyment.

TREASURY NOTES

Herb Teeple 394-5784

We welcome four new members this month. They are: Robert B. Langdon, 1843 Lake Lucerne Dr., Lilburn, GA 30247, ph. 972-5952; Charles S. Wagner, 904 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE, Apt. 3, Atlanta, GA 30306, ph. 876-3039; Richard Benoit, 533 Ridgecrest Rd. NE, Atlanta, GA 30307, ph. 378-5739; Ronald Estill, 104 Ridge Court, Mableton, GA 30059, ph. 948-7131.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Don Hall 938-8139

As in the past, I want to ramble along with a few comments. First, George Reight has made a set of cabinets with a board to hold star maps, etc. for our observatory. These have been attached to the south wall of the observatory and hold eyepieces and drive correctors. There are no more creaky tables or cabinets to fall when least expected. We are still looking for a good solid door for the observatory. I am waiting to hear from one of you.

In reference to the 20" telescope, we are beginning to see an end to the project. The mirror will be re-aluminized soon and the main components will be assembled by May. We are trying our best to have it in operation by late June. In April or early May, we will have a work day to prepare for the 20" installation and to "spruce" up the place. Let me know at the March meeting if you can help.

In looking ahead to the remaining three, possibly four, programs remaining before summer, we want each of you to make a special effort to attend our monthly meetings. There are exciting programs and events planned.

THE UPPER HALF

George Reight 633-1202

Among the M-Club candidates who have reported logged sightings to me as of the Feb. meeting, I'm pleased to state that Mark Wilkinson takes the lead with 57 objects caught and identified this year. Mark is a cinch for a certificate and a plaque in reaching the magic 70 but we are confident that he will not stop at that and will go the entire 100 yards. Go for it, Mark!

For the other sky watchers, there are many beautiful, awesome and challenging objects in the near zenith of March nights. One beauty, one awesome and one challenge lie within 2° of each other in the constellation Gemini.

The Beauty: Delta Gemini, RA 7h 17m, DEC +22.1° is a yellow and reddish double 4th and 8th magnitudes with a 6" separation. Not quite the beauty queen that Alberio is but a good looker anyway.

The Awesome: Dropping down a little over 1° southeast you'll pick up the planetary nebula NGC 2392 at 7h 26m, +21° commonly known as the Eskimo Nebula altho Burnham thinks it's the spittin' image of W. C. Fields. This oddball (the nebula - not Fields) has a double ring; the outer one looks like a parka around a face, therefore, the name Eskimo Nebula stuck. Magnitude is about 9 and the distance from our system has been variously estimated at 1370 to 3600 light years.

The Challenge: After leaving the Fields Eskimo, move about 2° east and a

mite north to the faint 10th magnitude open cluster NGC 2420. It's about 10,800 light years distant and consists of about 20 stars; RA 7h 36m, DEC +21° 38'.

The Horrible Challenge: For the really adventurous, try NGC 2438, an 11th magnitude planetary residing comfortably in the open cluster M-46. The cluster is an easy one at 7h 39.6m, -14° 42' shining at about 6th magnitude. The planetary seems to lie in the northern fringes and is TOUGH to locate. It's oval, non-uniform in brightness and blue grey in color according to Mallas and Kreimer. If you catch this one, you owe yourself a double chocolate sundae with absolutely no remorse.

Another Beauty: Finally, a beauty that is an easy one. An Alberio type double at 8h 44m, +28° 57'. Magnitudes are 4.2 and 6.6 with a wide separation of 31". Excellent for binoculars by just going east about 11° from the Pillbox in Gemini.

As mentioned last month, the last quarter moon is on March 13 and new is on the 21st. So, observing nights at the Barber Observatory will be on Sat. the 16th or Sun. the 17th.

Someone said "amateur astronomers make plans and the weathermen laugh". So, let's surprise them and have a successful observing weekend before they know we're out with our telescopes.

FOR SALE: Celestron Comet Catcher - \$225; contact Tim Puckett 436-4169.

FOR SALE: 8" Meade Newt. w/5 eyepieces, 8X50 finder: \$500; Burnham's Celestial Handbook (3 vol.) - \$30; Webb Society Handbooks (5 vol.) - \$40; or all items for \$550. Contact Tom Meylan 451-5671.

FOR SALE: 8" f5 Edmund Newt. (Edmund #4001) w/equat. fork mount. Contact James Oldham, 3443 Grinnell Rd., Yellow Springs, OH 45387, ph. (513) 767-1739.

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