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STAR DUST
National Capital Astronomers
Washington, D. C.

May 1952

Vol. 9, No. 9

MAY CALENDAR

Date

- 3 (Sat.) Public showing of three astronomical motion pictures: "SOLAR FLARES," "STAR IDENTIFICATION," and "NAUTICAL ASTRONOMY," Commerce Department Auditorium, 8:15 p. m. This is also regular meeting night.
- 4 (Sun.) "EXPLORING THE SKY," National Capital Parks-NCA joint program. Fort Reno Park, 40th and Chesapeake St., N. W., 8-10 p. m.
- 17 (Sat.) DISCUSSION GROUP, "OCCULTATION OBSERVING," 8:00 p. m. Commerce Foyer.
- 28 (Wed.) OCCULTATION PARTY at Bob and Janet Wrights. Come any time after 6:00. Occultation 10:19 Eastern Daylight Time.

Tuesday and Friday, 7-10 p. m. Telescope Making Class, Roosevelt High School, Room 319, 13th and Upshur, N.W. Miss Irene Warthen, Instructor. Telephone Lockwood 5-1237. Miss Warthen is present on Fridays.

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL ASTRONOMERS present a public showing of three important astronomical motion pictures at the Commerce Auditorium on May 3 in place of the monthly lecture. For additional information, call Mrs. H. Malitson, DUpont 3705. "SOLAR FLARES" - This unique movie was made at the McMath-Hulbert Observatory of the University of Michigan. It shows some of the most spectacular storms and outbursts on the sun. Many of these occurrences can be correlated with radio fadeouts on the earth.

MARS on the 15th is in R.A. 14m, Decl. 13° 16' S. and transits at 22.37. Moving into Virgo nearer to Spica, it is now well up in the east at sunset, spectacularly bright, and visible all night. On May 8 Mars is nearest the earth (about 52 million miles), and during this month reaches its greatest brilliance (stellar magnitude -1.5).

NCA'ERS who attended the 12th meeting of the Astronomical Colloquium at Georgetown University on April 8 report an exceptional program. Francis J. Heyden, S. J. and Dr. John P. Hagen spoke on "1952 ECLIPSE OBSERVATIONS AT KHARTOUM, SUDAN."

"IN THE BEGINNING--THE ORIGIN OF THE PLANETS," was the subject of a lecture given by Dr. Gerard P. Kuiper of Yerkes Observatory at the Franklin Institute on April 16. Bob and Janet Wright and J. S. Kendall motored up to hear it. Several NCA'ERS attended the annual JOSEPH HENRY LECTURE before the Philosophical Society on April 18. Dr. Sidney Chapman of Oxford University spoke on "METEORS AND METEORITES."

HARRIET MALITSON, PUBLICITY CHAIRMAN for NCA, is transferring from her job as physicist with the National Bureau of Standards to become the editor of "HARBOR NEWS," a publication of the Naval Research Laboratory dealing with physics.

MRS. NORRIS has returned to Washington after spending sometime with her sister in Knoxville, Tenn.

ON APRIL 30, beginning at 10:15 p. m. the following papers will be presented at the National Academy of Sciences: Dr. Fred Whipple, Harvard Observatory, WINDS IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE BY METEOR-TRAIN PHOTOGRAPHY; 10:30 Dr. David H. Menzel, Harvard Observatory, AURORA BOREALIS; 10:45 Dr. Harold C. Urey, University of Chicago, SYSTEMATIC ERROR IN ELEMENTAL ABUNDANCES IN METEORITES; 11:05 Dr. Paul W. Merrill, Mount Wilson and Palomar, TECHNETIUM IN THE STARS.

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"NAUTICAL ASTRONOMY"- Animation is used to show how the celestial coordinates are placed in relation to those on the earth. Such terms as declination, zenith point, nadir line, and summer and winter solstices are explained, and their uses in celestial navigation are described.

"STAR IDENTIFICATION"- The most important constellations and twenty-three basic navigational stars are located. The apparent daily motion of the stars across the sky is discussed briefly.

OCCULTATION OBSERVING. In accordance with the suggestion of the Astronomical League Group Projects Chairman, Mr. Charles H. Leroy, a group occultation observation will be held at Bob and Janet Wright's on the evening of May 28th. The time of the occultation is 9:19 p. m. EST (10:19 EDST). Be sure to bring your telescope. Stop watches will be provided as well as WWV time signals. In case you would like to have a picnic, there will be a fireplace and plenty of wood available. (Bring your own food.) Come any time after 6:00 p. m.

DISCUSSION GROUP on May 17 will have for the subject this month "OCCULTATION OBSERVING" which will include methods of timing, etc. Everyone who intends to take part in the group occultation observing at Bob Wright's on May 28 should plan to be present at this discussion.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS for the year starting September 1952 will be held at the May meeting. The Nominating Committee proposed that the following persons be placed in nomination for their respective offices:

For President	Janet Wright
For Vice-President	Irving Malitson
For Secretary	Ruth Heisey
For Treasurer	Elizabeth Fazekas
For Trustee	Hoy J. Walls

Further nominations may be made from the floor the night of election.

"EXPLORING THE SKY," the second observing night for this season will be held Sunday evening, May 4, at Fort Reno Park, 40th and Chesapeake Streets, N. W. If the weather is clear, please come and bring your telescope. The first observing night on April 6 was clouded out except for some occasional glimpses of the moon. In spite of the cold, windy weather, fifteen persons appeared, together with five NCA'ers and three telescopes, just in case the clouds broke.

GROUP SUBSCRIPTION TO "SKY AND TELESCOPE" was the subject of another postal card inquiry just prior to the April meeting. Replies were received from more than 30 percent of our membership, with the greatest percentage indicating that they favored the idea. About 40 members now take "SKY AND TELESCOPE" on an individual subscription basis. As a result of this inquiry, notice was given by the Trustees that amendments to the by-laws for this purpose would be presented at the May meeting for vote by the membership. The proposed changes to the by-laws, while not final, were presented at the April meeting. Further contacts with the Editor of "SKY AND TELESCOPE" have posed several problems which may make it necessary to postpone action. If agreement is reached with "SKY AND TELESCOPE," the necessary proposed changes to the by-laws will appear as a supplement to this issue of STAR DUST and will be presented for vote at the May meeting.

CORRECTION

The telephone number for BOB AND JANET WRIGHT is Evergreen 4-6748, NOT Everglade as reported in STAR DUST.

NEW MEMBERS

Andrews, C. L., 1712 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W. (6)
 Office LI 5-6700, x-60433
 Hastings, Agnes M., 4121 37th St., N. W. (8) WO 5490
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