



CAPE FEAR

Skies

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF THE
CAPE FEAR ASTRONOMY CLUB

VOLUME 2, No. 5

MAY 1987

MEMBERS:

OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE SUNDAY, MAY 3rd AT 7:30 PM. MORTON HALL ON THE UNC-W CAMPUS.

THE REPORT FROM MEMBERS THAT WENT TO CHAPEL HILL TO VISIT THE OBSERVATORY WAS THAT ALTHOUGH THEY WERE VERY IMPRESSED WITH THE OBSERVATORY AND THE PLANETARIUM, MOTHER NATURE WAS NOT AT HER BEST. IT WAS CLOUDY. THE MEMBERS DID NOT GET TO VIEW ANYTHING THROUGH THE GIANT TELESCOPE. THEY DID HOWEVER TAKE PHOTOS OF IT AND THE INSIDE OF THE OBSERVATORY. THE SLIDES WERE SHOWN AT OUR LAST MEETING. THEY WERE GREAT. THANKS TO THOSE WHO TOOK THEM.

REPORTS ON THE AZALEA FESTIVAL SHOW WERE VERY GOOD. THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF PUBLIC RESPONSE TO OUR EXHIBIT. HOPEFULLY WE WILL GAIN MORE MEMBERS THROUGH THESE EFFORTS.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER... MAY 9th AND 10th WE WILL BE SET UP AT INDEPENDENCE MALL FOR ASTRONOMY DAY EXHIBITS. WE NEED MEMBERS TO BE AT THE MALL TO HELP WITH THE SET-UP AND TO HELP ANSWER QUESTIONS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP OUT, PLEASE CONTACT ALAN, PAUL OR ROMNIE. WE NEED AS MANY PEOPLE TO COME OUT AS POSSIBLE. EVEN IF YOU CAN ONLY BE THERE A SHORT TIME, IT WILL HELP THE CLUB. ALSO, WE ARE TRYING TO WORK OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING A VIEWING SESSION THAT WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, AFTER THE MALL CLOSES SUNDAY EVENING. WE ARE THINKING THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO DO THIS IN THE MALL PARKING LOT AFTER DARK WHEN THE LIGHTS HAVE BEEN CUT OFF. IF THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE, WE MAY END UP DOWN AT FORT FISHER. FINAL PLANS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE UPCOMING MEETING.

RONNIE WILL PRESENT A SLIDE SHOW AT THIS MEETING ON LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE. THIS SHOW WILL LAST ABOUT 45 MINUTES. ALSO, HE WILL BE STARTING ANOTHER ASTRONOMY CLASS THROUGH CAPE FEAR TECH. SOON, IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN TAKING IT, PLEASE SEE HIM AT THIS MEETING. RONNIE HAS BEEN ASKED BY THE CAPE FEAR ARTS COUNCIL TO TEACH A CLASS ABOUT ASTRONOMY TO SOME OF OUR YOUNGER "FUTURE ASTRONOMERS". CONGRATS ON YOUR ASSIGNMENT AND GOOD LUCK TO YOU RONNIE.

THE MAY SKY CALENDAR

1st	MOON 4 DEGREES NORTH OF MARS
4th	MOON AT APOGEE VENUS 0.6 DEGREES SOUTH OF JUPITER
5th	ETA AQUARID METEORS
6th	FIRST QUARTER MOON 10:26 PM EDT
7th	MERCURY AT SUPERIOR CONJUNCTION. MOVES INTO THE EVENING SKY
10th	MOON AT DESCENDING NODE
11th	MOON 1.0 DEGREES NORTH OF SPICA
13th	FULL MOON 8:50 AM EDT
14th	MOON 0.2 DEGREES NORTH OF ANTARES
15th	MOON 6 DEGREES SOUTH OF SATURN MOON 5 DEGREES SOUTH OF URANUS MOON AT PERIGEE
16th	MOON 6 DEGREES SOUTH OF NEPTUNE
20th	LAST QUARTER MOON 12:02 AM EDT
23rd	MOON AT ASCENDING NODE
24th	MOON 2 DEGREES NORTH OF JUPITER
25th	MOON 4 DEGREES NORTH OF VENUS
27th	NEW MOON 11:13 AM EDT
29th	MOON 3 DEGREES NORTH OF MERCURY
30th	MOON 4 DEGREES NORTH OF MARS
31st	MOON AT APOGEE.

MORE NEWS.....

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO WANT TO TRY AND CATCH THE OCCULTATION OF VENUS BY THE MOON, IT'S GOING TO BE SATURDAY (APRIL 25th) AROUND 5:00 TO 6:00 AM EDT. YOU'LL HAVE TO GET UP PRETTY EARLY SATURDAY MORNING TO SEE IT AND YOU'LL NEED A CLEAR EASTERN HORIZON. IT SHOULD BE PRETTY SPECTACULAR.

ON A RELATED NOTE, HOPEFULLY WE'LL BE TRYING FOR A GLIMPSE OF OUR FARTHEST NEIGHBOR, PLUTO, SOMETIME BETWEEN THE 25th OF APRIL AND THE 1st OF MAY. IT'S AT OPPOSITION ON THE 29th AND WILL BE AT A DIM 13.5 MAGNITUDE. YOU'LL NEED AN 8 INCH OR LARGER SCOPE TO SEE IT AND YOU'LL HAVE TO KNOW EXACTLY WHERE IT IS. ACCORDING TO ASTRONOMY MAGAZINE, IT DOES NOT EXHIBIT THE USUAL "PLANETARY DISK" TRAITS OF THE OTHER PLANETS. IT SIMPLY LOOKS LIKE JUST ANOTHER STAR. SEVERAL MEMBERS INCLUDING MYSELF, WILL BE USING COMPUTER PROGRAMS TO TRACK PLUTO AND TRY TO PINPOINT IT'S POSITION. SOMETHING ELSE EXTRAORDINARY WILL BE HAPPENING TO THIS FAR AWAY NEIGHBOR. IT WILL BE ECLIPSED BY AND IT WILL BE ECLIPSING IT'S MOON, CHARON. THIS EVENT HAPPENS ONLY ABOUT EVERY 124 YEARS, SO ASTRONOMERS WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO VIEW THIS EVENT WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR THE FIRST TIME. THERE WILL BE 29 PLUTO-CHARON EVENTS IN ALL AND WILL OCCUR BETWEEN MAY 1st AND AUGUST 1st. TO TRY AND FIND THIS ELUSIVE NEIGHBOR, YOU'LL NEED TO HAVE A WELL-CHARTED STAR MAP AND A LARGER TELESCOPE, AND OF COURSE A WHOLE LOT OF PATIENCE. GOOD LUCK.!!

SEVERAL ITEMS WERE BROUGHT UP AT OUR LAST MEETING. FIRST, THE CLUB IS DISCUSSING BUYING THE SCREENS TO SILK SCREEN OUR EMBLEM IN COLOR ONTO OUR TEE-SHIRTS. IT'S A LITTLE EXPENSIVE, BUT MOST MEMBERS ARE INTERESTED IN HAVING THE EMBLEM IN COLOR ON THEIR SHIRTS. SECOND, EVERYONE WANTS TO GET HATS WITH THE EMBLEM ON THEM. WE MAY BE PLACING AN ORDER SOON FOR THE HATS. THIS WILL BE DISCUSSED AGAIN AT THE MEETING. THIRD, WE HAVE STARTED A LIBRARY FOR THE CLUB. ONE OF THE WAYS TO GET BOOKS FOR THE LIBRARY IS TO HAVE MEMBERS SIGN UP FOR THE BOOK CLUB OFFERED BY ASTRONOMY MAGAZINE. IT'S A GOOD DEAL FOR THE MEMBERS AND THE CLUB. THINK ABOUT SIGNING UP AND SEE ALAN FOR MORE DETAILS.

THE MEETING ON THE 3rd WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, SO ENCOURAGE YOUR FRIENDS TO COME WITH YOU. ALSO, WE INVITE OUR ASTRONOMER FRIENDS FROM OTHER CLUB TO COME AND JOIN US, ANYTIME. WE HAVE STARTED SOMETHING NEW AT OUR MEETINGS BY OFFERING REFRESHMENTS TO MEMBERS AND GUESTS. THE CLUB TREASURY IS PAYING FOR THESE REFRESHMENTS, SO THEY MAY BE ON A LIMITED TIME OFFER. IF YOU WANT TO BRING A BOTTLE DRINK OR SOME COFFEE, PLEASE DO SO, IT WILL HELP KEEP OUR TREASURY INTACT, NOT TO MENTION THE TREASURER.

THE MAY SKY CONSTELLATIONS

LEO	URSA MAJOR	HERCULES	BOOTES
CORONA BOREALIS	DRACO	COMA BERNEICES	CANES VENATICI
URSA MINOR	CEPHEUS	GEMINI	HYDRA

ORIGINS OF THE CONSTELLATIONS

HYDRA THE WATER SNAKE - ELIMINATING THIS WATER SNAKE WAS THE SECOND LABOR PERFORMED BY HERCULES. THE TROUBLE WAS THAT WHEN HE CUT OFF ONE HEAD, TWO GREW IN IT'S PLACE. HERCULES HAD HIS NEPHEW IOLAUS BURN THE STUMP OF EACH HEAD AS SOON AS HE HAD CUT IT OFF. BECAUSE HERCULES HAD HELP WITH THIS LABOR, HE WAS TOLD TO SUBSTITUTE ANOTHER IN IT'S PLACE. THIS CONSTELLATION SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH HYDRUS, A SOUTHERN CONSTELLATION.

LEPUS THE HARE - THIS HARE WAS PLACED IN THE HEAVENS TO BE NEAR ORION THE HUNTER.

LUPUS THE WOLF - THIS CONSTELLATION IS ASSOCIATED WITH LYCAON, WHO DOUBTED ZEUS' CLAIM TO DIVINITY. TO TEST ZEUS, LYCAON SERVED ZEUS THE FLESH OF A CHILD. TO PUNISH LYCAON FOR THIS TERRIBLE ACT, ZEUS TRANSFORMED HIM INTO A WOLF.

LYRA THE LYRE - THIS WAS THE INSTRUMENT GIVEN TO ORPHEUS BY APOLLO. WHEN HIS WIFE EURYDICE DIED, ORPHEUS WAS TOLD THAT HE COULD BRING HER BACK FROM THE UNDERWORLD ON THE CONDITION THAT HE NOT LOOK BACK AT HER UNTIL SHE WAS IN THE LIGHT OF THE SUN. ORPHEUS LED HER OUT, PLAYING THE LYRE, BUT WHEN HE REACHED THE LIGHT OF THE SUN, HE LOOKED BACK. BECAUSE EURYDICE HAD NOT YET REACHED THE SUN LIGHT, HE LOST HER FOREVER. HE REMAINED INCONSOLABLE AND REFUSED THE ADVANCES OF ANY WOMAN. ONE DAY, A GROUP OF WOMEN THAT HE HAD REJECTED, ATTACKED HIM AND DROWNED OUT HIS MUSIC. THEY TORE HIM APART, THROWING HIS HEAD AND LYRE INTO THE HEBRUS RIVER. APOLLO INTERVENED AND PLACED ORPHEUS' HEAD IN A CAVE. HIS BODY WAS BURIED AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT PARANASSUS AND HIS LYRE PLACED IN THE SKY.

ASTRONOMICAL GLOSSARY

CONSTELLATION - ONE OF THE 88 PARTS INTO WHICH THE SKY IS DIVIDED; ALSO REFERS TO THE HISTORICAL, MYTHOLOGICAL, OR OTHER FIGURES THAT REPRESENTED EARLIER DIVISIONS OF THE SKY.

GRABEN - ON THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH, THE MOON, OR OTHER PLANETS OR MOONS, A LONG, NARROW REGION BETWEEN TWO FAULTS THAT HAS SUBSIDED.

LIMB - THE EDGE OF THE APPARENT DISK OF AN ASTRONOMICAL BODY, SUCH AS THE SUN, MOON, OR A PLANET.

MINIMA - THE TIMES OF A VARIABLE STARS' MINIMUM BRIGHTNESS.

PULSAR - A ROTATING NEUTRON STAR THAT GIVES OFF SHARP PULSES OF RADIO WAVES WITH A PERIOD RANGING FROM ABOUT 0.001 TO 4 SECONDS.

SOLAR FLARE - AN EXPLOSIVE ERUPTION ON THE SUN REACHING TEMPERATURES OF MILLION OF DEGREES.

UNIVERSAL TIME - SOLAR TIME AT THE MERIDAN OF GREENWICH, ENGLAND.

SINCE WE STARTED THIS NEWSLETTER IN JULY 1986, WE HAVE ADDED NEW MEMBERS AND ARE ALSO COORESPONDING WITH OTHER CLUBS IN THE STATE AND SOUTHEASTERN REGION. I WOULD LIKE TO REMIND OUR MEMBERS, AND ALSO LET THE OTHER CLUBS KNOW, ANYTIME THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH OTHER MEMBERS, PLACE A CLASSIFIED AD OR WANTED AD IN THE LETTER, YOU ARE WELCOME TO DO SO. THE PURPOSE OF THIS LETTER IS TO KEEP YOU INFORMED ON WHAT'S GOING ON IN OUR AREA, WHAT YOUR OTHER ASTRONOMER FRIENDS ARE UP TO, AND OF COURSE, WHAT OUR CLUB IS PLANNING IN THE FUTURE. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO GET INFORMATION TO ME THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IN THE LETTER.

I HAVE A COLUMN FOR SPECIAL REPORTS THAT I RUN IN THE LETTER. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT ANY REPORT, (PLEASE KEEP IT TO ABOUT 2 PARAGRAPHS (TYPED IF YOU CAN, OR PRINTED), TRY TO GET IT TO ME NO LATER THAN THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PREVIOUS TO THE MONTH YOU WANT IT TO RUN.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADS AND WANT ADS, THERE IS NO COST TO RUN THESE ADS, PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU INCLUDE A GOOD DESCRIPTION OF THE ITEM, YOUR NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OR ADDRESS. I CAN'T RUN ANYTHING UNLESS YOU INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND HOW YOU CAN BE REACHED. (PLEASE PRINT).

REMEMBER, THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, OR COMPLAINTS YOU CAN CONTACT ME AT ANY MEETING OR AT THE ADDRESS BELOW. I HOPE THAT YOU ALL FIND THE LETTER INFORMATIVE. I WILL CHANGE THE FORMAT FROM TIME TO TIME TO KEEP IT FROM BEING BORING.

IF ANY OF YOU WOULD LIKE COPIES OF THE LETTER FOR ANY MONTH, OR COPIES OF ALL THE LETTERS SINCE JULY 1986, THEY ARE AVAILABLE FROM ME FOR 10 CENTS PER COPY (FOR THE COST OF MY PAPER).

SEE YA' IN JUNE

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