



CAPE FEAR *Skies*



The
Monthly
Newsletter of the
Cape Fear Astronomy Club

Volume 4 No. 3

Wilmington, NC

March 1989

March Meeting Announcement

Sunday
March 5, 1989
7:00 PM
Bryan Auditorium
Morton Hall
UNC-W Campus

The next meeting of the Cape Fear Astronomy Club will be held on March 5, 1989 in the Bryan Auditorium of Morton Hall on the UNC-W Campus. The Business meeting will begin at 7:00 PM EST.

The general meeting will begin at 8:00 PM. The program for the March general meeting will be a slide presentation and film on the Constellations of the winter sky.

was at \$14.01. David Maness moved and it was adopted to accept the report.

David Maness announced the appointment of Tom Jacobs to chairman of the Public Displays Committee. Tom requested members interested in working on this committee to notify him. He said the next project is Astronomy Day (Refer to the next paragraph.)

Paul Petty announced four club-sponsored public events for 1989. May 5 and 7, Saturday and Sunday, it will have an Astronomy Day display in Independence Mall like it has had the last three years. He wants members to participate, and bring their telescopes and art displays. Also on that Saturday, the club plans to have a solar projection in the mall's parking lot. On June 24 and October 21 it plans to have last quarter lunar viewing in the daytime, 9 a.m. to noon, in Independence Mall's parking lot. August 16 it is

(Continues on page 2.)

Meeting Minutes from February

David Maness, president, called the regular business meeting of the Cape Fear Astronomy Club to order at 7:04 p.m. February 5, 1989 in Bryan Auditorium, Morton Hall, UNCW. Paul Petty called the roll.

David Maness moved and it was adopted to dispense with the reading of the January meeting minutes. Ronnie Hawes gave a treasurer's report. The checking account balance at the end of January was \$543.97, January's total expenditures was \$190.51, and the report-time balance was \$488.11. The observatory fund

Inside This Issue

- March Meeting Announcement..... 1
- Meeting Minutes from February..... 1
- Sky Calendar for March..... 3
- Southern Star, 3rd Annual..... 2
- Upcoming Events for March..... 4

(Meeting Minute - from page 1)

planning a big public viewing of a total lunar eclipse at Fort Fisher.

David Maness announced the appointment of Martin Best to chairman of the Observatory Committee, and called for members to volunteer for service on committees.

Ronnie H. read a January 10 *Wilmington Morning Star* article about a black widow binary, a rapidly spinning binary pulsar that is devouring its companion.

David Maness announced that Sam Bisette and he spoke with the Pender County administrator concerning the Hampstead viewing site and the county's trash transportation station planned for nearby. The administrator conferred with the county commissioners and they agreed to work with the club on the lighting.

David Maness said a major goal of the club is an observatory for this area and this entails three steps: 1. deciding what it wants to build, 2. finding the place to put it, and 3. figuring how to pay for it.

Paul Petty spoke about improvements in progress on the Hampstead viewing site including a room to enclose the heater, and power connections. Sam Bisette highlighted many of the merits of the site: a dark sky, buffering on one half by the Atlantic Ocean, the county commissioners' promise for approved lighting, the five-year lease, enclosure from wind and light, and forthcoming power; then he encouraged members to use the facility.

Sam Bisette spoke regarding a potential name change for the club. It should consider if applying for grant funds for a permanent observatory that some foundations are not going to be interested in giving money to a *club* but rather an organization that sounds like and is a nonprofit educational enterprise. Also the club might choose to use a more general term such as *astroscience* in its name. David Maness added that the board will decide on a name change to be voted on at the next regular business meeting.

Martin Best and Alan Hilburn led discussion on planning a trip regarding the total solar eclipse later this year.

At 7:42 David Maness moved and it was adopted to adjourn the business meeting. After a break he presented the evening's program. Those present took a fill-in test while observing 25 slides of various astronomical objects including the earth, solar system, Milky Way galaxy, and beyond. David played a video tape entitled *Universe* which was an introduction to the scope of astronomy. Then the tests were graded.

Alan Hilburn encouraged members to find a specialty to concentrate thereon.

Ronnie Hawes announced the upcoming Southern Star convention.

- Paul D. Walker

Southern Star Astronomical Convention

April 28 - 30, 1989

Wildacres Retreat

(located between Spruce Pine and Marion, NC)

Once again this year the Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club (CAAC) will be hosting the Third Annual Southern Star Astronomical Convention. The convention this year will be held at the Wildacres Retreat, near Little Switzerland, North Carolina.

The main speakers scheduled for this year include:

Dr. Donald Parker; ALPO Mars recorder;
Topic: "Mars—Still a Planet of Mystery"

Thomas Dobbins; Vice-President of the Dobbins Instrument Company;
Topic: "Telescope Design: A Potpourri of Optical and Mechanical Design."

Allen Schiano; Assistant professor of Astronomy at the University of North Carolina; Topic: "Super Telescopes, Super Computers, and Super Things That Go Bump in the Night."

There will be short (10 to 15 minute) informal presentations given by the convention attendees on Friday night. The topics for the informal presentations include both club and individual projects in astronomy. These presentations are the leading edge of amateur astronomy.

The Moon will set around midnight during this April weekend. Star parties are planned for both Friday and Saturday nights; if the weather permitting. Otherwise, the speakers will be available for informal discussions.

Other activities will include equipment displays; swap tables and an astrophotography contest (last year CFAC member Conrad Pope was one of the winners. See *Cape Fear Skies* Vol. 3 No. 6).

There will also be nature walks and study as an alternative to the astronomy programs.

Cost is \$85.00 per adult for registration; lodging and meals; less for children under 12. Registration only is \$25.00. Meals may be purchased during the convention.

If you wish to see the information packet or want a registration form please contact Tom Jacobs.

Sky Calendar for March 1989

(All times are Given in UT to convert to EST subtract 5 hours.)

<u>Thursday: 2ed</u> 17h	Uranus passes 4° north of the Moon.	<u>Saturday: 18th</u> 4:04	Occultation between Asteroid 324 Bamberga and the star SAO 138118; right ascension 11:15.3 declination -2°17' (J1950); Magnitudes 11.9 and 9.2 respectively. This will be visible from the Wilmington area. Time give is the estimated midpoint of the occultation.
-----	Mercury at aphelion. Magnitude 0.0; distance from Earth 1.1 au.	-----	Aleksei Leonov becomes the first man to "walk in space" on this date in 1965.
<u>Friday: 3rd</u> 2h	Saturn passes 0.2° north of Neptune	<u>Sunday: 19th</u> 17h	Regulus passes 0.01° south of the Moon. Occultation.
6h	Saturn passes 5° north of the Moon.	-----	Palm Sunday
6h	Neptune passes 5° north of the Moon.	<u>Monday: 20th</u> 15:28	March Equinox (Earth at ascending node). Spring begins in the Northern Hemisphere.
<u>Sunday: 5th</u> -----	Active volcanoes discovered on Io by Voyager 1 as it passes Jupiter in 1979.	<u>Tuesday: 21th</u> -----	Camelopardalids Meteor. Radiant is right ascension 7:50; declination +68°; Zhr = 1.
<u>Monday: 6th</u> 4h	Mercury passes 0.8° south of the Moon Occultation.	<u>Wednesday: 22th</u> 9:58	Full Moon called the Lenten Moon. (The Lent Season runs from Ash Wednesday thru Easter Sunday.)
<u>Tuesday: 7th</u> 18:07	Partial Eclipse of the Sun. (Not visible from the Wilmington area.)	18h	Moon at apogee. Distance from the Earth is 63.7 Earth-radii.
18:19	New Moon. Lunation number 819	-----	Mercury at it's greatest southern latitude 7°.
<u>Wednesday: 8th</u> 8h	Moon at perigee. Distance from the Earth is 56.1 Earth-radii.	<u>Thursday: 23th</u> -----	March Geminids Meteor. Radiant is right ascension 6:22; declination +23°; Zhr=40.
-----	On this date in 1969 astronauts Jim McDivitt and Rusty Schweickart make first space test flight of the Lunar Module Spider in Earth orbit.	<u>Sunday: 26th</u> -----	Easter Sunday
<u>Sunday: 12th</u> 8h	Mars passes 2° north of Jupiter.	<u>Tuesday: 28th</u> 2h	Antares passes 0.6° north of the Moon. Occultation.
19h	Mars passes 4° south of the Moon.	18h	Mars passes 7° north of Aldebaran.
19h	Jupiter passes 6° south of the Moon.	<u>Thursday: 30th</u> 0:00	Saturn passes 5° north of the Moon.
<u>Tuesday: 14th</u> 10:11	Moon at first quarter.	2h	Uranus passes 4° north of the Moon.
<u>Thursday: 16th</u> -----	Robert Goddard launches the world's first liquid-fueled rocket on this date in 1926.	10:21	Moon at last quarter.
-----	Corona-Australids Meteor Shower. Radiant is Right Ascension 16:20; Declination -48°; Zhr = 5.	14h	Neptune passes 5° north of the Moon.
-----	Astronauts Neil Armstrong and Dave Scott accomplish the first space docking between their Gemini VIII spacecraft and an Agena target vehicle on this date in 1966.		
<u>Friday: 17th</u> -----	Venus at it's greatest southern latitude 3°.		

Upcoming Events for March

Monthly Meeting of the Cape Fear Astronomy Club
March 5, 1988; 7:00 PM - Bryan Auditorium; Morton Hall

Club Viewing Session
March 11, 1988; Dusk until "?" - Hampstead Site

Deadline for submissions for the April Newsletter
March 20, 1989

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