

NEWSLETTER of the WESTMINSTER ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY  
July 1984, Vol 1 No 2

**Next Meeting July 25** The July meeting of the Westminster Astronomical Society will be at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday July 25, at 3481 Salem Bottom Rd., Westminster (848-6384). The meeting will feature a "Sampling of Heavenly Bodies". Following a short talk on celestial objects visible in small telescopes, the meeting will move outdoors to observe samples of these objects, so bring your instruments.

Drafting of a constitution will continue. To save time a preliminary copy is enclosed. P. Clay Sherrod's book A Complete Manual of Amateur Astronomy and the constitution of the 50-member Prairie Astronomy Club were used as sources in preparing the sample draft. Mark it up and keep in mind which items do or do not apply to our organization. Also any additions that are needed should be written down for the meeting.

**Clear Skies at Last Meeting** The June meeting featured clear dark skies and telescopes brought by members. A sample draft for a constitution was distributed for consideration. Adoption of the constitution was postponed pending further review.

Telescopes in use following the meeting were a 3" refractor, a 4 1/4" rich-field, and a 6" Newtonian. All outer planets except Pluto were observed with these instruments.

**Preliminary Membership List** The following were present at the May and/or June meetings:

Tom & John Appler  
Michael Booth  
Curt & Cheryl Roelle  
Eugene Sterner

Tim & Kathy Titus  
Tom Trall  
Franklin Ways

Thanks to each for your participation. This organization is the first of its kind in Carroll County.

**Newsletter's Name** The newsletter is lacking a name. Suggestions will be accepted at the July meeting, followed by a vote.

**Orbiter To Observe Halley From Venus** The Pioneer Venus Orbiter was recently maneuvered to observe periodic Comet Enke for 8 hours. The test was performed in anticipation of using PVO to observe Halley's Comet in 1986. During Halley's perihelion passage, both Venus and Halley will be on the side of the sun opposite Earth, giving the orbiter favorable position. The PVO, in orbit since 12/4/78, measures water vapor loss and found Enke to have a rate three times higher than expected.

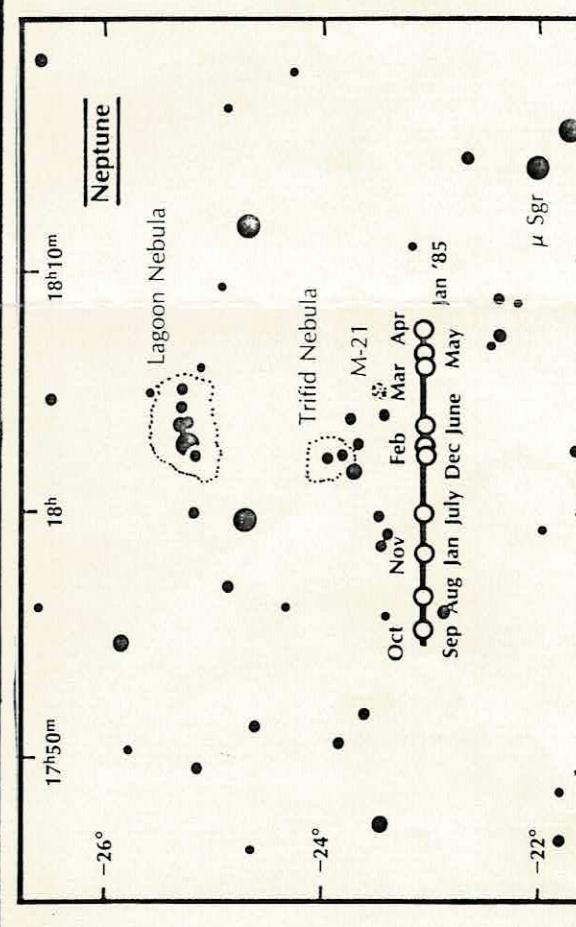
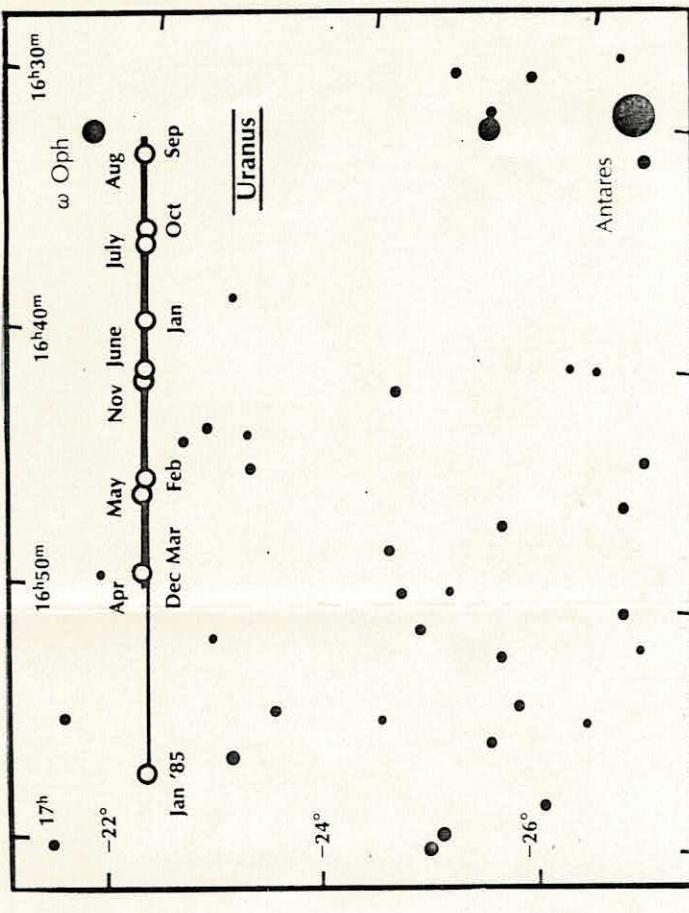
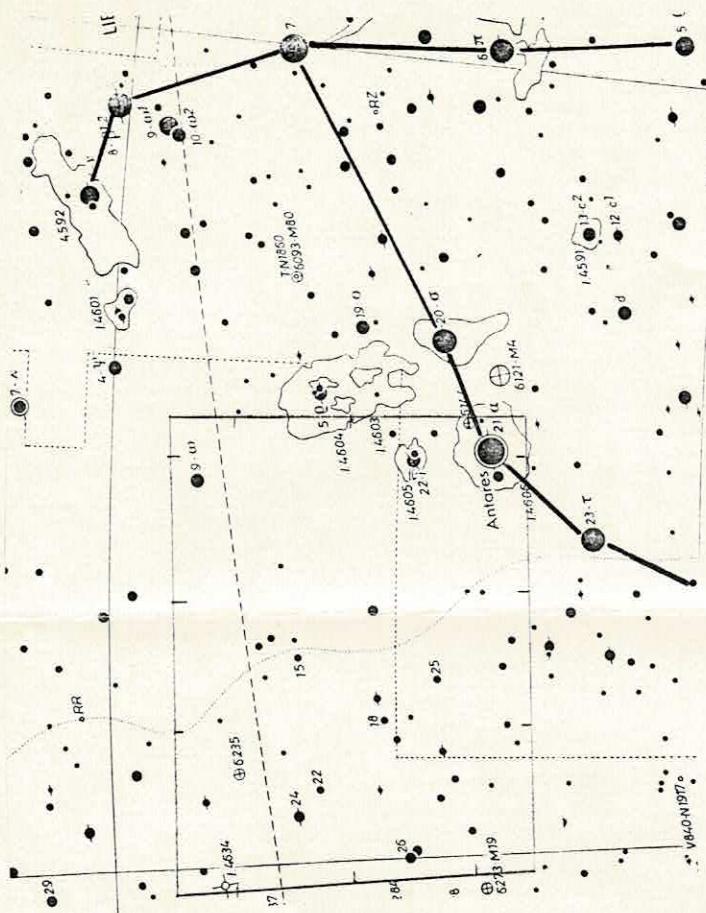
**Uranus/Neptune Supplement** Enclosed are finder charts for the two outer gas giants. Each includes a section from the Sky Atlas 2000.0, and a finder chart from Astronomy magazine. The rectangular area of each chart is outlined on the map. At 10:00 p.m. brilliant Jupiter dominates the eastern sky. Below Jupiter hangs the "teapot" of Sagittarius, as highlighted on the Neptune map. Neptune floats above Sag. near the Trifid and Lagoon nebulae, which are visible on moonless nights in a telescope.

Uranus is near Scorpius in Ophiuchus and easier to find than Neptune. Extend your arm and spread the index and pinky fingers. Starting at the tip of the teapot's lid, Scorpius is twice the distance between your fingers to the right. You will recognize it by the bright red-orange star Antares, the scorpion's heart.

When viewed with binoculars, Uranus looks like a star. A telescope shows its tiny round blue-green disc, one-eleventh the diameter of Jupiter. Neptune requires a telescope and is fainter than Uranus and about half the diameter. Neptune appears blue and star-like through a telescope.

Using the atlas map, locate the region visually. Using binoculars or a telescope's finder, "star-hop" until you recognize a field from the finder chart. Notice the Neptune chart is inverted (turned 180 degrees) to appear as it does in a telescope. Sketch the stars visible in the eyepiece. A night or two later re-observe the same field comparing it with your earlier sketch to see if your suspected planet has moved. If it has, then you have repeated history by your discovery! You will have a written record that can be compared with other observers. Uranus is currently about 1.8 billion miles from Earth, and Neptune is 2.8 billion miles. Good luck on your journey.

URANUS and NEPTUNE in 1984



**Proposed Constitution of the  
Westminster Astronomical Society  
July, 1984**

**Name of Organization**

The name is the **Westminster Astronomical Society (WAS)**, of Westminster, Maryland.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the society is to encourage interest, to educate members, and participate in amateur astronomy. The knowledge and talents of the members are directed at increasing the astronomical awareness of the general public. Any proceeds held by the organization, after payment of debts, is to be invested in club equipment and property. No income received by the society shall be distributed among any of its members.

**Monthly Meetings**

The WAS meets monthly throughout the year. The society serves Carroll County, Maryland and the public is invited to attend.

**Majority Vote**

Decisions made by the society as a whole shall be conducted at regular monthly meetings when a quorum of the members are present. A quorum is one third of the currently enrolled members.

Generally, a simple majority will be sufficient except when a two thirds majority vote is required. When a two thirds vote is required, notification will be given to members in the newsletter prior to the meeting.

The constitution may be modified by a two thirds majority vote. The proposed change will be presented and discussed during the meeting one month before voting.

**Debts**

The society shall not financially extend itself beyond the current balance of the treasury unless two thirds of a quorum direct it to be done. Personal property of members shall not be liable.

**The Executive Committee**

Club business shall be directed by the Executive Committee. Meetings will be held when necessary at the request of the President. The committee will use treasury funds for any valid purpose pertaining to the WAS.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the four club officers.

**Nomination and Election of Officers**

Four offices are held by club members. Nominations are held at the August meeting. The election will be a majority quorum vote by secret ballot at the September meeting. The term of each office is from October 1 through September 30.

Should an office be vacated, the President will appoint an individual to fulfill the remaining term. If the office of the

president is vacated, the Vice President assumes the duties of president.

#### Duties of Elected Officers

**President:** The President organizes and conducts all club activities including the monthly meetings. Motions may not be proposed or seconded by the President. The President may call meetings of the Executive Committee and make appointments to non-elected and vacated offices. The President represents the society at regional or national conferences when in attendance.

**Vice President:** The Vice President has the same authority as the President during the President's absence. In addition the Vice President is in charge of public relations. This includes informing the news media of events and phenomenon of interest to the public.

**Secretary:** The Secretary is in charge of correspondence with potential members as well as other organizations and the Astronomical League. The Secretary maintains the society membership list. The Secretary records and files the minutes of each meeting.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer is responsible for funds in the treasury and the club checking account. The Treasurer shall collect dues and keep Astronomy subscriptions and Astronomical League dues current. A written treasury report shall be prepared at the request of any member of the Executive Committee. Any member may request an oral treasury summary.

#### Duties of Appointed Officers

**Editor:** The Editor is in charge of preparing the monthly newsletter in time for the scheduled monthly meeting. The Editor also assists the Vice President in publicity efforts.

**Program Chairman:** The Program Chairman is responsible for providing a topic for the lecture at each monthly meeting. A speaker from outside the club may be invited, or a program may be presented by a member. These activities are coordinated through the Program Chairman.

#### Benefits to Members

Three classes of membership are available as shown below. Dues for each class is decided by the club as influenced by economic factors.

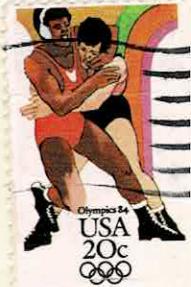
| MEMBERSHIP CLASS | RECEIVE ASTRONOMY MAGAZINE | RECEIVE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | NUMBER OF VOTES |
|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Full             | Yes                        | Yes                        | 1               |
| Family           | Yes                        | Yes                        | 2 *             |
| Associate        | No                         | Yes                        | 0               |

\* When two or more family members present at meeting

All paid members may actively participate in club activities and decision making and submit articles for publication in the newsletter. Advertisements of astronomical interest may be placed in the newsletter free of charge by members.

Membership is open to all who have an interest in astronomy.

WAS



Curt & Cheryl Roelle  
3481 Salem Bottom Rd  
Westminster, MD 21157