

SAN JOSE AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

AUGUST
1974

BULLETIN

Bob Malm, Editor
(941-1343)

SJAA Officers

President: Tom Mungall
Vice-president: Brian Day
Treasurer: Jerry Rattley
Secretary: Norman Wild

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266-8690
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252-8966

Board Members: Dave Erickson, Tom
Curtis, A.B. Gregory,
Jim Van Nuland, Jim
Vermilion.

RECENT ACTIVITIES: On July 13, thirty members and guests attended the installation picnic and star party at Levin Park, Milpitas. After enjoying the Mungall barbecued chicken, the officers were installed. While the picnic was an unqualified success, the star party produced mixed reactions. Conditions were wet and the sky was erratic. The consensus of opinion indicates that of the "big four" observing sites, Levin Park places fourth. The highlight of the evening (no pun intended) was the observation of possible fireball by Norm Wild, Jim Van Nuland, Jerry Rattley and others. The position, speed and general description, however, indicates that it was probably a recently launched rocket.

On July 20, twenty-three members and guests enjoyed a very successful star party at Henry Coe State Park. The weather was warm enough to be pleasant but not to the extent that significant atmospheric turbulence was produced. The only condition to mar the otherwise perfect seeing was a fifteen mile per hour breeze. Those telescopes which were not "wind-resistant" produced images which were hard on the eyes. Fortunately the breeze lessened as the evening progressed and most of the viewers found protected observing spots.

By 4 A.M. when the Zodiacal lights and the rising of Venus signaled the imminence of dawn, the persistent ones finally retired. Interesting objects which had been observed included many of the clusters of the Scorpius-Sagittarius region, the nearby galaxies M 31* and M 33*, a more distant though bright galaxy in Sculptor, NGC 253, the Helix planetary nebula in Aquarius, NGC 7293, the Veil nebula in Cygnus, NGC 6992-5 and the California nebula in Perseus, NGC 1499. Yours truly observed the North America and Pelican nebulas in Cygnus for the first time, in binoculars.

Interesting equipment used during the night included the long-awaited Wright-Schmidt of Dave Erickson, Jim Vermilion's 15" fork-mount and Don Alber's "Redwood Special."

Yours truly was the only one foolish enough to attempt astrophotography, taking a couple of wobbly 'piggy-back' shots of the Scorpius-Sagittarius region.

COMING EVENTS: August 2 (Friday): General meeting at the Community Bank. Jerry Rattley will talk on galaxies, after which the meeting will be thrown open for general discussion on topics of interest.

8PM

August 17 (Saturday): Overnight star party at ~~Fremont Peak~~ ^{Coe Park}. Come and take advantage of the new moon which occurs on this date.

August 24 (Saturday): Public star party at the K Mart on the west side of the valley, Bollinger and Highway 9. More information on this in the next bulletin.

September 6 (Friday): General meeting at the Community Bank.

September 13 (Friday): Board meeting at Dave Erickson's residence.

September 14 (Saturday): Star party at the Skyline site.

September 28 (Saturday): Public star party at the K Mart in Santa Clara, El Camino Real and Lawrence Expressway.

REQUEST: If you have any information which you feel should be included in the Bulletin, please call me at 941-1343.

*The former could be seen more extensively than usual and some viewers could see spiral structure in the latter.