

the san jose astronomical association

SJAA

John P. Gleason

Editor

241-1058

July '77

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 1: No General Meeting at Olinder Center this month. Picnic, July 9.

July 2: Los Gatos Red Cross, 7:00 P.M.

July 9: Ed Levin Park, 3:00 P.M. till midnight.

The installation of the new officers and club picnic will be held this year at Ed Levin Park. Bring your own food and drink, the club will provide the reserved picnic area and will maintain the barbecue pits for your food. To get to Ed Levin Park, take Interstate 680 North and exit East on Calaveras. Follow Calaveras to Downing Road. Turn left onto Downing and follow it into the park. Look for the SJAA signs. BRING YOUR TELESCOPE!

July 16: Sanborn Canyon Park, Dusk till dawn F.E.A.O.

This months Field Expedition for Astronomical Observation will be at Sanborn Canyon Park in the Saratoga foothills. Several members have used this new park for general observing and have found it highly desirable as a close to town observing site. Take Highway 9 towards Big Basin as you would if you were going to the Skyline site. Turn left onto Sanborn Road (just before the bridge directly across from Saratoga Springs), drive on Sanborn until you come to the 1st gate at the park. This gate opens to a road which will bring you to the parking lot for the overnight campers. All other gates into the park will be locked.

July 23: Los Gatos Red Cross, 7:00 P.M.

Aug. 5: Olinder Center, 7:30 P.M.

Dave Nakaji will present a lecture about Black Holes

BOARD ELECTIONS

At the June 3rd general meeting of the SJAA, the following members were elected to the associations board of directors; Jack Zeiders, Jim Van Nuland, John Gleason, Cathy Pinhero, and Bob Fingerhut. The following board members are continuing for another year; Dr. Gregory, Allan Meyer, Gerry Rattley, and John Rhodes.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Members! Be sure to give your yellow Sky and Telescope renewal cards, along with your \$15 membership fee to John Rhodes, Treasurer. \$10 for junior membership, under 18. This will be the last month you can renew your membership without the penalty of missing an issue of Sky and Telescope magazine and the monthly bulletin.

We are seeking old club records -- Secretary's notes, Bulletin's (Pre Oct. 74), Announcements and especially any records of constitutional revisions, including that of 1975, for which we have misplaced the official copy. Contact Jim Van Nuland, 371-1307, who can make copies if you wish to keep your originals. We are trying to establish a club history book.

The June 18 F.E.A.O. was again clouded out. The sky seemed to be clearing about sunset, but by dark it had clouded over, never to break again. The dozen or so who showed enjoyed a good Taurus session in John Rhodes' M.M.R. (Mobile Meeting Room). The Lexington School site has somewhat high horizons and various lights on the school, but has promise as it is protected from both city and highway lights and has lots of paved area for setting up telescopes.

At approximately 1:55 A.M. Saturday morning the 18th of June a spectacular fireball was observed by members of the SJAA. Four of us, Norman Neinchel, Robert Fingerhut, Richard Rodgers, and myself were on Mt. Hamilton undertaking astrophotography behind the 36" refractor. What began as a bright meteor about 40 degrees above the eastern horizon, suddenly exploded into a tremendous blue-white fireball. The fireball illuminated the entire eastern sky, our observing site experiencing daylight for about 2 seconds. Needless to say we were temporarily blinded and somewhat startled. The meteor ended in a beautiful red-orange trail extending some 50 degrees across the eastern sky and ending about 30 degrees above the northeastern horizon. The trail remained visible for 60 seconds.

Jack Zeiders and Kevin Medlock were at Fremont Peak enjoying unusually dark skys when their observations were interrupted suddenly by a brilliant flash to the east. They observed the meteor trail in the trees for about 2 minutes.

Don McGlauflin was driving ten miles south of Pine Ridge when the fireball fell directly overhead. Blinded by the tremendous explosion of light, Don pulled to the side of the road where he and Nancy observed the meteor trail for about 5 minutes. From these reports we can only guess at the visual magnitude of this event. It surely was brighter than a full moon (-12) but dimer than the sun (-26). I was taking an astrograph of the Trifid nebula when the fireball occurred and the sky background was fogged on the film. None of the eyewitnesses to this event have ever seen anything this bright before, perhaps -15 is a good estimate of visual magnitude. It is surely something that we will never forget. Next time I'll wear my sunglasses.

A D S I N F I N I T U M

WANTED--6 or 8 inch scope in good order, for potential new member. Will consider simple or fancy mount. Contact Jim Van Nuland, 371-1307

FOR SALE--1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " Eyepieces, K. 18mm, K. 12mm, Or. 9mm, Or. 6mm. \$12 each.
Contact John Gleason, 241-1058