

JANUARY IN THE YEAR 1979

Predictions

- Jan. 6 General Meeting, Rosicrucian Planetarium, 7:30 pm.
Park and Naglee, San Jose. Dr. Gregory will give a
talk on the influence of Copernicus beyond astronomy.
(A direct line to the French Revolution and the
American Constitution.) The second part will be Jim Van
Nuland telling of the wonders of your friendly ephemeris.
It will include a brief description of what it is and
what it can tell you without the technical details.
- Jan. 13 Indoor star party, Los Gatos Red Cross, 7:00 pm.
- Jan. 19 Board of Directors meeting, 8:00 pm. Bob Fingerhut's
340 Rio Verde Pl. Milpitas. #4.
- Jan. 20 Indoor star party, Los Gatos Red Cross, 7:00 pm.
- Jan. 27 Club star party at Sanborn Canyon.
- Feb. 3 General Meeting, Rosicrucian Planetarium, 7:30 pm.
Park & Naglee, San Jose. Jack Borde will give a talk
on the Moonwatch program of the 50's and 60's.
- Feb. 9 Board of Directors meeting at Gerry Rattley's fishes
house at 8:00 pm. 185 Homestead Rd. #2 Sunnyvale.
- Feb. 10 Indoor star party, Los Gatos Red Cross, 7:00 pm.
- Feb. 17 Indoor star party, Los Gatos Red Cross, 7:00 pm.
- Feb. 24 Star party at Henry Coe Park.

Norm: Gerry, why don't we have more members attend the meetings?

Gerry: Ignorance and apathy.

Norm: How Come?

Gerry: I don't know and I don't care!

"The obvious misspelled words are looked up." Gerry Rattley

"The Bulletin always has turkeys in it." Gerry Rattley

"Penny's our backup scapegoat." Gerry Rattley

"The fish didn't take to the water." Gerry Rattley

"People know just how fruity I am through these Bulletin quotes."

Gerry Rattley

"I don't know anything about being President." Gerry Rattley, Pres.

"We have too much of Gerry Rattley in these Bulletin quotes."

Ed Schell

Catherine the Great

Catherine Ann Constance Pinheiro was born in Los Gatos on July 31, 1958 at 4:15 A.M., weighing in at 8 lbs.11 oz. Her arrival was a bit of a surprise to her parents because her mother was seven months pregnant before she realized she would have a baby. The doctor said it would be a girl and would be born in July. He was right. Five years later, in the first week in January, Cathy got a baby brother named Tony.

Although her parents are from the San Joaquin Valley, Cathy has been raised in Los Gatos. As a matter of fact, she has never been out of the state of California except for a quick trip to a casino in Nevada at Tahoe.

School life for Cathy has been for the most part normal. Due to the family moving to another school district in the middle of the school year, she never completed kindergarten. That qualifies her as an official kindergarten dropout. But she did go on to first grade in September.

She began going to West Valley College during the summer between her junior and senior year in high school and continued to take supplementary courses until graduation from high school in 1976. Since then, she has been going either full or part time to West Valley taking classes in art and graphic design. Her ultimate dream is to become a free lance artist. Right now she works at Intel as a technical illustrator. When asked if she enjoys it, she exclaimed, "I love it!"

For her 18th birthday, Ed Schell gave her a membership to the Astronomy Club. Up until then she hardly knew astronomy existed. Now she's in the process of making a telescope and is secretary of the club. She enjoys astronomy, especially the people. She likes the easy pace, the casualness of the club and its members. Astronomy itself is intriguing. Just looking at all the stars and thinking about the wonders, known and unknown, that are out there is enough to keep Cathy busy and interested. Looking through telescopes is another enjoyment. She doesn't like all the mathematical and technical aspect of astronomy, just the basics. That's the fun part.

As for the future, finishing her mirror and staying on as secretary are definite musts. Anything else is too far in advance to know about. For now, she is unattached, lives with her new paramour, Perky Pinheiro, and is searching for her Camelot.

"I get into enough trouble by myself. I don't need your help."
Jack Zeiders to Wolfgang

"Don't worry about Johnny, he is like all board members. He can take apart a calculator and he won't be able to put it back together again."

"I want to write a note to Denni." Wolfgang Hanisch

"I sometimes think that I'm misquoted, whether it's in the Bulletin or otherwise." Ed Schell

"I told you Kevin's got an 18 inch." Denny Medlock

Blurbs

There are no Comet Comments this month because at this printing there have been no new discoveries and there's nothing very bright in the northern hemisphere. Santa Claus predicted Don will discover another comet this year, so maybe we'll have some excitement soon.

Because of the holidays and the Editor getting sick, this Bulletin is a little late. I had originally planned on making it 7 pages instead of 9, but as you can see, that fell by the wayside. Next month's Perils of Penny and her Petty Publishing Problems will explain.

On December 11, an occultation of SA0114159 by (18) Melpomene was attempted by Gerry and myself. (The Medlocks were fogged out.) Other observations were made nearby and on the east coast.

Early reports indicate that the asteroid passed across Oregon, but a number of short secondary events, not yet completely correlated, suggest at least two more objects. Gerry observed a possible event about 9:16 UT, seeming to match Richard Nolthenius in Mountain View; and an observer at Chabot Observatory seems to match my own very short event at 9:19.5 UT. I'll report more as I hear of it.

More observers are needed to improve coverage on these asteroidal occultations. If you can observe from your home on a day's notice, and would like to participate, please contact me.

Jim Van Nuland.

Foothill College is offering a short course titled "Cosmic Evolution: How the Universe Turned Into You," taught by Andrew Fraknoi. The dates are February 3 and 4, Saturday and Sunday. Fee is \$18. For enrollment information call Jim Van Nuland at 371-1307. Send check to Foothill College, P.O. Box 12345, El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills, Ca. 95022.

The AANC has elected new officers. They are Don Warren, President; Doug Berger, Vice-President; Lori Warren, Treasurer; Gerry Rattley, Secretary.

For the last few months I have not mentioned much about the goings on at board meetings. Mainly because nothing has been going on. The Dec. 15 meeting was really no great exception, but I feel the general membership would be interested to know just what happened.

Phil Hermsmeyer was the only board member not present. Non-board attendees included Ed Schell, Norm Neinchel and myself. Between 8:00 and 8:30, Gerry, John and Jim talked calculators while watching John take one apart. Cathy began singing "Oh Christmas Tree" in the corner between yawns. She and Bob eventually got into a deep discussion about whether or not Bob was blocking Cathy's view of the "bored".

When the meeting finally started, the calendar was reviewed and programs were discussed for future general meetings. End of meeting. Afterwards, during refreshments, John sat down at the piano and entertained us until I left around 11:30. It was the pièce de résistance of the whole evening.

History

The most traumatic part of the December 2 star party at Sanborn was that Jack Zeiders did not show up. He was not there to receive the birthday present Wolfgang Hanisch had thoughtfully bought for him. Wolf was hungry and wanted to eat it but didn't feel it was polite until he gave it to Jack first. In the end, Wolf and his family ate it the next day.

The second traumatic thing was the extreme cold. Consequently, I had Wolf take me home early so I could thaw out.

The third traumatic happening was the totally unexpected arrival of numerous West Valley College astronomy students. Ed thinks that this time they weren't all that bad.

I could go on, but reporting three traumatic happenings for one star party is enough, so I'll continue in less glowing terms. Marty Maguire, Ed Schell and Wolf had a kind of a I-can-play-bad-music-louder-than-you-can contest. Jim Van Nuland got really bugged by it all and began dismantling his telescope. All of the music was then turned off. Jim and the rest went back to entertaining West Valley (which, by the way, was about all that was done). Of those who braved the cold, I probably have an inaccurate list. If I missed anyone, blame it on the fact I didn't want to take my mittens off because it was so cold, and I couldn't write well with them on. Anyway, Gerry Rattley, Pete Manly, Rita Miram, Bruce DeGraff, John Cincotta, Jeff Lo and Doug Snyder are those who made my scribbled list. Oh, I shouldn't forget Marty Maguire's bathrobe which he used to keep warm in.

General Meeting of December 9

The main announcement concerned the February eclipse flight. Pete Manly said PSA was very interested in the idea, and details should be available in about a week. (Since then the arrangements have gone "belly up"!)

For the first half of the program Gerry Rattley divided the sky into 13 areas of Messier objects and gave us an idea of what was involved in the upcoming marathon. Then Richard Hansen showed slides of post cards which related to astronomy.

The meeting concluded with a birthday cake for John, Jeff, and Jack. Rita Miram brought some cookies, too.

Suzanne Lowd, Staff Reporter

"One neat thing about astronomy, we're always considering things millions of years old!" Jim VanNuland

"I kicked the bucket." Jack Zeiders at the Nov. 4 star party

"Penny, let me ruin my own reputation without any help from you." Wolfgang Hanisch

"Ed, You're the only guy I know who can disrupt chaos." Pete Manly

"I can't quite think." Penny Pinschmidt

"If Jack Zeiders doesn't show up we're going to eat his birthday present." Wolfgang Hanisch

"Gerry doesn't know anything." Denni Medlock

Rattley rattles

We're now only three months away from the Messier Marathon, and just two months away from the solar eclipse! This article will only be dealing with the Messier Marathon though and is going to serve as a prelude to a two part Messier catalogue/check-list which will appear in the next two SJAA bulletines. As was reviewed at the last general meeting, I have divided the sky into 13 zones (with the critical aid of Don Machholz and others) which should help make this one night attempt project a little easier. The areas and objects have been arranged in a close order as to the sequence in which they should be attempted, however, this order can be broken if necessary.

A couple of notes about the two part catalogue! It will contain a listing for each of the 110 Messier objects, including the ones that are considered missing (M.91 and M.102) and those that are not true objects (M.40 and M.73) as well as the addition of M.110 (NGC 205) as suggested by Glen Jones in his book listed below. The AANC award will not require the following 3 objects of the 110 listed in the article, M.40, M.91, and M.110. These objects have been added to satisfy my own Gestalt and possibly yours also. Of all the 110 Messier objects only 2, M.74 and M.77, will probably not be possible to view at the Marathon. You may wish to go out observing at the next couple of new Moon periods and get these 2 objects before the Marathon date or you can wait till a few months after the Marathon and see them in the morning sky. Debbie Moore has requested that people try to register before the Marathon, so use the registration form from your August '78 SJAA bulletin or use one of the forms that will be brought to the next couple of general meetings. These forms will be available also up at the Marathon, but you may run the risk of not meeting the AANC requirement of "pre-registration" by waiting till the last minute! Debbie is in charge of the AANC Messier Awards program. All coordinates given in the catalogue/check-list will be for 1980 to aid those with setting circles and the following list of stars may be useful for setting sidereal time on your R.A. circle:

Area 1	Almach (γ And)	02 02.7 +42 14 (1980)
2	Rigel (β Ori)	05 13.6 -08 13
3	Capella (α Aur)	05 15.2 +45 59
1,2,3	Aldebaran (α Tau)	04 34.8 +16 28
4	Regulus (α Leo)	10 07.3 +12 04
5	Dubhe (α UMa)	11 02.5 +61 52
6	Cor Caroli (α CVn)	12 55.1 +38 26
7	Spica (α Vir)	13 24.1 -11 03
8	Arcturus (α Boo)	14 14.8 +19 17
9,10	Antares (α Sco)	16 28.2 -26 23
11	Nunki (σ Sgr)	18 54.0 -26 19
12	Altair (α Aql)	19 49.8 +08 49
13	Enif (ε Peg)	21 43.2 +09 48

. . . continued

RATTLEY RATTLES ON . . . (continuation)

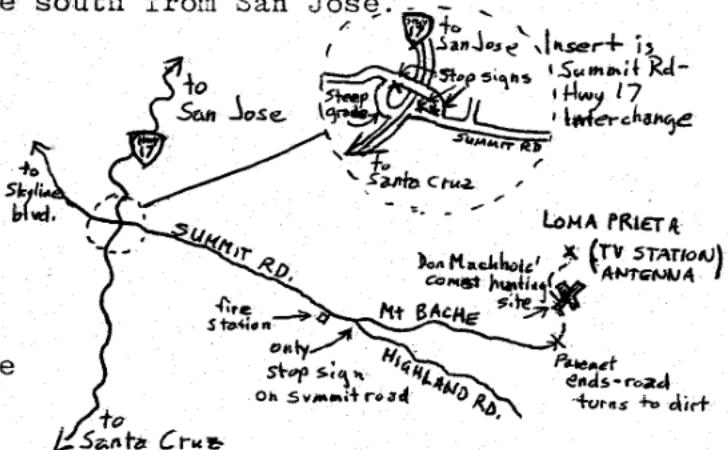
The catalogue/check-list may not contain enough space for you to make adequate notes to satisfy the AANC requirements, so I would suggest that you bring a note pad and pencil along to note date, time, place, etc. for each object, plus maybe a brief personal description or impression (like "Wow" or "turkey").

The following bibliography lists those books that I have found useful in my own Messier studies. It is not a list of all sources, but only those that are relatively complete and that I would personally recommend:

- "MESSIER's Nebulae and Star Clusters" by Kenneth Glyn Jones
(I bought my copy at Optica b/c in Oakland)
- "The Messier Album" by John H. Mallas and Ewerd Kreimer
available from Sky Publishing Corporation
- "The Telescope Handbook and Star Atlas" by Neale E. Howard
available anyplace that sells astronomy books
- "Atlas Coeli II - Catalogue" by Antonín Bečvář
available from Sky Publishing Corporation
- "Atlas of Deep Sky Splinters" by Hans Vehrenberg
available from Sky Publishing Corporation

Anyone who is interested in participating in this Messier Marathon is invited to come, no one who shows up will be turned away unless he is terribly distracting to those who are trying to do the marathon! Persons with Messier experience are welcome to attend to either do the marathon or help other less experienced observers who are having problems. You must find these objects on your own though, you can have someone tell you how to look and where to look and even look through someone else's scope to see what to look for, but you must find it for yourself!

Time and Place: from dusk to dawn (show up early enough to set-up before it gets dark) on the evenings of March 23-24, March 24-25, Friday and Saturday nights, and March 30-31, March 31-April 1, again Friday and Saturday nights. The place will be at Don Machholz' comet hunting site on Loma Prieta Mt., a 45 minute drive south from San Jose. To get there take Hwy 17 south to Summit Rd, halfway between San Jose and Santa Cruz. Go east for 5.3 miles, here you will come to a stop sign (the only one you'll find on this road!), take the left branch, Mt. Bache Rd. At 2.8 miles the pavement will end and the road continues as a dirt road. Don's site is another 1.2 miles along this road, but observing may be done anywhere along it! Look for the people, you're there! Horizons are general good, and the general elevation is just over 3200 feet. Sky is reasonably dark!



Astronomically Yours;

Neale W. Rattley
Good Seeing and Good Luck!

Christmas, Astronomically Speaking.

With three loud knocks on the double doors, Santa Claus and his Elf came bounding into the Red Cross on December 16 spreading cheer and hearty "Ho, Ho, Ho's" all around. With a twinkle in his eye and a sharp tongue in his mouth, Santa dived into his big, heavy sack he had swung over his shoulder and tossed brightly wrapped presents to all the good little astronomers. He frightened poor Kevy Medlock so much, he hid under the table. Santa asked his wife, Cathy Claus, if she'd been a good girl all year, and predicted Don Machholz would discover another comet.

When opening the presents, Gerry Rattley got a helicopter and Denni Medlock received a baby bottle (another prediction, perhaps?) After posing for pictures and trying to undo the buttoned sleeves of his elf's red top, Santa gathered up his empty sack, and laying a finger aside of his nose, giving a nod, out the door he goes/ Jumped in his Scout, to his starter gave a whistle,/ Put in the clutch and away he went/ Like the launching of a missile;/But, I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight, Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good starry night.

After the big event, things settled down to the normal indoor star party activities. Cathy tried to get everyone to sing Christmas carols while playing a small portable table organ. She wasn't very successful. I guess the astronomy club will never make the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Bob Schalck and I retired to the kitchen and worked on parabolizing my mirror til 1:00 A.M.. It was a regular telescope worker's workshop. That is if you don't count Jack Petersen's hot apple cider. It warmed the stomachs of the weary elf who polished on her mirror endlessly and her conscientious instructor who continually referred back to Sam Brown's telescope making book for information. Pete Manly's little girl was a bit disappointed in Santa's Elf. She wanted to play, and the elf, named Penny, was too busy polishing her mirror! Oh, well, elves do get busy that time of year.

Anyway, because of my obvious preoccupation, I didn't get involved with the activities out in the main room. If anything fantasmagorical happened, let me know, and I'll put it in next month.

Ads Ads Ads Ads Ads

I need to borrow a 24 mm Konig eyepiece. Anybody have one?

Bruce DeGraff 408-224-0972 Eve.

FOR SALE: C8 purchased in June '77. Mint condition, tripod, wedge, drive corrector and most all photographic accessories. New cost, \$1600. Will sacrifice \$1200 or best offer. Jeff Culp 408-867-9844 after 6.

FOR SALE: Cave 10" f/8 Newtonian. 6 mm, 12 mm, 1½ inch and 60 mm two inch eyepieces. \$700 or offer. Les Delong, 408-263-4612

"I've got to fix up Gerry." Wolfgang Hanisch

"We're going to have a dull Bulletin without any quotes in it."
Jim Van Nuland

"See, I've been a good girl." Penny Pinschmidt

Reply to the President

I am amazed that the titular head (and beard) of such a distinguished amalgamation as the SJAA hasn't at least a working knowledge of such a basic instrument as the Limburger Cheese Photometer. Since the device has become so widely used, its roots are buried in antiquity. Folklore attributes the initial description of this device to an article in the Journal of Microwave Astrology some time in the late 1700's.

The principle behind the device is based upon the well known fact that limburger cheese decomposes in direct proportion to the energy density per unit time ambient upon the mean surface of the cheese. Said decomposition is known to produce vapors and aromas unique to this technology. These vapors are directed to the observers, who are stationed at 1 cubit intervals. The stellar magnitude is related to the number of observers who pass out per unit time interval by the following relation, integrated from minus infinity to Bagdad over the Yellow Brick Road:

$$M_V = \frac{4\pi ekk'}{N/N_0}$$

N = number of observers down
N₀ = starting number of observers
k = number of little liver pills
k' = age of the cheese

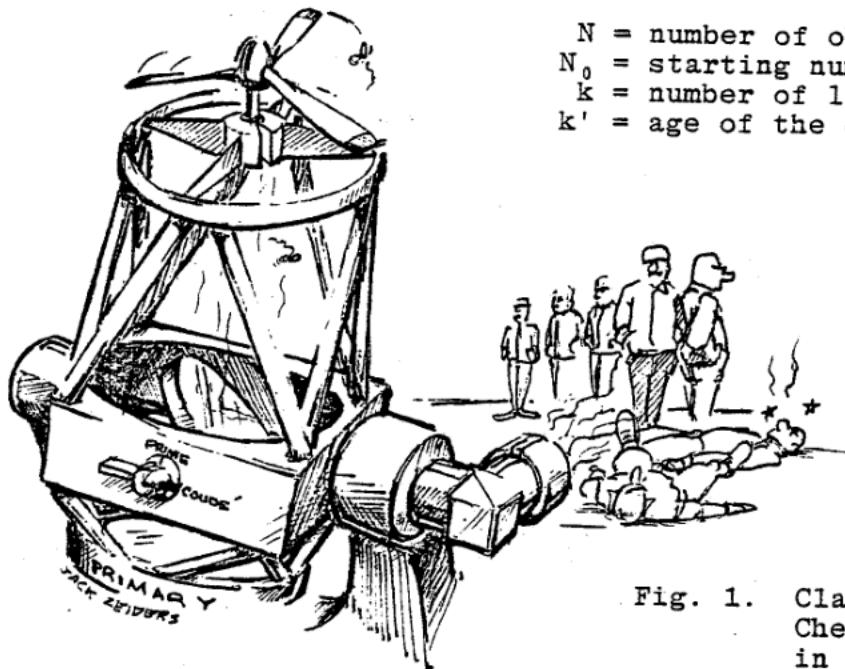


Fig. 1. Classical Limburger Cheese Photometer in use.

Limburger cheese photometry is especially adaptable to group astronomy due to the large number of observers required. The mere mention of the technique never fails to generate Federal grants.

The limburger cheese photometer, standardized by J. L. Kraft, is not to be confused with the limburger spectrophotometer as carried aboard Apollo 13 (see Lunar Limb. Expt.) which requires high dispersion of observers and an environmental impact statement.

Question of the Month: "What was the Star of Bethlehem?"

"The Kings were astrologers, so the star was an unusual planetary configuration." Dave Ambrose

"It was a triple conjunction in Leo at the time of heliacal rising." Jim Van Nuland

"I have no idea, but this year it is the same as the Star of David, because Christmas and Hanukkah fall on the same day." Richard Barrett

"It's a star that got lost." Bob Fingerhut

"I don't see how they figure anything astronomical for it, because anything of that nature would look the same from any point anywhere around the world at that latitude." John Delaney

"An adorned singularity." Les Delong

"Jack Zeiders wrapped in aluminum foil cruising at 11,000 feet." Marty Mahuire

"A midnight launching of a Saturn V." The Medlocks

"It was a triple conjunction of planets in Leo, or it might have been a super nova." Gerry Rattley

"Christ." Don Machholz

Next month's Question of the Month is: "Why do you like astronomy?
What do you want out of it?"

Great Red Spot
On Meridian PST

da	mo	d	h	m
Tu	1	2	5	16 AM
W	1	3	1	5 AM
W	1	3	8	56 PM
F	1	5	2	47 AM
F	1	5	10	35 PM
Su	1	7	4	20 AM
M	1	8	0	9 AM
M	1	8	8	4 PM
Tu	1	9	5	57 AM
W	1	10	1	47 AM
W	1	10	9	39 PM
F	1	12	3	25 AM
F	1	12	11	18 PM
Su	1	14	5	4 AM
M	1	15	1	2 AM
M	1	15	8	45 PM
W	1	17	2	35 AM
W	1	17	10	27 PM
F	1	19	4	18 AM
Sa	1	20	0	2 AM
Sa	1	20	7	56 PM
Su	1	21	5	50 AM
M	1	22	1	41 AM
M	1	22	9	37 PM
W	1	24	3	16 AM
W	1	24	11	8 PM
Th	1	25	6	59 PM
F	1	26	4	58 AM
Sa	1	27	0	53 AM
Sa	1	27	8	41 PM
M	1	29	2	23 AM
M	1	29	10	22 PM
W	1	31	4	6 AM
W	1	31	11	59 PM

Calico Observatory
3509 Calico Ave.
San Jose, CA 95124

Look, Dick! Look, Jane! See Spot Run!
With Jupiter reaching opposition Jan. 21, the
list of transits is longer this month. So get
out there and look! Look! look! Look for a
large dark mass; the Spot follows this very
prominent region. Use medium - high power, and
wait for the moments of good seeing, the Spot
will appear delicately shaded pink. Things
change from night to night, so run! run! run!
to your telescopes.

Jim Van Nuland 371-1307