



# SJAA EPHemeris

## Editor's Notes

There is now a portable toilet installed at the parking lot and/or observing area at Henry Coe State Park. This is the lot on the corner about 1/4 mile before the main entrance, and is currently the area used for SJAA events since the uphill area access was closed.

The Orionid meteor shower will be peaking October 21/22. The Orionids are the incoming (pre-perihelion) particles from Halley's comet. This shower is active throughout October and reaches its maximum activity between October 17 and 25. The highest hourly rates average near 15 but occasionally reach 40. Most Orionid meteors are faint and therefore difficult to photograph. This shower's radiant is located near the Celestial Equator allowing it to be seen equally well from both hemispheres. (Specs courtesy of George Zay.)

Bill Arnett recently made the Lick Tour, noting that the 120-inch was the high point for him: "the 120" mirror blank was a 'leftover' test piece from the construction of the 200" Hale telescope on Palomar; Lick Obs. got it from Corning for only \$50,000 ("the smallest amount the accountants thought they could get away with"). The mirror is rela-

See Editor, p. 2

VOLUME 8 NUMBER 10 OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SAN JOSE ASTRONOMICAL ASSOCIATION, OCTOBER 1997

*Please note that SJAA insurance only covers SJAA members at SJAA sponsored events.*

### October

- 4 Star party at Fremont Peak. Sunset 6:45 pm, 11% moon sets 8:45 pm.
- 10 Hoge park star party. Sunset 6:37 pm, 68% moonset 1:57 am.
- 11 General meeting Hoge Park 8pm; Member Night. Bring your questions, concerns, ideas and anything else of interest. Open board meeting 6:30 pm.
- 24 Last Beginning Astronomy Class this year: the 30-inch telescope at Fremont Peak. Hoge Park star party. Sunset 6:16 pm, 23% moon rises 3:03 am.
- 25 Star parties at Fremont Peak, Coe. Sunset 6:16 pm, 23% moon rises 3:03 am.
- 26 End of Darkness Squandering Time. Set clocks back 1 hour, and apologize to your honest sundial.

### November

- 1 Star party at Fremont Peak. Sunset 5:09 pm, 3% moon sets 6:24 pm.
- 7 Hoge park star party. Sunset 5:04 pm, 53% moon sets 11:51 pm.
- 8 General meeting Hoge Park 8pm; Dr. Ken Croswell, author of Planet Quest, will speak on the drama surrounding the discover of planets both in our solar system and around other stars.
- 21 Hoge park star party. Sunset 4:54 pm, 49% moon rise 11:55 pm.
- 22 Star party at Fremont Peak. Sunset 4:53 pm, 39% moon rises 0:49 am.
- 22 Star parties at Fremont Peak, Coe. Sunset 4:49 pm, 0% moon sets 5:03 pm.

## Good Luck Near Yosemite

John Gleason

*One of the great things I like about astrophotography is the record you get of such a great night. The resulting images of the Pelican and M31 are amazing for their detail, contrast, and color saturation.*

Late August often provides amateur astronomers with the best observing conditions in Northern California. Taking advantage of the good weather forming up for the weekend, I launched out on a three day astrophotography trip to near Yosemite. The night of the 27th into the morning of the 28th was noteworthy by its calmness and transparency.

Most Sierra locations suffer from atmospheric turbulence flowing off of the central valley, but this was not to be the case this evening. Mild temperatures, and zero wind prevailed early on. Hardly a star was twinkling in any observed direction. The ST-4 autoguider also betrayed the unusual conditions by providing 0/0 readouts during a pair of long exposures of the Pelican Nebula. That typically means that no correction to the RA and DEC directions are occurring. The ST-4 is so sensi-

See Yosemite, p. 2

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**Editor, from p. 1**

tively slow for a large telescope because the blank was too thin to cut a deep curve into." He also noted that when it comes to double stars, the 36-inch refractor is truly remarkable (no surprise, since that was S. W. Burnham's favorite scope for hunting them: "Epsilon Lyrae was impressive, though. The close pairs were not just split, they were separated by HUGE gaping rivers of blackness."

Former board member Rich Neuschafer had a close call at The Peak when his truck went over the side, but the accident (though dangerous) led to only bumps, scrapes and bruises... and to his relief, no damage to his equipment.

Longtime local observer John Hales suffered a heart attack, but rallied quickly in the hospital and was out observing again the weekend after his release! Everyone was delighted to see him do so well.

Last but not least, when going to Fremont Peak, Henry Coe, Grant Ranch or any other park that requests fee payment, please make it a point to remember to do your part. As astronomers, we're lucky to have these facilities, and should do everything we can to keep them in our "arsenal."



**Yosemite from p. 1**

tive, it typically will track on atmospheric seeing.

After about 140 minutes of this (all the while wondering if the ST-4 was even doing its job), I decoupled the camera and swung the Astro Physics 7" f/7 refractor to Jupiter

which was just crossing the local meridian. 300X revealed a vista of pastel yellows and browns, with a hint of red-orange in some of the southern most Jovian cloud belts. I counted 12 belts, No GRS, but a large brown cloud was visible.

Temperatures hovered around 52 F, and the 7/7 has been suffering from astigmatism in the lower temperatures. (Something to do with the objective cell being too tight) Yet, the image was excellent, with Jupiter's moons exhibiting solid, observable disks.

An OIII filter was slipped on a 35mm Panoptic eyepiece for a quick peak at the Pelican/North American Nebula complex. A great view indeed, but nowhere near as good as John Kuklewicz' 18" views from Lassen '96. This was one of the few times I pined for more aperture. Still, there were visible twisted dark structures near the tip of "Florida" and the Pelican form was unmistakable.

Back to astrophotography. Several pix were done of M31, now riding high in the east, with the telescope reaching near vertical at the end of the second photo run. Sky transparency had remarkably improved past midnight. 10 stars were counted visually without optical aid in the Pleiades. M33 was also naked eye.

The sky itself had taken on a granular appearance. I suspect that a number of 7th magnitude stars were just on the edge of visibility. Orion, just clearing the trees, was wreathed in a veil of glittering 6th magnitude diamonds.

Through the telescope, the Pleiades was the finest that I could remember in 30 years of observation. The Merope nebula was huge, fill-

ing about 80% of the 35 Panoptic field. Lots of fine structure and faint wisps of nebulae near Electra. In fact, all of the bright stars had glowing halos of gas extending well outside the field of view.

M33 was interesting for its unusually clear spiral form against a glittering star-sprinkled sky background. Lovely.

M31 looked like a Tony Hallas photograph. Dark lanes were mottled, star clouds were bright and well defined. Why take photos when the viewing is as good as this? Hmm... must be some incurable disease at work. I wonder if the Betty Ford Clinic has a cure?

At 5 am, a -1 magnitude bolide meteor dropped to the northeast, with a great flameout and breakup at the end of its 3 second life. Hurrah!

Running through the Pleiades and out to Saturn, the band of zodiacal light was visible. This actually put a lot of skyfog in my resulting images of the Pleiades. The zodiacal light reminded me of a great cosmic finger pointing to Saturn. At 300X Saturn was magnificent. Subtle coloration could be detected within the rings, with momentary glimpses of brightness variations where the Enke division should be. The binoviewer revealed pronounced polar darkening and subtle details in the broad cloud band on the planet.

By this time I was very much toast. 300+ minutes of astrophotography and a thermos of coffee later I was both buzzing and bleary-eyed at the same time. At the first signs of astronomical twilight, telescope power was shutdown and eyepieces were put away. Another great night reminding me why I love this hobby so much.

# The Spirit Of Mars

Bill Arnett

It's time for our space program to get more aggressive and stop worrying about making everything safe and easy. The point is not to cut costs but to do dangerous things, to take risks, to push the envelope, (I can't help it) to boldly go... NASA is too timid.

They've tried to make space travel seem like airplane travel. It just aint so and it won't be for a long while. And their attempt to pretend it is safe has gotten us into the current mess ...

It was not always thus. The Apollo program was known to be risky and dangerous. The deaths in the Apollo 1 fire only cost a few months and no loss of public support. Apollo 13, though so many things went wrong, was a smashing success.

So let's go to Mars. And if the first few tries end up with dead astronauts so be it. That will make it all the more rewarding when we finally do succeed.

Many people think there's a valid case that there are big problems that need to be solved here on earth...

Nonsense! First of all, there is no way in hell that we can feed everyone unless we stop the population growth. It's not even clear we can support the current population for long. (I won't insult your intelligence debunking the view that we can export our excess population to Mars.) The real fix to this doesn't cost anything, in fact it saves huge amounts of money, but it does require a change of attitude of staggering pro-

portion. It may be that the Chinese solution, draconian though it may be, is better than any of the alternatives.

Secondly, I quite agree that there are many "terrestrial" problems that come way above the space program in any rational priority list. Education is certainly one of them. But we are not so poor that we can afford only to do the single thing on the top of the list. We can have a vigorous space program and teach our kids, too. In fact, it might help; it might help a LOT. It sure worked when I was a kid.

But the real reason we need the space program, and in particular to send (wo)men to Mars, is to revive our spirit. Maybe China or Europe can get by with running in place and living on the glories of the past. Maybe some can be content with tending their gardens and waiting for a peaceful end.

But not America. We are pioneers, children of the Wild West. We need to grow, to expand, to boldly go. When we stop, when we lose that pioneering spirit and settle down, we die.

We start worrying about crime and the loss of "values" and argue endlessly over minutiae (e.g., should the retirement age be 65 or 67?). If we want to really cast off our cultural malaise we need a new goal. A tough one, one that isn't even obviously possible. One that catches the imagination. One that our kids will want to grow up to be a part of. (Ever hear a kid say, "When I grow up I want to be a lawyer"?)

The space station is not it. Neither is going back to the Moon (been there, done that). Both of these are worthy endeavors but only as intermediate steps. The real, only, and

obvious goal is Mars. And not with robots, scientifically valuable though they may be. There's no adventure in watching Sojourner's videos. There's no risk, no danger, no personal triumph. ("When I grow up I want to be a remote vehicle operator"? I don't think so.)

This is not about science. Its about humanity.

The first person to stand on Mars will be remembered long after Columbus is a footnote in history. I only hope I live to see that day.

It's still possible, but we've got to get started pretty soon!



## ASTRO ADS

TeleVue Panoptic 22mm Eye-piece. Excellent condition. Asking \$190. 8" Mylar Solar Filter (for C8). Excellent condition. Asking \$75. Interested parties should e-mail [Lezlie2@aol.com](mailto:Lezlie2@aol.com) or call (510) 793-5275.

Meade LX-200 10-inch f/20 for \$2,800. Patrick Rodriguez 408/269-7709. Email: [70262.1363@compuserve.com](mailto:70262.1363@compuserve.com)

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# The Shallow Sky

David North

If you are one of those folks who like the Shallow Sky (solar system viewing), note that Saturn is really coming into its own this month, and Jupiter is still well-placed in the early evening.

Activity has been terrific all year in Jupiter's cloud bands, and the moons are almost edge-on to us in their orbits, which means all manner of curious "near eclipse" and eclipses as well as spectacular shadow passes.

Saturn's rings are far more open this year, though they have been closing down a bit again since early August and will continue to close for the rest of the year. Still, they will be visible for the duration; they do not go "edge on" again this year, or for quite a few more.

Due to the idiosyncrasies of the moon's orbit, October's best views of the moon will be from Third Quarter until about halfway to full. This is a "backlighted" variation of some of the most interesting lunar territory, high in the sky on the terminator. The best viewing will be in the early morning (or even daytime!) starting around October 20. On the 21st, the libration will be at it's best for the eastern limb, which will (unfortunately) be hidden.

Full moon occurs on the 16th, which is basically between all of October's librations, so those who like to hunt in the libration zones will have little luck both east or west this month. North and south

offer some opportunities on the 20th and 7th respectively; since light gets spread more evenly at the poles (a broad terminator creeping slowly across instead of the fleeting days we get at either limb near full), so those areas might show some mountains and craters that are otherwise not available.

For those who (like me) prefer evening viewing, the 3-day through full+3 moon will still be somewhat low in the sky, with the worst First Quarter viewing having just passed in September. Due to the dates, this month will be just about as poor.

Saturn and the Moon will dance close to each other near the horizon from 3am to 6am on October 15, for the early risers among us (not me!).

All in all, this month looks like a good one for just getting familiar with the basic features and hunting some targets of opportunity, unless you are the sort to get up in the morning; in that case, with any luck it's the best time of year to hunt the third quarter moon.

Though this may not be the strongest month for mooning, it is more than made up for by what may be the best planetary observing of the year (seeing permitting, and seeing has been brutally poor most of this summer). Perhaps the return of Autumn will bring us steady air at the "wrong" time of year...)



# Freeman On Everything

Jay Freeman

*From Notes For Beginners, updated recently, in which he is discussing various kinds of telescope the amateur can buy:*

## **High-Tech Conversation-Stopper:**

This is how you shame those grass-chewing hillbilly clodstompers who have giant cardboard Dobsons with tubes so big that they echo. Odds are the seeing will never get good enough for them to demonstrate that a half meter shaving mirror will blow eighteen centimeters of optical perfection clean out of the water, and if they start talking about faint galaxies, you can always change the subject to diffraction rings and modulation transfer functions, and ask them to compare internal baffles and background sky brightness. Besides, your telescope has more knobs than all theirs put together, and it costs more than all theirs put together, too.

The default choice for the High-Tech Conversation-Stopper these days is typically an apochromatic refractor, or some close approximation... some folks like Questars, but not me.

My present High-Tech Conversation-Stopper is the 90mm Vixen fluorite refractor I mentioned earlier. It is not big enough to be as impressive as I might want, and is rather short on knobs, but I can

See Freeman, p. 5

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**Freeman** from p. 4

talk fast enough to make up the difference.

***On Venus:***

My most impressive planetary observation lately was made with the naked eye, on the evening of Sunday, 31 August, 1997. Someone had set up a Meade LX200 and used it to locate Venus for daytime viewing, half an hour or an hour before sunset.

To our surprise, the planet was not only visible to the naked eye as well, but was obvious. Even with the full glare of the late afternoon sun, not blocked by hand or cloud, shining in my face, I could see Venus in the sky. Even with my sunglasses on, and sun in my face, there was Venus. The presence of thin cloud near the planet helped with this observation, for it gave the eye something to focus on, and provided "landmarks" against which to remember and reference the planet's location. But even so, Venus in the full Sun, from a relatively low altitude, is rather startling. Wow.

***On Telrads:***

I have experimented with unit-magnification finders on my own telescopes, and have of course regularly used them in the field, on other peoples' equipment. Yet I wouldn't bother mounting one — even a good one, such as the Telrad — on a telescope of mine. I prefer a straight-through finder (as opposed to one with a star diagonal) of perhaps 30 to 40mm aperture. My preference is based on the following experience:

1) I have cultivated the knack of using a straight-through finder as a reflex sight, by keeping both eyes open and letting the brain project the cross-hair seen by one eye onto the sky as seen by the other. That works well enough for me, so that I can find a naked-eye object about as quickly as with a unit-magnification finder. It did take a while to learn the trick of doing so.

2) The vast majority of the objects I look at are far too faint for the naked eye. To set on them, I routinely use stars as faint as shown in the atlases I am using — sometimes to magnitude 9. The positional accuracy obtainable with just naked-eye stars is insufficient for many parts of the sky where NGC galaxies are common, or where there are enough stars to make it hard to identify a double by rough position and brightness alone. Thus the use of a magnifying finder saves a lot of time, that would otherwise be spent sweeping and identifying objects.

3) For observing double stars, small finders are particularly desirable. As I just indicated, with a small finder I can usually see the star I am looking at, and identify it unambiguously from among many others of similar brightness. Furthermore, it is no problem to align a small finder sufficiently that when I have a star on its crosshair, it is in the field of a 300x eyepiece on the main telescope. Thus I don't need to keep changing eyepieces and refocusing, to find and center the next double star. That saves a lot of time, particularly when the seeing is less than perfect, for in such conditions it can take many

minutes to achieve critical focus at high magnification.

While assisting with the public program at Lick:

One young visitor seemed particularly impressed that the body of observatory benefactor James Lick lay entombed in the pier of the great refractor, the more so when I added that his ghost walked the halls of the building late at night, snatching up unwary astronomers to meet a terrible, unknown fate. (I placed my red flashlight beneath my chin, shining upward over my face, as I uttered these baleful words.) His eyes grew rounder and rounder as I remarked that I had let more people into the 36-inch dome than had come out, and how could that be so? But he climbed bravely up the stairs when his turn came. Of such stern stuff are astronomers made. It was ever thus, and I expect the ghost of Lick would have been right there in line for a look through the eyepiece, too.

*Editor's Note: Jay is a prolific author in the amateur community. It's simply impossible to print everything he cranks out in a month; it would more than fill the Ephemeris. So, for those who don't have access to his Internet output, the editor is compiling his favorite excerpts in a column-like format and rudely sticking Jay's byline on it. Still, the editing is my fault, not Jay's.*



## COMET COMMENTS

### Don Machholz

A faint comet has been discovered "automatically" by the Spacewatch equipment at Kitt Peak. Comet C/1997 P2 (Spacewatch) will remain faint. Six more short-lived faint comets have been found on images obtained by the solar-orbiting SOHO satellite; its total is now 26. Meanwhile, Comet Hale-Bopp is now in the morning southern sky and Comet Meunier-Dupouy slowly brightens in our evening northern sky.

**COMET HUNTING NOTES:** With so many comets from the Kreutz Sungrazing Group being discovered by the SOHO satellite, amateurs have taken a renewed interest in sweeping along the path by which these comets are arriving. That path is now in the morning sky, having been behind the sun this past summer. The comets are very faint in the weeks before perihelion and it may take CCD imaging to capture them. The brightest members, although rare, can still be discovered visually.

#### Ephemerides (for 0h UT)

##### C/1995 O1 (Hale-Bopp)

Date	R.A.	Dec	El	Sky	Mag
10-04	08h08.9m	-38°46'	70°	M	6.1
10-09	08h10.0m	-40°53'	72°	M	6.2
10-14	08h10.5m	-43°00'	75°	M	6.3
10-19	08h10.3m	-45°05'	77°	M	6.4
10-24	08h09.3m	-47°08'	79°	M	6.5
10-29	08h07.6m	-49°09'	81°	M	6.6
11-03	08h04.9m	-51°07'	83°	M	6.7
11-08	08h01.2m	-53°00'	84°	M	6.8

##### C/1997 J2 (Meunier-Dupouy)

Date	R.A.	Dec	El	Sky	Mag
10-04	15h05.1m	+60°15'	71°	E	11.1
10-09	15h23.8m	+59°24'	72°	E	11.1
10-14	15h39.5m	+58°30'	73°	E	11.0
10-19	15h55.2m	+57°33'	73°	E	11.0
10-24	16h10.9m	+56°33'	74°	E	10.9
10-29	16h26.5m	+55°30'	74°	E	10.9
11-03	16h42.0m	+54°25'	75°	E	10.8
11-08	16h57.2m	+53°17'	75°	E	10.8

#### ELEMENTS — Epoch 2000.0

Object:	Hale-Bopp	Meunier-Dupouy
Peri. Date:	1997 04 01.13800	1998 03 10.4346
Peri. Dist:	0.9141405 AU	3.050393 AU
Arg/Peri:	130.58915 deg.	122.6927 deg.
Asc. Node:	282.47069 deg.	148.8384 deg.
Incl:	089.42943 deg.	091.2715 deg.
Eccen:	0.9951172	1.001491
Orb. Per:	~2500 years	Long Period
Ref:	MPC 29568	MPC 30429
Epoch:	1997 06 01	1998 03 08
Abs.Mag/"n":	-1.0/4.0	3.0/4.0

#### NOTES TO HELP YOU MAKE BETTER USE OF COMET COMMENTS

### Don Machholz

Comet Comments contains information about new comet discoveries. This is followed by comet news and observing tips for the comets currently visible. Next I provide ephemerides (predicted positions) for bright comets (usually all those brighter than magnitude 11) so that amateurs can find them. This is how to read these tables:

**Date:** This is the Universal Time for the comet's position. The positions are for 00 hours Universal Time (UT). The United States is a few hours earlier than this, so for a comet viewable in the evening, look for it on the night preceding the indicated date. For morning viewing the comet has already passed the position indicated for 00hr UT position, so the comet has passed that point and moved on.

**R.A. and Dec:** Right Ascension and Declination in 2000.0 equinox coordinates. These can be plotted on a star chart and found by star-hopping, or by using setting circles.

**El:** The elongation of the comet; the number of degrees it is from the Sun as seen from the Earth.

**Sky:** Morning (M) or evening (E) sky.

**Mag:** The predicted magnitude or brightness of the comet. The brightness of a comet is difficult to predict so this is only a guess based upon past performance and comet theory.

The last item I include is the elements of the orbits. This information can be entered into most comet-orbit computer programs to further project the comet's positions.

**Peri. Date:** The date the comet is closest to the sun. Year is followed by month and day.

**Peri. Dist:** The distance from the comet to the sun at perihelion in Astronomical Units.

**Arg/Peri, Asc. Node, Incl:** These define the angle of the comet's orbit. The Arg/Peri is the Argument of the Perihelion, the Asc. Node is the Ascending Node — if this figure is under 180 the comet reaches perihelion north of the ecliptic. The Incl is the Inclination of the comet's orbit. If it is under 90 degrees indicates the comet is in a direct orbit, while over 90 degrees means it is in a retrograde orbit.

**Eccen:** This is the shape of the orbit. A "1.00" is a parabola, while "0.00" is a circle. An eccentricity of greater than 1 is a hyperbolic orbit — the comet will never return.

**Orbital Period:** The length of time it takes for the comet to orbit the sun.

**Ref:** The source giving the elements. MPC indicates Minor Planet Circulars by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory.

**Epoch:** The time for which the orbit is most accurate. The orbit is generally accurate enough for visual location of the comet for several months on either side of this date.

**Absol. Mag/"n":** This is the absolute magnitude — the brightness of the comet if it were 1 AU from both the earth and the sun. The average comet is about 7.0. The "n" value is the rate of brightening as the comet nears the sun, or dimming as it leaves the sun. The average is 4.0. The "n" value presented here may have to be multiplied by 2.5 to enter into some computers.

## CELESTIAL CALENDAR OCTOBER 1997

Richard Stanton

*Daylight Savings ENDS SUN 26-OCT*

27\* = Pacific Standard Time

### Lunar

Phases	Time	Date	Rise	Trans	Set
NM	09:52 PDT	01	07:00	13:06	19:06
FQ	05:22 PDT	09	14:18	19:35	00:05
FM	20:46 PDT	15	18:37	01:08	06:36
LQ	21:48 PDT	22	00:21	06:36	13:42

**Mercury** 1.42 A.U. Mag. -1.3

Date	Rise	Trans	Set	R.A.	Dec.
07	06:44	12:41	18:37	12:35.9	-02:11
17	07:31	13:04	18:37	13:38.7	+09:36
27*	07:14	12:26	17:13	14:40.0	-16:07

**Venus** 0.81 A.U. Mag. -5.1

Date	Rise	Trans	Set	R.A.	Dec.
07	10:59	15:48	20:38	15:44.3	-22:11
17	11:16	15:56	20:36	16:31.2	-24:48
27*	10:30	15:04	19:37	17:18.5	-16:26

**Mars** 1.86 A.U. Mag. +0.7

Date	Rise	Trans	Set	R.A.	Dec.
07	11:29	16:18	21:07	16:15.3	-22:23
17	11:25	16:10	20:54	16:46.0	-23:21
27*	10:20	15:02	19:44	17:18.0	-24:18

**Jupiter** 4.63 A.U. Mag. -2.5

Date	Rise	Trans	Set	R.A.	Dec.
07	15:55	21:00	02:08	20:59.5	-18:05
17	15:16	20:21	01:30	21:00.0	-18:02
27*	13:19	18:44	23:49	21:01.9	-17:54

**Saturn** 8.39 A.U. Mag. +0.6

Date	Rise	Trans	Set	R.A.	Dec.
07	18:51	01:11	07:27	01:07.6	+04:12
17	18:10	00:29	06:44	01:04.6	+03:54
27*	16:28	22:43	05:01	01:01.8	+03:37

**SOL Star Type G2V Intelligent Life in System?**

(HOD = Hours of Darkness)

HOD Dt	Rise	Trans	Set	R.A.	Dec.
09:33 07	07:08	12:55	18:42	12:51.8	-05:33
09:56 17	07:17	12:53	18:28	13:28.8	-09:18
10:17 27*	06:27	11:52	17:15	14:06.9	-12:50

**Astronomical Twilight** Begin End

JD 2,450,728	07	05:42	20:08
738	17	05:51	19:55
748	27*	05:00	18:43

### Siderealtime

Transit Right	07	00:00	= 23:56
Ascension at	17	00:00	= 00:35
Local Midnit	27*	00:00	= 02:15

**Darkest Saturday Night** 04-Oct-1997

Sunset	18:47
Twilight End	20:13
Moon Set	20:46
Dawn Begin	05:40

## ACTIVITIES THROUGH OTHER CLUBS

TAC has every Wednesday reserved at the Montebello site (on Page Mill Road near Skyline; watch for the parking lot sign). This is a very genial and convenient midweek observing opportunity.

### October

- 10 TAC Van Meter School public night.
- 11 TAC Fremont Peak or Henry Coe lunar observing.

### November

- 1 HVAG Starparty at Grant Ranch Telescope Row
- 7 TAC Van Meter School Middle School public night
- 8 TAC Fremont Peak or Henry Coe lunar observing
- 29 HVAG Starparty at Grant Ranch Telescope Row

### 24 hour News and Information:

**SJAA Hotline:** (408) 559-1221

**Web Address:** <http://www.seds.org/billa/sjaa/sjaa.html>

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## DIRECTIONS TO SJAA

### PLACES

**Houge Park** is in San Jose, near Campbell and Los Gatos.

From Hwy.17, take the Camden Avenue exit. Go east 0.4 miles, and turn right at the light, onto Bascom Avenue. At the next light, turn left onto Woodard Road. At the first stop sign, turn right onto Twilight Drive. Go three blocks, cross Sunrise Drive, then turn left into the park.

From Hwy.85, take the Bascom Avenue exit. Go north, and turn right at the first traffic light, onto White Oaks Road. At the first stop sign, turn left onto Twilight Drive. You will now be passing the park. Turn right at the first driveway, into the parking lot.

**Henry Coe State Park** is east of Morgan Hill.

From Hwy.101, exit onto East Dunne Avenue. Continue for 12 miles, far past Andersen Reservoir, to the park, atop the ridge. The current SJAA site is the parking lot on the right about 1/2 mile before the main entrance. There is now a fee for use.

**Fremont Peak State Park** is south of the village of San Juan Bautista.

From Hwy.101, about 11 miles south of Gilroy, take the eastbound Hwy.156 exit. Run for 3.0 miles, to a traffic light, and turn right onto county Hwy.G-1. Follow G-1 for 12 miles into the park. Be careful to note the sudden "left/right jog" soon after the turn; signs are posted. There is a \$3 entrance fee.

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## August Board Meeting

David North

As usual, we settled the immediate schedule of events, ran through the Secretary's Report (Jim Van Nuland was back from vacation) and reviewed the Treasurer's Report (Bob Elsberry was absent, but submitted the report ahead of time). It would appear membership is in a slight decline after the strong showing earlier in the year; not a problem yet, but something that requires some attention.

A tentative schedule for next year was also presented, but some amendment is expected before final adoption.

The board's only official action was to approve a resolution to support the change of Fremont Peak State Park's name to Fremont Peak Astronomical Park, or any variant that gets the idea across. SJAA will at some point draft a letter to this effect for mailing to FPOA and the state. The name change is obviously useful to the astronomical community, and a petition is currently being circulated for eventual presentation to the proper authorities. Members may want to contribute to this effort by signing such a petition, or any other way of "taking the message" to the park service.

Former board member Rich Neuschafer encouraged members of the board to be more forthcoming with their comments on the fledgling SJAA mailing list, set up by Bill Arnett. We all offered various excuses for our reticence, my own being the most long-winded and encompassing such points as "not everyone reads their email" and "comments from board members can take on an official stamp when it is not really warranted" and other such hot air, ad nauseam. Since then, there has been little traffic, so the issue is somewhat moot.

A long discussion of filing a report of the minutes of the board meeting ensued, in which everyone present agreed that such a report would be desirable, whether it appeared in the Ephemeris or the mailing list, or both... but nobody volunteered to take on this task, and the Secretary offered compelling reasons why the minutes would not be useful for this purpose.

If anyone wishes to take on this role, it would certainly be appreciated. For the moment, I'll just print my own impressions until someone who can do a better job comes along.

Hopefully, an agenda for future board meetings will be sent out over the SJAA mailing list; instructions for how to sign on (if you are not already getting SJAA email to your address) are in each month's Ephemeris.

All in all, the weather was nice, it wasn't too hot in the room, and greater attendance than usual made for a more interesting meeting. Unfortunately, some matters were not addressed due to time constraints, so meetings will probably be busy for some months to come. Just the same, if anyone has a matter they wish to bring before the board, it can be included by informing any board member before the meeting (phone numbers are in the Ephemeris) or by simply showing up.

The meetings are not all that formal — and the more input the board gets, the better we are likely to do in helping to make a stronger club, while hopefully having some fun doing it.

Hilarity is permitted with some judicious restraint.

## Officers and Board of Directors

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VP Ed Erbeck	379-5413
Sec Jim Van Nuland	371-1307
Tres Bob Elsberry	226-4483
Dir Bob Brauer	292-7695
Dir Terry Kahl	629-0563
Dir Paul Mancuso	946-0738
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Dir Bill O'Shaughnessy	984-3985

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## School Star Party Chairman

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## Telescope Loaner Program

Mike Koop 446-0310

## Web Page

Bill Arnett	billa@znet.com
Scott Wade	



## Telescope Loaner Program Status

Mike Koop

No.	Scope Description	Borrower	Due Date
1	4.5" Newt/ P Mount	Available	
2	6" f9 Dob	John Paul De Silva	?
3	4" Quantum S/C	David Manley	9/30/97
4	60mm Refractor	Del Johnson	Indefinite
6	8" Celestron S/C	Bob Bootz	11/13/97
7	12.5" Dobson	Available	
8	14" Dobson	Brian Zaring	9/25/97
9	C-11 Compustar	Paul Barton	Indefinite
15	8" Dobson	Gennaro Sorrentino	10/29/97
16	Solar Scope	Jack Peterson	Indefinite
18	8" Newt/ P Mount	Available	
19	6" Newt/P Mount	Madhava Kidambi	10/15/97
21	10" Dobson	Nathan Hill	11/9/97
23	6" Newt/ P Mount	Bob Hess	10/8/97
24	60mm Refractor	Ravi Tembhkar	7/31/97 Note 1
26	11" Dobson	Terry Kahl	10/1/97
27	13" Dobson	Dean Sala	9/26/97
28	13" Dobson	Ramin Ghafouri	10/19/97
29	C8, Astrophotography	Scott Wade	8/28/97 Note 1
30	7" f9 Newt/Pipe Mount	David Manley	9/30/97 Note 2

**Note 1:** Please call or email us and let us know how things are going.

**Note 2:** Special loan to support cub scout star party.

Waiting List: There is no one on the waiting list. Reserve a scope today.

All scopes are available to any SJAA member. To reserve a scope, please contact Mike Koop at (408) 473-6315 or email at koopm@best.com.

## Periodical Publication Statement

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San Jose Astronomical Association  
5380 Pebbletree Way  
San Jose, California 95111-1846

## Submit

Members are encouraged to submit articles for publication in the *SJAA Ephemeris*. Send articles to Dave North via e-mail to Timocharis@aol.com. Articles received by the tenth will be put in the following month's newsletter. Please include your name and phone number.



## San Jose Astronomical Association Membership Form

New  Renewal

Membership - \$15

Junior (younger than 18 years old) - \$6

Sky and Telescope - add \$27 to membership

(Sky & Tel will not accept multiyear subscriptions)

Make checks payable to "SJAA"

Bring this form to any SJAA Meeting  
or send (along with your check) to  
Bob Elsberry, Treasurer  
San Jose Astronomical Association,  
5380 Pebbletree Way  
San Jose, CA 95111-1846  
Telephone: (408) 226-4483

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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