

OBSERVATIONAL DATA

During March the planet Mercury moves from inferior conjunction on the first to greatest western elongation on the 28th. At this elongation Mercury is 28 degrees distance from the sun, but is nevertheless too low in the east at sunrise for easy observation.

Venus is an evening star and can be seen low in the west after sunset during the later part of the month.

Mars is in Scorpius and rises soon after midnight.

Jupiter is in Taurus this month. On the 15th it is approximately on the meridian at sunset and sets about midnight.

Saturn is in Libra and rises several hours before midnight.

—A. L. White

LUNAR OCCULTATIONS FOR MARCH

Date	Star	Mag.	Age	Phase	E.S.T.
9	9 Taur.	6.7	4.9	D	8:40.5 p.m.
10	BD/24° 674	6.3	5.9	D	8:55.7 p.m.
11	BD/25° 941	6.9	7.0	D	10:42.3 p.m.
12-13	BD/23° 1491	6.5	8.1	D	12:39.2 a.m.
13	BD/21° 1630	6.8	8.9	D	7:31.7 p.m.
13-14	79 Gemi	6.3	9.1	D	2:28.1 a.m.
22	9 b. Libr	6.5	18.1	R	10:50.9 p.m.
24-25	sigma Scor	3.1	20.2	R	1:28.8 a.m.

—A. L. White

PROFESSOR HENRY MARGENAU, well-known philosopher-physicist and author, gives the annual Joseph Henry lecture before the Philosophical Society at 8:15, Friday, March 26 in the auditorium of the Cosmos Club. His topic will be "ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF A CASUAL INTERPRETATION OF QUANTUM MECHANICS."

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Jewell Boling, Editor, 1717 P Street, N. W. (6) NO 7-9621

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STAR DUST  
National Capital Astronomers

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MARCH CALENDAR

- March 6 "THE JOVIAN VERSION OF SUNSPOTS," Dr. James C. Bartlett, Jr., American International Academy. Commerce Auditorium, 8:15 P. M.
- 11 TRIP TO BELVOIR PLANETARIUM. Assemble at Commerce Building 6:30 P. M. (Article inside)
- 20 SPECIAL DISCUSSION GROUP. 2:30 till 5:00 - 7:30 on-. Commerce Foyer. (Story inside)

Tuesday and Friday, 7-10 p. m. Telescope Making Class, Roosevelt High School, Room 319, 13th and Upshur Sts., N. W. Miss Irene Warthen, Instructor. Telephone LO 5-1237. Miss Warthen is present on Fridays.

THE GIANT PLANET JUPITER is covered with an atmosphere of bitterly cold hydrogen gas thousands of miles thick. We can see bright and dark bands, vast clouds and bright and dark spots drifting over its surface as the solid core inside spins around with a speed of more than 25,000 miles an hour at the equator. The clouds and spots, particularly the dark spots, are continually changing. What are they? What causes them? Are they similar to sunspots? Are they completely different? Dr. James C. Bartlett of the American International Academy has made a careful investigation of the spots on Jupiter and will discuss the problem they present, giving his own conclusions on an enigma that has puzzled astronomers for many years. Dr. Bartlett has done research on planets, the moon, and the sun.

THE PITTSBURGH AAA has notified us that the Middle East Regional Convention of the Astronomical League will be held there May 29-31. Hold open this Memorial Day

weekend and plan to make the trip. Efforts will be made to provide transportation in private cars at a cost to be established by each driver to cover his expenses.

ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE is to be in Madison, Wisconsin, July 3-5. We hope you will be able to attend. Bus transportation will be provided to a limited number to view the total eclipse of the sun (June 30) from the northern peninsula of Michigan, and also to view interesting sites in Wisconsin. Contact Miss Scholz immediately if you think you may be interested in this bus trip (leaving Milwaukee June 28). If you are going to the convention, it is recommended that you register as soon as possible. Limited reservations in the dormitories on the campus of the University of Wisconsin are available. The overflow will stay at hotels and motels. Send one dollar registration fee plus a deposit of four dollars for accommodations in the dormitories to Mrs. Harold B. Porterfield, 1001 University Bay Drive, Madison 5, Wisconsin.

A FORT BELVOIR, VIRGINIA, PLANETARIUM trip will be made Thursday, March 11. The only information the Planetarium can give us is that the program will not include "A TRIP TO MARS," the subject of our October visit.

We need to know who needs transportation and who will furnish cars. The Planetarium has asked that we give them an estimate of the number who will attend. Please give us this information at the Saturday, March 6, meeting, or telephone Thelma Cressy, HO 2-2993. Cars will assemble at the Department of Commerce Building at 6:30 p. m. Take Route 1 through Alexandria to Ft. Belvoir (about 15 miles). At Ft. Belvoir turn left and enter gate. Continue straight ahead on Belvoir Road about two miles to end of parade grounds where cannon are on left. Make a right turn into 21st street. Planetarium is second or third building on left. No. 215.

MARCH DISCUSSION GROUP will follow last year's precedent and include an afternoon session from 2:30 to 5, and an evening session from 7:30 on. There will be the features which were so popular last year: discussion of telescope making and telescope accessories and general problems in photography and optics. However, the outstanding feature this year will be something new -- a session on eclipses. Different things which amateurs can do and the types of equipment necessary to carry out the various kinds of specialized observations which amateurs can handle will be discussed. This particular session is timely in view of the NCA'ers who will be making the trip to view the total eclipse of the sun in Michigan this June. The March Discussion Group will originate entirely with Washington, but Norfolk, Richmond, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia have been invited to attend.

THOSE WHO WERE PRESENT at the February meeting know that a motion was adopted to subscribe on a group basis to SKY AND TELESCOPE beginning with the September 1954 issue. The contract with the Sky Publishing Corporation specifies that all regular members must subscribe; and that junior and life members may subscribe in accordance with an adopted procedure. Thus, beginning with the 1954-1955 fiscal year of the NCA dues will be \$5 for regular members, and \$2 of this amount will pay for your subscription. A copy of the revised By-laws will be sent to every member.

LIEUT. COL. FRANCIS P. WELLS, RET., passed away in Florida on February 7. His body was brought back to Washington and he was accorded a full military funeral in Arlington National Cemetery. Col. Wells (to everyone in NCA he was Dr. Wells) joined the NCA in 1949. He was very much interested in the technical end of astronomy and he taught the NCA astronomy course for two years. He was the very good friend of many NCA'ers who will remember for a long time his ability to reach in his pocket on any occasion, pull out a piece of string with attachments, and demonstrate some point in astronomy.

AT THE MARCH MEETING TWO PROPOSED AMENDMENTS to the By-laws of the Astronomical League will be presented for vote.

The first of these amendments proposes adding three classes of membership to those now contained in these By-laws. The present classes of membership are: regular society membership, junior society membership, and membership-at-large. It is proposed to add:

**Affiliate:** To permit the national observing societies (AAVSO, ALPO, etc.) to become affiliated with the League, thus effecting closer cooperation than is possible under the present arrangement.

**Patron:** To provide individuals or societies with a means by which they can contribute to the financial benefit of the League, if they so desire.

**Supporting:** To permit commercial corporations a type of membership which will benefit them and also supplement League income.

It has been apparent to the League Council that it is restricted in the services that may be provided to members by the limited funds at their disposal. It seems impractical to increase the dues of member societies, many of which could not afford to pay more. They hope that by establishing patron and supporting classes of membership more benefits can be provided.

The second amendment proposes a change in the method of voting for League officers in each annual convention. The change will permit those societies with no delegates in attendance at a convention to express their preferences in writing prior to the convention by an absentee voting procedure. This is expected to effect better representative opinion of the members' wishes than the present method of voting.

NEW MEMBERS

- Robert M. McLellan, 2811 Jefferson Davis Highway,  
Arlington, Va. OTis 4-8822  
Howard R. Wilkerson, 2519 Maston Street, Silver Spring,  
Md. LO 5-2970  
Selma Schmidt, 1925 16th Street, N.W., Washington 9, D.C.  
Kay Hand, 1420 Chapin Street, N. W. AD 4-4871  
Aaron Goldberg, 4416 Colesville Road, University Park  
Hyattsville, Md. UN 4-8766  
\*Henry H. Howe, Jr., 1313 N. Wayne Street, Arlington 1,  
Va. JA 2-6888

NEW ADDRESSES

- Abraham Robinson, 7000 Ninth Street, N. W. (12)  
Jean St. Thomas, 4008 Lawrence Avenue, Kensington, Md.  
Dr. James Q. Gant, 4349 Klinge Road, Washington,  
D. C. EM 3-0744  
Mr. John Lund, 6117 43rd Avenue, Hyattsville, Maryland  
UN 4-8909

THE FOLLOWING USED BOOKS are for sale on a first come, first served, basis: Contact Irving Malitson during the day at EMERSON 2-4040, Ext. 444.

ATOMS, STARS AND NEBULAE.	Goldberg and Aller.	\$1.50
EARTH, MOON AND PLANETS.	Whipple.	1.50
PRIMER FOR STARGAZERS.	Neely.	1.00
UNVEILING THE UNIVERSE.	Wagner.	1.00

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE has been appointed by the President. As required by the NCA by-laws, the Chairman of this committee shall be a Trustee, whose term is not expiring, and two members who are not officers of the corporation. The Nominating Committee is as follows: Dana K. Law, Chairman; Paul Davis; Thelma Cressy. This committee will nominate one or more eligible candidates for each office and make its report at the April meeting.