

NOMINATING COMMITTEE. After discussion at the September and October meetings, it was voted that a nominating committee be appointed by the President in March to submit at least one candidate for each office at the annual election in May. Arguments were raised for and against it. Space does not permit a full discussion of the question here. Perhaps members who are doubtful or opposed to this measure are not aware that in the past such matters have been handled by a few who have assumed the responsibility, although not officially appointed. Those few would like to see affairs managed in a more democratic manner. "Star Dust" invites queries to which individual replies will be given.

TWO NEW MEMBERS are welcomed by the Association:
 Dr. James Q. Gant, 7243 Arlington Avenue, Bethesda, Md.;
 Mr. Eugene S. Henning, 205 N. Edison St., Arlington, Va.

We are sorry to lose Dr. Gerald F. Cox who has sent his resignation from La Grange, Illinois, but we hope he will find clear skies in his new surroundings.

IF YOU FOUND A METEORITE, would it belong to you? "The Jurisprudence of Meteorites" in The Mineralogist for June 1943 gives a short history of litigation in this country to determine the ownership of bodies from outer space.

Because Iowa has been unusually favored with meteoric showers, it is also the jurisdiction of many lawsuits to recover the aerolites. "After thoughtful consideration of the principles of law involved and due appreciation of the significance of the case, the court decided that meteorites belong to the owner of the land on which they fall." And again, "Like alluvial accretions, meteoric material should belong to the owner of the land where it is deposited."

In the event the aerolite is discovered upon property belonging to the United States, the Dept. of Interior has ruled that the stone becomes the property of the government and shall be deposited in the Smithsonian Institute.

STAR DUST

National Capital
 Amateur Astronomers Association
 Washington, D. C.

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- President
 Dr. Edgar W. Woolard, 1232 30th St. N.W. Mich. 8287
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 Mr. George L. Skirm, 4304 Brandywine St. N.W. Wo. 1216
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"STARLIGHT" will be the subject of a lecture by Dr. Raymond J. Seeger on Saturday, November 4, at 8 p.m., in Room 43, U. S. National Museum. Dr. Seeger, who is on war leave from the Department of Physics of The George Washington University, is Physicist, Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department.
 ---Edgar W. Woolard

THE HISTORY OF ASTRONOMY GROUP will hold its first meeting at the home of Dr. Woolard at 7:30 p.m., November 13th. Please notify him if you plan to attend. The subject will not be a repetition of the one last year. Those who heard Dr. Woolard in the former class look forward to more of those worth-while evenings.

AN AMENDMENT TO THE BY-LAWS was proposed at the last meeting to change the election of officers from September to May. Article IV, Section 1, now reads in part: "The officers shall be over twenty-one years of age and shall be elected by ballot at the

first meeting of the Association in the month of September of every year, except that in the event of a vacancy before such time a special election shall be held to fill such vacancy during the intervening period."

As amended, that portion would read: "The officers shall be over twenty-one years of age and shall be elected by ballot at the meeting of the Association in May of every year, to take office the following September, except that in the event of a vacancy before such time, a special election shall be held to fill such vacancy during the intervening period." If a quorum is present, the amendment will be voted upon at the next meeting.

COMMITTEES for this year are as follows:

Lecture: Dr. Woolard, Chairman; Major Lyons.
Publications: Mabel Sterns, Chairman; Mrs. Davis, Miss Koetz.
Observation: Mr. McClellan, Chairman (Hillside 0757); Miss Warthen, Mr. Stanton.
Adjustment and Making of Telescopes: Mr. Peterson, Chairman (Woodley 2614); Mr. Kummell, Mr. Masters.
Membership: Major Windham, Chairman (Wisconsin 6342); Mr. E. V. Smith.
Entertainment and Publicity: Mr. Herreshoff, Chairman (Emerson 0992); Lt. Wagner, Miss Lamore, Miss Scholz.

EACH OBSERVATORY TIME SIGNAL you hear on the radio requires about eleven and a half man-hours of work in preparation for it. Mr. Bendler of the Time Service and Zenith Tube Division at the Naval Observatory described the steps involved from observing a star to sending corrections in time of transmission over the air.

A great many factors enter into every observation of stars for the computation of time. Only those stars crossing the meridian very near the zenith are used and then only after their positions have been checked during a two-year period. The wobble of the earth's axis, attraction of the moon, variation in the rate of the earth's revolution, all have to be considered.

Some of the steps involve comparison of four clocks, photographing transits of the stars (72 exposures), measuring images on the plate, making allowance for errors, checking with chronograph record, transferring to star sheet, and setting the transmitter.

There are five threads in the telescope and the time is noted as each star crosses the two lines preceding the meridian and the two following. The average is taken to get the time it crossed the meridian. Eighteen stars are photographed on the same small plate on any given night.

Mr. Bendler also discussed the quartz crystal clock, accurate to 1 part in 100 million, considered an improvement over other types. This clock is not affected by gravity such as the pull of the moon, earthquakes, etc., and is more constant than the earth's rotation. It is kept in a chamber with constant temperature.

The time signals are radioed from the Naval station at Annapolis on several frequencies. The Federal Communications Commission's monitoring stations use them in checking radio station frequencies to .01 second. The Coast and Geodetic Survey requires accuracy to .003 second, and the Geological Survey corrects its time to .001 second.