

National Capital  
Amateur Astronomers Association  
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Sec. 2. Applications shall be endorsed by one full member instead of two, and accompanied by dues for one year. At present, several months are allowed for payment of dues. It is intended that the Membership Committee will make thorough investigation of applicants. Upon approval, vote by secret ballot of members will admit applicant. This form of voting will obviate embarrassment to a negative vote.

Sec. 3. New: a member joining in January, for example, will pay \$3 and the following September be billed for \$2, having been credited with \$1 from the first payment. Memberships now expiring during the year will be prorated at 25¢ a month at the next September billing. Juniors will be prorated at 10¢ a month.

Sec. 4 will allow 3 months' grace; now, 6.

Art. II. Duties of officers are removed from by-laws. They will be determined by the trustees.

Art. III, Sec. 2. In event of a vacancy, an officer shall be appointed by Board of Trustees instead of elected by membership.

Art. IV, Sec. 1. Standing committees will be declared by Board of Trustees as circumstances require, instead of set forth in the by-laws.

Sec. 2 specifies that one member of the Nominating Committee be a trustee, and two other than officers.

Sec. 3 adds the time the Audit Committee is to be appointed.

Sec. 4 allows special committees to be appointed as needed.

Art. V is new.

Art. VI, Sec. 1. The present by-laws prescribe the order of business, which has proven inconvenient and is seldom adhered to. New: made elastic to fit the occasion.

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"THE DISCOVERY OF UNSEEN PLANETS" will be the topic of the lecture Saturday, January 5th, 8 p.m. at the National Museum. Dr. Edgar W. Woolard, Astronomer at the Naval Observatory, past president of NCAAA, and author of several papers, will discuss methods by which Neptune and Pluto were discovered before they were seen with the telescope; also small, dark companions of stars, not yet classified as planets or stars.

DR. HARLOW SHAPLEY, Director of Harvard College Observatory, will lecture on "Our Expanding Universe" before the National Geographic Society at Constitution Hall, Friday, January 4, 1946.

AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS RETURN TO NAVAL OBSERVATORY.  
Two small buildings, Nos. 14 and 15 on the Observatory grounds, our first "home" for the 5-inch telescope, are open to us again. The scope has been set up in one and plans are under way for a permanent mounting. The other building will be used for members' portable instruments. To have access to the key at the Administration Building, members must be certified by Mr. Lyons. Take your membership card when going to the Observatory, in case you need it for identification.

ASTRONOMERS' LUCK jinxed the lunar eclipse December 18th. The snow, pretty though it was, could not have picked a more inopportune night for blotting out the moon. Mr. Lyons was interviewed on a radio program.

SNOW AND SLIPPERY STREETS prevented many from attending the amateurs' Christmas party at which Miss Koetz and Lt. Wagner were hostesses. Games and prizes occupied the evening. Worthy of note were the constellations drawn by Mrs. Harris.

IF THE MOON'S DIAMETER were 2000 instead of 2160 miles, we would not have discovered the solar prominences and corona, according to Dr. Gardner who spoke at the last meeting.

From lunar eclipses astronomers have proved the roundness of the earth, figured the distance from earth to moon, and computed change in the length of the day. From solar eclipses they have discovered helium, sun's prominences and corona, with the aid of the spectrograph determined how far from the sun its elements extend, and ascertained height of the ionosphere.

BOOK NOTES

"Northern Lights," by A. S. Eve, Smithsonian Publication 3419, is an instructive and scientific account of the aurora borealis and aurora australis. Electrically charged particles from the sun spiral through the earth's magnetic field to one of the polar regions and ionize the upper atmosphere. Subsequent recombinations of electrons and positive ions result in the famous radiant displays.

In spite of several apparent observations to the contrary, the weight of scientific observation indicates that the aurora may extend from 40 to 600 miles above the earth and is not accompanied by audible phenomena. The peculiar conditions of arctic night have occasionally obscured this essentially straightforward phenomenon by misty reflections and simultaneous electrical brush discharge from snow and bushes.

---Eugene S. Henning

NEW MEMBERS

William H. Schroeder, 3618 Conn. Ave. N.W. Em. 7768  
Joseph C. Boyle, 16 Webb Road, Bethesda Branch, 14.

FOR SALE, Mogy equatorial telescope, class B, 4 in. lens (56X - 224X); cost \$675, will sell for \$500. Lt. Edward P. Street, Republic 6700, Br. 73860.

MOTION WAS MADE at the December meeting to substitute a constitution and set of by-laws for the present laws. We have no constitution. Further discussion and vote will take place in January. Major changes are noted below.

Constitution

Art. I. The present appellation, "National Capital Amateur Astronomers Association," is a test of lung capacity and unwieldy in written form. Proposed: "Washington Amateur Astronomers," tells what and where, easy to remember.

Art. III. Now: only Caucasians over 16 years old are eligible for membership. Proposed: to include all ages (see by-laws), exclude only the Black race.

Art. IV, Sec. 2. Now: four members on the Board of Trustees; no chairman, and no meetings required. New: four members plus the president who shall act as chairman, if he was not a trustee at the time he took office. If he was a trustee, the Board shall consist of only four. The trustees shall meet at least once a year.

Art. V, Sec. 1. By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote instead of majority, a quorum being present.

By-Laws

Art. I, Sec. 1 (a). Memberships now comprise regular, life, patrons, and honorary. It is proposed to add juniors, no minimum age to 18 years maximum, at annual dues of \$1, without the right to vote or hold office. A junior may become full member at 16 by paying appropriate dues.

(b) New: husband and wife may pay jointly \$5 a year; each will have full privileges except that only one copy of notices and publications will be sent to them.

Initiation fee of \$2 is eliminated. Minimum age of 16 was omitted from copy but will be inserted by amendment.