

STAR DUST
National Capital Astronomers
Washington, D. C.

many member-owned telescopes have been made available for these gatherings, ranging in attendance from 20 to 50 cubs. The fulfillment of these requests by the cubs has called for the participation of many NCA members who have never before been active in such fields. We hope that they have enjoyed the experience enough that they will not only continue along these lines but also take part in the many other activities of the NCA.

--Janet Perkins

JUNIOR PROGRAM. The Committee which was appointed in November to investigate the Junior Program made their investigation and presented their recommendations to the Trustees. The Trustees were in agreement with the Committee that they wanted to encourage Junior members and a Junior organization, wherein the juniors hold separate meetings and activities. They also agreed that it would be reasonable to divide such a group into those under 12, and those from 12 to adult membership, as suggested by the committee. The Junior meetings are not being held at the present time, but it is hoped that they can be resumed with the present nucleus of Junior members. It is also hoped that JUNIOR STAR DUST can be resumed when a new source of editorship is determined. The Leroy Benfer telescope is available on a loan basis to any Junior. It was also agreed to allow use of the 5" at the Naval Observatory by a Junior when an adult member is present and willingness was expressed to devote time to such a plan.

MR. CILLEY RETIRES. Mr. Cilley retired the beginning of this year. We had a story on this coming to us from the Naval Observatory. It seems to have gone astray and this story we shall have to give you in the next issue of STAR DUST.

Jewell Boling, Editor, 1717 P. St., N. W. North 9621.

February 1952 Vol. 9, No. 6

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- Date
- 2 Feb. "FORBIDDEN RADIATION," Mr. Marvin L. White of the Army Map Service, Commerce Auditorium 8:15 p. m.
 - 16 Feb. ANNUAL NCA DINNER. Haeringer's Buffeteria, 4728 14th St., N. W. (14th & Decatur) 7:00 p. m.
 - 19 Feb. "THE ENIGMA OF COLOR," Dr. Deane B. Judd, National Bureau of Standards, 8:30 p. m. Pierce Hall, 16th and Harvard, N. W.

Tuesday and Friday, 7-10 p. m. Telescope Making Class, Roosevelt High School, Room 319, 13th and Upshur, N. W. Miss Irene Warthen, Instructor. Telephone Lockwood 5-1237. Miss Warthen is present on Fridays. Note: There will be no class on February 22.

AMONG THE RARE BUT MOST FASCINATING objects of our Milky Way system are the planetary nebulas. Much of their interest lies in the fact that they have been the source of one of astronomy's greatest puzzles. Mr. Marvin L. White will show the role played by modern physics in the solution of this problem. Planetary nebulae consist of intensely hot stars surrounded by expanding shells of highly rarefied gases. Mr. White will explain how the invisible radiation given off by the central star causes the gaseous shell to glow brightly with a greenish light. No laboratory on earth has been able to duplicate the color of this light. In fact, for many years scientists thought that it was impossible for such radia-

tion to be produced anywhere in the universe. That is why it acquired the well-deserved name, "forbidden radiation". A full explanation of this phenomenon depends in part upon an understanding of Niels Bohr's theory of the hydrogen atom. Mr. White promises to give his audience a clear and understandable introduction to atomic physics as it bears on the problem considered.

Mr. White majored in astronomy and astrophysics at the University of Chicago and Yerkes Observatory, and is now employed at the Army Map Service.

---Harriet Malitson

"THE ENIGMA OF COLOR"-- scientists, philosophers, poets for centuries have struggled to understand it -- what it is, how to control it, and how to predict what it will do for us and to us. Each day of our lives is profoundly influenced by color. We buy by color, eat by color, and rejoice in color combinations, but the study of color has disclosed chiefly a series of riddles. A few of these riddles, both solved and unsolved, will be presented by demonstrations in color, and the scientific attempts to solve them will be sketched in commonsense terms by Dr. Judd at Pierce Hall on Tuesday, February 19.

RESERVATIONS FOR THE ANNUAL NCA DINNER must be made and paid for in advance, by February 11, to Mrs. Ione Alston. The cost will be \$2.50. Menu will be steak plus all the trimmings. Miss Heisey is in charge of entertainment. Leo Scott is making the arrangements.

THE SKIES ALMOST COOPERATED on January 15, the first night set aside for NCA group observing. Twelve persons enjoyed the warm evening and clear observing for the first half hour, when a light haze interfered. Constellation study received considerable attention, since several felt the need for a brief review in anticipation of working with Cub Scout groups.

NO DISCUSSION GROUP this month.

NEWS OF THE DEATH OF LLOYD NORTH, former NCA member, was received with deep regret. Mr. North was once secretary for NCA and very active in observing.

TRUSTEE FOR THE TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 1955, to fill the unexpired term of James Crowell, will be Ned Johnston, who was elected at the last NCA meeting.

THE NEW HANDBOOK OF THE HEAVENS has been received from the publisher. An order for 50 copies was placed several months ago, and was received for distribution at the last meeting. If you wish a copy of this excellent book, see Mrs. Alston. Twenty cents for members, thirty-five cents to nonmembers.

EACH MONTH the NCA sends bulletin-board publicity to various government agencies and schools for posting. If you have additional locations where we could post our publicity, please tell Mrs. Malitson.

OPEN HOUSE FOR THE TELESCOPE MAKING CLASS on January 11 was a gathering place for several former mirror-grinders, who had a good time exchanging notes and watching current progress. A few first-time visitors also attended.

NEW MEMBERS

Col. Charles H. Mitchell, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Apt. #1, Bldg. #12 GE 1000, Ext. 2364
Mrs. Elizabeth M. Mitchell -- same as above.

CUB SCOUTS STUDY ASTRONOMY DURING JANUARY. January has been a busy month for the NCA working with the cub scouts of this area. In all more than twenty different dates have been scheduled to help in showing the boys something about astronomy and to give them a chance to look through a telescope. (A new ruling at the Naval Observatory limits visitors to those over 12 years of age and all cubs are under that age.)

Many members have been called upon to assist in this work. The set of slides of the NCA and two sets of borrowed slides together with the NCA projector, as well as