

OFFICER NOMINEES FOR THE YEAR 1955-56.

President Law announced the Nominating Committee at the March meeting, consisting of: Hoy J. Walls, Chairman; Leo Scott, Ione Alston. Mr. Walls announced the following slate at the April meeting: President, Dana K. Law; Vice-President, Dr. James Q. Gant, Jr.; Secretary, Dorothy E. Lamore; Treasurer, John Lund; Trustee, A. L. White. Election will take place at the May meeting. At that time members may present other names from the floor.

ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE CONVENTION.

The 1955 general convention of the Astronomical League will convene in Seattle, Washington on July 1, 1955. The host society will be the Seattle Amateur Astronomical Society and the convention will be held on the campus of the University of Washington. Registration fee before May 15 is \$1.00; after May 15, \$1.50. Housing is available for both single persons and family groups at the Men's Dormitory on the Campus. Rates will be from \$2.00 to \$3.00. Meals at the Dormitory cafeteria are \$2.20 per day. Registration and reservation for lodging may be made with a remittance of \$4.20 and addressing the letter to:

Office of Short Courses and Conferences  
318 Administration Building, University of Washington  
Seattle 5, Washington

Papers are welcome. Remit the title and time required to Forest Ritscher, 4727 16th Avenue, N. E., Seattle. There will be ample space for all types of exhibits. Descriptive cards should accompany all material and displays. Register all display material with Guy R. Blackie, 18305 47th Ave., N. E., Seattle 55. Included as a part of the convention is a trip by bus and ferry to Victoria and the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory. The trip will include two sightseeing stops, Victoria and Vancouver, B. C. Cost will be \$10.00 plus lodging and food. To make reservations send \$2.00 to Robert Nicola, 4231 E. 125th St., Seattle, Washington, before May 15. Later registration incurs penalty of \$2.50. Dr. R. M. Petrie, Director of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory, and Dr. T. S. Jacobsen, Head of the Department of Astronomy, University of Washington, will both address the delegates.

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Jewell Boling, Editor, 1717 P St., N. W. North 7-9621

May 1955 \*\*\*\*\*

MAY CALENDAR

- May 1 (Sun.) EXPLORING THE SKY, Joint program of the NCA and National Capital Parks, Fort Reno Park, 40th and Chesapeake Streets, N. W., 8:30-10:30 P. M. Please bring telescopes.
- May 7 (Sat.) "COSMIC RAYS," Dr. Maurice Shapiro, Naval Research Laboratory, Department of Commerce Auditorium, 8:15 P. M.
- May 12 (Thu.) GROUP OBSERVING, NCA 5" at Naval Observatory. 9:00 P. M. With Bill Isherwood. See item inside.
- May 14 (Sat.) JUNIOR OUTDOOR OBSERVATION SESSION, CONSTELLATION STUDY, etc. Please bring your scope if you have one. Fort Reno Park 8:00 P. M. If the weather is bad the meeting is cancelled.
- May 21 (Sat.) DISCUSSION GROUP WITH BEN ADELMAN - "Johannes Kepler - His Life and Achievements." 8:00 P. M. Commerce Foyer.
- May 23 (Mon.) JUNIOR MEETING to discuss topic of next month's lecture, or some other interesting astronomical sidelight. Mt. Pleasant Branch of the District Public Library, 16th and Lamont Streets, N. W. 7:00 P. M. We have this regardless of the weather.
- May 29 (Sun.) EXPLORING THE SKY, Joint program of the NCA and National Capital Parks, Fort Reno Park, 40th and Chesapeake Streets, N. W., 9-11 P. M. Please bring telescopes.

Each Saturday morning, Telescope Making Class with Irene Warthen at Chevy Chase Community Center, 5600 block of Connecticut Avenue, 9-12 A. M. Miss Warthen's phone is Lockwood 5-4058.

THE MOST POWERFUL RAYS produced by man's greatest atom-smashing machines are far weaker than the cosmic rays that Nature hurls at the earth. Even the hundred miles of atmosphere do not prevent them from reaching the surface though it does transform them. Scientists study cosmic rays to gain insight into the nature of the atomic nucleus, one of the most important problems in science. Dr. Shapiro will discuss the nature of the cosmic rays in space, how they are transformed by their passage through the atmosphere and recent research on the unstable elementary particles discovered in cosmic rays. Dr. Shapiro is a well known authority on cosmic radiation. He is superintendent of the Nucleonics Division of the Naval Research Laboratory and has done research in nuclear physics at the University of Chicago, Los Alamos and Oak Ridge.

— Benjamin Adelman

MAY 21 DISCUSSION GROUP will have as its subject "Johannes Kepler - His Life and Achievements." Kepler was one of the greatest scientists who ever lived yet even today his investigations are underestimated. It took the people of Western Europe more than 1400 years to catch up with the ancient Greek astronomers whose observations and theories are summarized in Ptolemy's great treatise, the Syntaxis or Reckoner. Kepler's discovery of the three laws that govern the paths of the planets was the first great advance beyond the astronomy of antiquity. His work marks the turning point in the history of science and, consequently, in the history of mankind.

Then, as now, astronomy was the leader of the sciences. Once astronomy had finally broken away from the provincial ideas of the Greeks under Kepler's leadership, the way was opened for Newton and the tremendous growth of modern science. My talk on Kepler will describe his career and discuss the long range effects of his great achievements.

— Benjamin Adelman

AN EVENING UNDER THE CLEAR SKIES of the Baltimore Planetarium was enjoyed by about 30 NCA'ers on April 21. Thelma Cressy arranged the trip and Dr. Paul Watson of the Maryland Academy of Sciences described the heavens.

APRIL DISCUSSION GROUP— Miss Scholz led a lively discussion on solar system facts and fancies with background material from the Madison convention papers.

LUNAR OCCULTATIONS FOR MAY

Date	Star	Mag.	Age	Phase	E. S. T.
1	p <sup>3</sup> Leo	6.2	9.5	D	8:41.4 P. M.
2	13 B. Vir.	5.8	10.6	D	9:29.4 P. M.
25	23 H' Cnc	6.6	4.2	D	9:49.3 P. M.
26	209 B.Cnc	6.5	5.2	D	8:12.5 P. M.
28	237 B.Leo	6.3	7.2	D	9:56.8 P. M.

— A. L. White

OBSERVATIONAL DATA

Mercury reaches greatest eastern elongation May 21 and may be seen about 15 degrees above the western horizon just after sunset. Venus is a morning star in May and may be seen low in the east before sunrise. Mars is in Taurus and visible low in the west just after sunset. Jupiter moves from Gemini to Cancer, is well past the meridian at sunset and sets about midnight. Saturn reaches opposition on the 9th. The planet rises about sunset and is visible low in the southern sky for the rest of the night. A close conjunction of Uranus and Jupiter will occur at 4 P. M. on May 10th. At 9 P. M., E.S.T. Uranus will be within a distance of three Jupiter diameters and easily identified with binoculars. The date of maximum intensity for the ETA Aquarid meteor shower is May 4. This shower averages 10 meteors per hour and is associated with Halley's Comet.

—A. L. White

NCA MEMBERS ARE ADMITTED TO THE NAVAL OBSERVATORY GROUNDS on the basis of their NCA membership cards, but to operate the 5" they must take a test. Any new members desiring to be put on the list of those qualified to operate the 5" call Bill Isherwood to make arrangements. His telephone is APPLETON 7-9419.