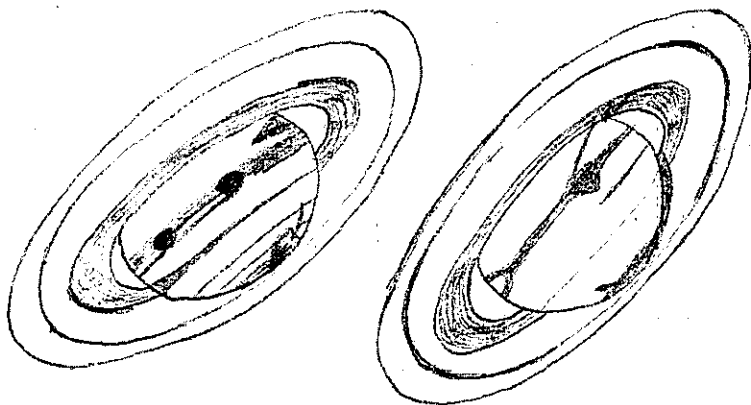


JUNIOR DIVISIONS

VIRGINIA JUNIORS ARE ACTIVE! Rather than wait for an adult to find time, Barry Sperling, himself a junior, is leading a group of junior astronomers in Virginia. Meetings began in January and are held at his home in Falls Church. Eleven enthusiasts --not restricted to boys, either--are hoping that others will join them.

MD.-DC. Working from the first date favorable for observing Saturn in 1958, the Maryland-DC. juniors began a systematic drawing of that planet. About eight people were working, and when the closing date came the beginning of October, we had a grand total of 44 drawings of good quality. Observations were made with a variety of instruments: 3" reflector, and refractors up to 5" and 8", and even the 26" at the Naval Observatory.

The drawings recorded such things as belts, colors, shadows, ring divisions, shadings, irregularities, and lines. Here the bands and colors were the most dominant things and consequently more was recorded on them. Several deductions were reached; the ones of which we felt most sure were recorded in the project report. All such reports are available from the Data Keeper of the Juniors for NCA members to read. Intensity estimates, a full explanation of which can be found in the report, were done also, and were sent to the BAA along with copies of most of the drawings.



Aug. 10, 1958; 8" - 135 X.

Aug. 15, 1958; 3 1/4" O.G. - 100 X.
---Michael Mattingly

Sam Friedman discussed Mercury at the February meeting, and Mike Mattingly reported his research on Venus.

Editor: Mabel Sterns, 1833 New Hampshire Ave. N.W. Washington 9, DC
Production: LtCol. Russell C. White, USMC, and Sam C. Felld, Jr.

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March 1959

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WHAT TO DO IN MARCH

- 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 TELESCOPE MAKING 7:30-10 p.m. Chevy Chase Community Center, Conn. Avenue and McKinley Street, carpenter shop in basement. Hoy Walls and assistant instructors.
- 6, 20 VIRGINIA JUNIORS 8 p.m., 1003 Birch Street, Falls Church.
- 7 "FIFTY YEARS OF PROGRESS IN ASTRONOMY", Dr. Harlow Shapley. 8:15 p.m., Department of Commerce Auditorium.
- 14 MARYLAND-D.C. JUNIORS 2 p.m. Chevy Chase Community Center lounge. "Galaxy--Structure and Composition". Leith Holloway, Advisor.
- 14 OBSERVATION AT THE 5-INCH, 8 p.m. Observatory grounds. Bill Isherwood, chief observer.
- 21 DISCUSSION GROUP, "Astronomical Instruments", Hoy Walls, moderator. 8 p.m. Commerce foyer.

DR. HARLOW SHAPLEY, director emeritus of the Harvard College Observatory, author, lecturer, wit, and one of the brightest lights in the astronomical firmament today, will review "Fifty Years of Progress in Astronomy". The NCA is fortunate to find Dr. Shapley available for this talk, as he is in Washington only briefly for research on his forthcoming book the manuscript of which has just been delivered to the Harvard Press. The subject of Dr. Shapley's lecture ties in neatly with his manuscript which is his second Source Book in Astronomy, and covers the years 1900 to 1950. His first was published some years ago and traced the scientific progress of astronomy from 1600 to 1900. (Source books are traditional in many fields of science.)

Dr. Shapley retired as director of the Harvard Observatory in 1952, and as professor at Harvard in 1956. It is characteristic of the man that between those years he taught a course in "Cosmography" open only to non-science majors. The course was designed to give students of arts and letters a broader conception of the size and nature of the universe. These lectures formed the nucleus of Shapley's recent book, Of Stars and Men. Negotiations are even now in progress for motion picture rights for the book which producers wish to make into an animated series for educational use in theaters, classrooms, and on TV.

Dr. Shapley's current research is also enabling him to revise and expand his book, one of the Harvard series, Galaxies, published in 1943.

Dr. and Mrs. Shapley leave on the first of April for Armagh, the national observatory of North Ireland, where he will pursue a program of intensive research on the Magellanic Clouds. Dr.

Eric Lindsey, a former student of Shapley's, and Director of Armagh, has just returned from South Africa with a trunkful of new plates which are expected to reveal much new pertinent data on the galaxies.
---Nelson M. Griggs

PLANETARIUM IN BLADENSBURG
Mrs. Nancy Bliss

The Prince Georges County Schools Planetarium in Bladensburg opened in September 1958, through the devoted efforts of Howard Owens, Science Supervisor of the school system. An old school was converted into a materials center and remodeled to accommodate a Spitz A-1 planetarium under a 20-foot flame-proof muslin dome, with a seating capacity of about 60. At the rate of two to four lectures a day, Lionel Howland, a retired school principal, has entertained over 9000 children, teachers, and other visitors, with descriptions of the stars and planets, stories of the constellations, views of the stars from different locations on the earth, a "worm's-eye" view of the continents from the center of the earth, and an introduction to celestial navigation. He tries to impress on the children the great sizes and distances involved in astronomy.

The basic lecture, illustrated with slides, varies according to the age level of the audience which has been mostly elementary and junior high school children and teachers. Mr. Owens hopes that eventually all of the children in the school system will be able to visit the planetarium. When the occasion arises that groups visit more than once, Mr. Howland will arrange different showings. Mr. Ferdinand Cardano who teaches at Bladensburg elementary school, helps with some of the evening programs. Once a month, high school students and teachers meet at the planetarium for lectures arranged by Mr. Adelman. Every Wednesday evening Mr. Isherwood conducts a telescope-making class at the Center.

We have been informed that although the planetarium was built for the use of the Prince Georges County Schools, it is available to other groups by appointment, and individuals in the area may be accommodated at the daytime lectures when there is space available. If any group is interested, contact Mr. Howland at the Materials Center, Union 4-1342.

| LUNAR OCCULTATIONS FOR MARCH | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-------|------|-------------|----------------|
| Date | Star | Mag. | Phase | Age | Time (EST) | Position angle |
| 14 | 30 B. Tau | 6.5 | D | 5.6 | 8:53.9 PM | 78° |
| 15 | 63 Tau | 5.7 | D | 6.5 | 6:42.1 PM | 138° |
| 18 | 41 H ¹ Gem | 6.0 | D | 9.6 | 10:02.2 PM | 167° |
| 20 | BD+13° 1994 | 6.8 | D | 11.6 | 8:43.0 PM | 102° |
| 20-21 | 60 Cnc | 5.7 | D | 11.8 | 1:37.7 A.M. | 155° |
| 20-21 | Alpha Cnc | 4.3 | D | 11.8 | 2:43.9 AM | 46° |

A. L. White, Astronomy Editor

A NEW COMMITTEE on Education and Schools Advisory is composed of Ben Adelman, Chairman, Misses Duvall and Hill, Messrs. McCracken, Lyons, Holloway, Neville, and Owens. Its purposes are to encourage teaching of astronomy in school systems in the Washington area and to develop participation by NCA in filling teacher's requests for help in the subject. The committee will coordinate NCA's services to the schools.

NEW MEMBERS

Dr. George C. Blevins, 5280 Partridge Lane N.W., Washington 16, D.C. EM 2-6114

Junior Members:

Beth Brewer, McLean, Virginia
 Alan Creutz, Route 2, Box 480, McLean, Virginia EL 6-3514
 John Hill, Old Chesterbrook Road, McLean, Virginia EL 6-4571
 Sam Johnson, 2104 Hileman Road, Falls Church, Va. EL 6-4761
 Gary Minar, Route 4, Old Chesterbrook Road, McLean, Va. EL 6-5258
 Anne Reiber, Swinks Mill Road, McLean, Va. EL 6-3229
 Joseph Whaley, R.R. #3, Box 132, McLean, Va. EL 6-4915

ASTRONOMERS IN ACTION

The star that Hamid Mahdy found on his photograph last month showed as 6.8 magnitude (BD+30° 3769; HD 187750), which the Naval Observatory said was 8.1 in the catalog. Harvard replied that the catalog was slightly in error, and that the star is blue which makes it appear brighter in the photo....Salome Betts, Jim Heidel Jr., Hamid Mahdy, and Bill Isherwood have been reporting for the nova search program. Negative reports serve a purpose as much as positive ones....Clare M. Fetrow (Mike) is one of the Maryland finalists, and among the top ten per cent of the Westinghouse Science Talent Search; his project is in astronomy.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE appointed: Everette Neville, Chairman, Leith Holloway, and Bob Dellar.

TRIP TO PLANETARIUM at the Naval Academy drew 60 NCA members and guests, many of whom were of school age. Lts. Jg. Carl Haussler and George Yeager demonstrated the use of the instrument in teaching celestial navigation, and pointed out the constellations as they moved across the dome. Pegasus became a baseball diamond with Casey Stengle (mu) arguing with the umpire (lambda), and Alpheratz on first.

We saw how the planetarium serves as a practical aid to technical instruction. Measurements are figured from the center of the earth. A plastic geocentric globe projects the continents on the dome of stars so that both appear geocentrically. Other devices project the coordinates and celestial triangle used in measuring angles. We thank Lts. Haussler and Yeager for their efforts on our behalf, and Mr. Cronin who made the special arrangements with those officers.

AT DISCUSSION GROUP in March, Mr. Walls will take up accessories to telescopes, such as star diagonals, eyepieces, Barlow lenses, and he hopes that a new type of glass for mirrors and flats will arrive from the manufacturer in time for the meeting.

AFTER ONLY FOUR MEETINGS of Prince Georges telescope class, one worker was in the polishing stage. Thirteen students have filled the class and more are waiting. Both Mr. Isherwood and Mr. Walls expect their classes to be very busy in preparation for the science fairs.

THE GAVEL rapped to bring the business meeting to order, was presented to the President by Nelson Griggs last January. We meant to tell you earlier.