

URANOGRAPHOS



*Newsletter for the
Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association*

President- Dr. Robert Wade

Vice President- Peter Burkey

Secretary- Michael Côté

Treasurer- Mark Logsdon

Michael Côté and Robert Wade, Editors

January, 1990

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January Meeting

The January meeting of the Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association will be held on January 16 at 7:30 PM in the West Ottawa Middle School Planetarium in Holland, Michigan. The agenda will be as follows:

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| 7:30-7:35 | The January Night Sky Tour. |
| 7:35-7:45 | The Observer's Log - A review of objects to observe in the constellations Triangulum and Auriga. |
| 7:45-9:00 | General Business Meeting. We will discuss club events for the coming year, including guest speakers, observing sessions, occultations, observatory visits, etc. |

December Meeting Highlights

On December 21 our meeting was started by Sandy's tour of the December sky. Bob followed with a presentation of interesting objects to observe in the constellations Pisces and Cassiopeia. We concluded the video narrated by astronomer Timothy Ferris entitled *The Origin of the Universe*. All items of business, i.e. constitution changes, dues, club non-profit status were tabled until the January meeting.

3882 62nd Street
Holland, Michigan 49423



January Executive Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. by Bob Wade. We discussed the SAAA 1990 meeting calendar and brain stormed possible programs to be presented to the general membership at the general meetings. It appears that a schedule can be confirmed through May.

Peter Burkey talked about plans for Astronomy Day which is on April 28 this year. Our plans will not coincide with that date but instead we will plan to be at Herrick Library on Monday, April 30 starting at 6:30 or 7:00 pm until 9:00pm. We

envision setting up our telescopes again and to present a video on a suitable astronomical topic and perhaps some computer simulations of astronomical programs.

We discussed placing a schedule of events in the newsletter and subscribing to the calendar of sky events produced by Abrams Planetarium. This monthly calendar would be included with forthcoming issues of *URANOGRAPHOS*.

The board would like to remind members to renew their memberships as soon as possible as we are into a new year. Part of our dues pays for our association's membership in the Astronomical League.

The board also talked about submitting to a vote our proposal that the SAAA become a non-profit organization. This would require appropriate applications be submitted to the IRS and include a one time expenditure of \$150. This would allow for the SAAA to hold money making events. Think of it as an investment with the possibility of huge returns.

The board has decided to assign each board member certain duties in order to carry out the functions needed for the SAAA. We then as chairpersons will be looking to the membership to assist us in fulfilling these duties. Most of you can look forward to being on at least one committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Michael Coté

SAAA Schedule

The following list is a partial calendar for events the first half of this year. More detail will appear either in the newsletter or during the club meetings prior to the events. The star parties are listed for Friday evenings, but if the weather is bad and picks up the following Saturday night, the date will then be one night later. BW = Bob Wade's house, ML = Mark Logsdon's house.

January 1990

- 3 Quadrantid meteors
- 4 Exec meeting

- 11 Full moon
- 18 SAAA meeting
- 19 Star party BW
- 25 Exec meeting
- 26 Star party ML
- 26 New moon

February 1990

- 9 Lunar Eclipse (not here)
- 15 SAAA meeting
- 17 Star party BW
- 24 Star party ML
- 25 New moon

March 1990

- 2 Star party BW
- 3 Occultation
- 8 Occultation
- 15 SAAA meeting
- 24 Star party ML

April 1990

- 13 Mercury elongation (20)
- 19 SAAA meeting
- 21 Star party BW
- 22 Lyrid meteors
- 28 Astronomy Day Public star party at Kollen Park
- 30 Astronomy Day at Herrick Library

May 1990

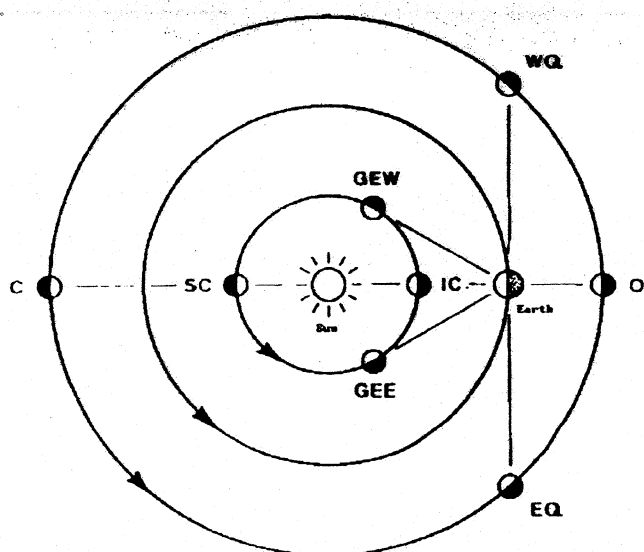
- 4 Eta Aquarid meteors
- 17 SAAA meeting
- 18 Star party BW
- 26 Star party ML

June 1990

- 16 Star party BW
- 21 SAAA meeting
- 22 Star party ML

Planets

Have you ever wondered what *superior conjunction* meant? How about *greatest elongation east*? The following diagrams have been reprinted from the *Observers Handbook 1990*. The first diagram shows the positions of inferior planet (those closer to the sun than the earth) and superior planets (those farther from the sun than the earth) which merit special vocabulary terms.



When a superior planet is at *opposition* (O), the earth is directly between it and the sun (or at least as close between them as their orbits allow!). The planetary diameter will also appear at its widest as seen from an observer on the earth (see adjacent diagram). The planet is said to be at *conjunction* (C) when the sun is between that planet and the earth and it will appear smaller to an observer on the earth. Note that the difference in apparent planetary diameter between conjunction and opposition is negligible for Uranus and Neptune. That is because of the extreme distance between those planets and

earth. When a superior planet is at *eastern quadrature* (EQ) it is in the evening sky (i.e. it is east of the sun along the ecliptic). The converse is true for *western quadrature* (WQ).

An inferior planet is at its largest (as seen from earth) when it is just before or just after *inferior conjunction* (IC), or when it is between the sun and the earth. Of course, only a thin crescent can be seen at that time (see diagram below). An inferior planet is at its greatest apparent separation from the sun (as seen from the earth) when it is a *greatest elongation east* (GEE; evening sky) or *greatest elongation west* (GEW; morning sky).

PLANETS: APPARENT SIZES

