

THE SHORELINE OBSERVER



*Newsletter for the
Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association*

President- Peter Burkey

Vice President- Steve Tuls

Secretary/Treasurer- Rob Tuls

Robert Wade, Editor

February 1991

February Meeting

The February meeting of the Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association will be held on February 21st, beginning promptly at 7:00 PM in the West Ottawa Middle School Planetarium in Holland, Michigan. Refreshments will be provided. The agenda will be as follows:

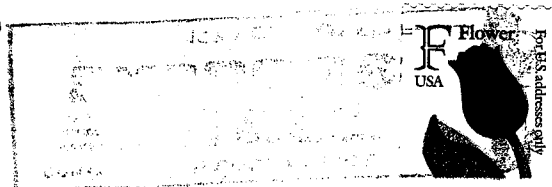
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| 7:00-7:15 | Refreshments and Socializing. |
| 7:15-7:30 | The February Night Sky. |
| 7:30-8:00 | <i>Stars, Galaxies, and the Southern Skies</i> is the title of a video received from the Astronomical League. The work of astronomers Bart and Priscilla Bok is featured in this video made at the Cerro Tololo observatory. |

Board Meeting

The last board meeting was held on January 24, 1991 with Pete Burkey, Steve Tuls, Rob Tuls, Arlin Ten Kley, and Sandy Plakke present. Rob gave a Secretary/Treasurer's report and reported \$352.43 in the club treasury as of January 24, 1991.

The topic of Holland's "LibertyFest" was again discussed, and some new ideas were liberated to the light of day. These included a possible talk on the cultural aspects of constellations, Mythology and

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constellations, and star names.

Steve is continuing to lay the groundwork for Astronomy Day. He has contacted Westshore Mall about getting in on the 20th of April. They seem interested because the date is also during the national Science Week. One idea floated was to have a poster contest for area middle school students. Winners could possibly receive a prize from Walden Books. Another idea would be to have public observing from the parking lot. If you are sufficiently creative, don't hesitate to contact Steve and give him an earful.

Respectfully submitted by Rob Tuls.

1991 Observing Program

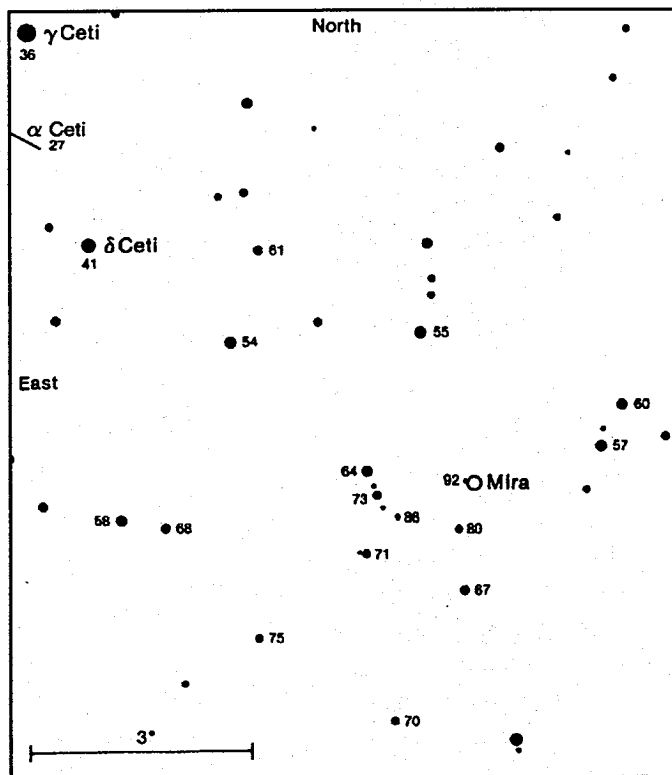
If you have not yet received a copy of the SAAA 1991 Observing Program and are interested in one, contact Bob (396-3614) and a copy will be mailed to you or you can pick one up at the next meeting. Your records need to be submitted month by month (at the club meeting) to receive credit towards the club competition. Thus far, two observers are off and observing...

Mark Logsdon.....55 points

Bob Wade.....30 points

Don't forget the all-night Messier Marathon on March 15-16 or 16-17 at Bob Wade's home. Mark your calendars now.

Part of the observing program involves plotting a light curve for Mira (omicron Ceti) over the course of the year. The following diagram should be helpful to those of you who don't have a proper variable star chart for Mira. Thus, the star next to Mira is magnitude 9.2, whereas the star a bit further north is magnitude 5.5, etc.



S.M.U.R.F.S.

The Southern Michigan Universal Regional Festival of Stargazers, sponsored by the Genesee Astro-

nomical Society, has set the date for the 2nd Annual observing bash. The event is organized by Richard Walker (313-627-9524) and will be held at the River Valley RV Campground near Claire, MI on August 16-18, 1991. The only fee is \$17/night for the campsite. If you will be free around that date, mark your calendars. It would be good to have some SA³ representation there this year. More details later....

JUPITER'S MOONS AND THE SPEED OF LIGHT

Soon after Isaac Newton published his theory of Universal Gravitation, the astronomers of the day devoted much of their time to measuring the orbits of the planets and their moons in order to provide the necessary data to test the theory. Although most of the figures fit the equation beautifully, some of the observed positions of the moons of Jupiter did not match those predicted by the new law. In fact, the moons seemed to be behind in their orbits when Jupiter was farthest from Earth and ahead in their orbits when Jupiter was nearest. At first this was thought to be a contradiction of the theory, but the explanation is very simple and beautiful. It takes some time (about 1/2 hr) for light to travel from Jupiter to the earth and when Jupiter is farther, the time is a little more, when it is neared, the time is a little less. Therefore, the moons appear to be a little ahead or a little behind, depending on whether they are closer to or farther from the earth. These observations showed that light traveled at a finite speed, and furnished the first estimate of the speed of light. This work was done in 1656.

Contributed by Peter Burkey