

The Shoreline Observer



*Newsletter for the
Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association*

President- Peter Burkey

Vice President- Steve Tuls

Secretary/Treasurer- Mark Logsdon

Robert Wade, Editor

March 1992

March Meeting

The March meeting of the Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association will be held on March 19th, beginning promptly at 7:00 PM in the West Ottawa Middle School Planetarium in Holland, Michigan. The agenda will be as follows:

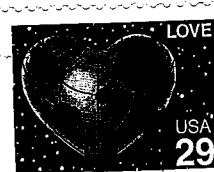
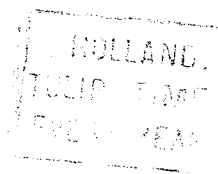
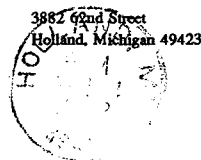
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| 7:00-7:15 | Refreshments and socializing. |
| 7:15-7:30 | Announcements, etc.. |
| 7:30-8:30 | Meteorologist Peter Chan will present a slide program on the aurora borealis, or northern lights. Get ready for some spectacular slides. Come early for a good seat!. |

February Board Meeting

With Steve, Arlin and Mark present, Pete called the meeting to order at 7:20 PM on February 27th, 1992.,

Treasurer's Report: \$268.89

As noted above, Peter Chan will be our guest speaker for March. If schedules and timing permit, we'll be taking Peter out to eat before the meeting. If you would like to join us, contact Mark Logsdon at 772-4904 before March 19th.



Several upcoming star parties have been scheduled. Actually, some members are forgetting what a clear sky looks like. Others are beginning to think *Michigan clear skies* is an oxymoron. Still others are clamoring for a dues refund, claiming astronomy is patently impossible in western Michigan. In any case, Bob Wade (396-3614) will host a **members and friends** star party on March 27th (Friday). If the weather is poor, we'll try again on the 28th. Mark Logsdon will host the **3rd Annual Messier Marathon** on April 3rd or 4th, depending on the weather. Also, on April 10th at the small park on the corner of Central and Eighth in downtown Holland we'll host a **public star party**. Contact Pete Burkey for more information (392-5704).

Ideas for star parties not yet scheduled include a campout this summer, a lunar centered observing session, and a star party at Vivekananda Monastery. Contact a club officer and make your preference known!

Planispheres have been ordered from Edmund Scientific and will be distributed to members at the March meeting. These are free of charge as a privilege of club membership.

April 16th will be **Family Night**. The regular April meeting will be geared towards family members of the SAAA. As such, a special program is being planned for that date. More information to follow.

While May 9th is national **Astronomy Day**, the SAAA is setting May 16th for our local observance of it. With a Westshore mall display planned again, a switch to the 16th is necessary due to scheduling conflicts. Pete Burkey is our Astronomy day Coordinator.

Meeting adjourned 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Mark Logsdon.

Miscellaneous

The full moon in March occurs on the 18th. This moon is called the Sap Moon, the Crow Moon, or Lenten Moon. This is the full moon nearest to the March equinox. At the equinoxes, the Sun and full Moon are both on middle-height parts of the ecliptic (at the two opposite places where it cuts the celestial equator). Hence both spend 12 hours in the sky; when the Sun sets, the Moon rises, and vice-versa. Around this time, the Moon sometimes in northerly latitudes rises more than an hour later each night, because of its steep descent along the ecliptic; contrast the full Moon nearest to the September equinox - the Harvest Moon.

March "comes in like a lion, goes out like a lamb" -- this saying refers to blizzards and mild weather, but perhaps the images come to mind because in the March evening sky Aries is setting as Leo approaches the zenith.

Looking to the southern horizon now -- toward Vela, due south from the head of Hydra -- you are looking backward in our journey around the galaxy....

Take a look at all the meteor showers coming up in April... Unfortunately, all these have zenith hourly rates of less than 5, with the exception of the Lyrids (around 30).

April 4th:	Kappa Serpentid meteors
April 7th:	Delta Draconid meteors
April 12th:	Virginid meteors
April 17th:	Sigma Leonid meteors
April 22nd:	Lyrid meteors
April 25th:	Mu virginid meteors
April 28th:	Alpha Boötid meteors

These bits and pieces can be found in the Astronomical Calendar 1992 by Guy Ottewell.