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NEW OFFICERS TO TAKE ON RESPONSIBILITIES

At the November LAS Meeting the election of officers was held. The new leaders of the Society are John Sabia, president; Merton Ruth, vice president; Mildred Ruth, secretary; Diane Pluciennik, treasurer. The office of junior vice president will be occupied by two young men this year as the result of a tie vote - Richard Hogg and Michael Babcock. Outgoing officers are Jo-Ann Pluciennik, president and James Filipksi, vice president. Everyone wishes the new officers the best of luck.

MEETING PLACE CHANGED; OPEN HOUSE CREATED

Future meetings of the LAS will be held at the Everhart Museum rather than at the Keystone Jr. College Observatory. The switch was made to make it easier for newcomers to locate the meetings; to make it easier, in winter especially, for the membership to get to the meetings; and to restore some of the sociability and conversational aspects of the meetings.

The meetings will still be on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. (except in November). Added to the schedule will be open-house for LAS members and friends at the observatory in Fleetville on the Saturday after the regular meeting. Every other week of the month, there are public nights on clear wednesdays and LAS group observing nights on Saturdays at the Observatory.



CARBONDALE 1974

It began Saturday night, November 9th, at about 7:00 p.m., when John Lloyd, age 14, happened to notice a streak of orangish-red light arch from over Salem Mountain in Carbondale. Informing his companions, Bob Gillette, age 15 and Bill Lloyd, same age, they saw it drop toward the silt pond near Russell Park. Arriving at the pond they saw waves coming in to shore as though from a splash. They quickly informed others about this strange object, some of whom called the police. Two and one-half hours and about a dozen calls later the police arrived. They took a total of 5 shots (witnesses reported that 3 were hits) at a shiny glowing object. Witnesses report that the object moved when shot at.

In a short while 12 to 15 policemen from the surrounding areas had arrived and cordoned off the area for the night. The original eye witnesses were allowed in to talk to police. After 3:00 A.M. Sunday morning, no one except the police were on the scene. It is believed they made some attempts to retrieve the object that night.

After reading an article in the "Scrantonian" describing the efforts of the police to clamp "a lid of secrecy around the Russell Park area," I, along with a photographer friend of mine, decided to take a short trip to Carbondale. I was the first LAS member there, arriving at 2:30 Sunday afternoon. Finding a rather large crowd around the pond, I was surprised at the lack of security.

At about 3 o'clock a team of scuba divers from Lake Wallenpaupack arrived and were told by police not to dive. It is not clear as to why they were turned back, although, with the radioactivity that had been detected, it could have been that police decided it was too risky. Speculation also had it that police had been under orders from an unspecified federal agency not to go near the object - risky or not. Acting Police Chief, Francis Dottle, quickly began to clear the area and by dusk the entire area including the nearby public park was off limits to any UFO spectators.

I arrived at the pond around 10:30 Monday morning finding the entire area guarded by the Civil Air Patrol. From a distance I could see a rowboat floating around the pond taking readings from what appeared to be a Gieger counter. By that afternoon, about 10 pumper fire trucks and dozens of firemen, policemen, civil air patrol, and assorted officials crowded the pond. A back hoe had been called in from a local construction firm and along with the help of a pump, it started to drain the pond. The fire trucks for some unknown reason were never used.

Now it just so happened that a diver (his name was never given out) from Syracuse, New York was in the area. The police immediately allowed him to dive in the muddy waters and in just five minutes he made a great discovery - retrieving Carbondale's version of a UFO - a railroad lantern.

Totally disgusted I lingered around until Jim Filipski and Jerry Zawislak arrived. Dusk was quickly falling as they proceeded to interview as many witnesses as possible. The tone of the townspeople was harmonious. They felt ridiculed and rejected by the police and were determined to search the pond.

Meanwhile the official police position was that the object seen was merely a lantern, and acting-police-chief Dottle now denied reports that the police shot at the object even though the officers who shot at it were admitting it. The teenagers who first saw the object were threatened publicly with arrest. The police thought that either the witnesses saw someone throw the object into the pond, mistaking it for a UFO, or that the entire story was made up and the lantern was thrown in by the witnesses.

But the case was not and is not over. Reports have yet to be made by UFO investigators who visited Carbondale. Articles are being written and will be published. Meanwhile the confusion is dying down and the truth may slowly emerge.

Michael Babcock

BRRRRRR.....

or

HOW ... COLD ... WAS IT?

These sparkling winter nights that we occasionally see, give anyone much food for thought. "How beautiful and vast the universe is!" "How unearthly Jupiter and Saturn are!" "Too bad they built that shopping center so close to my house." "How much longer will it be before my feet fall off?" "What's a sensible person like myself doing out here hopping around to keep the blood moving?" "We definitely need a dome or at least a roll-off roof shed for comfortable observing with the 12½!"

Yes, it's nights like these that remind amateur astronomers that its not just the temperature that determines how cold we feel. Increasing wind speed has the same effect on living tissue as rapidly dropping temperatures. Luckily, after a certain point you're not as sensitive to increasing cold. By that point, however, you should have been inside by a fireplace or radiator 2 hours ago.

For those who like to know just how cold they should feel, we offer the following chart adapted from "Science World" magazine.

wind speed (MPH)	A I R T E M P E R A T U R E						
	32°	23°	14°	5°	-4°	-13°	-22°
calm	32	23	14	5	-4	-13	-22
5	29	20	10	1	-7	-18	-28
10	18	7	-4	-15	-20	-37	-48
15	13	-1	-13	-25	-37	-49	-61
20	7	-6	-19	-32	-44	-57	-70
25	3	-10	-24	-37	-50	-64	-77
30	1	-13	-27	-41	-54	-68	-82
35	-1	-15	-29	-43	-57	-71	-85
40	-3	-17	-31	-45	-58	-74	-87
	little danger		increasing danger			extreme danger	

PERSEIDS 1 9 7 4

Members of the LAS organized a visual and photographic observational program for the Perseids on the nights of August 10, 11 and 12 (U.T.). Members met at KJC Observatory, stretched out on lawn chairs with tape recorders and counters and were rewarded by the best meteor shower of the year. A battery of three cameras were mounted on a clock-driven equatorial mount, and three other cameras were mounted on tripods using various films and lenses.

This was the first time in two years we were able to observe the Perseids, having been plagued with moonlight or bad weather in previous years. We were in luck this time, for the peak fell on a Sunday night, which wasn't too bad, and the sky was clear for both August 11 and 12.

On August 10, the seeing was bad with hazy sky and partly cloudy conditions. We were able to observe 6 meteors between 2 and 4 hours U.T. Hourly counts for August 11 and 12 are given in the table that follows. "N" represents the number of Perseids (not included are sporadic meteors) seen by s members, with their duplicate observations of the same meteor counted as one meteor.

August 11		August 12	
U. T. hour	N	U. T. hour	N
1:30 - 2:00	2	1:15 - 2:00	20
2:00 - 3:00	18	2:00 - 3:00	44
3:00-4:00	10	3:00 - 4:00	37
4:00 - 5:00	12	4:00 - 4:50	44
6:30 - 8:00	20		
	<u>62</u> total		<u>145</u> total

The average magnitude of the Perseids were 1st and 2nd with a few attaining 0.0 or brighter. At 3:22 U.T. on August 11, there was seen a Perseid that obtained an estimated brightness of -2 or -3. On August 12, the Perseids peaked and the hourly count is, therefore, much higher than for the previous night. Between 2:00 and 3:00 hours U.T. on the 12th, there was an interval of about 20 minutes with no meteors seen at all. Then all at once, in a period of one minute, 7 Perseids blazed through the night sky. A truly impressive and exciting event.

With 6 cameras operating, two bright Perseids were photographed on Tri-X +2475 Recording film. In all, 5 meteors were captured on the 2475 recording film, three of which are 4.5 or fainter with small trains with one showing signs of double exploding.

We're all looking forward to the Geminids in December. The moon is favorable for that shower too.

John Sabia

LEONIDS

On the night of November 16-17, 1974, the Leonids were at their maximum! These meteors are noted for the fact that they travel in a "swarm" and not a "stream" as the Perseids do. A swarm is the gathering or concentration of meteoroids along a certain point in the orbit. On the other hand, a stream is somewhat uniformly dispersed along their orbit. The peak of a stream occurs every year on the same day, as the earth crosses the orbit of the stream. A swarm has a minor peak every year, but the peak maximum will occur only when the earth and the main clump of meteoroids are simultaneously at the point of intersection of their orbits. The peak maximum occurs every 33.3 years for the Leonids, with the latest one occurring in 1966.

Leonids are known to have brilliant heads, displays of persistent trains and vivid colors of red and green. Their swiftness is remarkable. During a peak maximum year as much as several hundred meteors can be seen per hour.

From the KJC Observatory, the party witnessing the Leonids this year was made up of Jo-Ann Pluciennik, Jim Filipski, Rich Hogg, Bob Warren and myself, John Sabia. A total of 15 Leonid meteors were counted between 12:00 p.m. and 1:30 A.M. Each one was a sight in itself. Some traveled 20° before final burn-up; while others seen near the radiant travelled only ½ degree before burn-up. An attempt was made to photograph one on Tri-X film, but the results were negative.

The night was not perfect with partly cloudy skies developing during the observational period. One Leonid was seen in the foreground of the clouds. Between Jim, Jo-Ann and myself, the deduced Zenith Hourly Rate from 12 to 1 a.m. was approximately 12 Leonids per hour. Zenith Hourly Rate, also known as the double-count method, adds to the actual observation of meteors by two people, the meteors that were probably overlooked by them.

John Sabia

COMING EVENTS

Dec. 13	New Moon, Partial Solar Eclipse visible in East USA
Dec. 14	Geminid meteors, very favorable
Dec. 22	Solstice. Winter begins
Dec. 22	Ursid Meteors
Jan. 2	Earth at perihelion
Jan. 3	Quadrantid Meteors
Jan. 6	Saturn at opposition
Jan. 10	Occultation of SAO 79057 by Saturn
Jan. 23	Mercury at greatest elongation E. (19°)
Jan. 24	Occultation of κ Gem by Eros
March 6	Mercury at greatest elongation W. (27°)
March 21	Equinox. Spring begins
March 28	Spica 1° N. of Moon. Occultation
March 31	Neptune 0.7° N. of Moon. Occultation

WANTED:

Volunteers to work public nights at KJC observatory

Articles, fillers, cartoons, etc. for the "Ecliptic"

Members with practical building skills to help with the planning and constructing of our shelter for the 12½" scope

STAFF CHANGES

ECLIPTIC editor Jerry Zawislak has announce his decision to step down because of his busy schedule. Jerry did a commendable job, reviving the ECLIPTIC, Setting it up in its new quarterly form and gearing it to the members, rather than just at the local high schools. With this issue, the editorship is taken on by Jo-Ann Pluciennik. Any suggestions, comments, articles should be sent to the new editor at the address below.

Jo-Ann Pluciennik
313 East Elm Street
Scranton, Penna. 18505

FOR SALE

6" Reflector, (Edmund Scientific) equatorial mount, 6mm, 12mm, and 25 mm eyepieces, also erector system. \$150.00. Phone John Newman at 842-2281
