
P.G.A.S. Newsletter #12 1988 Apr 1

Hi everyone! Because of the pressure of work and of the Easter weekend, (and the lack of mail delivery then), I was not able to get this newsletter out in time. Therefore, this newsletter was handed out to those who attended the March meeting and mailed to those who weren't able to attend.

I have a great piece of news. As you may have heard, the Provincial Government has lifted the moratorium on new casino licences and we are now eligible to cash in, so to speak, on this source of income. I spoke with some one at the Great Canadian Casino and we should be able to get a set of dates this spring (volunteers needed). Soon we'll be able to start on those great things we have only just been able to talk about!

OBSERVATORY NEWS

Well, the Moon shutter is now completed, installed on the big telescope and ready to go. (It can deliver exposures from 1 millisecond = 1/1000 sec to 50 milliseconds = 1/20 sec.) I have 25 sheets of 4' x 5" TMAX sheet film (at \$0.75 per sheet) and the appropriate developer. Next clear night, we'll take the chemicals out to the observatory and hopefully produce one or two fine negatives of the Moon on the spot (so to speak). Spectacular Moon posters should then be possible. Another possibility is to use a doubler or eyepiece projection to get close-up images of Venus. If you're interested in participating, please let me know.

RECENT OBSERVING

We called out the troops once last month - just on the road to Forests to the World. Although the site is convenient, the skies are really not that good. We'll have to start using the observatory soon where the Milky Way is spectacular. Although the road up there (at time of writing) is half snow and half mud, things should improve in the next week or so.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE SKY

Venus is prominent high (40 degrees up) in the west at sunset and reached greatest eastern elongation on April 3. As mentioned above, good pictures should be possible IF we take them when Venus is high in the sky - near sunset.

Jupiter will soon be lost in evening twilight to the west. Saturn and Mars rise about midnight and 3 AM resp.

However, this is the season for galaxies. The giant Virgo and Coma clusters are just east of Leo and on the meridian at midnight (daylight time). Out at the observatory with its dark skies, and with a fast 6, 8, or 10" reflector, one should have good views of these galaxies. Why

not partake of this observing? (Unfortunately, observing gets quite late at this time of year. One could, however, do it on weekends, possibly sleeping out there. No Paul, there are no mice at the observatory now - honest!)

NEXT MEETING

This was held Wednesday, April 6 at the Physics Lab at CNC. If you were not there, you missed my talk on variable stars. (However, it may continue next month.) In any case, a transcript is available on request.

Clear skies (and let's get observing!),

Bob Nelson, President