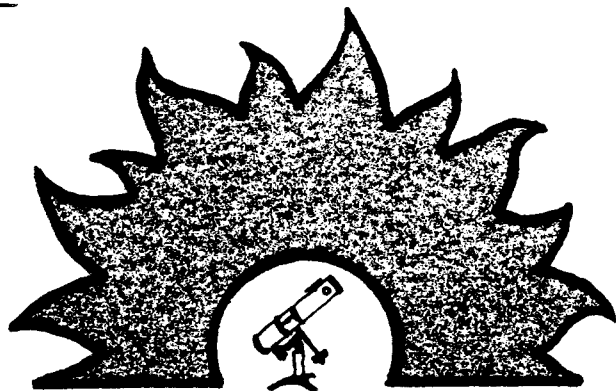




O C T O B E R

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PASTIMES

PHOENIX ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY -- FOUNDED 1948

OCTOBER MEETING OCTOBER MEETING OCTOBER MEETING OCTOBER MEETING OCTOBER

Our meeting this month will be held at our usual meeting place, Phoenix College, Room C-102 at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, October 24. (See map on back of newsletter.)

Our featured speaker will be Dr. J.T. Williams, Operations Director of the Multiple Mirror Telescope. Dr. Williams will offer slides, a video, and a question and answer period on "The Future of Astronomy in Arizona". If you've been following all the controversy surrounding Mt. Graham, don't miss this event!

NOTES FROM OUR SECRETARY

Actually, these are notes from your "acting secretary". We are still in desperate need of a volunteer to fill this position ASAP so that I can devote my full time to the post of Presidency. Please call me at 254-4057 if you want to discuss this matter.

Our September meeting drew a nice crowd at ASU, and our thanks go to Dr. Susan Wyckoff for her informative lecture and discussion with members on the latest findings about Halley. According to Dr. Wyckoff, the best is yet to come with the scientific community meeting this month in Germany to discuss cometary revelations. No doubt our finest scientific minds and equipment will only confirm that Halley's Comet is indeed just a huge "burnt potato". (So don't just ask for a light -- ask for a spud light!)

Mark your calendars now for our November meeting on the 21st (early due to the Thanksgiving holiday). Our speaker will be member Louis Boyd to talk

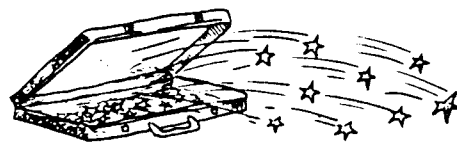
-- Notes p2

ASTROBRIEFS

Attack From Mars!! What do India, Egypt, France, Antarctica, Nigeria, Brazil and Indiana

have in common? California Institute of Technology researchers say it's pieces of Mars. Eight similar meteorites found in these countries all have the geological characteristics and composition that seem to have a Martian origin. Scientists speculate that a large asteroid or comet striking Mars at an angle of 25 to 60 degrees from horizontal could have vaporized rocks releasing trapped water and gases to boost the Martian boulders into space, with an escape velocity of 11,300 m.p.h.

New Moons! Voyager I has found two new moons possibly made of ice or rock located in Saturn's Cassini division. The pair may have contributed the icy material



-- Briefs p2

NOTES -- continued

about "Photometry on Mt. Hopkins" and progress on his 31" f1.8 spherical mirror currently under construction.

And finally, the good news is that Phoenix College has dropped this year's anticipated \$60 per meeting room fee down to \$25 per meeting. The bad news is that this is still double the fee we paid last year.

-- Bill Krist



"I've done it! The first real evidence of a UFO!
... And with my own camera, in my own
darkroom, and in my own ..."

BRIEFS -- continued

that forms the rings around the planet. So this brings the total to three moons in the rings of Saturn

Where Dit Go? Was it a planet, a brown dwarf, a massive-gassive -- or nothing at all? Two years ago three astronomers spotted a Jupiter-like mass of gases in the summer-sky constellation, Ophiuchus. It seemed to hover around the star, Van Biesbroeck 8. Therefore, VB8 seemed to have a planet. Some other scientists suggested that perhaps it was a brown dwarf, a cousin to a planet, which cannot support life and only generates energy internally. For the past two summers three groups of astronomers have searched in vain for VB8's mysterious companion. It may not have vanished but be orbiting so rapidly that it is too close to VB8, forming only one image to the observers. Only a truly massive body of gases could orbit that rapidly. Or it might be a dying, cooling, shrinking star known as a white dwarf . . . or just turbulence in the sky -- literally nothing!

Cygnets, Anyone? On earth Cygnets are baby swans. In space they're another form of matter entirely, the focus of a debate and this month the focus of a world-wide watch. Hypothetically, Cygnets, mysterious high energy particles, are created after explosions in the star system Cygnus X-3. Cygnus X-3 is a pair of stars, one large, one small, both in mutual orbit at the edge of the Milky Way (217,560 trillion miles away). Roughly every 367 days an unknown disturbance triggers the smaller, dense star's gravity to suck in huge amounts of material from its larger companion. There's nothing sneaky about it -- it's an explosion that makes a ther-

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monuclear bomb look like a pebble splash in a lake -- instant transformation of matter into energy! The resulting radiation, harmless to Earth, takes many forms: radio waves, infrared light, cosmic rays including gamma rays and possibly "cygnets". Cygnus X-3 is the first known source of the once mysterious cosmic rays that bombard Earth and the rest of the galaxy. Scientists expect an explosion this month and are organized to prove or disprove that there are Cygnets in the sky.

WELCOME!

Greetings to the following new members:
Kai Statts
John Desjardines
Kit Schweitzer

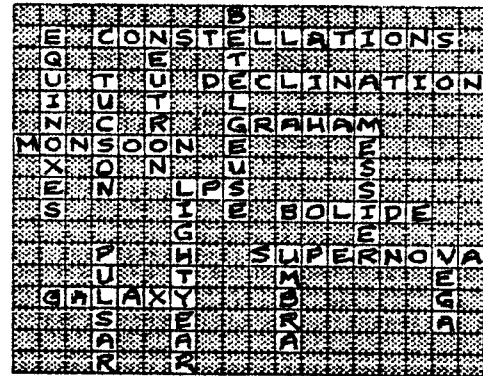
FOR SALE

14½" f7 Newtonian Reflector with Byers German Equatorial Mount, 232 tooth drive, polar worm gear, roller bearing cradle, setting circles and eyepieces. Excellent condition. To make offer, call Ruby Rigoni at 974-0077.

FOR SALE

10" f8 with Equatorial Mount and 8" f6 camera. Includes electric dec., setting circles, drive corrector, full aperture solar filter for 10", oculars and many extras. \$2,200 or best offer. Adrian Fitch 942-5976.

Answers to last month's puzzle



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