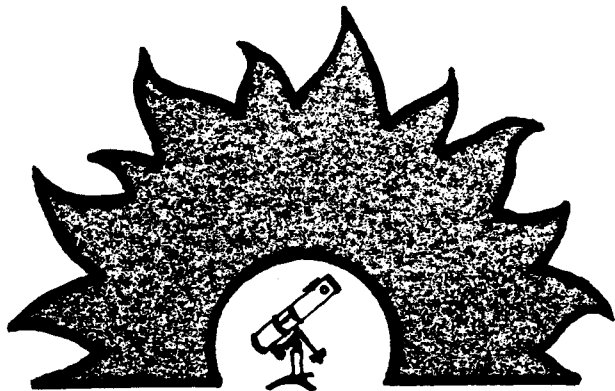




MARCH -- APRIL

1987

PASTIMES

PHOENIX ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY -- FOUNDED 1948

MARCH MEETING MARCH MEETING MARCH MEETING MARCH MEETING MARCH MEETING

Our regular March meeting will be held on Friday, March 27, at Phoenix College, Room C-102 (see map on back of newsletter). Speaking to us on "Recent Advances in Lunar Occultation Observing" will be Dr. Paul Schmidtke of A.S.U. Regular meeting time is 8:00 p.m.

APRIL MEETING APRIL MEETING APRIL MEETING APRIL MEETING APRIL MEETING APRIL

An early April meeting is planned at Dr. Keith Parizek's home on Saturday, April 4 (see map on back of newsletter). This will be our yearly business meeting for election of officers PLUS a special observing session. Everyone is invited to bring their own scopes as well as cameras, adapters, and high speed film to use on Keith's 11½" Maksutov for some great lunar shots!! This meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m.

NOTES FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Our sincere thanks go to Dr. Ann Cowley for speaking to us at our February meeting on "Astronomy in China". Her travelog was a nice mix of Chinese culture and science. She also treated us to some preliminary findings on the new supernova in the Large Magellanic Cloud (is anyone else beginning to feel that the northern hemisphere just ain't the place to be?).

Our February 28th star party at McDowell Mt. Park's Asher Circle was a success as dozens of observers and about 8 scopes enjoyed mild weather, good seeing, and a meteor that flashed so bright it cast shadows. ZOWIE!! Mark your calendar for more fun to come on May 2 -- National Astronomy Day.

ASTROBRIEFS

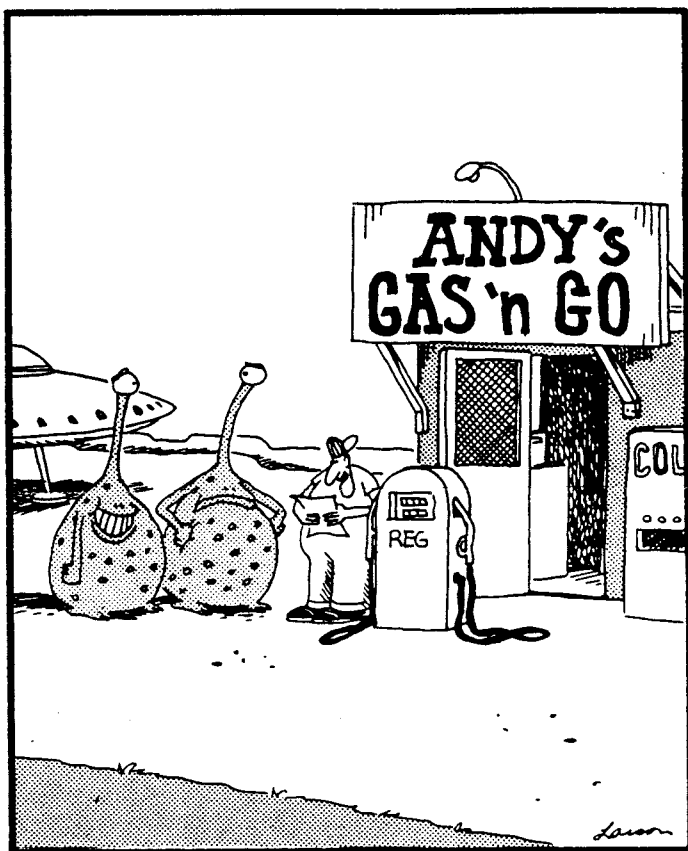
Superdupernova! The closest and most easily studied supernova since 1604 just popped up in the Greater Magellanic Cloud some 160,000 light years from Earth. Supernova Shelton 1987 was first sighted February 24, but of course actually exploded 160,000 years ago. Visual evidence of the new supernova was preceded 8 hours earlier by an apparent seven-second neutrino burst detected by a device about a mile beneath Mont Blanc on the Italian-French border. If confirmed by at least one other neutrino detecting device elsewhere in the world, this will mark the first time that neutrinos have been linked to a source outside our solar system and would pin-



NOTES -- continued

Our nominating committee (Keith Parizek 996-1013, Hermann Andresen 997-8759, and Chuck Nash 242-1581) is still looking for candidates for next year's president. How about some volunteers!

-- Bill Krist



"Shoot! You not only got the wrong planet, you got the wrong solarsystem... I mean, a wrong planet I can understand—but a whole solar system?"

BRIEFS -- continued

point the precise time the supernova explosion began. Theory says the miniscule neutrinos are generated at the moment a collapsing star starts to explode internally, hours before the shock wave hits the star's outer shell to cause the visible supernova. Astronomers are a bit perplexed because the star thought to be the progenitor of the supernova is still apparently in place, unscathed by the cosmic blast. The source of the explosion must therefore have been something else.

New Visitor. Comet Wilson, discovered in August, 1986 by Christine Wilson, a doctoral candidate at California Institute of Technology, will be tracked by Pioneer 12 from March 31 to April 30. The comet, believed to be on its first visit to our solar system, will dash by Venus and be closest to the sun on April 20. Pioneer 12 is currently orbiting Venus.

Faithful Servant. It's official -- Pioneer 9 is dead. The 18 year old sun satellite's last radio signal was received May, 1983. It had circled the sun 22 times and covered 11 billion miles studying radiation and magnetic/electric fields in interplanetary space. All highly successful projects. Even though NASA's communications antennas have been concentrating on newer and more important missions and have not tracked Pioneer 9 and its three predecessors regularly, still in 3 years there's been no response from No. 9

Close Encounters. On March 13, two billion miles away, Voyager 2's thrusters fired on command from Earth to set course for the closest planetary flyby yet. August 24, 1989 is the day that the probe will pass within 3,100 miles of the clouds topping Neptune's north pole

BOARD MEMBERS

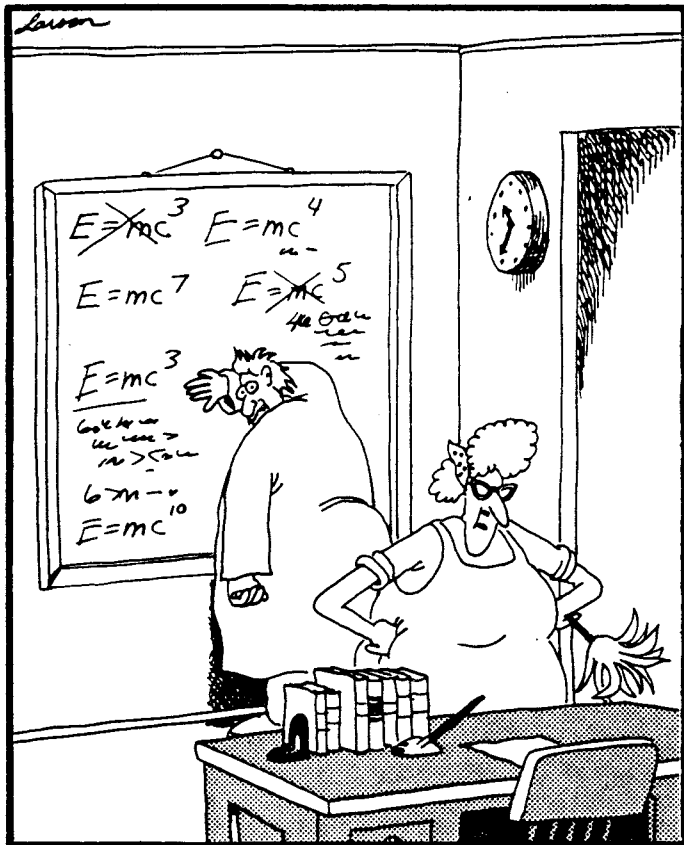
President
Vice President
Secretary/Treasurer
Director
Director
Director
Editor

Bill Krist	254-4057
Richard Wasson	279-0384
Bill Krist	254-4057
Robert Pribbenow	275-2786
Raul Espinoza	948-3617
Trevor Tuffin	948-3126
Steve Lewis	955-1205
2806 N. 33rd Place	
Phoenix, AZ 85008	

and within 25,000 miles of Triton, one of its two known moons. (This is 20 times closer than the craft's 1986 encounter with Uranus.) The previous plan to fly within 800 miles of Neptune and 5,000 miles of Triton was changed to avoid endangering the probe

Icy Spitfire. Frosty Leo Nebula is the name. Spitting hot gas ($5,430^{\circ}$) through cold gas (405° below zero) is the game. Nothing else quite like it in the sky. It's the death of a "red giant" -- probably headed towards becoming a white dwarf. (A white dwarf is a very compact dense star that was once the core of a red giant.) The 1983 U.S.-European Infrared Astronomy Satellite is responsible for the show & tell of this theatrical star performing only 1,000 light-years away.

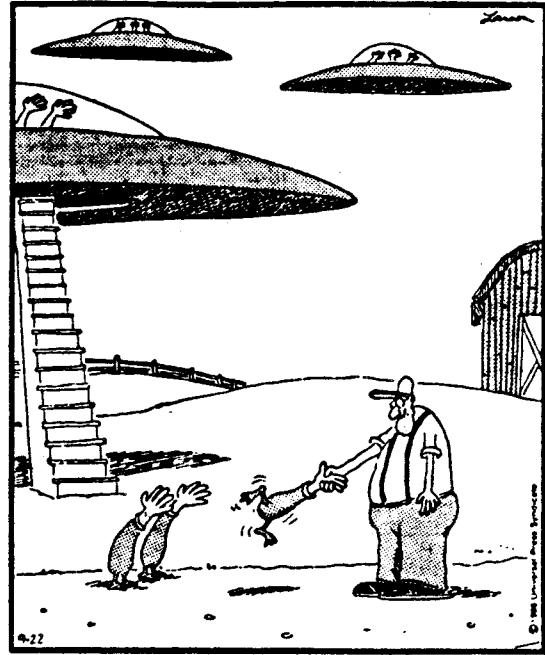
ASTROBRIEFS is edited by Helen Lewis



"Now that desk looks better. Everything's squared away, yessir, squaaaaaaared away."

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



Inadvertently, Roy dooms the entire earth to annihilation when, in an attempt to be friendly, he seizes their leader by the head and shakes vigorously.

THE GIANT TELESCOPE FACTORY

When Roger Angel gave his fine presentation on spin casting large honeycomb mirrors at the October PAS meeting, some landmarks looked familiar as it was a football's throw from our son's dorm room. In previous visits to the Optical Science Lab (under the University of Arizona stadium) I never got past the receptionist (probably just as well as it didn't disturb any constructive labor). Mr. Angel was kind enough to mention where the real work took place and invited me to drop in next time. The visit was as interesting as the building was obscure (it's holding up the NE corner of the stadium) and has absolutely no markings to distinguish its distinguished reputation as the world's largest producer of large telescope mirrors and hotbed of advanced technology future mirrors.

I had just missed a group tour, but Karen Kenagy set me in front of a SuperBeta machine, then gave me a quick informative tour while carrying out her multitude of duties. It was impressive to stand on the turntable which spins as fast as an LP, gets red hot and is about 25 feet in diameter. Amazing!! Along with thanks to Roger, Karen, and the crew there, I would heartily recommend it to any PAS members when they are in Tucson, though those folks would appreciate if you would schedule ahead to catch a group tour.

-- Hermann Andresen