



Los Angeles Astronomical Society, Inc.

MONTHLY BULLETIN FOR MAY 1973

Volume 3, No. 5

GENERAL MEETING

The next general meeting will be Monday, May 14 at 7:45 P.M. at the Griffith Observatory. We will get the latest information on Comet Kohoutek, the spectacular comet expected at the end of this year, and the latest on a newly discovered comet which may be as large. The main ^{speaker} is not definitely known at press time.

STAR PARTY SEASON BEGINS

June 2 is the date for our first star party of the year. A map giving directions to our observing site is included in this bulletin. Some simple rules must be followed so that everyone may fully enjoy this event:

1. Park only as directed by the person in charge. He knows where cars should be placed in order to protect telescope mirrors from dust and cameras from car lights at night.
2. Use only your parking lights when approaching the site after dark, if possible. You will be directed to a parking space by others if you have difficulty.
3. Cars cannot be allowed in the observing area as dusk approaches because telescopes will be uncapped and driving raises dust. Try to arrive before dusk, if possible, if you want to avoid carrying your equipment 100 feet or so.
4. Most of the cement observing pads are owned by Star Members and cannot be used without their permission. Unowned pads can be identified by the person in charge. These are available to anyone on star party nights, but very few are left so come early if you want to use one.
5. PLEASE remove your own trash.
6. Firearms are not allowed on the LAAS property.
7. Open fires are illegal in the National Forest, however Coleman stoves and charcoal barbecues are allowed.

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We hope these rules do not inconvenience anyone, as they are designed to make the evening enjoyable for all. Camping area is available for tents and motor homes. Come early and hike or picnic. A store is open in Lake of the Woods during the day. This is about fifteen minutes drive from the land and is on your way as approaching the land from Interstate 5. Water and electricity are not available at the observing site. The LAAS 14½ inch telescope will be there for everyone to observe through. Driving time from the San Fernando Valley is about 1½ hours.

ASTRONOMICAL SWAP MEET

The LAAS and the Monterey Park Astronomical Society will sponsor a swap meet on Saturday, May 19 from one to five o'clock at Garvey Ranch Park. Telescopes, accessories, cameras, and anything else of interest to amateur astronomers may be bought, sold, or traded. The event, billed by the planners as "the West Coast's largest astronomical swap meet", is open to the public free of charge.

WHAT IS A STAR MEMBER?

With the advent of warm weather and the completion of the LAAS observatory this summer, many members have asked what Star Membership means and what advantages it has.

When the LAAS had a chance to purchase property for an observing site in Lockwood Valley, it was apparent that membership dues were not sufficient to pay for the land and proposed observatory. A new class of membership was created for those who wanted to pay for these projects in exchange for special privileges on the observing site. This was the Star Member Group.

Those who joined the Star Members prior to June 1970 are called charter members and pay thirty dollars per year dues. These members paid the initial costs in return for very few benefits. Those joining since then pay fifty dollars per year, but the benefits have increased greatly.

Star Members are entitled to use the observing site at any time, while regular members may use it only on official summer star party nights. Star Members can purchase a cement pad for their personal use. Pads are eight feet across and circular with an 18 inch hole in the center to accommodate a permanent pier for the Star Member's telescope. Three such piers have been installed so far. The pads cost twenty dollars (one time only) and remain the purchaser's property as long as he is a Star Member. Thirteen of the 48 pads are still available.

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The LAAS observatory has been under construction since 1971. The roof will be built this month and the telescope, a 14½ inch Newtonian f/7 reflector, mounted soon after. Electronic sleuthing and guiding controls are now being built. The mounting is a very sturdy fork.

When completed, the observatory will be available to every Star Member any night of the year for double star, variable star, and planetary work, photography, and general observing. Regular members will be able to use it only on star party nights. Five are planned this year.

Future projects include a building for storing Star Members' personal equipment and a lodge for overnight comfort.

For further information, contact Mike Simmons at a meeting, or call 345-1243. To join, send dues to Walt Deutsch, Treasurer, LAAS, Box 27787, Los Feliz Station, Los Angeles, Calif. 90027.

LAAS LIBRARY

The LAAS library is open to all members after the general meetings. It is located in the basement of the Griffith Observatory at the site of the old optical shops. Books on such topics as astrophotography, telescope making, and general astronomy may be borrowed for one month upon presentation of a current membership card. A number of periodicals and reference books are also available. Contact Lew Chilton, LAAS Librarian, for further details.

ROSTER CHANGES

The following telephone number corrections and changes should be made in your 1973 LAAS Roster: Ephraim Merritt 285-1639, A.R. Smith 756-6596, Steve Trever 805-526-0501.

STAR MEMBER REPORT

The April 16 Star Member meeting saw the finalization of some exciting plans, the building of the observatory roof. This project will be undertaken Memorial Day weekend, May 26, 27, and 28. Carpenters will be there to construct the roof, but all the sawing will be done by us. WE WILL NEED HELP ON ALL THREE DAYS. General members who can help can stay at night to observe. If you can help, call Mike Simmons at 345-1243 to let us know which day, or just show up whenever you can. Final plans will be made at the May 21 meeting. The telescope will be mounted in June or July.

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IMPORTANT REMINDER: If you have not paid your Star Member dues, they are now overdue. Payment should be as soon as possible to retain your Star Membership.

The next Star Member meeting will be May 21 at 7:30 P.M. at Palms Recreation Center, National and Overland in West L.A.

DATES ON THE LAAS CALENDAR

General meeting--Monday, May 14, 7:45 P.M., Griffith Observatory

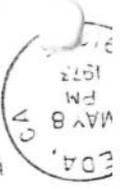
Star Member meeting--Monday, May 21, 7:30 P.M., Palms Rec. Center

Observatory roof construction--May 26, 27, 28, Lockwood Valley

Board of Directors meeting--Wednesday, May 30, 7:30 P.M., at Ron McKnight's home

Star Party--June 2, Lockwood Valley-see enclosed map.

FIRST CLASS MAIL



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