



STAR FIELDS

NEWSLETTER OF THE AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON, INC.

Vol. 2, No. 3

March 1991

OUR MARCH MEETING...

Thursday, March 14, 1991, 8 p.m.
Phillips Auditorium, Harvard-Smithsonian
Center for Astrophysics

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF LESLIE PELTIER REVISITED will be the title of this month's talk by Richard Lynch, amateur astronomer and historical researcher. Richard who lives in Greenville, RI was formerly a member of the ATMoB and has been active in the Skyscrapers, Inc of Rhode Island for some 25 years. He travels extensively for his firm and uses his spare time on these trips to become familiar with amateur activities and personalities throughout the country. In his talk to us he will acquaint us with one of these persons: Leslie Copus Peltier, an avid Ohio amateur astronomer who discovered 12 comets and made thousands of variable star observations before his death in 1980. Peltier's autobiography, "Starlight Nights: The Adventures of a Star-Gazer" is a moving tribute to amateur astronomy.

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Please join us for dinner before the meeting at the Changsho Restaurant at 5:45 p.m. The restaurant is located at 1712 Mass Ave. in Cambridge, near Linnean St.

FEBRUARY'S MEETING HIGHLIGHTS...

The February's Valentine Day meeting of the ATMoB was convened with about 58 individuals in attendance. Reports were given by the Secretary, Treasurer, Shop, Observing, and ATMoB/ALCON 91 committees. Marion Hochuli announced that a star party will be held at the Waltham Central Middle School on March 12, and that she is exploring a joint ATMoB and Manchester, NH amateur trip to the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium on some forthcoming weekend. John Samolyk indicated he is taking on the coordination of the Baxter Dark Skies trip tentatively scheduled for first week of September. Another La Paz eclipse trip information mailing and request for the next payment will be forthcoming from ITA Tours shortly reported Mario Motta. Steve Mock announced that the Bentley College donated stuff will be taken to VERNONscope & Co. on March 2 and 3 for the company's May 18 auction. Our speaker, Dr. Kenneth Janes of Boston University, provided us with the latest information on star clusters and the research techniques used to investigate them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS...

THE ATMoB's ANNUAL DARK SKIES TRIP to Mt. Katahdin in Maine's Baxter State Park is scheduled for Aug. 21 - Sept. 7. You can choose to stay any number of days anywhere within this period. However, you must sign up and pay the camping fee of \$2 per night no later than March 23. You can sign up at the March meeting or by mail. Contact John Samolyk, 90 Myrtle St., Waltham, MA 02145 (617-894-2323).

A STAR PARTY will be held for the Waltham Central Middle School on March 12 from 7 to 9 p.m. The school is located near Waltham center (Rt 20, Main Street) on School and Church streets. Setup is in the parking lot between the vocational and middle school at 8:30 p.m. Cloudy date March 20. Help introduce young people to astronomy with your scope and enthusiasm. For more info call Marion Hochuli 603-888-0141.

AN ASTRONOMY DAY special speaker at the BMOS will be Dr. David Crawford. His topic: Light Pollution: The Need for Dark Skies. Contact John Reed if you want tickets for this talk.

A DESIGN REVIEW MEETING for the club's 20-inch scope project will be held at Ed Dougherty's home in Dracut on Friday, March 15 at 7 p.m. Everyone interested should attend so that the future of this scope can be decided.. The meeting should last about an hour and refreshments will be served. Obtain directions at our March meeting or call Ed at 508-458-8857.

ATMOB ACTIVITIES...

DAVID LONG is working at the clubhouse on an 8-inch mirror he started 17 years ago. He's now in the polishing stage and with some encouragement it will be a finished scope this year. TIM SOLINSKI with help from GARY WALKER is in the process of converting his 10-inch equatorial mounted newtonian to a Dobsonian mount. He then plans to build two short focal length scopes, one 4 and one 8-inch. ED DOUGHERTY has machined the diagonal mount for the club's 20-inch and now plans to mount the primary in the tube to see what problems may need solving. Lucky were those ATM'ers who were at the clubhouse on Feb. 9 and observed M42 and Jupiter through VLADIMIR VUDLER's 20-inch scope. Absolutely fantastic images of Jupiter where Seen with BERNIE VOLZ's CCD camera system! Our trusty clubhouse workshop chairman, GREG CHASE,

repaired a leaking water pipe to the kitchen sink. TONY COSTANZO and ED DOUGHERTY have completed the refurbishing of the 6-inch refractor at Phillips Academy, Andover.

LOWELL LECTURES BEGIN...

This year's Lowell Lectures at the Boston Museum of Science focus on cosmic origins. The first lecture, The Beginning of the Universe, was presented by Kenneth Brecher of Boston University on March 6. The remaining Wednesday night 7:30 p.m. lectures in the series are:

- Mar. 13 The Origin of the Elements -- Owen Gingerich
- Mar. 20 The Birth of the Stars -- Philip Myers
- Mar. 27 The Start of the Solar System -- Myron Lecar

Tickets for each lecture are free but must be requested in writing to the Hayden Planetarium, Science Park, Boston, MA 02114-1099. Enclose a S.A.S.E. for the return of the tickets. Remaining tickets will be available at the museum one hour before each lecture. For more information, call 617-589-0270.

A MEMBER'S REPORT...

The Winter Star Party, held on Big Pine Key, Florida, was attended by ATM'er, Howard Le Vaux of Cambridge. Although cool, windy, and at times cloudy, he got in some good observing and did some photography. With some 400 - 500 attending, Howard said that there were Dobsonians galore--some of very large aperture. The Southern Cross could be seen clearing the southern horizon, and among other things, he observed Omega Centauri and saw the satellite barium release on Feb. 18 which was also observed by members at the ATMoB clubhouse on the same night. A good speaker's program and vendor display made his trip well worth while.

AMATEURS SEEN AS HAVING A ROLE IN COMBATING SCIENCE ILLITERACY...

IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT AND STATE GOVERNORS' announced "war" on math and science illiteracy, a workshop was held in Washington, D.C. on Feb. 23-24, 1990 to discuss a possible response from the astronomical community to this national crisis. Through the support of the Space Telescope Science Institute, a report of this workshop was just published. Under the section on Strategies appeared the following:

"Bring in the expertise and personpower of amateurs. Amateur astronomers, numbering about 20,000 in the US, are an immense source of expertise, creativity, and enthusiasm. Large numbers of them are professionals in their own fields of science, computers, engineering, or education. They are good observers with excellent knowledge of the sky. Many amateur astronomers promote public awareness and public understanding of science by giving public talks, by arranging "star

parties" to provide the public with the thrill of looking through a telescope, and by helping youngsters to learn the techniques of astute observing. Recognizing formally this immense resource, and bringing in their expertise to elementary and high schools, possibly through an extension of the Shapley lecture program of the AAS, would have excellent educational returns and very high "multiplier effect." (Shapley himself was a great promoter of amateur astronomy.) Arranging workshops for amateurs at AAS meetings, similar to those for teachers, would provide the recognition they deserve. Through these workshops, amateur astronomers would be informed of recent significant astronomical findings which they can then communicate to the public and their colleagues."

Anyone wanting access to the complete report, contact Ted Poulos.

NEW MEMBERS...

We welcome the following new ATMoB members:

Joseph Connolly	Charlestown, MA
Dr. Paul Fougere	Bedford, MA
George Kavanagh	N. Chelmsford, MA
Burno Nardelli	Watertown, MA

AN INEXPENSIVE ASTRONOMY PROGRAM...

SkyGlobe is a very fast, fun, and easy to use Shareware astronomy program for MS DOS computers. On cloudy nights its fun to watch the starry sky roll by on your computer screen. Although the program runs on CGA or Hercules displays, it is particularly impressive on a VGA display. Up to 15,000 stars can be displayed. Turn the constellation lines on or off with a single keystroke. Change viewing direction or location instantly. Use the auto mode to watch the movement of



the stars throughout the night. Output can be printed on Epson compatible printers and data for displaying the planets, sun, and moon for 18 years is included. A thanks is extended to Dave Aucoin who received a promotional copy of this program and gave it to me for a look see. If you would like a copy, contact me, and if you like it, you can get a registered copy from Klassm Software for only \$15.
-- Ted Poulos

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK...

If the topography of STAR FIELDS looks a little different to you this month, its because it was produced using new desktop publishing software (Publish It) and a new printer. Previous issues were composed and edited using a word processor, but the page layout and headings were a laborious, manual cut and paste operation. Now my computer does it all except, of course, compose the copy. For this I need your help!

MARCH OBSERVING CALENDAR...

- Thru Mar. Last telescopic look at Comet Levy in Hydra, >10 mag.
- Thru Mar. Jupiter's Galilean satellites occult & eclipse each other. See Astronomy and S&T.
- Mar. 20 Moon occults stars of the Pleiades.
- Mar. 27 Mercury at greatest western elongation, -1.3 mag, 5.6" dia. disk, 88% illuminated.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE..

The 29th of this month is the deadline for items to be included in next month's STAR FIELDS. Mail or telephone your contribution to Ted Poulos, 18 Cushing Rd., Brookline, MA 02146, 617-566-5127.

THE MARKETPLACE...

FOR SALE Tele Vue alt-azimuth mount (for Genesis) with case and eyepiece tray. \$210. Call Joseph Rothchild at 617-964-6371.

FOR SALE Pentax K1000 35 mm Camera with F3.5, 50 mm lens and through lens metering. Like new. Great camera body for astrophotography because time exposure is manually controlled. \$90.00. Call Ted Poulos at 617-566-5127.

FOR SALE Meade 8-inch f/5 reflector, Model 6800, with equatorial mount, finder, tripod, and 9 and 25 mm eyepieces. Like new. \$500. Call Mary Sedach, 508-692-5060 after 4 p.m.

COMING EVENTS IN MARCH...

- March 9 ATMob Executive Board meeting at the clubhouse at 7th p.m.
- Mar. 12 STAR PARTY, Waltham Central Middle School. See page 1 for details.
- Mar. 15 20-inch REVIEW MEETING, see page 1.
- Mar. 16 ATMob/ALCON 91 Committee Meeting at the clubhouse at 7 p.m. Snow date: Mar. 17 at 2 p.m.
- Mar. 13-27 LOWELL LECTURE SERIES. See page 2 for details.
- Mar. 21 CfA MONTHLY OBSERVATORY NIGHTS. "An Infrared View of the Universe" by Dr. Giovanni Fazio, CfA, 8 p.m. Phillips Auditorium, CfA, Cambridge, MA. For more info call 617-495-7461.

ALCON '91 - 45th Astronomical League Convention August 7 - August 9, 1991

The Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston, Inc. are hosting ALCON '91 at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Massachusetts (UMASS). ALCON '91 will take place from August 7th to August 9th, 1991. On-site registration will start at 5:00PM on Tuesday, August 6th.

ALCON '91 is being held the three days immediately before Stellafane. Stellafane is about a 75-minute drive north of Amherst.

Registration: Please fill in and return the Registration form below by June 15th, 1991.

Travel: Amherst is located one hour north of Hartford's Bradley International Airport and about two hours west of Boston's Logan International Airport. Bus service is available from Bradley International Airport and Boston to the UMASS campus (via Springfield, MA). Amherst is also reachable, via AMTRAK.

Accommodations: Dorm rooms are available at \$20 per person, per day for a double. Dorm rooms do not have individual bathroom facilities and are not air conditioned. Linen and towels are provided. If you need hotel information, please check the appropriate area on the Registration form. Camping (*tents only!*) is available outside the dorms for \$15.

Meals: A dining hall meal plan is available for breakfast and lunch (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday). A barbecue dinner is available for \$13 on Wednesday evening and a banquet on Thursday evening for \$16 per person. Other food services are available both on and off campus.

Call for Papers: Those wishing to present a paper (or poster paper) should contact Bernie Volz, ATMob/ALCON '91, PO Box 1164, Framingham, MA 01701. Include an abstract and a list of audio-visual equipment

needs. Abstracts must be submitted by June 1st, 1991.

Speakers/Activities/Exhibitors: Information on speakers, commercial exhibitors, raffle prizes, and convention activities will be provided to those registering early and will appear in the *May Reflector*.

Eclipse: The July '91 Total Solar Eclipse will be a topic of ALCON '91. Plan to enter your photographs in the photo contest.

Stellafane: Bus transportation to and from Stellafane for Saturday is under consideration. If you would like to stay at UMASS and take advantage of this, please check the appropriate area on the Registration form. For information on Stellafane, write Stellafane, PO Box 50, Belmont, MA 02178 (information to be mailed in May).

Note: ALCON '91 attendance is open to the general public.

ALCON '91 REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete this registration form and return it, with payment, by June 15th. Make checks payable to "ATMoB/ALCON '91" and return to Bernie Volz, ATMoB/ALCON '91, PO Box 1164, Framingham, MA 01701.

Name _____

_____ Check if you need hotel information.

Address _____

_____ Check if interested in transportation to/from Stellafane on Saturday.

City, State, Zip _____

_____ Check if you need swap table space.

Club Affiliation _____

	No. of Participants	Price per Person	Sub-Total
Registration (\$40.00 after June 15)	_____ @	\$30.00	_____
Wednesday evening barbecue	_____ @	13.00	_____
Thursday evening banquet	_____ @	16.00	_____
Dining hall meal plan	_____ @	30.00	_____
Tuesday (8/6) night dormitory ... _____ single (\$25/person) _____ double (\$20/person)			_____
Wednesday (8/7) night dormitory . _____ single (\$25/person) _____ double (\$20/person)			_____
Thursday (8/8) night dormitory .. _____ single (\$25/person) _____ double (\$20/person)			_____
Friday (8/9) night dormitory _____ single (\$25/person) _____ double (\$20/person)			_____
Saturday (8/10) night dormitory .. _____ single (\$25/person) _____ double (\$20/person)			_____
Camping			_____
ALCON '91 T-shirt	_____ M _____ L _____ X-L @	10.00	_____
Proceedings - ALCON '91 (post-paid, may be ordered even if not attending) _____	@	6.00	_____
GRAND TOTAL ENCLOSED (check or money order)			_____

regform-2

EXECUTIVE BOARD 1990-91

PRESIDENT: Marion Hochuli, 28 Taschereau Blvd., Nashua, NH 03062, 603-888-0141

VICE PRESIDENT: Scott Milligan, 843 Boston Rd., Groton, MA 01450

SECRETARY: Ted Poulos, 18 Cushing Rd., Brookline, MA 02146, 617-566-5127

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Edward Los, 7 Cheyenne Dr., Nashua, NH 03063, 603-880-6219

TREASURER: Anthony Costanzo, 4 Lafayette St., Haverhill, MA 01832, 508-521-4209

MEMBERS AT LARGE: Mario Motta, 806 Lowell St., Lynnfield, MA 01940, 617-334-3648. — Bernard Volz, 1108 Windsor Ridge Dr., Westboro, MA 01581, 508-368-0788.

COMMITTEES

OBSERVING: John Reed, 1437 Mass Ave., Lexington, MA 02173, 617-861-8031

WORKSHOP: Greg Chase, 29 Beacon St., 65F, Burlington, MA 01803, 617-272-9394

HOW TO FIND US...

MEETINGS: Held the second Thursday of each month (September to July) at 8 p.m. in Phillips Auditorium, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, 60 Garden St., Cambridge, MA. Parking available on the grounds.

FIRST CLASS

Nashua, NH 03063
7 Cheyenne Drive
c/o Edward J. Los

AMATEUR TELESCOPE MAKERS OF BOSTON