



The Eyepiece

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JANUARY AT A GLANCE

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NEW MEMBER WELCOME MAT

The month of December brought several new members to the club.

First is Larry Pratt, 301 Castelwood Drive Apt. 9A, New Braunfels, TX 78130. Larry joined our club about 5 or 6 years ago but relocated to Texas about two years ago. He sent me a nice letter recently with a check for dues because he "wanted to keep in touch with the NPMAS".

Next is Jeff & Jill Last, Jeff & Jill are meteorologists at the Weather Bureau next to the airport. They have offered to give the club a tour of the facility whenever we want to. We will let you know as soon as we can pin down a date. On a side note, now we have somebody in the club to blame when New Moon Weekends are cloudy.

Welcome to the club Larry, Jeff & Jill!

FOR SALE-WANT ADS

For Sale: Back issues of Sky & Telescope from July 1983 to April 1992. Lost radio contact with two issues--March '88 and April '91--but the other 104 issues are still sending decent data. Make an offer to Roger Dier at 499-1507.

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months events.

The final section is titled "Eyepiece Features" and will include things like Dan Sheber's "A Scopic View" and a new feature starting this month by Wayne Kuhn-"The Book Corner".

A NEW LOOK FOR THE EYEPIECE

With a new year comes a new look for *The Eyepiece*. I was getting tired of the old format and wanted to do something a little different. I also wanted to re-organize the content in hopes that it would flow a little better.

The first section you see is the Table of Contents. Pretty self explanatory. What used to be called "Upcoming Events" is now called "Month at a Glance". It has moved to the front page of the newsletter so you can open it up and have a quick way to mark your calendar.

Also moving to the front is the New Member Welcome Mat and the For Sale, Want Ads. Any words from the editor will round out the front page and spill over to the second page.

From here we move into what I call "month in Detail". It will follow in the same chronological order and will be the in depth reminders and details of each event. It is possible for the "month in Detail" to have as many authors as events, and can be several pages long.

Next is the section titled "Down the Road". It will cover upcoming events in the months ahead. Again, there may be several authors.

The next section "A Look at Our Past" will be where I group all of the reviews of the past

a text and electronic version?" The answer is no. There will be no more work because the hard copy that gets mailed will just be a printed version of the "electronic copy".

So those with Internet access will be able to print the same copy of the newsletter on their own printer that people without Internet access are getting mailed to

There is another reason for the change in format. In December, we launched our very own Internet web page so the NPMAS is now on the information highway. If you have Internet access you can find us at:

<http://www.dct.com/~ddewitt>

When polled, an overwhelming majority of our members with Internet access said they would prefer an electronic version of the newsletter over a standard mail copy, as long as there would be a way to keep the graphics in tact.

With my personal desire to change the format of the newsletter and a large segment of the club willing to experiment with an Internet version of it, I started generating the newsletter with an Internet web page creating program.

The advantages of moving in this direction far out-number the disadvantages. The first being time. Those with Internet access will have access to the newsletter as soon as it is ready. In the mean time, photocopying, addressing and stamping time will be cut so it will be in the mail quicker.

The biggest advantage is the cost savings. Not having the expense of photocopying and mailing about 30 copies to members alone will save the club about \$125.00 a year.

A potential problem that we may run into this year is with the printing of our newsletter. It has been basically "free" where all we need to supply is the paper. We may be losing this very beneficial service and one thing I do not want to do is sacrifice the content of the newsletter.

The easiest way to do that is to trim the circulation. If 30 or so members that have Internet access and are willing to receive it electronically, it is in the clubs best interest to pursue this option.

A question that you may ask is this, since the newsletter is a "benefit of membership", how can we put it online for the world to see? An easy answer to that question is this. The web page containing the newsletter will be encrypted with a password. Only club members and special guests will be given the password to get the newsletter.

Another question that you might be asking yourself is "Won't this create more work doing both

them.

I am very interested in your thoughts and suggestions on the format and content of the new *Eyepiece*. As always, I want this newsletter to be a symbol of the quality organization that this club is. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Don DeWitt

JANUARY IN DETAIL

HOLIDAY PARTY

We start out the new year with a celebration on January 10 and our annual Holiday Party. This year's party is at the Union Hotel in DePere. We will meet at 5:00 PM for drinks and dinner starts at 5:30 PM. Our room has just enough space for 30 people and there is still space available. If you want to join in on the fun please call Don or Katrina DeWitt at 405-8534 after 2:00 PM so we can reserve your spot. See you there!

MONTHLY MEETING

Our monthly meeting is January 14th from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the Neville Public Museum. The scheduled speaker is Steve Mofle and the topic is "Debunking Astrology" Hope to see you there!

NEWSTAR HOLIDAY PARTY

In addition to our holiday party, our friends at NEWSTAR will have their holiday party at The Granary in Oshkosh on January 17th. They will meet at 5:00 PM for drinks and 6:00 PM for dinner. Call Tom Jorgenson at 920-722-2829 for details.

WINTER WEEKEND

Our annual Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya Winter Weekend will be held on the weekend of January 23-25. See last month's newsletter for complete details, here are some of the basics:

The cost of the weekend is \$56.00 for adults, \$51.00 for children under 18. This includes; two nights lodging, six meals, and unlimited use of all the camps facilities; ice skates, cross country skis, snow shoes, sleds, sauna, camp telescope, etc.

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Please call Don DeWitt at 405-8534 evenings to reserve your space. We need to get a rough head count by January 15th, so we can tell the camp how many cabins we need. See you there!

ASTRONOMY DAY PLANNING MEETING

We will be having an Astronomy Day

The tour is scheduled for early afternoon for a few reasons. The first is that it allows people plenty of time to get there. The second reason is that it will finish early enough for anybody that wishes to head back the same day.

You will also have the option of staying the night and touring the Shedd Aquarium on Sunday. We are currently working on lodging arrangements and should have definitive information for next months newsletter. There will be an area on the sign-up sheet for you to

planning meeting on Wednesday, January 28th. The meeting will be held at Don & Katrina DeWitt's house starting at 6:30 PM. For more details on Astronomy Day, please see article in the "Down The Road" section of this month's newsletter.

WINTER STAR PARTY

For those of us that dream of a simple life in shorts on a beach, the Winter Star Party is just about as close as you can get, at least for a week or so. This year's dates are January 26-31.

I am not aware of anybody from the club that is going this year, so I will not spend too much time discussing it. Those with the Internet version of the newsletter can [click here](#) to check out their web page.

NORTH WOODS WINTER STARFEST

Can't go to the Winter Star Party, well how about the next best thing? The North woods Winter Starfest will be held on the weekend of January 31 to February 1st. A weekend of dark sky observing hosted by the Chippewa Falls club. For more info, contact Gary Baier at 391-9654.

DOWN THE ROAD

MESSIER MARATHON

It's not too early to start thinking about the annual Messier Marathon. This year's date for the marathon is March 28th. A more in depth article will appear in next month's edition of the *Eyepiece*.

CHICAGO FIELD TRIP

On the weekend of April 18-19 we will be taking a field trip to Chicago with members of NEWSTAR. There are several options at this point depending on what your schedule allows for timing.

The main trip will be to the Fermi Lab on Saturday for an early afternoon tour of their facilities. More information about the Fermi Lab will appear in next month's newsletter. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the January club meeting for the purpose of getting a head count for the Fermi Lab trip.

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Here we will begin the groundwork and start assigning tasks to those interested. Can't make it this month, but still interested in helping? No problem! Just let me know and I'll put you down.

Astronomy Day is a monumental event for our club; it's vital we have everyone help out in whatever manner they can. After all, the public is willing to take the time to come out and see what astronomy and the NPMAS is all about! The least we can do is put our time and effort into it and make it worth their while. I hope to see you there!

Katrina DeWitt

check if you are interested in the extended trip. Stay tuned to this newsletter for more information.

ASTRONOMY DAY 1998

Once again it's time to start planning for Astronomy Day 1998. This year's event will be held on Saturday, May 2nd. This major event can only be accomplished with the input and help of all our club members.

Astronomy Day is our opportunity to show the public what astronomy is all about: to learn that astronomy is fun, inexpensive and not as technical as many believe it to be. It's our golden opportunity to grab the public, WOW them and "hook" new members.

While Astronomy Day does commit many hours of planning and work, don't be scared off! Whether it only be an hour of your time or a great idea for an activity you can help. This event gives everyone the opportunity to participate and do a little extra socializing during those blah winter months.

What does Astronomy Day actually involve? The answer is YOU! To begin with, our first meeting will be held January 28th. This meeting will be used to solicit new ideas, expand on older ones and discard ideas that didn't work well last year. So, what ideas are we looking for?

Our theme this year is: Interactive Astronomy. Simply put, the public gets a hands-on experience. No more boring lectures, show-and-tell-thank-you-for listening to us approach. This year the public will get to try out what we do in astronomy (observing through binocs, drawing at the eye piece etc.). Or any number of aspects that teaches or ties in with astronomy.

Do you know something that would be great to showcase? How about helping set up displays or volunteering time on Astronomy Day? We even need a snack co-ordinator! There are many areas we need your help. Come join your fellow club members at the DeWitt house on January 28th at 6:30 pm.

Many colorful illustrations are also used to fire the imagination.

Much of his material is taken directly from articles he wrote in *Astronomy* magazine. The greatest feature of the book is, of course, the collection of HST pictures. It is a well written, hard cover reference book containing the best views of the Universe available.

Next month's meeting presentation - Turn Left at Orion.

COMING NEXT MONTH

Astronomy Day Co-Ordinator

EYEPIECE FEATURES

BOOK CORNER

by Wayne Kuhn

Through The Eyes Of Hubble - The Birth, Life and Violent Death of stars.

Robert Naeye - author

Kalmbach Publishing - \$19.97 through the NPMAS club discount plan.

Article Preface:

In order to make our members aware of one of the benefits of club membership, the available discounts on merchandise, I will be reviewing books at our monthly meeting with a follow-up article in *The Eyepiece*. Current discounts include 33.3% off Kalmbach merchandise (free shipping!) and 10% off Sky Publishing merchandise. Orders must be placed with Ron Parmentier of the NPMAS.

Through The Eyes Of Hubble

Naeye presents the material contained in Through The Eyes Of Hubble in a very organized, easy to read fashion. He starts with explaining the value of the Hubble Space Telescope, perched 330 miles above Earth's light distorting atmosphere. He quotes Paul Scowen who states "with Hubble, every time you get a picture, it is humanity's best view of that object, period."

The majority of the book explains star formation, types of stars, changes through their lifetimes, and their various "deaths". Ground based photos are used to show a familiar object, then the Hubble view is shown with its enhanced resolution and detail.

Here's a look at what's in store for next month's edition of *The Eyepiece*.

- Astronomers all over the world are gearing up for the February 26th total solar eclipse. Our NPMAS Feature Article will provide an in-depth look at the proper ways to observe and photograph them. We'll also let you know when and where the next few solar eclipses will be taking place so you can make your plans now.
- The Messier Marathon is now less than two months away! Learn how to get your scope ready now, so you don't run into problems on the big day.
- The Chicago field trip is not too far away. Stay tuned to next month's newsletter for more details on lodging, tour times and car pooling information.
- There are always interesting story's to tell after our annual Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya Winter Weekends. See what kind of mayhem club members get into this year.
- All this and much, much more in the February edition of *The Eyepiece*!