

# East Valley

# Astronomy Club

President	Tom Harvey	998-0035
Vice-President	Ted Heckens	827-1524
Treasurer	Bob Kelley	451-7319
Newsletter	Bill Smith/Roy Halverson	831-1520/844-9563

December

Newsletter

1991

## EDITOR'S NOTES

This will be my last my issue as newsletter editor for a while. I would like to thank the many members who have submitted astro news and provided information over the past year. And special thanks to Bill Smith for his effort in the final copy, duplication, and mailing. Without his support, and yours, we would not have had the level of quality which I now hope has been achieved. In the upcoming year I'm confident that your new editors will continue to mold our newsletter into a high quality publication. For any ideas, comments, or suggestions you may have please let them know.

While preparing this issue I heard the news of Gene Roddenberry's death. Although a Science Fiction author and creator of the Star Trek series He was aware of astronomy and its contributions to mankind. His vision of a positive future for man in space and our quest for knowledge will continue now after his passing. Our club officers are also moving on to bigger and bolder things so I wish them success and I'm confident the incoming officers offer us an exciting year ahead.

-Michael.

## EVAC NEWS

Congratulations to the new EVAC officers and board members for 1992. Elections were held at the November 20th business meeting and the results are:

President -	Tom Harvey
Vice-president -	Ted Heckens
Treasurer -	Bob Kelley
Newsletter -	Bill Smith
	Roy Halverson
	Ted Heckens

### Board members

Steve O'Dwyer  
Dave Brown  
Robert Kerwin  
Dick Simmon  
Frank Kraljic

Please contact any of the people listed above with ideas and suggestions you have to make our club better. Your board will need everyone's help to make 1992 a successful year!

## ASTRO NEWS

The first image of the asteroid Gaspra has been released over the electronic networks. Taken by the spacecraft Galileo in October it flew to within ten miles of the asteroid. Even in the low light level of space the asteroid shows remarkable features contrasted light to dark. Oval in shape and revealing an uneven surface this is the first photograph of many to be sent to Earth. It took almost eleven hours for the low gain antenna to transmit the photo which was received by the Deep Space Network. Unfortunately the cost and time required on the Deep Space Network antennae array to receive Galileo's images will not allow us to download them right away. The planned opportunity for downloading additional images is during the next Earth flyby of the spacecraft in December, 1992. Galileo's High Gain antenna is still stuck and technicians are hoping that the additional time in the cold of deep space will loosen the antenna rods. Once this is accomplished the data rate used by the High Gain antenna will provide rapid signal transmission of images reducing the Deep Space Network's time allocation and cost.

The eruptive variable V1251 Cygni is currently in outburst. This appears to be the first time since 1963 that it has erupted according to M. Moriyama of Nagasaki, Japan. Visual estimates are as follows: Oct. 15.90 UT, [14.2 (Schmeer); 25.54, 12.4 (Moriyama); 26.89, 12.4 (Moriyama); 26.833, 12.7 (Schmeer); 27.880, 12.5 (Schmeer). The coordinates are R.A. 21h 39m Dec. +48 26'(epoch 1950).

## IMPORTANT DATES

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

#### EVAC BUSINESS MEETINGS

December 18th - SCC Room SB 161

Guest Speaker - Jeff Charles

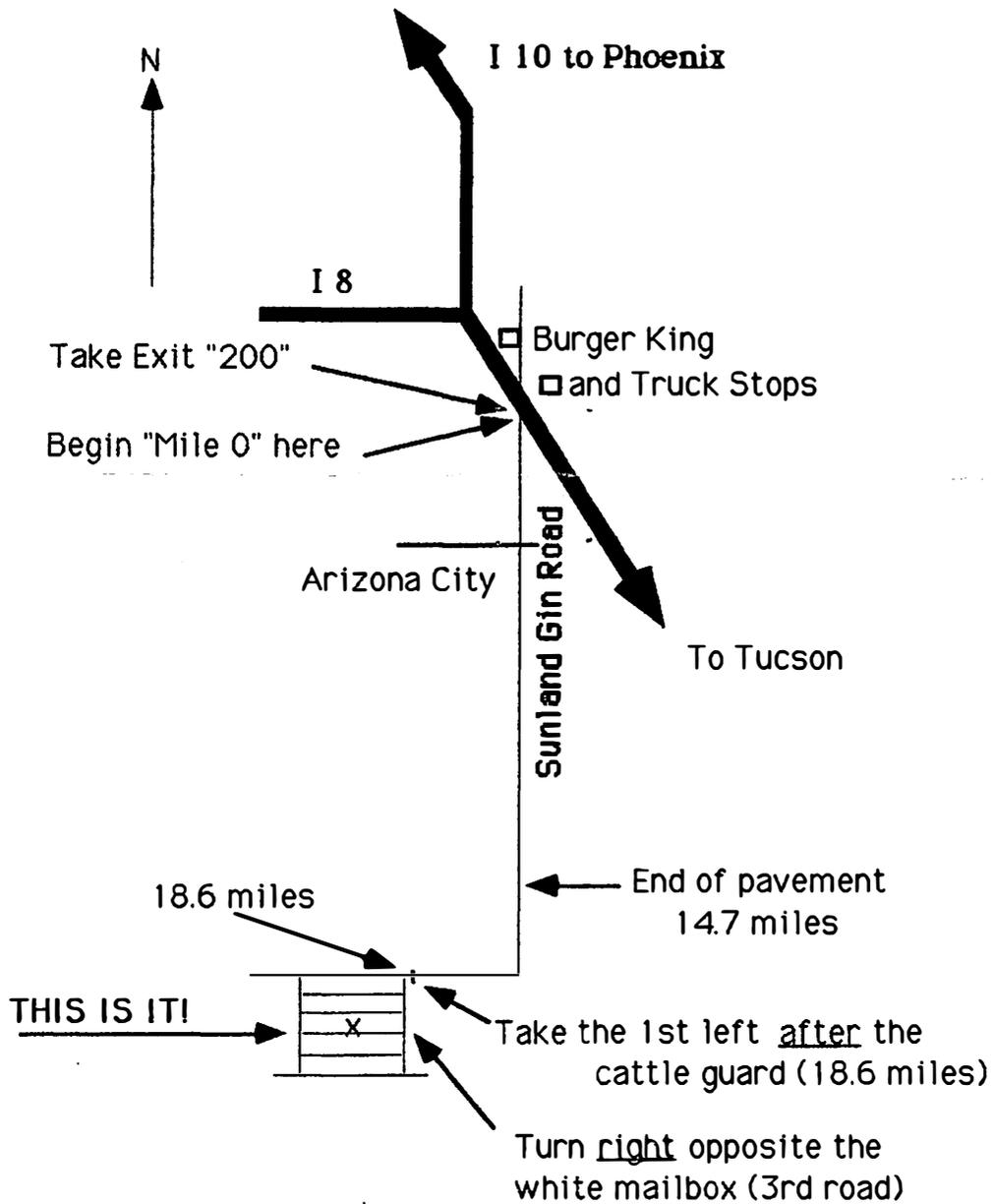
NOTE: Beginning with the January 22nd meeting until the end of the second semester we will have the business meetings in PS 172.

#### STAR PARTIES

December 7th - Southern Site see map p. 2

Dress for cold weather!

**Now is the time to renew for '92! Use the renewal form inside.**



## December 7th

**THIS IS A GREAT SITE FOR DEEP-SPACE OBSERVING.**

**DRESS FOR A COLD NIGHT - COLD FEET ARE NO FUN.**

**SEE YOU THERE!**

Call Bob Kelley four hours prior to departure for final information! 451-7319.

## **THE BEST SHOWER OF THE YEAR IS COMING!**

Saturday, Dec. 14th, is birthday of Tycho Brahe (1546-1601) and it also the date for the best meteor shower of the year. The Geminid meteor shower is one of the few showers which is quite good before midnight! It is said that the meteors are brighter and more colorful before midnight, so get warm clothing, a lawn chair, music and something warm to drink and enjoy! The source of the meteors was finally located in 1983 by the IRAS satellite as an "asteroid" which probably is the core of a long dead comet. The stream of meteors is distributed evenly since the calculated age is 4,700 years. This means that each year the number of sightings remains about the same although the rates are usually 50 per hour, ranging to 80 (in 1988 the peak was 130 per hour!) How many this year?

## **SOMETHING FOR CHRISTMAS??**

Sam Herchak, at the last business meeting, presented several interesting ideas that each of us may want to consider. He has found the Observer's Handbook an invaluable tool to use in his observing decisions. It is loaded with useful information for the current year. The 1992 edition is available and the cost is very reasonable. So if you need to supply someone with a gift idea you may want to provide them with the following source:

***OBSERVERS HANDBOOK***  
**SKY PUBLISHING CORPORATION**  
**PO BOX 9111**  
**BELMONT, MA 02178-9111**  
**\$14.50 ppd.**

If you would like to talk to Sam in person to get more information, call him at 759-0304.

Sam had another idea. For those of us interested in occultations, there is a source for predicting occultations visible from our area. Sam shared with us that if you send a self-addressed stamped envelope (two first class stamps) with your exact coordinates (nearest tenth of a minute) to the individual and address listed below, he will send you a free prediction list. If you can't get accurate coordinates, pick the closest airport coordinates:

Sky Harbor	33 degrees 26' N	112 degrees 01' W
Deer Valley	33 degrees 42' N	112 degrees 05' W
Falcon Field	33 degrees 28' N	111 degrees 43' W
Scottsdale Muni	33 degrees 38' N	111 degrees 55' W

You can use a topographic map to determine your coordinates more accurately. They can be purchased at Wide World of Maps or try your local library. If you are interested in more information about observing occultations call Sam at 759-0304 or Pete Manly at 966-3920. Pete is an authority on occultation observations and gave a presentation at one of our monthly meetings some time back.

Walter V. Morgan  
10961 Morgan Territory Rd.  
Livermore, CA 94550

## NOTES FROM NOVEMBER'S SPEAKER STEVE COE

The spiral nature of some galaxies was discovered in the mid-1800s by William Parsons, the third Earl of Rosse, using his "Leviathan," a 72-inch reflector, according to Steve Coe of the Saguaro Astronomy Club in his lecture to EVAC at its November meeting.

Coe described the construction of the enormous instrument and showed slides of the machine itself and of the earl's drawings made during his observations. Rosse, of course, could not photograph the skies, but his drawings of M51, among other objects, clearly show a spiral structure.

Coe noted that the vile Irish weather frequently obscured the skies and made observing an irregular occurrence.

The mirror was made of metal, the 60-foot tube of wood. It was suspended from masonry walls by cables and chains and was able to track the passage of stars and planets across the heavens. The observer sat in a compartment at the top of this remarkable Newtonian and used a 4-inch eyepiece.

Coe said the f10 telescope magnified about 350 diameters.

"The Leviathan of Parsonstown" as it was known, was erected in 1845 and was dismantled in 1908. J.L.E. Dreyer, who published the New General Catalogue in 1888, was one of several illustrious astronomers who used the telescope.

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The guest lecturer expected at the December meeting of EVAC will be Jeff Charles, Valley developer of a variety of special aids and attachments for astronomical equipment.

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### TRIVIA

Lots of people know the second full moon within one month is called a Blue Moon. But how many people know how often "once in a Blue Moon" occurs? Call one of your editors and let them know. Next month we'll print your name and others, if you have the correct answer.

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### FOR SALE

Meade drive corrector. Single axis. Used twice!  
Call Bill Smith - 831-1520. \$80.

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### WANTED

Photograph of the occultation of Jupiter by the moon. Contact new member David Robbins at 966-5171 if you have or know someone who has a photo. David viewed this event on the morning of August 18 or 19, 1990 and is willing to pay for a photograph.



# East Valley

# Astronomy Club

## Membership Form

Please complete the information on the form and return to the address below along with a check to EVAC for \$15.00 annual dues.

Bill Smith, EVAC Treasurer  
1663 S. Sycamore  
Mesa, AZ 85202

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

*Please*

*Print*

- New       Renewal       Change of address

Major area(s) of interest:

- General observing  
 Lunar observing  
 Planetary observing  
 Telescope Making  
 Astrophotography  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

It is not necessary, but do you currently own astronomy equipment?

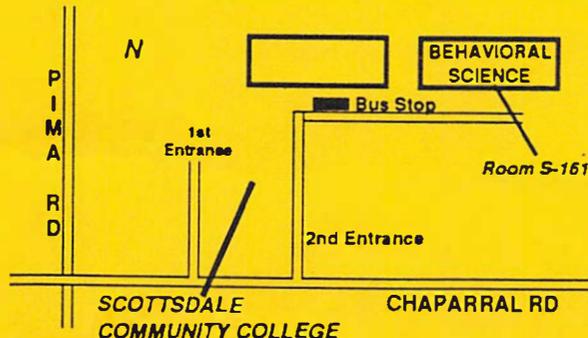
- Yes       No

If yes, please describe. \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about the East Valley Astronomy Club? \_\_\_\_\_

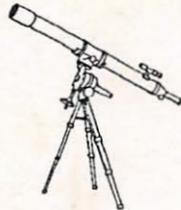
*CLIP AND SAVE*

Monthly business meetings  
are on the Wednesday nearest  
to the full moon.





EVAC/Bill Smith  
1663 S. Sycamore  
Mesa, AZ 85202



Please join us today!