



East Valley Astronomy Club

August

Newsletter

1994

EVAC HIGHLIGHTS

The main speaker for the July 20th meeting was Michael Janes, who spoke on variable stars. A variable star is a star whose light output changes over a period of time. Variable stars are given letter designations for each constellation in the order of discovery starting with R and continuing through Z. After Z, the next designation is RR, followed by RS, RT, etc.. After RZ comes SS, ST and so on. After ZZ, the sequence shifts to the beginning of the alphabet with AA. The letter J is not used. Finally, after all the letters are used up (a total of 334 variables), the remaining variables in the constellation are designated with a V followed by the number (for example V335, V336, etc.).

Variables are divided into two general categories: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic variables change brightness because of physical processes taking place within the star. Extrinsic variables change brightness because of external factors such as eclipses by a companion star.

Although the AAVSO recommends starting with the long-period variable stars, Michael encourages beginning variable star observers to start with some stars that will hold their interest. Long-period variables change so slowly that the observer's interest is likely to wane.

COMING CELESTIAL ATTRACTIONS

Saturn reaches opposition on September 1st and is visible all night. At magnitude +0.5, it's difficult to miss among the faint stars of Aquarius. The rings appear rather narrow, since they are tilted only 7° to our line of sight. Now is a good time to re-aquaint yourself with this showpiece of the solar system!

Two interesting events involving asteroids happen this month. On September 4th and 5th, 15 Euonomia crosses M37 in Auriga. At magnitude 9.8, the asteroid should be visible in almost any telescope.

At almost the same time, the magnitude 13.4 asteroid 894 Helio is crossing M31 in Andromeda. The crossing takes place on September 3rd through the 7th. You will need at least an eight-inch scope and dark skies for this event. As if this weren't enough, on the 11th, Helio passes through the center of M110, one of M31's companions. It passes only 20" to the south of the nucleus at about 12:30 UT on the 11th (5:30am Arizona time).

ARTICLES NEEDED!

Starting with the September issue, the newsletter will be back to its full size. There's only one problem: we have no articles to print! The editors are looking for all types of articles. Here are some suggestions:

- Observations of the SL9 impact on Jupiter.
- Perseid observations.
- Book/equipment reviews.
- Articles on telescopes.
- Suggestions/opinions on club activities.
- Humorous articles (in good taste, of course).
- Your experiences as an amateur astronomer (both good and bad).

There are no qualifications for writing articles and getting them printed in the EVAC newsletter. We don't check credentials or publish only the big names. We strongly believe that everyone has something valuable to say and that your ideas can benefit others. We especially welcome the viewpoints of

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVAC Business Meeting
August 24, SCC Room PS172, 7:30pm

Local Star Party
August 27, Florence Junction Site and Carefree Site

Deep Sky Star Party
September 3, Vekol Road Site

beginning astronomers. So be creative! If you have any questions, your friendly, knowledgeable EVAC editors will be glad to help! We can be reached at:

Robert Kerwin
Don Wrigley

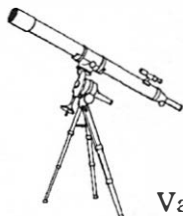
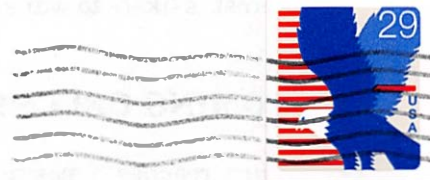
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FOR SALE

10" f/6 mirror, accurate to 1/12th wave, aluminized; \$400. Contact Jeff Fromm at 564-0317.

Odyssey 13.1 Dobsonian tube and mount only. No optics, focuser, spider or mirror mount; free. Contact Sam Herchak at 964-7371.

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Valued EVAC member since 1/17/92!