

Event of the Month

by Bill Larson

Saturn and Venus in Conjunction on July 10

Saturn which passed within six minutes of Mars last month, will have an encore with Venus this month. Unfortunately minimum separation will occur at 7 am CDT on Monday, July 10 when the pair will be visible from India. When darkness comes here, they will have separated to about $\frac{1}{2}$ a degree. The planets will also appear separated by about $\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ before conjunction on the night of the 9th. On the 8th and 11th they will be separated by $1\frac{1}{2}^\circ$.

In one way this conjunction is more interesting than last month's. Both planets will still fit in a wide field eyepiece and both will show detail in a telescope or astro-photograph. Although last month's Mars was too small (5") to reveal much, Venus' diameter (17") will be large enough to reveal its gibbous shape (70% illuminated).

All of the planets except Venus will soon be deserting the evening sky. Use this conjunction as a reason for taking one last lingering look at our ringed friend before it disappears!

MINUTES

Minutes of the general meeting of the Twin City Astronomy Club, Tuesday, June 6, 1978:

This meeting of the TCAC was highlighted by two programs, preceded by various announcements.

Bill Larson displayed several publications, including a circular from the US Naval Observatory listing cloud cover in the area of next February's total lunar eclipse. He also showed Robert Jastrow's book, Until the Sun Dies, and The Webb Society Quarterly Journal.

Jim Cooner, treasurer, reported there is approximately \$800 in the club treasury.

Lauren Nelson has the 28mm eyepiece received as a sample for club use. Anyone interested in using it should contact him.

Jim Fox presented the first program of the evening, a lecture on lunar features. The key features were craters, positive relief features, ridges, massifs, and rills (a negative relief feature). Fox then lectured on stratigraphy, or the study of the relative ages of rock formations. The key elements of lunar stratigraphy are embayment, contract, faults, and crater density.

The entire lecture was accompanied by slides of the features. A quiz followed the lecture. Those taking the quiz found identification of lunar features and determination of relative age both challenging and perplexing.

David Siskind of Minneapolis gave the second program of the evening, a report on his recent trip to southwestern observatories. Siskind visited McDonald, Kitt Peak, Lowell, and the US Naval Observatory. He found Kitt Peak and McDonald best for observing and deep-sky photography. Using an 8" Celestron set up on observatory property, he was able to obtain some very good shots of deep-sky objects.

Siskind also showed some aurora shots taken about 2 a.m. over Lake Calhoun during a recent display.--Carl Harstad, secretary

The July 11 program will be a 2-reel film on Stonehenge.

Anyone interested in working on the observing site should contact Andrew Fraser, president, or Lauren Nelson, vice-president.

GEMINI

Editor---- John Mlinar

Gemini is issued monthly by the Twin City Astronomy Club (TCAC), an affiliate of the Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minn.

The TCAC strives to promote amateur astronomy through its publications, meetings, and public programs. Membership is open to anyone. Annual regular member dues are \$16 and student member dues are \$5, of which \$1.50 is allocated for a subscription to Gemini. Subscription to Gemini is available to non-members at \$2.50 per year. Inquiries may be directed to: TCAC, Science Museum of Minnesota, 30 E. 10th St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

Advertisements for publication in Gemini are welcome and inquiries may be directed to Lauren Nelson c/o TCAC.

Second class postage paid at St. Paul, MN 55101.

Publication No. 338070

TCAC
Science Museum of Minnesota
30 E. 10th St.
St. Paul, MN 55105

Second Class Postage
Paid at St. Paul, MN
55101