



Event of the Month

by Bill Larson

Saturn is at opposition March 1

On the first day of March Saturn will be 1.25 billion km (8.36 AU) from the Earth. It will be at magnitude +.5 in Leo. The rings will be 45 seconds in width. The planet itself will be 18 seconds. The rings will be only tilted about 6° with respect to the Earth, opening to $7\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ in May. Then they will close up again until the Earth passes through the plane of the rings on October 27. Up to 6 satellites will be visible with a 20 cm telescope.

Minutes

The February meeting of the TCAC was held at the University of Minnesota. The chairman of the Astronomy Dept., Butler Burton, hosted a tour of his department. The group was broken up into 6 groups which toured six areas. A computer was used to show how Saturn would appear if a black hole were between it and Earth in its line of sight. A very precise measuring machine and a blink comparator were demonstrated. A tour of the IR lab included the University's set-up for their expedition to the eclipse. The $10\frac{1}{2}$ " reflector was demonstrated under very poor skies. Cosmic ray detectors that the University has flown in satellites and under balloons were shown. The use of the Very Large Array in New Mexico was discussed.

The next meeting of the club will be in the auditorium of the Science Museum, Tuesday, March 6 at 7:30. If club members successfully photograph the eclipse the program will be photos and stories of the expeditions. If they are unsuccessful Jim Fox will tell us about the uses of mini-computers for amateur astronomers.

The Twin City Astronomy Club is assisting the Science Museum in planning an eclipse tour on February 25-26. Probable destination for the three busloads of eclipse chasers is Ladin, Manitoba. At least 8 club members are taking the tour and several others are headed for sites along the path of totality. All are hoping for clear skies and a minimum of cold weather, in that order.

THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF GEMINI IS:

MARCH 16

GEMINI

Editor . . . Alan Ominsky

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 55101

Second Class Postage
Paid at St. Paul, MN
55101