

The Mason-Dixon Astronomer

Westminster Astronomical Society of Maryland

May 1986, Vol. 3 No. 5

Dr. Lufkin To Wrap Up Halley's Comet at May 28 Meeting

Dr. Daniel H. Lufkin, of Hood College in Frederick, shall present a "Comet Halley Wrapup" at the May 28 meeting. He will discuss some of the early findings from the current apparition as Halley continues to fade in our telescopes.

The May meeting is not being held at the usual location. The meeting begins at 8:00 p.m., at the Hashawa Environmental Center, north of Westminster (see map). Dinner with Dr. Lufkin shall be at Fan's Chinese Restraunt, 59 W. Main Street, promptly at 6:00 p.m. Reservations are not necessary and all are invited to attend. For those who wish to bring telescopes, there shall be an opportunity to observe after the meeting from the park.

To get to Hashawa from Westminster, take Rt. 97 north to John Owings Road. Turn right and follow the signs to Hashawa, which is past the county landfill, on the left.

President's Report

I want to thank all of the members who worked hard during the recent public comet watches at Piney Run and Hashawa, and the Astronomy Day in Westminster. Public response has been very positive from each event, and letters keep coming in.

As a reminder, the national convention of the Astronomical League (ALCon 86) is coming to Baltimore during the week of August 5-10. If you have not already registered, please do so as soon as possible; there shall be registration forms at the meeting. This is a perfect chance for anyone who has never been to a national convention to see one close to home. Last year's convention for example was in Tucson.

Comet Halley will still be around in June and two opportunities remain for group viewing. The first is after the meeting at Hashawa on May 28. The second is at the June star party at the Key Observatory in Keymar on the 7th.

-- Curt Roelle

WAS Welcome Wagon

The newest member of the WAS is Carole Sakamoto of Columbia, MD. Carole was a guest at the Piney Run Halley watch in April. Welcome aboard, Carole.

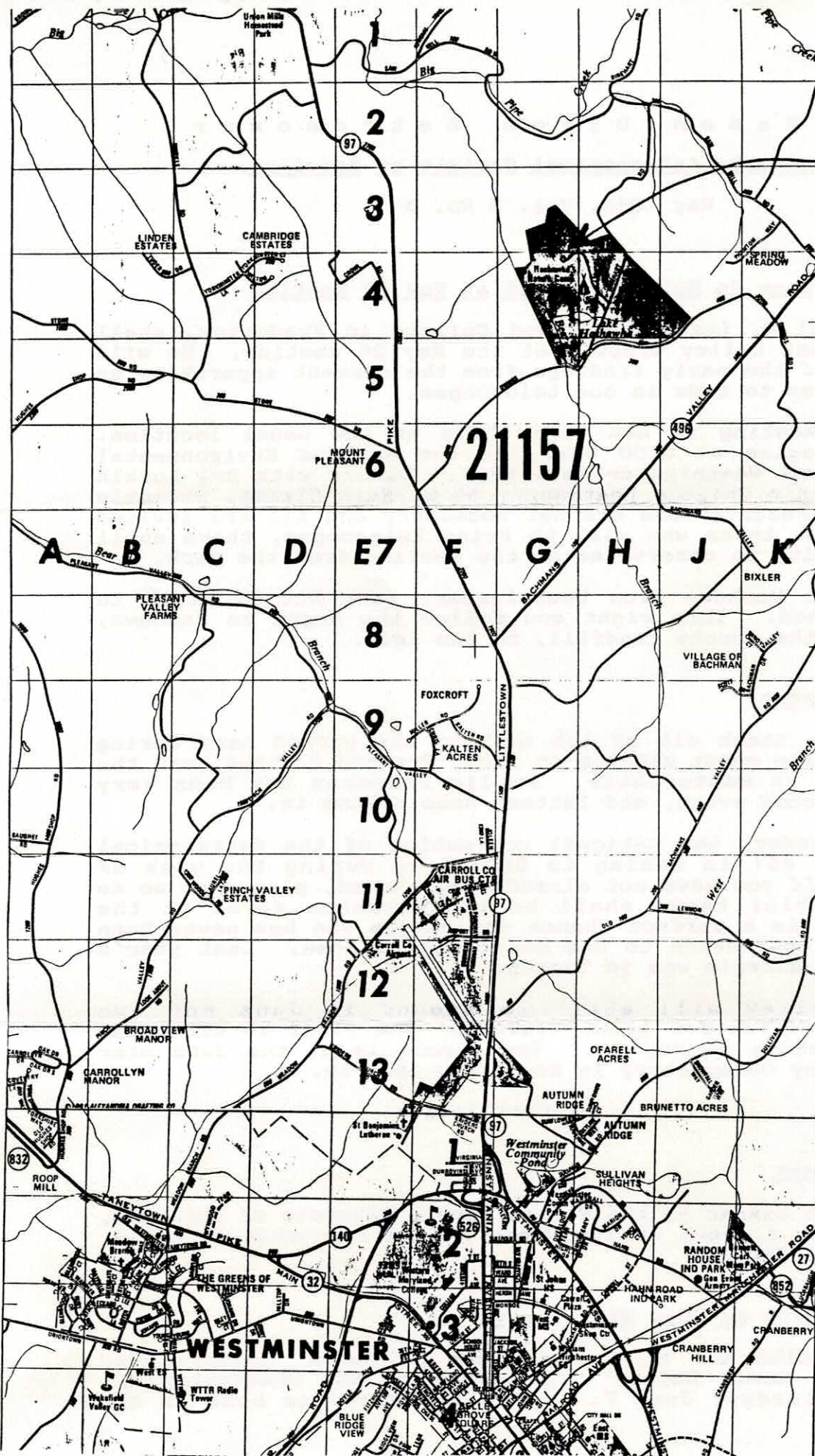
Farewell to Halley at June Star Party

Blaine Roelke and Mike Potter are having a "Goodbye (and good riddance) Comet Halley" star party at Key Observatory in Keymar, on Saturday, June 7. Key observatory is home to the

CAMP HASHAWA

EVENT:
WAS monthly
meeting
DATE:
Wed, May 28, 1986

TIME:
8:00-10:00
Observing after
meeting.



17.5" Newtonian constructed by Mike and friends, and is located at 6700 Keyville Road, southwest of Taneytown (see map). From Westminster take Rt. 140 to Taneytown. At the single stoplight downtown, turn left onto Rt. 194 and go about 1 1/2 miles south to Keyville Road, and turn right. Key observatory is about two miles down on the right.

Mike and Blaine have also invited the Baltimore Astronomical Society as well as employees of the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore. The last time these three groups got together for a star party, over 30 persons attended.



WAS members were given a tour of the Space Telescope Institute in Baltimore by astronomer Dr. Mark Damashek, on October 19, 1985. Astronomical League members shall tour the institute at AlCon 86 in August. WAS members above are, from left to right: Curtis Roelle, Walter Richards, Kegan Breuning, Eugene Sterner, Todd Bonner, Mike Scalion, Barry Willen, and Frank Filemyr. Photo by Kenneth Flynn.

Astromedia Magazines Arrive

Those who placed orders through the club for Astronomy, or Odyssey magazines should be receiving the monthly issues by now. The quarterly Deep Sky should also begin arriving soon. If you have not received any of the monthlies, then contact our Treasurer Joe Pekala at 635-2601.

Summary of Recent Events

The April 25 Public Halley Watch at Piney Run Park in Eldersburg was rescheduled for the following night because of cloudy weather. This was fortunate because on the new date there

was an extra hour before moonrise, at which time the program would be over. Although thin clouds obscured Halley from time to time, most of the visitors did get to view it. Telescopes were provided by Kenneth & Janet Flynn, Blaine & Frank Roelke, and Curt Roelle. Joe Pekala ran the slide program and sold comet books. We want to thank the Baltimore Astronomical Society for again loaning us their slide program.

As on December 14, May 4 was a beautiful clear night at Hashawa, only warmer and more tolerable. Because of Daylight Savings Time it was not dark until nearly 10:00. Bill Shuey brought his 10" Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain and Mike Scalion brought a 10" Newtonian. Kenneth and Janet Flynn brought their excellent 3" Celestron refractor and Curt Roelle brought a 4" Schmidt-Cassegrain. Once again Joe Pekala manned the slide projector, while Eugene Sterner helped keep order in the ranks.

The 1986 Carroll County Astronomy Day went without a hitch at the Main Library Branch. Eugene Sterner coordinated the event and displayed models of space vehicles, a bulletin board of information about the Challenger tragedy, and some new videotapes. Kenneth Flynn brought his astrophotographs and set up his 3" refractor. Bill Shuey put his massive 10" Meade Schmidt-Cassegrain on display. Todd Bonner had new astronomy software for his computer and provided guests with the opportunity to run a Space Shuttle simulation. Curt Roelle displayed the equipment he used to photograph Halley from Peru, and the photographs taken. Outside Eugene Sterner's refractor was set up for solar projection viewing.

One recurring comment from our guests at these events was "I had no idea there was a club like this around here; wish I would have known about it before." WAS needs to organize more public events so that those interested in astronomy can find out about us.

Putting Halley To Work For Astronomy

The Prairie Astronomy Club (PAC) held a public Halley viewing at a rest stop south of their home town from 11:00 p.m. until 2:30 a.m. on April 12. Despite the location, time, and an "extremely unimpressive" comet, between one and two thousand people came to view through six telescopes, reports club president Andy Corkill in the Prairie Astronomer for April. In addition, he reported, 134 Halley Comet Certificates were sold at \$1 each! The profits should aid in their efforts at building a new club observatory. What major metropolitan area could attract such a large crowd? Why Lincoln, Nebraska, of course.

ATM Help Wanted

Frank Filemyr wants to get in touch with anyone who owns, or has access to, a copy of Telescope Making #9. Frank's summer project is to construct a poncet mounting for his 13.1" Dobsonian reflector. Frank's telephone number is 876-1924.

Free Books

A stack of Comet Halley booklets remain in stock. At the May meeting, they shall be given free to members.

WAS CALENDAR

May 28 06:00 p.m. Dinner with speaker - Fan's Restraunt
28 08:00 p.m. Monthly meeting - Hashawa Env. Cntr.

June 07 duak Star Party - Key Observatory, Keymar

August 5 through 10 A.L. National Convention - Baltimore

Westminster Astronomical Society

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