March 1998

Meetings first Thursday of each Month
Next Meeting: March 5th 7:30 pm Discovery Center
Fort Collins
“Meteorites” by Marty Tippmann
** Club Business will precede the program, 7-7:30 pm **

March 5 NCAS Meeting Directions
Discovery Center, 703 E Prospect Rd, Fort Collins
From Loveland go North on US 287 to Prospect Rd in Fort Collins, go East about 0.5 miles. Look for the Discovery Center sign on the South side of the street.
From I-25, take Exit 268, head West into Fort Collins. Continue past Lemay Ave about 0.5 miles and see the Discovery Center on the left.

NCAS Star Party, March 21 and 28, Pawnee Grasslands Site
Take Colorado Hwy 14 East from I-25. At 17 miles East of Ault, just after milepost 170, take Road 65 (dirt) North one mile. At the curve West, stop. Go through the gate on the right (no road), close gate and set up on the prairie. There are no facilities, and beware of the cactus! Call Tom Teters with questions about the star party status, site or dates, 482-5702, or Email tjteters@ezlink.com.

NCAS Events, from Randy Moench, Vice President
March 6 Starwatch Discovery Center
March 21 Starwatch Discovery Center
April 2 Eclipse! Dorothy Pillmore
May 7 Variable Stars Robert Stencel

Other FRASC Events
Longmont Astronomical Society Meetings
7:30 pm, Third Thursday, monthly
Longmont Christian School, 550 N Coffman St

NCAS 1998 Dues
Treasurer Doug Moench would be delighted to accept members’ dues for the upcoming year. Annual dues are now $15. You may catch Doug at a meeting, or mail to:

Doug Moench
1509 Lakeside Ave
Fort Collins CO 80521

February 5 Program: StarLab Planetarium, by Dee Wanger
The main talk of the night was by Dee Wanger about the portable planetarium the Discovery Center has, the STARLAB, it sets up in 15 minutes by two people and weighs about 100 lbs. It was obtained from a grant from H-P, Gannett Publishing and the NSF. She said that every other Sunday during the spring there are full astronomy programs as well as star parties in March.
There are several type of displays the stars and planets by themselves, another with lines connecting the stars in each constellations and yet another on based on the Native American Lore, which does need some further research to fill in the gaps in the story. Anybody?
There is a rental program which is fee-based and will be rented out after an appropriate training program.

NCAS Business Meeting, Feb 5
The regular monthly meeting was attended by Bob Carlson, Jamie McArthur, Steve Emmons, Tom Fay, Andrea Schweitzer, Dan Laszlo, Brad Jarvis, Dee Wanger, Darrell & Sally Whitezell, Ken VanLew, Gene Schmidt, Larry Sarner, Linda Rosa & Emily Sarner, Jim McCormick, Richard & Nettie Lane, Steve Lynch, Roland Auenthem, Dave & Maggie Sharp, Jeann Sauer, Eric Reading, Phil McCallum, Daryl Boggs & Tom Teters, Thom Peck, Doug Moench (Hope I included everyone and didn’t spell your names too badly).
With the elections last month the newly elected officers have assumed their duties. Doug Moench told us that we
have about $600 in the treasury, that membership dues are past due for the year. He is also going to update the members list and include their phone numbers. Thom Peck suggested we consider joining the Astronomical League—it's $10 plus $3 for each member. Gene Schmidt told of a dark sky site at his residence near the power plant north of town. Someone needs to make a run out there to examine the site. Ken VanLew (493-2182) told us about his Friday 6th star party which I heard was very well attended by about 100 people. He will bring lists for the next two months to the next meeting.

Submitted by Tom Teters, Secretary

Members Activities
Bob Carlson saw the meteor that may have been from the Hale-Bopp comet as it reappeared in the northwest sky and traveled to the southeast when he was just south of Denver. He said he saw it change colors from white to red-orange. Thom Peck has received the new manual for Dobsonian building, The Dobsonian Telescope by David Berry and Kriege.

Excellent Internet Astronomy Sites
from Tom Teters

Astronomy Image of the Day
Latest Hubble Images
http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/latest.html
Planetary Sciences of NSSDC
http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/
Astromart New & Used Astro-Gear
http://www.astromart.com/
Great Nebulae Images
http://seds.lpl.arizona.edu/billa/twn/

Starwatch for the Public at Discovery Center at First Quarter Moon Fridays, from Ken VanLew
Telescope views of Saturn and its rings, Jupiter and its moons, star birthplace Orion Nebula, red supergiant Betelgeuse, hot blue giant Rigel, the nearby star clusters 7 Sisters Pleiades and Hyades, and much more will be available on Friday, February 6. The session will begin at 7PM on the south lawn at Discovery Center with 2 rounds of at least 6 objects each round being offered by members of Northern Colorado Astronomical Society. In the event of questionable weather, call 493-2182 AFTER 6PM for a go/no go message. Saturday is the backup date if weather is bad on Friday.

This is the first of a series of planned Friday stargazings nearest the 1st quarter moon (also one of the viewing objects) with changing objects each month. Jupiter will be gone for the next event on March 6, but new objects will be added each month as the skies change. Both telescope and binocular views will be available, and guests are welcome to bring those new Christmas telescopes for help in getting them working. From June through August the sessions will move to Rocky Mountain National Park, so now is the time to see the winter skies and take advantage of the Discovery Center's convenient location at the corner of Prospect & Stover.