

# **The Shoreline Observer**

Newsletter for the  
Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association

**January 1996**

President - Phil Sherman

Vice President - Pete Burkey

Secretary/Treasurer/Editor - Mike Henry

## **January Meeting**

The January meeting of SAAA will be held on Thursday January 18th at 7:00 PM in the West Ottawa Middle School Planetarium.

- ♦ Business Meeting.
- ♦ Sandy will give a tour of the January night sky.
- ♦ Mark will be telling us about the constellation Pegasus.
- ♦ Bob will have an overview of 1996 observing events.
- ♦ Pete has an astronomical activity for all to do.
- ♦ Gary will be bringing refreshments.

## **Treasurers Report**

As of January 10, 1995: \$283.13

## **THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT FROM PETE BURKEY**

### Communications

I received an interesting request from some folks in Jackson who are planning to form an astronomy club. They asked for a copy of our constitution, by-laws and newsletter so that they would have some ideas for a starting point for their own constitution. I assume they requested the same information from a number of clubs so as to gather a variety of ideas which they can adopt or modify to suit their needs. It would be interesting to hear how they react to our constitution and newsletter.

Former SAAA guest speaker, expert aurora photographer and weather forecaster, Peter Chan, has moved from Channel 3 Weekend Weather to the U S Weather Service in Grand Rapids. Peter will be the guest speaker at our March meeting. More info on that next month.

## Planets

Hopefully, everyone has had several chances to see Venus in the southwestern sky right after sunset. It has been quite brilliant on the clear nights we had in the first two weeks of January. I have not observed Mercury or Mars and would be interested to hear from anyone who has. They were both low in the WSW, below and to the right of Venus. Saturn is the fourth planet visible at dusk and since it started the month 34 degrees up and to the left of Venus, it is visible for several hours after sunset. Any reports of ring observation is welcomed. Watch Saturn and Venus come to within 1.3 degrees of each other by early February.

Also, now, and continuing into February, Jupiter is the bright "star" low in the SE just before dawn. I observed it around 7-7:15 AM on January 15. Use Jupiter as a guidepost to Mercury which becomes a morning "star" by late January. Look to January 26th on your Sky Calendar.

## International Deep-Sky Association (IDA) News

The Next Midwest Regional IDA meeting will be held in Milwaukee, WI, on Saturday, March 30th from 8:30AM to 6:00PM. It is jointly sponsored by IDA, the North Central Region of the Astronomical League, and Astronomy Magazine. See Pete for more information.

The most recent IDA newsletter reports on meetings in Italy and Bulgaria, two countries that have a section of their national scientific academies devoted to light

pollution. A national law is making its way through the Italian legislative process to regulate against light pollution, and a major Italian lighting company has an extended advertising campaign both against light pollution and for quality outdoor lighting. Much activity continues to progress in the UK also.

IDA is also mentioned in the Observer's Handbook which has two pages of light pollution issues (PP36-37). It notes that IDA's membership represents "...less than 2% of the community of amateur and professional astronomers. Anyone who values the night should support this unique organization."