

OBSERVATIONS

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
CHESTER COUNTY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

★ President: Edwin Lurcott
★ Treasurer: Steven Lurcott

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★ Vice President: Mike Tucker
★ Secretary: Nancy Armstrong

CCAS AUGUST MEETING

The August meeting of CCAS will be held on Friday, August 12, 1994, at 8:00 PM at the headquarters of the Brandywine Valley Association (BVA). This will be the third and last of our three summer observing sessions held jointly between CCAS and BVA. Members and friends of both organizations are invited. There will be a brief business meeting before we go to the field for observing. CCAS members are encouraged to bring their telescopes so there will be enough available for all to observe. Those bringing 'scopes may want to come early to set up in the daylight. Electricity is available. If you need assistance, there will always be members to help you.

The date of this observing session was chosen to coincide with the Perseid Meteor Shower. No optical aid is needed to observe the Perseids. For comfortable viewing, we suggested lounge chairs, blankets, and bug repellent. Anyone interested in submitting meteor counts should team up with a time-keeper and note taker, so that the observer would not be distracted by taking notes. These counts may be submitted to astronomers studying the meteor shower. The August, 1994 Sky & Telescope magazine has more guidelines for submitting meteor counts.

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NEW CCAS MEMBERS WELCOMED

Ten new members signed up following the July 16th meeting. We welcome the following into the society:

William Barry	William O'Hara
Jill Fragale	Paul Rullo
Ave Gaffnei	Mildred Schriff
Mike Gallagher	Jim Sylvester
Chuck McLaren	Kevin Yodorow

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JULY OBSERVING SESSION - HUGE SUCCESS

Thanks to some great publicity by the Community Courier, there were over 75 people at the July observing session. Many brought telescopes and shared them with the first-timers. Some viewed Venus, the Moon, and some of the brighter M objects, but the murky skies kept us from seeing many of the deep-sky objects.

The main event was, of course, the expected impact of fragment B of comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 onto Jupiter. However, fragment B must not have been as massive as first reported, because no evidence of an impact was observed.

Many of those attending expressed interest in joining the society. Steve Lurcott, our treasurer, reported eight people signed up that night and a few more expected to join. It was exciting to see so many at the session and encouraged the society leaders.

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PERSEID METEOR SHOWER

The Perseid Meteor Shower is believed to be the debris left behind after the passage of the Periodic Comet Swift-Tuttle many years ago. This comet has a 130 year orbit around the sun and each time more debris is left behind. Our Earth travels through this debris each August, providing viewers with a unusual display.

Some refer to these meteors as 'shooting stars.' Actually, meteors are small pieces of rock which burn up in the Earth's atmosphere due to the heat of friction. If a meteor is large enough and survives the heat of friction, landing on Earth it is called a meteorite.

This particular meteor shower was given the name Perseid because the Earth is traveling toward the constellation Perseus at the time the Earth passes through the debris. This makes it appear as though the meteors were coming from the direction of the constellation Perseus.

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REQUEST FOR COMET - JUPITER CRASH OBSERVATIONS

Members are requested to report their observations of the comet fragment impacts on Jupiter. We need the following information:

- When did you see them?
- What did they look like?
- How long could you see them?
- What instrumentation was used?

Submit your drawings and/or written descriptions to Ed Lurcott, 1384 Station Place West Chester, PA 19380. A summary of all observations will be published in a future issue of "Observations."

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SEPTEMBER CCAS MEETING

Beginning with the September 12, 1994, meeting, CCAS will resume its regular meeting schedule. They will be held the second Tuesday of each month in the Planetarium room (room 186) Schmucker Science Center, West Chester University and starting at 7:30 PM.

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CHESTER COUNTY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY'S PURPOSES

The Chester County Astronomical Society was formed in September, 1993, with the cooperation of West Chester University, as a non-profit organization dedicated to the education and enjoyment of astronomy for the general public. The society holds meetings with speakers and observing sessions once a month. Anyone who is interested in astronomy or would like to learn about astronomy is welcome to attend meeting and become a member of the society.

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The present membership rates are as follows:

REGULAR MEMBER

(18 years or older)\$20/year

SENIOR MEMBER

(65 years or older)\$10/year

STUDENT MEMBER

(full-time college student) \$ 5/year

JUNIOR MEMBER

(under 18 years old)\$ 5/year

For further information on membership or society activities you may call Edwin Lurcott (610) 436-0387.

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