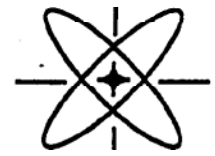


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NEWSLETTER OF THE MEMPHIS ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
A NON-PROFIT, PUBLIC SERVICE ORGANIZATION PROMOTING INTEREST
AND EDUCATION IN ASTRONOMY AND RELATED SCIENCES. FOUNDED IN 1953.

December, 2009

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER MEETING

The Memphis Astronomical Society will hold its regular monthly meeting at 8:00 P.M. on Friday, December 4th 2009, in the Science Auditorium on the campus of Christian Brothers University at Parkway and Central. Members are urged to attend and to bring guests; the public is welcome.

PROGRAM

WELCOME * * President Moore will greet the members and guests and outline the evening's program.

BUSINESS * * The Treasurer's Report will be given by Treasurer Bill Wilson and the Minutes of the November Board of Directors Meeting will be read by Secretary Carrie Armus.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2010 * * The M.A.S. will hold its annual election of its Officers and Board of Directors for the upcoming year. Remember, in order to vote or to run for office, you must have paid your dues. Since there are no contested Officer positions, the voting will be by acclamation. The Nominees are:

PRESIDENT: Richard Moore **VICE-PRESIDENT (OBSERVING):** Brenda Harris

VICE-PRESIDENT (PROGRAMS): Bill Busler

TREASURER: Bill Wilson

SECRETARY: Carrie Armus

BOARD POSITIONS: we *will* have an election for the Directors, since 6 candidates are running for 5 positions:

Lee Cole	Freddie Diaz	Leiland Duke
Ric Honey	Mark Matthews	Paul Reeder

MAS E-MAIL ADDRESS: info @ MemphisAstro.Org

MAS WEB SITE URL: <http://www.MEMPHISASTRO.ORG>

MAS SHORT COURSE SESSION No. 4: *The Solar System* * * by William J. Busler.

Bill will review some basic facts about our Solar System, especially its overall shape and the orbital motions and composition of the planets, their satellites, and comets. He will conclude by discussing some old and modern theories of the origin of the Solar System.

BREAK * * Time to refresh and mix and mingle.

THE MOON FROM PREHISTORY TO GALILEO * * by Ross Sackett.

Early views of the Moon as timekeeper, as a god, and as an object. Ross, an instructor of Anthropology at the University of Memphis, will examine the diverse significance of our Moon to early cultures, focusing on its role in the development of calendars, its varying depiction in world mythology, and the occasional speculation on its nature as an astronomical body and as a world.

DECEMBER OBSERVING SESSION * * The December Observing Session will be held on Saturday, December 12th at 7:30 P.M. at our observing site near Lagrange, Tennessee

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS * * The M.A.S. welcomes its newest members:

James C. (Jim) Carter; 63 Shady Glen Road; Memphis, Tennessee 38120-2021;

carte.jim@gmail.com

And

Sue E. Bolding; 99 North Main Street; #1505; Memphis, Tennessee 38103; sebolding@bellsouth.net.

Please help welcome Jim and Sue to the Society and add them to your membership listing.

THE GALLOPING AMATUER * * by Richard Moore.

...Twas the Night of Observing...

**Twas the night of observing and all the ground,
Not an astronomer was an astronomer, not even a sound.**

**The telescopes were hung by the observatory with care,
In hopes that a star or a planet would soon appear there.**

**The observers were nestled all snug in their oculars,
While visions of deep sky objects danced in their monoculars.**

**An another in their finder I in my sight,
Had just settled down for a long observing night.**

**When out of the field there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my telescope to see what was the matter.**

**The moon on the horizon on the new-fallen snow,
It mustered a midday two objects below.**

**That what do I wonder in my eyepiece should appear,
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer.**

**With a little old driver so lively and clear,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.**

**Now dasher and Prancer, now dashes a quick,
To the top of the zenith, to the top of the dome.**

**And up to the observatory top these reindeer they flew,
With a sleigh full of telescopes and St. Nicholas too.**

**A round little face and round stiffened belly,
That shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.**

**His stars how they twinkled, his temper how jova,
His cheeks were like red giants and his nose like a nova.**

**He spoke not a word but went straight to his work,
He filled all the telescopes with objects de merc.**

**He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like a Patriot on a scud missile.**

**But I heard him exclaim as they flew out of sight,
“Merry Christmas to all and to all a good observing night”.**

***THE PLANETS FOR DECEMBER, 2009* * * by Richard Moore.**

PLANET	DATE	R. A.		DEC		MAG.	RISE		SET	
		h	m	o	'		h	m	h	m
Mercury	12/01	16	27	22	31	-1.3	04	27 PM	06	56 AM
	12/05	18	02	-25	46	-1.7	03	44	08	24
	12/10	18	34	-25	30	-1.9	03	57	08	35
	12/15	19	02	-24	40	2.1	06	23	08	41
	12/20	19	24	-23	22	2.2	06	19	08	39
	12/25	19	34	-21	53	2.1	06	14	08	23
	12/30	19	25	-20	38	-1.1	03	49	07	50

***COSMIC CHUCKLES* * by Richard Moore.
Christmas Train for the Mentally Ill... Bipolar Express..**

WHAT's UP ** by Richard Moore.

DECEMBER, 2009

Visible Constellations

Cassiopeia	Andromeda	Triangulum	Aries	Taurus
Perseus	Orion	Eridanus	Cetus	

Visible Planets

Mercury... emerges into evening twilight.

Good Objects to Observe

NGC6905	planetary nebula in Delphinus	C1	open cluster in Cepheus
C52	elliptical galaxy in Cetus	NGC7009	planetary nebula in Aquarius