OUR NEXT MEETING. Our July meeting will be held on Friday, July 7th at 6:30 PM at the Bella Vista Restaurant on NM Route 14 North in Cedar Crest. (See map for directions and mileage.) Dinner will be $4.60 per person—guests are welcome—and includes all of the chicken or fish you can eat. When you enter the restaurant, specify that you are with the Albuquerque Astronomers to be directed to the private dining room. Following our dinner we will have a business meeting and view the NASA movie "Jupiter Odyssey." Weather permitting, we will then all drive out the additional 5.6 miles to Jim Tolle's lot for a star party. Please bring plenty of extension cord if planning to use clock drives at the observing session.

OUR LAST MEETING. Wynne Wood reported that Merv Seay would have the telescope box completed within two weeks and that it should be fiber-glassed. (See elsewhere in the newsletter about the club telescope.) Mention was made of the investigation into a Forest Service special use permit for club star parties on National Forest land; the process would involve a lot of red tape.

A tour of the Solar Thermal Test Facility at Sandia is being examined for the August meeting.

Derek Wallentinsen handed around copies of a draft lighting ordinance for the club to examine.

Jim Tolle reported on developments for a platform design for a permanent observing facility out at his site (see below).

Club opinion on star parties still favors impromptu gatherings.

Derek, Wilfred Pedroncelli, and Jimmy Theiler observed or attempted to observe the appulse involving an SAC star and minor planet 2 Pallas on May 29. Derek reported that there was no occultation from Albuquerque. (An occultation was observed from places in Maryland, Illinois, and Wyoming.)

George Tolle and Bill Wood then raised the question of whether or not the club should incorporate for insurance reasons (injury lawsuits). Most people in attendance favored looking into the idea. New Mexico charges a fee of $100 for incorporation; Maryland, Delaware, and Connecticut have less restrictive regulations and only charge 20-25 dollars. George and Bill will further study incorporation and report at a future meeting.

We then watched the NASA film "Mercury: The Exploration of a Planet," which a consensus thought was excellent. Thanks to Wilfred Pedroncelli for running the projector.

OUR SINCEREST CONDOLENCES. We were saddened to learn of the death of Paul Wright, who had been a member of the club for over two years. Paul was especially interested in radio astronomy. Our sympathy to his wife and family.

A MESSAGE FROM WYNNE. Would you like to see beer and pretzels served at each meeting, or a question and answer period to help beginners clarify points? These were but a few of the suggestions/comments on the questionnaire forms I have reviewed so far. If you haven't returned yours yet, it's not too late—pop it in the mail to Derek or bring it along to the next meeting. Results so far indicate a heavy area of interest in star parties. This subject was brought up at the last meeting to determine if members prefer organized,
prearranged observing sessions or impromptu, spur-of-the-moment gatherings. The latter was the more popular. Our new site at Jim Tolle’s should be a good step in the right direction for more good, clear observing in the future. (Perhaps also for the scheduling of regular star parties as well.

-- Ed.

Another strong area of interest in the club this year is astrophotography. We have arranged for a speaker on this topic for the September 1st meeting. We’d like to see a big crowd at Bella Vista on the 7th. Guests are welcome. Our last NASA film was excellent and the fact that the "Jupiter Odyssey" film was unavailable until now indicates it is much in demand and another good one!

-- Wynn

PERMANENT OBSERVING SITE. Our plans for a permanent observing site at Jim’s place are materializing beautifully. The committee appointed to design a pad on Jim’s lot (Jim, Don Davey, Mark Nolen, and Bill Wampler) met prior to the last business meeting. They arrived at the following decisions; the surface will be 12′ x 16′ of cement to be poured in a few months at the time Jim’s house foundation is laid; there will be underground conduit supplying electricity for a couple of outlets for those using drives; inset anchor bolts will provide a place to join standardized mountings for any telescope. Eventually we may decide to expand the size of the pad if member use is high enough to warrant it. New member Jim Martin of Schoener Lumber has agreed to furnish any hardware supplies needed at cost or a discount.

CLUB TELESCOPE. Merv Seay has worked long and hard on the box to transport the club scope. A reminder that it is again available to borrow; minors must have a parent sign the telescope use agreement form and all users must pay a $2.00 service fee for each period they wish to use the telescope as well as signing a users agreement contract. Special thanks again to Merv and all the others who have put in many hours refurbishing our telescope.

GOOD LUCK: To Art Jacobs who has moved now to Mercer Island, Washington. Art will have an excellent vantage point for the solar eclipse in February. His new address is 3605 50th Ave. SE, Mercer Island, Washington 98040. Art was a June graduate of Eldorado High School and will now be a freshman at the University of Washington in Seattle. We’ll all miss you, Art. Keep in touch.

To Robert Babb, formerly in Las Cruces, who is also moving to Washington (Seattle), where he will be working at Boeing. May you both have clear and dark skies!

NEW MEMBER: John J. Corcoran 337, 557 Mission NE 87107, 345-1309. Welcome!