This is the first newsletter distributed under the new, able, efficient, and illustrious administration (well, those people who admitted they were somewhat interested in leading this group this year). Speaking of the new leadership, the following people were anonymously, I mean unanimously, elected at the last meeting to the following respective posts for this year:

Alan Lampson —— president
Susan Dietrich —— vice president
Glenn Pickett —— secretary-treasurer

Scott Green was appointed the program committee chairman, and Bob Hufnagle was appointed editor of this collection of literary gems (smattering of somewhat readable tidbits).

Keeping on the subject of appointments and volunteers, we still need volunteers for some minor but important functions. Each month our meeting is held in the home of one of the members. Besides helping out the club by furnishing a temporary clubhouse, you can be creating an excuse to clean the house and put away all those magazines now covering the couch and coffee table. I found an unread copy of LIFE magazine, along with a water bill from 1968! If you would like to open your home to an evening of fun and entertainment, see Alan or Susan at one of the meetings, or call one of the officers and let them know. Don’t restrict yourself to next month — this goes on all year.

Volunteers are also needed for the program committee. Scott Green is heading up that committee and could use some help. See him at the meeting or call. Let him know your ideas for some exciting meeting agendas or extra-curricular activities.

We also try to have a star party every month, weather permitting. But the turnout lately has been underwhelming, to say the least. On some nights, all of the members present could have fit into Mac’s car, along with their telescopes. So we would like to start having a schedule of objects which we will observe, along with a volunteer (we’re still talking about volunteers) to provide a list of objects and approximate locations in the sky, preferably above the horizon during the evening hours. The volunteer could also coordinate the event to avoid the confusion which has marked some of these events in the past. Again, see Alan or Susan at the meetings or call.
One more volunteer item, and then on to more exciting things. Astronomy Day, held annually on the first Saturday in May, has been a very good event for the club, offering lots of exposure of the club to the public, and bringing in new members. But a certain amount of work always needs to be done. We like to have plenty of telescopes there, along with other exhibits, and lots of members around to answer the questions of the visitors to the display. You don’t have to be a walking astronomical encyclopedia – none of us are – but just be willing to help someone to understand astronomy a little better. You can always steer someone to a member who can answer the question if you can’t. If you can help, come to the meeting, call, write, or send up smoke signals. Sorry, but our E.S.P. receiver is on the blink, so just thinking about it won’t work. An organizational meeting will be held sometime in February, so let us know as soon as possible.

Included with this newsletter is the latest member listing. I entered the list into my computer to allow us to keep track of members and membership dates more easily. But while I can handle the computer fairly well, I have very little control over the keyboard and there are undoubtedly some errors in the listing. So if you see an error, please call or write to me or Glenn Pickett and let us know. This includes the date up in the corner which is your renewal date. If that date has passed, then your membership is overdue and you should have a little note to that effect with this letter. If you don’t agree with that date, call Glenn or me and we will straighten out the situation.

If you thought you would quickly read the date and location of the next meeting and skip everything else, then you’ve noticed by now that I have cleverly buried that information to force you to read all the other stuff first. But now you can find out. The next meeting will be held on Feb. 4 at my home on 1109 Saint NE (see map on the last page). The topic will be STELLAR EVOLUTION AND RELATED TOPICS, given by Capt. Robert Richter-Sand, and will include a slide presentation. Refreshments will be served as usual, and I guarantee that everyone will have something to sit on. If so many people attend that I have to find some more chairs, I will be delighted. Bring your friends and neighbors.

The star party will be held on Feb. 11, with Feb. 12 as the backup date in case of lousy weather. It will be held at Coronado State Monument (see other map on the last page). This is a new location for us, and we can thank Patricia Rogers and Susan Dietrich for contacting Jim Harmon, the superintendent of Coronado State Monument. Mr. Harmon has not only consented to allow us to use the grounds after normal closing time, but he also will have the office area open for us to warm up in, and restrooms will be open for obvious purposes. Susan and Pat will also have hot apple cider and some snacks available for us. Electrical outlets will be available in the area in back of the museum for power to the telescopes, and we will have a hard surface on which to set up telescopes. It’s hard to imagine a more ideal situation for a star party. Mr. Harmon has been most helpful to us for this star party and is looking forward to a lot
of eager star gazers. If you have been putting off attending a star party because of the cold, or you were envisioning standing around in the middle of a patch of sagebrush getting bored, you really shouldn’t miss this one. A hands-on demonstration of the manipulation of an equatorial-mounted telescope will also be presented in the building starting at about 8:00. It will be held inside so we can see where the controls are and what they do without trying to learn to use them in the dark of night. We will have the club telescope (an 8-inch Newtonian) and several Celestrons and similar scopes. Alan Lampson will be the coordinator of the event and you can call him at 821-3289 with any questions, including if the star party will be postponed if the weather is lousy. The sky is very dark up there, much better than at the Petroglyph Park site. If you think that I’m trying to convince you to be there, you’re right! BE THERE!!

Here is a list of the objects which we plan to view in the club scope as well as other scopes. Of course, we won’t only be looking at the following objects, but anything interesting you want to see. You can usually ask to see an object, and if it is visible at the time, whoever is operating the telescope will oblige.

1. M-1 – Crab Nebula
2. M-31, M-32, NGC 205 – Andromeda Galaxy and companions
3. M-33 – Spiral galaxy with very open arms
5. M-45 – Pleiades
6. M-74 – Spiral galaxy with very open arms
7. M-76 – Little Dumbbell Nebula
8. M-78 – Diffuse nebula
9. M-79 – Globular cluster
10. NGC 869, NGC 884 – Double Cluster
11. M-44 – Beehive (if session lasts long enough)
12. M-51 – Whirlpool Galaxy (if session lasts long enough)

We are mainly going after the Messier Objects since some new ones have risen since the last good observing session.

You may not get this in time, but the Space Exploration Day activities planned for Winrock Center have been cancelled due to lack of interest and a required insurance fee that didn’t quite fit into our budget. It had been planned for Jan. 29 & 30, but don’t go because it won’t be there.
Among the coming events either scheduled or in the planning stage:

1. Next meeting - Feb. 4

2. Next star party - Feb. 11 (backup Feb. 12)

3. Tentative session in an inflatable planetarium - Mar. 10. Call Alan Lampson or come to the next meeting for details.


5. Tentative trip to the Annual Texas Star Party, including a tour of the University of Texas McDonald Observatory on Mount Locke, Fort Davis, Texas - May 28-30. Come to the meeting or call Susan Dietrich for more details. This would be a weekend trip over Labor Day, and should be a lot of fun.

Here are the maps to the meeting and the star party. I hope they are clear enough, but if not, call me at 294-5949 and I will explain the route to either place.

**Meeting Feb 4. 1109 Saint NE 294-5949 7:30 PM**

**Star Party Feb 11 Coronado State Monument**