

IO – March 2003

www.eugeneastro.org

Eugene Astronomical Society, Annual Club Dues \$25, President: Jean Grendler, School Star Party Coordinator , 683-9382, moe@msn.com, Vice-President & Treasurer: Sue Moe, suemoe@worldnet.att.net, Telescope lending program: Jeff Phillips 685-0973, phichu@epud.net,
*Io (EYE-oh) is nearest to Jupiter and fastest orbiting of the four Galilean moons.
Web Master Dave, Nexstar11.com ; IO editor, Sam Pitts, sampitts@aol.com

EAS - March 3rd Meeting 7:00 PM

Come early and mingle with fellow members. Share your observing experiences with others. Bring questions regarding astronomy equipment and observing and we will try and answer them.

Monday, March 3, 2003 EAS meeting features Larry Dunn with a presentation on **Lunar Occultation and Timing**. Learn about a fun way amateur observers can contribute to science. Astronomy Day update and member sharing. Short activity to demonstrate variable star observing. Star Party Schedule to be announced. 7 :00 PM Room 319 North Eugene High School 200 Silver Lane, Eugene

Astronomy Day May 10

SPEAKERS SET FOR ASTONOMY DAY!

Some of our popular speakers are coming back and new speakers have been added. Returning are John Flinn with his Aurora Borealis presentation, NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador, Don Brown will speak on current missions and will present a class titled "Rocketry 101", including a demo launch. Don will be helping us provide authentic space memorabilia. Larry Deckman of Starfinders, Inc. will present his fascination slide show that takes viewers from our home planet to the edge, or center, or the Universe! New this year, are talks by Mel Bartels and Larry Dunn. Mel will speak on optimizing your scope for Mars and Larry will talk on observing our Moon. Other presenters include Sam Pitts and Jean Grendler. Vendors have been invited to give talks, too.

EAS welcomes all amateurs' astronomers or those who just have an interest in Astronomy, to come and participate in our meetings. Our members are more than willing to introduce you to the wonders of the night sky. See you there!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ASTRONOMY DAY- MAY 10th

We need a safety coordinator for solar viewing. This person will also coordinate the volunteers who bring scopes for this part of the event, ensuring that all scopes and are safe and that all scopes are attended at all times!

We need people to help with setup, take down decorations. Our club table will need staffing.

Anny Cole needs two adult volunteers to help staff the Children' s Activity Room. Samara from The Science Factory will be giving two Comet "building" demos in that room for us!

We need a volunteer to coordinate door prizes, including helping secure donations of door prizes and prizes for the children' s room and Student Project contest.

Telescope operators for the evening Star Party and Solar viewing need to please start signing up right away. Please sign up at the next meeting or contact Jean at moe@msn.com

Together we can all make Astronomy Day a wonderful community event!

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Astronomical League Binocular Messier Certificate

2nd in a Series

Astronomical League Messier Club Certificate

The Binocular Messier Club is for beginning observers as well as experienced amateurs. Beginning observers will find that it doesn't take an expensive telescope but only a simple pair of binoculars, no matter what size, cost or condition, to do serious astronomy. On the other hand, experienced amateurs, even though they may already have the A.L.' telescopic Messier and Herschel certificates, will enjoy the new perspective binocular observing gives them as they pull back from an object and observe the area around that object as well as the object itself. Seeing the object and its relationship to the sky around it will put that object in its proper context in the sky.

Rules and Regulations:

To qualify for the A.L.' s Binocular Messier Certificate, you need only be a member of the Astronomical League, through either an affiliated society or as a member-at-large, and observe 50 or more Messier objects using only binoculars. Any 50 of the 110 recognized Messier objects may be observed. Any pair of binoculars may be used, but those with objectives between 20MM and 80MM in diameter are recommended. To record your observations, you may use the log sheets found in the back of the Astronomical League' s manual "Observe: A Guide to the Messier Objects", or any similar log sheet. The required information is: the name of the object; date and time of the observation; an estimate of the seeing and transparency; the size and power of the binoculars used; and perhaps, a brief comment on what you saw. To receive your Binocular Messier Certificate, simply send your observations along with your name, address, phone number, and society affiliation to:

Mike Benson
2308 Dundee Lane
Nashville, TN 37214-1520
(615) 883-6571
E-mail: ocentaurus@aol.com

Upon verification of your observations, your certificate will be forwarded to either you or your society' s "Awards Coordinator", whomever you choose.

Almost every amateur astronomer begins to be aware of the Messier Catalog as soon as he or she opens their first book. The novice is sure to find some spectacular object pictured and designated by its "Messier Number" with the universal abbreviation "M". Of the myriads of star clusters and nebulae scattered over the sky only about 100 (perhaps 110 at most) can claim membership to this celebrated list. However, this happens to include most, but not quite all, of the finest of these objects observable from mid-northern latitudes.

There is nothing in the catalog that the owner of so humble an instrument as a three-inch reflector cannot reach under good observing conditions. Many of the objects can be seen with binoculars and some with the naked eye. Thus, the Messier Catalog is a happy hunting ground for any amateur with a taste for deep sky objects.

Even an extremely brief review of the history of Messier' s Catalog will explain why it contains so many bright and easy clusters and nebulae.

Charles Messier (1730-1817) was a French astronomer who developed an intense interest in comet hunting. While he had other achievements to his credit, this was his chief occupation during his long observing career. In this, he was so successful that he probably observed half of the comets known in his time. He discovered about twenty. It was to keep track of the star clusters and nebulae which might have otherwise confused him by their comet-like appearance, that he began to catalog and describe them. In commenting on his catalog in later years, he frankly stated that he had compiled it in order to aid other comet hunters. There is a slight touch of irony in the fact that Messier' s chief claim to immortality grew out of his efforts to rid himself of a nuisance to what, he felt, was his important life' s work. As might be expected, Messier telescopes were all modest instruments, none of them exceeding the capacity of telescopes amateurs can expect to own today. **Continued Page 4**

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Observers Corner

Winter-Spring Skies

Should the weather clear in Eugene, its time to look at the gas Giants, especially Jupiter & Saturn. On the 1st of March Jupiter will be at -2.56 Magnitude and 44.3" in diameter. Time for some really good views. Take advantage of this approach; take some photos or CCD images. Several good Transits will be visible from Eugene this month, as well as the Great Red Spot. Use filters to aid in viewing the GRS, Blue and Green filters help.

Saturn is at magnitude 0.0 and 18.9", situated high overhead for good viewing if the shies cooperate

Messier Season is here. Look to the South for Canis Major, You can't miss it, with Sirius the prominent Star. M41 is just Below Sirius and M46 & M47 are to the East, with M 93 resting below them, in Puppis. M50 is North of Sirius. This is a good time to see these five Messier Star Clusters.

Orion is high and perfect for viewing and imaging early, with Leo and Virgo coming up late.

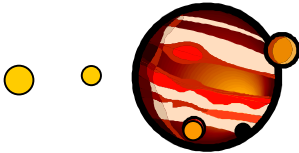
Check out the Messier information listed elsewhere.

-Sam

Jupiter's Red Spot Centered PST

02/28		17:12		03/16	00:31	20:22
03/01	03:07	22:59		03/17	06:18	
03/02	18:50			03/18	02:09	
03/03	04:45			03/19	07:56	17:52
03/04	00:37	20:28		03/20	03:48	23:39
03/05	06:24			03/21		19:31
03/06	02:15	22:06		03/22	05:26	
03/08	03:53	23:45		03/23	01:18	21:09
03/09		19:36		03/24	07:05	17:00
03/10	05:32			03/25	02:56	22:47
03/11	01:23	21:14		03/26		18:39
03/12		17:06		03/27	04:35	
03/13	03:01	22:53		03/28	00:26	20:17
03/14		18:44		03/29	06:13	
03/15	04:40			03/30	02:05	21:56

Transits of Jupiter's Moons



03/01	01:17	Io	Transit Begins
	03:34	Io	Transit Ends
	05:28	Europa	Transit Begins
03/02	19:44	Io	Transit Begins
	22:01	Io	Transit Ends
03/04	18:38	Europa	Transit Begins
	21:32	Europa	Transit Ends
03/06	10:12	Ganymede	Transit Begins
03/07	01:48	Ganymede	Transit Ends
03/08	03:03	Io	Transit Begins
	05:20	Io	Transit Ends
03/09	21:30	Io	Transit Begins
	23:47	Io	Transit Ends
03/11	18:14	Io	Transit Ends
	20:59	Europa	Transit Begins
	24:53	Europa	Transit Ends
03/14	01:40	Ganymede	Transit Begins
	05:16	Ganymede	Transit Ends
03/15	04:51	Io	Transit Begins
	07:07	Io	Transit Ends
03/16	23:18	Io	Transit Begins
03/17	01:34	Io	Transit Ends
03/18	17:45	Io	Transit Begins
	20:01	Io	Transit Ends
	23:22	Europa	Transit Begins
03/19	02:16	Europa	Transit Ends
03/21	05:13	Ganymede	Transit Begins
03/22	06:39	Io	Transit Begins
03/24	01:06	Io	Transit Begins
	03:23	Io	Transit Ends
	23:16	Callisto	Transit Begins
03/25	04:02	Callisto	Transit Ends
	19:34	Io	Transit Begins
	21:50	Io	Transit Ends
03/26	01:48	Europa	Transit Begins
	04:41	Europa	Transit Ends
03/31	02:56	Io	Transit Begins
	05:13	Io	Transit Ends

Shadows cast on Jupiter's disk by Transit of its moons may Begin and end after transit times. Begin observing before Times listed do time variation due to precise location within time zones.

All times PST for Eugene

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Astronomical League Messier Club Certificate

Messier did not discover all the objects in his catalog and he never made any such claim. Many of the objects were called to his attention by his contemporaries, notably Pierre Méchain and the fact was always carefully noted. The catalog was published in several stages as additions were made to it, the first 45 entries being printed in 1771. In its classic form, it contained 103 entries. Studies of Messier's papers and correspondence (Dr. Helen Sawyer Hogg and Dr. Owen Gingerich) suggest that another four to six objects should be added to bring the total to 110.

The prospective observer should be warned that if he follows the older editions of the catalog, or many of the older charts, he may find nothing in the position indicated. More recent editions have corrected these errors but there are a few entries about which there is some doubt.

The Messier Club.

The Astronomical League offers special recognition in the form of a Messier Club Certificate for those that have observed most or all of the Messier objects. To qualify you must either be a Member-at-Large or be a member of an astronomical society which is affiliated with the League. To obtain an award you must observe the following rules:

Rule 1:

Observe 70 Messier objects and keep a record of your observations. Your notes must show:

- A. Date of observation
- B. Time of observation
- C. Seeing conditions
- D. Aperture size of telescope
- E. Power/Magnification used
- F. A short note describing your observations

Rule 2:

Have your notebook or record examined by an officer of your Society (**See Our President Jean Grendler**) or a suitably qualified second party if you are not a member of a society and have this party forward a letter to the effect that you have made the necessary number of observations. This letter should be addressed to:

Scott Kranz
106 North Darrowby Drive
Raymore, MO 64083-9181

Only non-society members need to actually mail their observing log to Mr. Kranz. A Certificate of Membership in the Messier Club will be forwarded to your Society for presentation at a meeting. The letter should specify the address to which the Certificate should be mailed. The certificate will be suitable for framing

Rule 3:

When you have observed the balance of the Messier Objects, have your notebook or records examined again and a letter forwarded to Mr. Kranz again, indicating that you have completed the observations of the Messier Catalog. You will receive an **Honorary** membership certificate signed by the current President of the League. Be sure to indicate the return address.

Note:

Since the purpose of the Messier Club is to familiarize the observer with the nature and location of the objects in the sky, the use of an automated telescope which finds the objects without effort on the part of the observer is not acceptable. Also "Messier marathon" sessions where all the objects are found in one occasion is to be discouraged if the beginning observer depends on other experienced observers to find the object to be observed.

www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/obsclub.html

See our Treasure Sue Moe

Subscribe to Sky & Telescope and/or Astronomy Magazine

And take advantage of our club's 10% discount
You also get a 10% discount at the S & T Store

Image of the Month

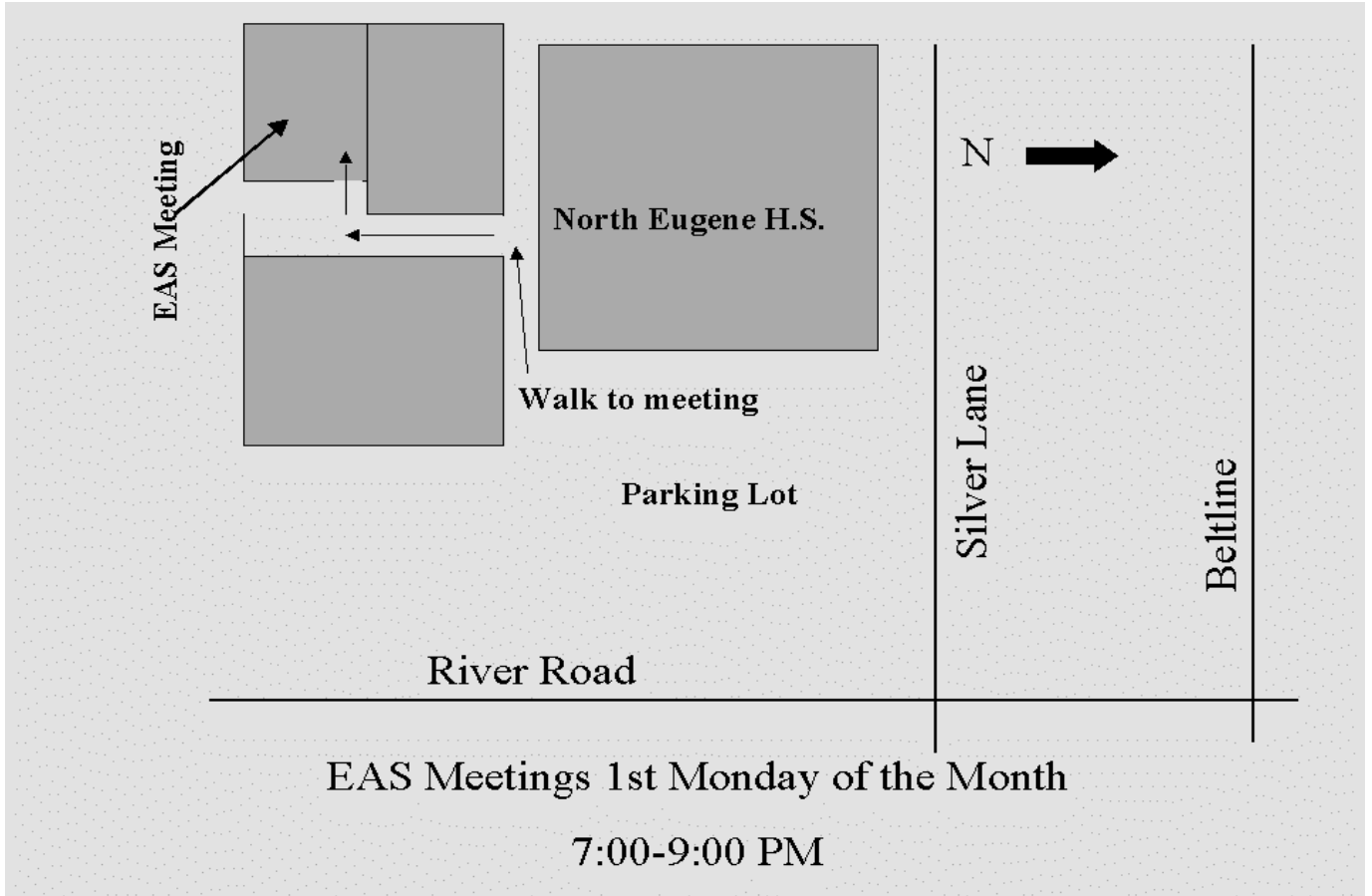
Please submit your Astronomy photos, images or drawings to Dave Cole so he can select one to post on the EAS Web-Site. I can digitize 35mm negatives or prints so they can be used. -

Sam

Web Master Dave : Nexstar11.com

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Come to a meeting and share your hobby with others!

School Star Party Set-Volunteers Needed!

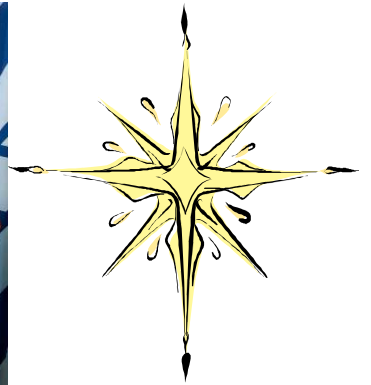
Friday, March 14th - Adams Elementary School 950 W. 22nd in Eugene. Two other schools may be invited to this event! Please bring out your scopes to give the families a good show. To thank us for our efforts, the PTA is making a generous donation to EAS. If you are borrowing a club scope, this is one of those events we want you to attend! Please contact Jean at moegren@msn.com to volunteer.

Set up at about 5:30 p.m. Thank you.

Jean

Club Meeting - March 3 - 7 PM

BE A WINNER! Try your luck with a chance to win another "Goodie Basket" at our next meeting. Proceeds go to fund Astronomy Day! Chances are \$1 each, drawing to be held during the meeting. Paul Swadener won the basket at the January meeting. Some of the items included were a video tape, greeting cards and a meteorite. Be prepared to try your luck!



Seven Strangers?

by Dr. Tony Phillips

At the dawn of the space age some 40 years ago, we always knew who was orbiting Earth or flying to the Moon. Neil Armstrong, Yuri Gagarin, John Glenn. They were household names--everywhere.

Lately it's different. Space flight has become more routine. Another flight of the shuttle. Another visit to the space station. Who's onboard this time? Unless you're a NASA employee or a serious space enthusiast, you might not know.

Dave Brown, Rick Husband, Laurel Clark, Kalpana Chawla, Michael Anderson, William McCool, and Ilan Ramon.

Now we know. Those are the names of the seven astronauts who were tragically lost on Saturday, Feb. 1st, when the space shuttle Columbia (STS-107) broke apart over Texas.

Before the accident, perhaps, they were strangers to you. But if that's so, why did you have a knot in your gut when you heard the news? What were those tears all about? Why do you feel so deep-down sad for seven strangers?

Astronauts have an unaccountable hold on us. They are explorers. Curious, humorous, serious, daring, careful. Where they go, they go in peace. Every kid wants to be one. Astronauts are the essence of humanity.

They are not strangers. They are us.

While still in orbit Dave Brown asked, jokingly, "do we really have to come back?"

No. But we wish you had.

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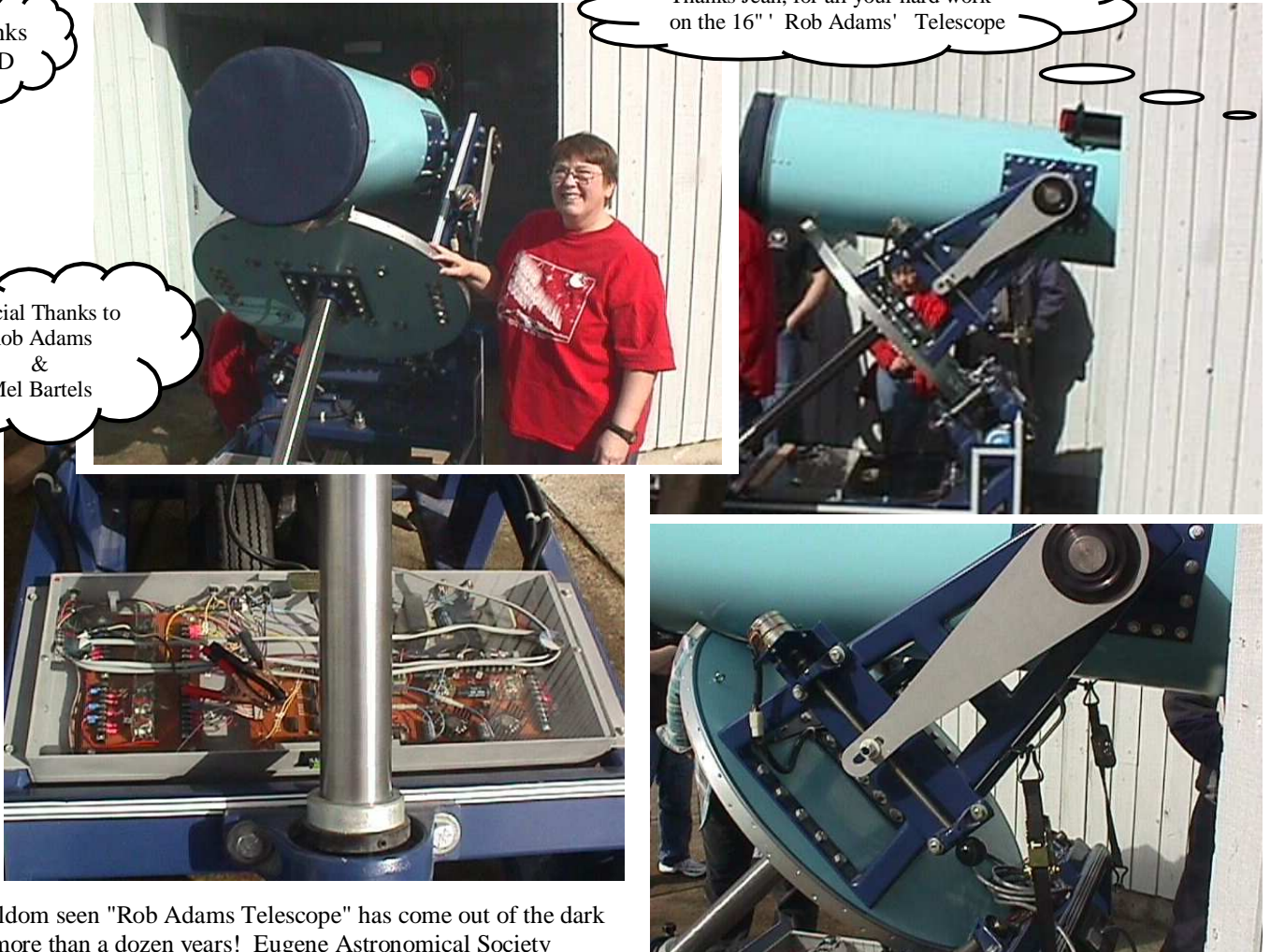
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"Rob Adams Telescope" has come out of the dark after more than a dozen years!

Thanks
ESD

Thanks Jean, for all your hard work
on the 16" Rob Adams' Telescope

Special Thanks to
Rob Adams
&
Mel Bartels



The seldom seen "Rob Adams Telescope" has come out of the dark after more than a dozen years! Eugene Astronomical Society members and helpers, including telescope builder Rob Adams, accepted possession of the 16" Cassegrain scope for the society and committed it to be available for public viewing from now on.

The telescope is a beautiful instrument, weighing over 1,000 lbs and running on 4 auto sized tires - 2 in front with a steering arm and 2 in the mid-rear. The scope stands over 6 feet tall. Sam Pitts rented a U-hall trailer for the move and after removing some parts and preparing the scope for the move, it was loaded up, tied down and slowly driven through Eugene. A procession of cars with flashing lights followed the scope, giving the beautiful instrument a "welcome home" parade!

Adams designed and built the scope during the time Bill Suggs was director of the planetarium, and EAS had grand ideas of an observatory at Mr. Pisgah. Those plans fell apart when Suggs left Eugene. Adams built the scope gratis and estimates a few thousand hours of labor. He was eventually reimbursed for parts. Adams was a key figure in amateur astronomy in the 80' s-a founding member of FOPMO, he organized gala Astronomy Days that drew thousands to the planetarium and got steady publicity for EAS. Twice a week the club put on star parties, as that was the era of Halley' s Comet.

The "Rob Adams Telescope" was built for a cooperative dream that did not materialize. This scope is now entrusted to Eugene Astronomical Society to make it available to the public. The scope may need a few modern upgrades, according to Mel Bartels, who worked on the scope with Adams. Fans to cool the 3-inch thick primary, redoing of the drives to a more modern system capable of computer interface, and adding a motorized focuser. Nothing major says Bartels, just some updating. A permanent home for the telescope is the ultimate goal to insure the safety of the instrument and availability for public viewing.

Eugene Astronomical Society thanks these members and friends for their generous help in moving the telescope: Sam, Dave and Anny, Rob Adams, Mel Bartels and wife Barbara, Jean and her son Dale, Jeff, Frank Szc, Rick Collins and Rossco. Ed Gerdes, director of the Science Factory, was on hand to give us access to the building and wish us well. -Jean

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EAS CLUB CALENDAR

- March 14, Friday School Star Party at Adams School 950 W 22nd Eugene – setup 6pm
- March 21 Friday - Club star party, near equinox, College Hill Reservoir
- April 7 Club meeting 7 pm North Eugene High School Room 319
- April 11 Friday Possible Reschedule of Junction City School star party?
- April 18 Friday Club star party- College Hill Reservoir
- April 25 Friday School star party? Possibly Thurston reschedule or? TBA
- May 5 Club meeting 7 PM North Eugene High School Room 319
- May 9 6 PM Work group – decorate/setup tables, etc. for Astronomy Day North Eugene HS
- May 10 Astronomy Day North Eugene HS 2PM-Midnight (star party) WORK STARTS AT 9 AM
- May 15 Thurs. Lunar Eclipse- schedule an event? make up if Astro day is a rain out, ? TBA
- May 23/ 24 Memorial Day weekend, no events
- June 2 Monday Club Meeting NEHS 7 PM - thin crescent moon – bring scopes
- June 6 Friday - final school star party - TBA
- June 20 Friday College Hill Reservoir EAS public star party(or 21st)?
- June 21 Possible date for Oregon Clubs Star Party at Mary's Peak ??? Solstice
- July 7 Club meeting NEHS 7 PM - end of long 4th of July weekend
- July 18 College Hill Reservoir EAS star party
- August 4 Club meeting NEHS 7 PM
- August 14-17 Mars Society Convention – Eugene Hilton - EAS sponsoring solar viewing and star party- times and dates TBA
- August 22/23 Possible club Mars event at College Hill Reservoir??
- August 27 - Mars closest approach - New Moon
- August 28 – 31 Oregon Star Party...
- September 1 - Club meeting – 7 PM North Eugene High School
- September 12 – “Back to School” star party – College Hill Reservoir
- September 23 - Fall equinox