# Occultation Newsletter 

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## FROM THE PUBLISHER

This is the second issue of 1987. Some changes in IOTA/ES instructions are shown below.

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Observers from Europe and the British Isles should join IOTA/ES, sending DM 50... to the account IOTA/ES Bartold-Knaust Strasse 8, 3000 Hannover 91, Postgira Hannover 555829 - 303, bank-code-number (Bankleitzahl) 25010030 . Full membership in IOTA/ES includes the supplement for European observers (total and grazing occultations).
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IOTA NEWS

## David W. Dunham

Fourteen years have elapsed since the last good passage of the Moon across the Pleiades visible from North America. Since the passage of March 5-6 is the first favorable Pleiades occultation visible from this part of the world since occultation Newsletter began publication, this issue is naturally dedicated to the famous open cluster. This issue is being distributed early enough so that most subscribers in the U.S.A. should receive it by March 5th. Most Canadians will probably receive it too late, but this passage is not very impressive there, the Moon missing all of the bright Pleiads and covering only a few 6th-magnitude stars. Mexico will get the best view of this passage, so I have sent a preprint of the Pleiades article to Guillermo Mallén. Unfortunately, there will be little or no time to process special requests for March 6th after you receive this, but many already will have been alerted either by the special P-catalog predictions distributed with U.S.N.O.'s 1987 total occultation predictions or by my articles in Sky and Telescope.

Unless a separate article is written, information about meetings with IOTA involvement, those held since the last issue was published and future meetings, will be included in the IOTA NEWS article. The only meeting since the last issue was the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) convention in Reno, NV. On January 14th, Paul Maley and I were able to exchange information about, and discuss the next steps that need to be taken, to complete analyses of the 1985 May 4th lunar eclipse grazes of Alpha 2 Librae and of the 1983 May 30th occultation of 1 Vulpeculae by Pallas. It is critical that we publish the results of these observations, especially for Pallas, which has waited much too long. The astronomical community has counted on us to publish these results, and we need to do so to maintain IOTA's credibility and demonstrate that we have a purpose other than just the distribution of predictions. I hope to have papers prepared on these occultations before I become too involved with needed star catalog improvements and 1988 predictions, which I must begin earlier in the year than I did for 1987 predictions, which have been distributed either just barely in time or too late. My tight schedule, including several business trips noted below, will make it difficult to find enough time to get the job done, and any help others can provide without too much direction from me will facilitate the situation and be greatly appreciated. At least,
most of the data are already in computer-readable form, so that the job should not be impossible. For Pallas, we want to document the full coverage of the event, including as many as possible of the miss observations, few of which are in the computer database, and few of which have even been reported to us. In most cases, one arc minute will be sufficiently accurate for the latitudes and longitudes of the miss observers, but local and regional coordinators should get this information before we lose contact with too many observers. This is also a concern for some of the discordant timings of the occultation by Pallas.

From March 16 to 25 , I will make another trip to Japan, to coordinate my spacecraft orbital design work with Robert Farquhar, my technical supervisor at Goddard Space Flight Center who is spending three months in Japan, and with workers at the Institute of Space and Astronautical Sciences in Tokyo. I hope to attend a meeting of Japanese comet observers in Shizuoka on March 21 and 22, and meet again friends in the Lunar Occultation Observers Group and at ILOC and Tokyo Observatory.

As noted in the last issue, I will be attending a Symposium on the Diversity and Similarity of Comets at Brussels, Belgium, on April 6th to 9th. I plan to arrive in Hannover, German Federal Republic, to meet Hans-Joachim Bode on April 4th. On April 5th, we plan to have a small meeting of IOTA/ES in northern Germany, perhaps in Hamburg, close enough to Denmark that IOTA/ES members there can attend. As soon as the symposium schedule is known, I will suggest one or two evenings when I might meet with Belgian observers in Brussels, as suggested by Jean Meeus, whom I have not seen in almost twenty years. Hans Bode expects to attend an evening meeting in Brussels, which would provide a valuable opportunity for IOTA, IOTA/ES, and GEOS to coordinate their activities. On April 10th, I plan to visit the European Space Agency's ESTEC in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, and will return home the next day.

On May 18-20, I will attend an AIAA meeting on Solar System Exploration in Pasadena, CA. I will also spend the preceding weekend, and one other weekday, in southern California. During May, I also may attend the American Astronomical Society's Division on Dynamical Astronomy meeting in Cambridge, MA, on the 7 th to the 9 th.

As described on page 38 of the last issue, International Astronomical Union Colloquium No. 98, "The Contribution of Amateur Astronomers to Astronomy," will be held in Paris, France, from June 20 to 24. We have no new information about this meeting, but considering my many other trips mentioned above, I probably will not attend the colloquium, but will work here on necessary projects, such as the Pallas paper, instead. In any case, Paul Maley plans to represent IOTA at the colloquium, and he can present my papers if I do not go.

The Pomona, CA, superconvention mentioned last time has been named Universe ' 87 and will be held at Pomona College in Claremont, CA, from July 11 to 18. IOTA is one of the participating organizations, along with the Astronomocal League, the W.A.A., A.L.P.O., the A.S.P., I.A.P.P.P., and Problicom. More information is in the February issue of the Reflector. A meeting packet and registration form
are expected to become available about April and can be obtained by sending your name and address to: Astronomical Society of the Pacific; Summer Meeting Department; 1290 24th Ave.; San Francisco, CA 94122; enclosing two first-class stamps with your letter would be appreciated.

The official annual IOTA meeting is still tentatively scheduled for October 10th in Houston, TX, although local observers warn me that the predicted profile for the Oct. 12th Beta Tauri graze in the area is quite uninteresting, promising only two events for most observers.

Walter Nissen and Bob Bolster inform me that daylight savings time begins on April 5th this year. I incorrectly showed it occurring during the last week of April in my lists of mid-Atlantic expeditions and Washington, DC, total occultations distributed in January. If you have these lists, you should add one hour to the times of events listed for April 5 to 25 , to convert them from EST to EDT.

Last October, the Australian government proposed a quick closing of VNG, their short-wave time signal service. David Herald and Graham Blow encouraged many Australian and New Zealand observers to write letters protesting the action. Probably many other VNG users also complained; the proposal was dropped, with no future plans to shut down the station.

I recently received a letter from Alexander Osipov giving a brief account of recent occultation activity in the Soviet Union. During 1985, 490 lunar occultation timings were made at 17 observatories; a detailed report is expected in a couple of months. During 1986, 44 contacts were timed by expeditions for grazing occultations of 136 Tauri (Z.C. 890) and 107 B. Tauri. Astrometric updates were obtained for a number of asteroidal occultations, but for various reasons, no timings resulted from these efforts.

Unfortunately, this issue, like most of the ones before it, is being prepared under considerable time pressure, and I have not been able to write articles covering everything that I wanted to say. Most of my urgent prediction jobs have been completed. I hope to generate computer-produced finder charts (especially for faint stars and for events not in Goffin's coverage) and regional maps for distribution to coordinators outside of North America and Europe, which I have not had time to do during the past several months. Since it will be nearly four months before I need to work on the next issue, I hope to finally answer many letters that I have not had a chance to acknowledge during the past several months, and in general clean up and organize a large pile of prediction material, uncompleted observation reports, and letters that have accumulated during the past several months and years. The next issue is targeted for distribution before the convention in Pomona in July, but the publicity from Sky and Telescope, the Reflector, and other sources may render O.N.'s role redundant for this purpose. Certainly, the next issue will be distributed well before the September 13th Pleiades passage.

## LUNAR PLEIADES PASSAGES

## David W. Dunham

The current series of Pleiades passages began in the

Southern Hemisphere nearly a year ago. The first one visible under favorable conditions from the Northern Hemisphere occurs on Thursday evening, March 5-6, the first in a series that will last over four years in the Northern Hemisphere.

Value. Due to the large number of occultations that can be seen during only a few hours, and the very accurate positions and proper motions that have been determined for even very faint stars in and near the rich cluster, accurate timings of Pleiades occultations have special value for the detail they can provide for studies of the lunar profile, especially as defined by Chester B. Watts' limb correction charts in the USNO publication, "The Marginal Zone of the Moon." Since the Pleiades are relatively far from the ecliptic, the Moon's latitude libration during passages is always very different from those encountered during eclipses, so Pleiades timings are not directly useful for solar eclipse analyses undertaken for solar diameter measurement. However, the detailed information obtained from Pleiades timings is valuable for general lunar profile studies, which are not only useful for eclipse analyses, but also improve all other astrometric uses of occultations, such as determination of the zero-point of right ascension and absolute proper motions needed for determining the Oort parameters of galactic rotation.

Predictions. O.N. readers who time occultations should get detailed USNO total occultation predictions (if they have not already done so) by sending accurate geodetic coordinates and telescope information to: Mrs. Marie Lukac; Nautical Almanac Office; U. S. Naval Observatory; Washington, DC 20390. Besides the regular XZ-catalog predictions, for 1987 (and for the following years of this series) she also distributes P -catalog predictions, including Pleiades stars to 12th magnitude with chronologically ordered summaries. Mrs. Lukac and I prepared a complete cross-reference table, giving names and Flamsteed, B.D., SAO, and XZ ("USNO" or Z.C.), and Hertzsprung numbers for all P-catalog stars that are also in the XZ, and Mrs. Lukac distributes this with the predictions. If you need predictions in a hurry (such as totals for the site of a graze during the March 6th passage), I might be able to supply them if you call me at 301,585-0989.

Observing Considerations. Observing strategies for Pleiades occultations are discussed in "Passages of the Moon through the Pleiades Star Cluster," distributed with 1987 USNO total occultation predictions by Mrs. Marie Lukac. Expeditions to time bright-limb grazes of Alcyone (Eta Tauri = Z.C. 552 ), when the Moon is not full or highly gibbous, are most important, if the bright-limb graze path is within your traveling distance. Alcyone is usually the only Pleiad that is bright enough to make reliable timings against the bright limb, if atmospheric seeing is good and the Moon's surface brightness is not too great. If the Moon is $5 \%$ or less sunlit, bright-limb grazes of some of the fourth-magnitude Pleiads might also be observable.

Timing the largest possible number of occultations with the largest-available telescope is the next most important job, especially for experienced observers. If there are a few or several observers timing occultations in one metropolitan area; they will sample usefully different parts of the lunar
profile if they are separated by 5 kilometers (3 miles) or more in a north-south direction perpendicular to local graze paths; less separation is useful for obtaining different data for nearly grazing events.

Expeditions to observe dark-limb grazes are especially useful for those with only a little occulta-tion-timing experience, since the timing accuracy for grazes is less stringent than for totals, and dark-limb grazes of bright Pleiads are easy to observe. Grazes are also useful projects when there are many observers in a city such that their separations from each other are too small to give usefully different total-occultation results. Expedition leaders should schedule time to observe total occultations during the passage, not just the graze, especially useful for those who want to gain occulta-tion-timing experience.

Selecting a location where two (or even three, if you're lucky) grazes can be observed during the passage is useful, since the grazes will occur at slightly different position angles; when analyzed together, the timings will define a larger section of the lunar profile than if only one graze had been observed.

The Passage of 1987 March 6. The passage of March 5-6 will be visible from most of North America, with the more southerly locations experiencing a more central passage with occultations of more of the brighter Pleiads. A map identifying all SAO stars in the cluster, and general information about total occultations during the passage, will be published in the March issue of Sky and Telescope. The northern limits of the occultations of Merope ( 23 Tauri = Z.C. 545), Alcyone, Atlas (27 Tauri = Z.C. 560), and Pleione ( 28 Tauri = Z.C. 561) crossing the southern U.S.A. are shown on the map on p. 68 of the January issue of Sky and Telescope. The first three of these paths are also in the 1987 Western Hemisphere grazing occultation supplement distributed with O.N. 4 (2).
pleiades Charts. The two Pleiades charts here are similar to the chart pairs that were prepared for each of the 1985 and 1986 total lunar eclipses, and distributed to Eastern Hemisphere observers early in 1985. The first chart used equinox 1950 positions to plot all stars within the $2^{\circ}-o n-a-s i d e ~ b o x ~ s h o w n . ~$ The stars were selected from my combined catalog described on pages 45-48 of the last issue, and include all of the P -catalog stars. Duplicate entries were deleted before plotting the charts. The faintest stars shown on the chart are 13th magnitude, while the brightest one, Alcyone, near the chart's center, is magnitude 3.0; the plotted diameter of the star varies linearly with the magnitude.
The second chart is similar to the first one, but includes identifying numbers just to the right of stars of mag. 11.0 and brighter, and the paths of The Moon's center for several cities. The positions are apparent positions (equinox of date) so they can be located with the apparent positions given in the USNO total occultation predictions. Consult the chart in the March issue of Sky and Telescope for SAO numbers. The star number key is as follows:

7-520: USNO P-catalog number
530 - 570: Zodiacal Catalog number
4750-5020: USNO XZ number, star not in P-catalog
 sunset. Tick marks show the Moon's position at hourly intervals, with the Universal Time hour given above the tick mark.

The Moon's disk shows its correct size for March 6. It will be $37 \%$ sunlit, with the position angle of the lunar north pole ( $0^{\circ}$ Watts angle) being $348^{\circ}$ and the position angle of the north cusp being almost the same, at $346^{\circ}$. Since the Moon is waxing, disappearances will occur along its advancing dark edge, with the center of the sunlit limb being in position angle $256^{\circ}$.

The next Pleiades chart that will be published in O.N. will be for the September 13th passage visible from most of North America. The chart will then be

more necessary for locating reappearing stars. If I can get some help (see p. ), charts like this one can be prepared for IOTA members, and perhaps local publications, for some passages visible outside North America.

While preparing the second chart, I found an error in the AGK3 position for B.D. $+24^{\circ} 552$. The proper motion in declination is incorrectly given as $+172.330 /$ century. Wayne Warren consulted the SIMBAD on-line stellar database in France, where he found that the proper motion in declination is actually about $-4.4 /$ century. With this correction, the star was found to be identical with P 98, so I deleted the AGK3 data from the Pleiades-area subset used for plotting the charts. The star is not in the XZ cat-

alog, but it is number 1957 in the K-catalog with the bad AGK3 data, so ignore any predicted occultations of K01957 in your regular USNO total occultation predictions.

Grazing Occultations. Reductions of two previously observed northern-1imit Pleiades grazes show that the March 6th grazes, and presumably all northernlimit Pleiades graze paths will shift south by 0."25, or 0.5 km or 0.3 mile south (measured perpendicular to the limit) on the ground, from IOTA's current $80 H$-based predictions. The two grazes were selected simply because they were the first ones that I could find; included were three stations during the graze of Z.C. 536 observed near Soltan, German Federal Republic, on 1972 March 19 by Hans-Joachim Bode's expedition, and four stations of Don Stockbauer's expedition for Z.C. 556 observed last September 23rd in Texas. Z.C. 556 is an outlying member of the Pleiades; both it and Z.C. 536 have accurate positions and proper motions from the P-catalog which are now used with the XZ catalog for the 80 H reductions. A reduction was also attempted for another
graze on 1972 March 19 observed at Leipzig, but the observer reported some difficulties in following the star and the analysis showed that he had a close miss, which was consistent with the other reductions.

Eleven graze paths of Z.C. stars brighter than mag. 7.5 during the March $5-6$ th passage are shown in the R.A.S.C. Observer's Handbook for 1987. Many North American IOTA members have predictions for these and other grazes during the passage, from their regular prediction coverage. I know of only a few planned expeditions, including ones to southern Alabama and Valdosta, GA, for the Merope graze.

Videorecordings of the Alcyone graze will be attempted during expeditions by Paul Maley near Corpus Christi, TX, and Gerald Rattley near Tucson, AZ. I hope to videorecord the grazes of Merope and Atlas from where their paths cross at Sand Dunes National Monument near Alamosa, C0. I will arrive at Denver Airport at 1:45 pm on the 5 th , and drive from there to the Sand Dunes; telephone me if you might be interested in joining me for this effort. If the wea-
ther forecast for Colorado is unfavorable, I may join a southern-California expedition for Alcyone instead; I expect to be in southern California for a couple of days after the passage in any case. My wife, Joan, will be on a business trip to the San Jose, CA, area that week, and will probably try to observe the Pleione graze near Salinas, probably joining a local expedition. There will probably be an effort to observe the low-altitude graze of 6.8mag. Z.C. 550 near Cranford, NJ. Call me at 301 , 585-0989 if you want more information about these expeditions.

Double Stars. Known or suspected double stars are underlined on the charts. These are listed in the table below. The USNO double star code is given in the "D" column. Codes K, X, and Y show that the star is suspected to be a close double from previous occultation observations, but duplicity is quite uncertain, position angles often can't be specified, and magnitudes and separations are very crude at best. The position angles of pairs with separations less than 0.3 are likely changing rather quickly. "SB" in the Note column indicates a spectroscopic binary. The third component of a triple star is given on a second line without the USNO and SAO numbers, and without Magl (primary mag.).

USNO\# SAO\# D Mag1 Mag2 Sep. P.A. Note


More about Pleiades doubles can be found in the o.N. issues listed in the notes, and in two Astronomical Journal articles (of which I was a co-author), J. McGraw, et al., "Occuiltations of the Pleiades: Photoelectric observations at Tonantzintla with a dis-
cussion of the duplicity of Atlas," 79 (11), 1299, and P. Bartholdi, et al., "Occultations of the Pleiades: Reappearances observed photoelectrically at McDonald Observatory," 80 (6), 449.

## M4, ALASKA, AND HAWAII OCCULTATIONS

## David W. Dunham

The tables and text below are from the manuscript for my article "Lunar Occultation Highlights for 1987," published in Sky and Telescope 73 (1), 68 (January, 1987). There was not enough room to include this material in Sky and relescope, so it is reproduced below.

M4: This 6th-magnitude globular cluster is $14^{\prime}$ in diameter, about half that of the Moon. It is occulted about 2 hours before Antares. The crescentmoon events listed in the table should give interesting views.

## Occultations of M4

| U.T. date | \% sunlit | Area of visibility |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Jan. $25,12^{\text {h }}$ | 23- | Central U.S.A. |
| Feb. 21, 19 | 45- | Japan |
| Sept. 28, 11 | 28+ | Australia |

Events for Alaska and Hawaii: At Honolulu, Hawaii, Spica will be behind the Moon for 50 minutes starting at $12^{\mathrm{h}} 50^{\mathrm{m}}$ U.T. May 11 th , again for 80 minutes starting at 6 h 7 m July 5 th, and finally for 59 min utes beginning at 15 h 10 m November 18th. At Anchorage, Alaska, there is only one 61-minute Spica occultation starting at 11 ha2m May 11 th. Some other special events are included in the tables on this page. Predictions for other occultations of bright stars at Honolulu are included in the R.A.S.C. observer's Handbook. More predictions based on stations at Ewa Beach, HI, and at Anchorage, AK, are available from W. V. Morgan as noted [in the "For More Information" section of the "Lunar Occultation Highlights for 1987" article]. Four dark-1imb grazes cross populated parts of Alaska and Hawaii, listed in the table, where "\%" is the lunar \% sunlit and "L" specifies a northern or southern limit.

Grazing occultations in Alaska and Hawaii
Date U.T. Star Mag. \% Location
March 22 14:45 W Sgr 4.3 50-S Honokohau to SW. Kilauea, Hawaii
April 7 5:53 Omega Cnc $5.959+N$ S. Clear, AK, 60 mi. S. Fairbanks

July 20 15:20 SAO 76249 7.3 23-N S. Kahe Pt. to Kaaawa, Oahu
oct. 14 15:06 Z.C. 11317.251 - S 15 mi . NE of Anchorage, Alaska

## GRAZING OCCULTATIONS

## Don Stockbauer.

Reports of successful lunar grazing occultations should be sent to me at 2846 Mayflower Landing; Webster, TX 77598; U.S.A. Also sending a copy to ILOC is greatly appreciated; their address is: International Lunar Occultation Centre; Geodesy and Geophysics Division; Hydrographic Department; Tsukiji-

5, Chuo-ku; Tokyo, 104 Japan.

ILOC collects reports of lunar total occultations; I do not need copies of them.

In the last issue (o.n. 4 (3), 40), I stated that ILOC requires data to be on its own forms. The IOTA/ILOC (main grazing) occultation report form is a standard ILOC form, so there is no problem with it. The problem arises with any
format which requires transcription to ILOC's format, as this would require unnecessary work by ILOC or me.

Your 1987 graze predictions are being computed by a new software version (80H). A new version usually means that you will need to manually apply a new set of empirical corrections to the predictions. Please see Dunham's article "Lunar Pleiades Passages" on p. pages 58 to 62 for details, especially p. 61.

Dunham has emphasized that observers should concentrate on total occultation timings during Pleiades passages. It is much more valuable to time the
largest number of totals possible than to travel to a graze path and time few to no totals. The only exception would be efforts to observe Alcyone at both limits in order to measure the lunar polar diameter. A question arises; how far must two stations timing totals separate to give non-redundant data? The contacts of the same star should not occur closer together than the smallest interval of Watts data ( 0.2 degree). This works out to three miles on the Earth's surface perpendicular to the bearing of graze isoskiatics during the passage. If the stations are separated a large distance downtrack, even three miles may be inadequate, since the (text continues overleaf)

bearing will vary during the passage.
The Houston Astronomical Society can claim the distinction of observing the first graze of a Pleiad during the current series of passages. The star was Z.C. 556 on 1986 September 23 at Katy, Texas. However, none of us realized that the star is a Pleiad until after the fact. Z.C. 556 is an outlying member, and the Moon was fairly bright. These data helped David Dunham to derive an empirical correction specifically for grazes of Pleiades members (see "Lunar Pleiades Passages").

I still have copies of a paper detailing how to calculate a graze shadow shift available on request.
Thanks for the reports sent in.

## CORRECTION

David Dunham points out that in the grazing occultation supplement for 1987, an incorrect designation was shown for one of the regions listed on page 87GOS-3. It should be "X1," not "XI."
REPORTS OF ASTEROIDAL APPULSES AND OCCULTATIONS
Jim Stamm
Reports of all appulses and occultations should be sent to me at Rt 13 Box 109; London, KY 40741; U.S.A. If the target star was monitored near the predicted time of an event, then the observation was valid, and a report should be sent to IOTA - even if nothing was seen. We use the negative reports more than we do the positive ones. So far, we have received 400 '1986' reports on 119 events. Only 5 reports indicated positive events. Furthermore, if we eliminate the handful of events that were well observed, we find an average of about 2 observers per event. One additional report can go a long way in determining a shift, or giving us other essential data.

The summary for the last half of 1986 is ready for the next issue - minus a few late reports. Since the addenda are time-and-space consuming, and it is desirable to have all of the data in one place, I would appreciate it if you would send me all of your 1986 reports immediately.

Additions: Table 1. Addendum to Table 1 of O.N. 4 (2), 26 - Additional appulses observed from January through June 1986.

| Asteroid | Star |  | Date |  | Observers |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| (1456) Saldanha | AGK3 | +06 1234 | Ja | 12 | MpMy |
| (1021) Flammario | AGK3 | +131334 | Mar | 22 | 2 MpMy |
| (195) Eurykleia | AGK3 | +13 1042 | Apr |  | Sm |
| (633) Zelima | SAO | 142361 | Jun |  |  |

Table 2. Addendum to Table 2 of O.N. 4 (2), 27 Observers and locations of events recorded from January through June 1986.

| $\underline{\text { Observer }}$ | ID Location | No. |
| :--- | :--- | ---: |
| Tim Cooper | Cp Sasalburg, South Africa | 1 |
| Patrick Manly | My Tempe, AZ | 2 |
| Peter Manly | Mp Tempe, AZ | 2 |
| J. Smit | Sm Pretoria, South Africa | 1 |

Correction: O.N. 4 (2), 26. The Feb 18 event should list Mc as the observer, not Me.

There are several predictions by Goffin that are visible from North America, but have paths more than 2 arc seconds away. Consequently, they are not included in the North American supplement. I will send these to anyone who sends me a self-addressed envelope (if U.S.A., please add $39 ¢$ stamp).

In answer to several questions regarding accuracy in reporting observing coordinates: The report form (I will include some ARP forms with the above mailing) asks for longitude, latitude, and elevation. For negative observations, a place name, and rough estimates of the coordinates are usually sufficient. However, if you observe an occultation, then we need geodetic coordinates accurate to within 1.0 second ( 0.0003 degree), or about 100 feet on the ground. Your best determination of elevation from a topographic map will be well within that accuracy ( 50 ft..). If we need your report for analysis of an event, then we may need the full accuracy. If it is not included, then I will call or write to you for it. Therefore, when you make an observation, you should be able to obtain the coordinates at a later date, if the need arises. Of course if you use a regular observing site, then those coordinates would be the same ones that you sent to IOTA, and should be included in your occultation/appulse reports.

## ASTRONOMY AND PERSONAL COMPUTERS

## Joan Bixby Dunham

Projects personal computers can be used in a number of ways to assist in occultation observing. It is not necessary to write programs; many quite useful projects can be done with nothing more than a word processor. David and I, along with others, have tried to define projects that would be interesting to do as well as helpful to observers. We developed a list of projects at a meeting in mid-January, and we have added several to the list since then. The following is a short summary of the projects:

1. Observatory project: It would be nice to be able to query a data base of observatories whenever there is a change in a predicted path for an asteroid occultation to see what observatories will be in the new predicted path. This project has several facets: 1) Collect information on local observatories, especially privately owned permanently mounted telescopes. This includes the observatory coordinates, telescope(s) size and type, the address and phone number(s) of the owners and/or observers who use them, equipment available for observing occultations, etc. An example of the type of information is that given in the Vercoutter Directory of European observatories...2) Design the data base that will hold this information. This means to define the fields used to store the information in the data base records, their contents, the order in which they appear, and their size. 3) Design an efficient algorithm to select observatories that are within the predicted asteroid occultation path.

Deciding which data base software is the best to use for these occultation projects is also a project. I have started investigating data base management systems (DBMSs), and found that good ones allow "importing" files into their data bases. We can use
any computer that can communicate to the external world to prepare the data base contents, so that people can work on these projects without needing to own a specific type of computer or a specific DBMS.
2. Abstracts database: Read recent journals and as-tronomy-oriented publications to find papers on occultations. Write an abstract of what the paper says, and provide that, along with the name of the paper's author(s), the name of the journal and the volume, issue, pages, and date. It may or may not be desirable to provide this information in a data base. The purpose is to provide, through the occultation Newsletter, a summary listing of papers on occultations, similar to those David provided in vol. 1 of o.N.
3. Update double star information in the star catalogs data used in occultation predictions. There are several sets of data collected from observers' reports of doubles detected during occultations, as well as those detected by other means. In addition, there are many known doubles with more recent data than that in the star catalogs. There is, for instance, a growing number of stars for which there are orbital elements.
4. Prepare a program to create reduction profiles of grazing occultations based on the observations and on the occultation prediction data available for PCs. Bob Bolster is attempting this on an Apple II.
5. Organize and revise the instructional papers for IOTA grazing occultation computors. This is purely a writing and editing project. Pat Trueblood has volunteered to retype these papers into machinereadable form (no small task). As she types, she will delete out-of-date information, and make changes to improve them. We need additional editorial and writing assistance from one or more people who have been computors to make this package more useful.
6. Prepare plots of tracks of the Moon's center across the Pleiades, or prepare input for David's mainframe program that currently does this job. The input for the mainframe program might be simplified by generating the lunar and solar coordinates with David's simplified LUNA and SOL subroutines.
7. Compute total occultation predictions for your region using $a$ and $b$ factors for standard station data, like that now used by Walter Morgan and Hans Bode. I have written a program in BASIC for an MSDOS computer to do this.
8. Write a program that will read the standard station data mentioned above for several stations and produce a table of the brighter stars in the same format as that published in David's "Lunar Occultation Highlights" articles in the January issues of sky and telescope. This could also be used for producing similar tables for Pleiades passages that sky and Telescope plans to publish in future issues for the better North American passages (starting with the one this March).
9. Help with analysis and quality assurance of observations of the well-observed 1983 occultations by Pallas and Nemausa. Similar work may be needed for comprehensive analysis of many of the video records of the 1984 May broken-annular eclipse. Part of this is to locate the observers and prepare a data
base of their current addresses.
10. Computerize reporting occultations to the ILOC. Peter Manly has sent us his software that computerizes the occultation report form by collecting the data the observer enters, storing the data, and, on command, printing the observation reports. Now we need the next step: defining a format and media for sending these data to the ILOC. This will include reaching an agreement with the ILOC on what they can use. Peter Manly's software probably will not run on their computers, but this may only require that it be converted to machines they can use, and that it have an additional output in the format they use when they key in the observations.
11. Prepare a version of the USNO XZ catalog for PCs. We have several requests for this.

I will maintain a more detailed list of these projects, their status, and who is working on them, which I will provide to anyone who sends me a SASE.

Data and Program Exchange. Exchanging data and programs is a continuing problem. We are able to read disks for MS-DOS and Apple II+ (DOS and ProDOS only) machines. Also, we have modems and communications software and can upload and download software and data. We have a membership on Source (ID BBB326) and can retrieve from that, as well. We are fully aware that Apple IIs and IBM PCs are not the only personal computers available, and each programming project has a corollary - someone to convert the programs to other computers.
The following programs are available to anyone (with MS-DOS capability) who sends a diskette and a selfaddressed stamped floppy mailer to me at P.O. Box 7488, Silver Spring, MD 20907:

1. Generate total occultation predictions, written in GWBASIC for MOS-DOS machines (see project \#7).
2. Computerized ILOC forms, in Microsoft Basic under $C P / M$, provided to us as text files on an MS-DOS diskette. (Peter Manly's software, discussed in project \#10).
3. Graze programs, executable load modules, and examples (5 diskettes).

David Herald has a series of programs that run on the C-64 and the C-128. In particular, he has programs for occultation predictions and reductions that would be nice to have on other formats as well as the Commodore. How much trouble that would be is unclear; if he wrote his programs in machine code rather than Basic, it might be easier to start over. He does have the ability to write and read MS-DOS diskettes, so he can probably provide the software in text files. He will provide his software for the C-64 and C-128 for the cost of the diskettes plus shipping. You can write to him about these programs at P.O. Box 254; Woden, A.C.T. 2606; Australia.

Computer Astronomy Network is "a newsletter for the computer astronomer." At $50 \$$ per issue, $\$ 3.00 / 6$ issues, it is obtained by sending a check to the editor, Barry Malpas, at 20 Helen St., Warren, NJ 07060. Ask for the November-December ' 86 issue, which has an index to 280 articles on computer astronomy appearing in 62 magazines and journals in 1986.

SOLAR SYSTEM OCCULTATIONS DURING 1987

## David W. Dunham

This is a continuation of the article started on $p$. 41 of the last issue. The tables of asteroidal and planetary occultations contain data for most of the second half of the year, starting (on July 18th)

Table 1, Part D
where the tables in the last issue ended, and going to the end of the year.

Some new events are included at the beginning of the table involving possible occultations by Comet Wilson. There is not enough time to get world maps for these events produced by Mitsuru Sôma and included in this issue. New orbital elements for the comet were used to generate a new ephemeris whose path differed from the one used for the predictions in










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the last issue by several arc minutes．Consequent－ ly，none of the events listed in the last issue will occur．There is also considerable doubt about the new events，since the comet has been too close to the Sun to observe during the last three months．A significant change could occur during March，when the comet again becomes far enough from the Sun to photograph．A new orbit using these new observa－ tions is likely to be different from the orbit used here．If new events are found as a result，I will try to inform regional coordinators．

Table 2，Part D

The osculating orbital elements for Comet Wilson published in M．P．C． 11429 （1986 December）and used here are hyperbolic．My computer programs，designed for asteroids and planets，could only handle ellip－ tical orbital elements．It took me nearly a week to change the program to use hyperbolic orbital ele－ ments，and verify the resulting ephemeris，which de－ layed production of this newsletter．As mentioned last time，the magnitudes are very rough estimates for the near－nucleus region．

Notes about individual events．The first several notes below refer to events listed in the last is－


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## sue. Wayne Warren supplied some important information, especially for double stars.

Feb. 16, (19) Fortuna and B.D. $+18^{\circ} 565$ : The star is ADS 2891, with 10.8 and 11.3 -mag. components separated by 2.44 in p.a. $191^{\circ}$. A double star code of "M" should have been printed under the "D" column. The star's duplicity was noticed by A. Klemola when
he measured a plate taken to improve the prediction for this event. The star was not flagged as double in the AGK3, my only source for it in the combined catalog. It is surprising that the star is in the AGK3, since close double stars, whose images are difficult to measure accurately on a photographic plate, are usually not included in the AGK3.
April 4: Venus will be $79 \%$ sunlit with PACBL $67^{\circ}$. See Sôma's world map for the location of the center-

## Table 1, Part E

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line and of the northern and southern limits.
May 16: For the B-component in Table 1, Part C on p. 46 of the last issue, the SAO number is wrong; it should be 94171 , the same as the A-component. The star is ADS 3483, a member of the Hyades, with separation 0.37 in p.a. $141^{\circ}$, according to Scardia's 1976 orbit. SAO 94171A is a spectroscopic binary of unknown period. Since the separation is so small, the apparent $\Delta m$ will be much smaller than given in the table, since one component will remain visible

Table 2, Part E
while the other one is occulted. For $A$, the $\Delta m$ will be 1.9, while for $B$, it will be only 0.3 , too small for reliable visual observation.

May 21: The star is Z.C. 3469.
June 29: The star is Z.C. 1763.
July 18: The star is Z.C. 2970.
July 21, (628) Christine and SAO 186544: The star is 16 Sagittarii $=$ Z.C. $2639=$ ADS 11191 . The components are separated by 6.0 in p.a. $216^{\circ}$. The A-

component may be a spectroscopic binary.
July 23: The star is the double star RST 4104, separation 2.4 in position angle $132^{\circ}$. If the seeing is not good, so that the components can not be resolved, the effective $\Delta m$ will be 2.0 if the primary is occulted, but only 0.2 if only the secondary is occul ted.

July 28, (313) Chaldea and SAO 93872: The star is 57 Tauri = Z.C. 637.

Sept. 14: The star is ADS 608. The 9.9-mag. companion is 41.2 away in p.a. $1^{\circ}$, too far away to be occulted.

Oct. 20: Jupiter's disk will be fully sunlit. The occultation occurs near Jupiter's South Pole, with a length shorter than the central duration listed.

Table 1, Part F
Nov. 24, Mars and SAO 158224:
Mars will be $97 \%$ sunlit with
PACBL $112^{\circ}$, but the defect of illumination will be a negligible 0.!.

Nov. 26, (325) Heidelberga and SAO 56709: The star is ADS 2772, with separation 3.4 in p.a. $18^{\circ}$.

Nov. 28, (77) Frigga and SAO 185320: The star is theta Ophiuchi $=$ Z.C. 2500, the brightest star to be occulted by an asteroid this year. The separation of the components of this 1-line spectroscopic binary is probably less than 0.0002.

Nov. 30: The star is ADS 8383, with separation 4.6 in p.a. $151^{\circ}$.

Dec. 1, (74) Galatea and SAO 146088: A gradual disappearance was seen during a lunar occultation by a visual observer, indicating the star may be a close binary.

Dec. 17, (5) Astraea and SA0 159625: The star is 49 Librae $=$ Z.C. 2291, and is a spectroscopic binary.

Dec. 20, (161) Athor and SAO 109103: The star has the double designation HDO 9. The secondary is $32^{\prime \prime}$ away in p.a. $45^{\circ}$ The double star catalogs give no indication about the magnitude of the secondary, but it is not obvious on the appropriate true value magnitude atlas plate, which has a limiting magnitude of about 12. In any case, no occultation of the companion will be visible from the Earth's surface.

Dec. 25, Venus and SAO 189335: The star, Z.C. 2988, will disappear on the dark edge of Venus' sunlit disk, with PACBL $259^{\circ}$.
[Ed: Apologies for a discrepancy in the tables. In Table 2, Part D, the entry for SAO 247211 by Comet Wilson should be deleted. Unfortunately, the super-
fluous listing destroys the exact correspondence between listings on facing pages，and time constraints make it impractical to do a com－ plete revision．］

Table 2，Part F


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C2515451 by Aeternitas 1987 Apr 18


SAO 79112 by Baptistina ' 87 Apr 11


L 36421 by Ceres 1987 Apr 17


L 36955 by Ceres 1987 Apr 27


Al839319 by Chiron 1987 Apr 28






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SAO 94171 by Meliboea 1987 May 16


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SAO 165754 by Athor 1987 May 21


SAO 159402 by Themis 1987 May 23


C2414034 by Ceres 1987 Jun 1


L 52829 by Iris 1987 Jun 16



SAO 95624 by Aspasia 1987 May 22

SAO 190731 by Lamberta 1987 Jun 17




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Anonymous by Bamberga 1987 Jul 17


A1748359 by Aspasia 1987 May 25


L 41082 by Camilla 1987 Jun 1


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SAO 119285/Princetonia '87 Jun 29


SAO 159377 by Themis 1987 May 25


Anonymous by Pallas 1987 Jun 16


Anonymous by Patientia 1987 Jun 21


Anonymous by Bamberga 1987 Jul 7


SAO 82039 by Eleonora 1987 May 25


SAO 146423 by Loreley 1987 Jun 18


Anonymous by Davida 1987 Jun 23


Anonymous by Davida 1987 Jul 7



SAO 110578 by Roma 1987 Jul 11


Anonymous by Bamberga 1987 Jul 22


Anonymous by Europa 1987 Jul 15


L 34161 by Christine 1987 Jul 24


SAO 189192 by 1975QD 1987 Jul 18


SAO 119510/Princetonia ' 87 Jul 28



SAO 110026 by Sapientia ' 87 Jul 17


L 1230 by Hilda 1987 Aug 5


SAO 208088/Sophrosyne 1987 Aug 10



SAO 186544 by Christine ' 87 Jul 21


SAO 165095/Mandeville 1987 Jul 23


SAO 110838 by Roma 1987 Jul 29


Anonymous by Europa 1987 Jul 21

$-18^{\circ} 5677$ by Pales 1987 Jul 26


SAO 188689 by Pompeja 1987 Aug 5


Anonymous by Bamberga 1987 Jul 22


SAO 145932 by Galatea 1987 Jul 26


SAO 188987 by Beatrix 1987 Aug 5


SAO 92414 by Melete 1987 Aug 8


Anonymous by Ophelia 1987 Aug 10


Anonymous by Ophelia 1987 Aug 12

## ASTEROID ORBITAL ELEMENTS UPDATED

 FOR OCCULTATION PREDICTIONS
## Edwin Goffin

I have analyzed all available observations of several asteroids that will occult stars this year, to compute improved orbital elements, which I have then used to update the occultation predictions. The corrections relative to previously distributed predictions are given in the table. Six-digit star numbers are SAO numbers; other star numbers are AGK3 numbers, as given in my predictions. For most events, there are two corrections, one to be applied to my previous prediction ( $G$ in notes) and the other to be applied to the IOTA prediction as shown on the maps by Sôma and Dunham (I in notes). " N " in the notes indicates an event that was in the North American supplement distributed in January. "M" indicates that the mean position of a double star was used in the calculations. The April 22nd event was not included in the predictions that I originally sent to IOTA.

| $\begin{aligned} & 1987 \\ & \text { Date } \end{aligned}$ | Asteroid | Star No. | Path Shift | Time Cor. | Notes |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Apr 11 | Baptistina | +28 ${ }^{\circ} 756$ | 0.19S | -1.6 | GN |
|  |  |  | 0.66 N | -0.9 | I |
| Apr 22 Jun 17 | Leto <br> Lamberta | $\begin{aligned} & 188000 \\ & 190731 \end{aligned}$ | 1.85 S | +0.6 | I |
|  |  |  | 0.25 E | +6.6 | G |
|  |  |  | 0.75 W | +5.6 | I |
| Jul 6 | Ausonia | $+02^{\circ} 1467$ | 0.45 S | -0.1 | G |
|  |  |  | 0.00 | +0.7 | I |
| Jul 23 | Mandeville | 165095 | 0.49 N | -0.7 | GM |
| Jul 26 | Galatea | 145932 | 0.775 | +7.6 | GN |
|  |  |  | 1.00S | -2.2 | I |
| Jul 28 | Chaldea | $+13^{\circ} 342$ | 0.23 N | -0.1 | G |
|  |  |  | 0.00 | +0.9 | I |
| Aug 15 | Leto | 210421 | 1.94S | +13.7 | G |
|  |  |  | 2.885 | +2.8 | I |
| Sep 8 | Galatea | 145609 | 1.45 S | +3.6 | GN |
|  |  |  | 0.985 | -2.9 | I |
| Oct 18 | Angelina | $+20^{\circ} 946$ | 0.475 | -1.2 | GN |
| Nov 13 | Chaldea | +04 ${ }^{\circ} 777$ | 0.10W | +1.1 | GN |
|  |  |  | 1.1 W | +1.2 | I |

errors in asteroid occultation prediction table

## David W. Dunham

There are some errors in the "Possible Area" column for some of the events in Table 1, Part C on p. 46 of the last issue. The correct areas are listed in
the table below.

| Date |  | Asteroid |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
|  |  | Possible Area |  |
| May | 16 | Meliboea |  |
| Tahiti? for both components |  |  |  |
| May 21 | Athor |  | southerh Indian Ocean |
| Jul 7 | Davida |  | Australia?n |

## REPORT OF ESOP-V

## Eberhard Bredner

The annual European Symposium on Occultation Projects in 1986 was arranged by Marek Zawilski, as representative of the Planetarium and Astronomical Observatory of Lodz, in connection with the Occultation Division of the Polish Amateur Astronomers' Society (Polskie Towarzystwo Milosnikow Astronomii). It was held from August 29 to September 2 in the Nicolaus Copernicus Astronomical Centre, Warsaw, with a trip to Lodz (Aug 31 - Sept 1). About 35 participants joined the sessions (Poland, G.D.R., G.F.R., Czechoslovakia, U.S.A.).

We had a first meeting the evening before the symposium when the participants arrived.

ESOP-V was opened August 29 by Marek Zawilski and the Vice Director of the Astronomical Centre, which was donated in 1973 by the U.S.A. to the people of Poland on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the death of Nicolaus Copernicus, as a central facility for Polish astronomy. Today, it shelters the Section Asyronomy of the Polish Academy of Science. Hans-Joachim Bode, President of IOTA/ES, started the lecture sessions, pointing out that this was the third ESOP outside West Germany.

A short slide review by Dr. Eberhard Bredner, Secretary of IOTA/ES, gave an impression and connection to last ESOP-IV in Antwerp, Belgium. Charles H. Herold, Executive Secretary of IOTA, presented the greetings of IOTA President Dr. David Dunham, emphasizing that IOTA work is without restriction, necessary, for example, to clarify whether the Sun shrinks or not. As a standard, one has to measure, first, again and again, the diameter of the Moon. Peter Lipski gave a report on observations of total occultations (more than 2000, 600 of them reappearances) made during 1984/85 in the G.D.R. He was the first to regret the insufficient service from ILOC. Marek Zawilski presented measurements of the Polish organization (several hundreds) SOPiZ-PTMA in 1984/85. Roman Fangor showed methods of timekeep-
ing, complaining of the difficult situation to get electrical devices in Poland. Now his clock has an accuracy of about 0.02 second. Bohumil Malacek gave a report of asteroidal occultation observations in Czechoslovakia and problems related to last-minute predictions. The calculations have to be checked in advance as to whether an observation is possible. The service of IOTA/ES, as clarified by Eberhard Bredner, should be perfected; several possibilities were discussed.

After a visit to observing facilities of the Polish Amateur Astronomers' Society, we had dinner in a typical restaurant.

Next morning, the lectures were continued by a video presentation (Hans-Joachim Bode) of a grazing occultation, slides of an eclipse in New Guinea and the U.S.A. Charles Herold showed video tapes, including the alpha-2 Librae graze in Sudan. Dietmar Büttner presented his reflections on ILOC's problematical work (O.N. 4 (2) 35,1986 December) which is even now very disappointing. Marek Zawilski assisted him, showing false reductions from ILOC, so that the observer is not able to get a clear information of his ability for measuring occultations. The audience agreed to an appeal to ILOC for a more supporting work.

After lunch, the whole conference started by bus for a visiting tour, with breaks at Frederic Chopin Museum, and at a well-known pilgrimage church, to Lodz, where we all settled, impressed by the landscape and culture, in a first-class motel.

The next morning we were welcomed at the Lodz School Planetarium and Astronomical Observatory, where Agnieska Wlodarczyk introduced us to their work of basic astronomical education. Bazy Feret gave us a computer session with a survey to astronomical programs for microcomputers. We then had an impressive guided sightseeing tour around the town of Lodz. A more practical computer session followed, with lots of discussion and a vist by Polish television camera crew after lunch.

The closing ceremony of ESOP-V gave, once more, the opportunity to discuss in detail the connections to ILOC. We tried to check our facility for reducing European occultation timings before giving them to ILOC to support the normal amateur astronomer. [Herold notes that some Polish observers were interested in undertaking such a project, and wanted to use available microcomputers for other computing projects related to occultations.] Only by chance, but with great acknowledgement of the audience, Peter Lipski showed a photomultiplier measurement of high quality. The whole symposium then had their closing dinner at the hotel, a great opportunity to show the Polish hospitality which was so anxious about us.

Most of us then had an additional trip back to Warsaw, visiting the astronomical observatory of Warsaw University, with a rustic open fire roasting Polish specialties. The very last day gave us a sightseeing tour in Warsaw to old and new points of interest with a once-more closing dinner at an old inn. We then had to part from our Polish friends who had enabled to us a very gracious stay, new impressions, and a lot of engaged discussions. Oh, what a lovely time it was!

## CORRECTIONS TO 80H GRAZING OCCULTATION PREDICTIONS

## David W. Dunham

Recent analyses of past graze observations, especially Pleiades grazes (see p. 61) and Antares grazes observed near Sendai, Japan, last November 4th (28 stations tried it, the largest graze expedition in Japan) and near Baker, CA, and Gila Bend, AZ, on January 25 th (at least 6 videorecordings were made, a record; David Werner reported a 0."16 north shift at Baker), indicate that a correction needs to be applied to most northern-limit grazing occultation predictions distributed by IOTA, those generated with the $80 H$ USNO OCC program and the ACLPPP of 1986 Dec. A hint of the correction was implied in the discussion of southern-declination stars in the last issue, but the correction seems to be a little smaller than indicated there. The cause of the recent shifts is probably the empirical latitude-librationdependent correction applied to northern-limit grazes. In the 1986 Dec. version of the ACLPPP, I changed the correction factor to $0.043 /{ }^{\circ}$ of latitude libration, the same value as that determined at the Royal Greenwich Observatory several years ago. But when used with USNO-based predictions, which include other empirical corrections, the correction factor should probably be $0.08 /{ }^{\circ}$ of latitude libration, the previously used value. For most IOTA predictions for the 2nd half of 1987, I plan to change the ACLPPP back to the $0.08 /^{\circ}$ value, so IF THE ACLPPP VERSION DATE AT THE TOP OF YOUR PROFILE IS LATER THAN 1987 FEBRUARY, YOU SHOULD NOT APPLY ANY CORRECTION, unless one is recommended in a future O.N.

For all northern-limit grazes from now until 1987 June 30 (and for predictions for later dates that have already been distributed), you should apply the following corrections:

For stars in: Shift the path:

The Pleiades
Taurus (except the
Pleiades) and Gemini
Aries and Cancer
Pisces and Leo
Aquarius and Virgo
Capricornus and Libra
Scorpius and Sagittarius

| 0.25 | south |
| :--- | :--- |
| 0.3 | south |
| 0.2 |  |
| 0.1 | south |
| 0 |  |
| 0.1 | north |
| 0.2 | north |

Note that NO corrections should be applied to ANY southern-limit graze predictions. Use the arc-second scale on the left side of the profile for applying these corrections; convert the shift to miles or kilometers using the scale on the right side of the profile, or divide the shift above by the vertical profile scale (VPS) given in the lower part of the profile to determine the amount of the shift on the ground measured perpendicularly to the limit. We are anxious to receive reports of observations of northern-limit grazes, especially of stars whose source is FK4, PLDS, P70, or 2P70, to assess the accuracy of the above values.

For the predictions (actually, only the profiles) for the second half of 1987, I want to update the XZ catalog to merge the improved Lick Voyager catalog data into it. Apparently, SAO-G.C. or Z.C. data are still in the XZ for some southern stars that are in the much more accurate Perth 70 catalog; I hope to replace the data for any such southern stars with

Perth 70 data. If either of these changes is made, the USNO OCC program version will be changes to 801 . But I am not sure that my busy schedule will permit this work to be accomplished before profiles for the second half of the year need to be calculated.

## THE SUMMER OF 1986 - A PERSONAL REVIEW

## Charles H. Herold

The summer of 1986 was astronomically a very fruitful one for me. It was that summer that I attended two super conferences in astronomy in Europe. One was in Helsingor, Denmark, and the other was in Warsaw, Poland. The first one, GIREP, at Helsingor, was funded by the Danish Ministry of Education, the Danish Natural Science Research Council, the Royal School of Educational Studies, E.S.A., and some other well-known institutions of Europe. It was wellfunded, well-planned, and executed according to the plan. The week was spent discussing "Casmos, an Educational Challenge." It was attended by 128 people representing 25 countries, all around the world. All in all, it was very enlightening and very educational.

The second conference I attended was in Warsaw, Poland. It was IOTA/ES's yearly conference, called ESOP-V, and hosted by the Polish Academy of Sciences. Unlike the former, it was not as amply funded, but like the former, it was very well planned, very well executed, and presented in a professional manner. The ESOP-V conference, although having only attendees representing five countries, had an equivalent level in presentation of papers. As noted by Secretary Bredner's report, the subjects were diverse and presented with enthusiasm and concern for IOTA's goals (observation, timing, recording, and reporting of astronomical events). The conference was also a great place to meet and converse with fellow members about similar ideas. To add to this, new friendships arose between the attendees, which cut across national boundaries, and brought together Amateur astronomers with common ideas. The new friends placed an IOTA emblem in the lobby of the hotel in Lodz. We also placed another sticker on the wall, next to IOTA's emblem, which said "astronomy is universal." All members agreed and applauded.

With this in mind, it would be good if IOTA and IOTA/ES could get together for a joint tonference, or something in that vein, in the very near future. It was suggested that IOTA and IOTA/ES members could get together this summer to discuss common problems, goals, and future plans. Many thanks to IOTA/ES and ESOP-V committee people for a conference well done.

## U.S.G.S. OFFICE FOR EASTERN MAPS CLOSES

Anerican observers no longer have to figure out whether they are east or west of the Mississippi River for ordering U.S.G.S. maps by mail. Harold Povenmire and Richard Taibi inform us that the eastern map distribution office in Arlington, VA, has closed. Now all U.S.A. map mail orders, including requests for free state topographic mapping index maps, must be sent to the previous western office, whose address is: Distribution Branch; U.S. Geological Survey; Box 25286 Federal Center Building 41; Denver, C0 80225.

## FEBRUARY 18TH SPICA GRAZE OBSERVED

## David W. Dunham

On the morning of February 18th, Spica was occulted across most of North America, the first of a series of occultations of the first-magnitude star. The grazing occultation was timed by observers at several locations near the southern limit across the western U.S.A. shown on my map on page 68 of the January issue of sky and telescope.

Richard Linkletter organized an 8-station expedition at Lacey, WA. It was cloudy most of the night, but the graze occurred during a 20 -minute clearing, and timings of the spectacular graze were made at all stations. Three mountains occulted the star at most stations. Only one event timing was lost, when a police dog nuzzled one of the observers: The dog became excited when the observer started calling out the contacts. Smaller expeditions in Oregon and British Columbia were clouded out.

David Werner got at least eight timings through thin clouds near St. George, UT: A second observer was also successful at a nearby site. The last reappearance took place in two distinct steps. The star's duplicity also modified the diffraction patterns recorded photoelectrically by Nathaniel White with the 42 -inch telescope at Lowell Observatory's Anderson Mesa Station. The possible third component may also be in the record, but computer analysis will be needed to be sure; the observation was made through thin clouds. Both disappearance and reappearance were well on the dark side: The multipleevents zone passed about a mile southwest of the observatory, as predicted. A few observers did time the graze within this path at Flagstaff, AZ. Gene Lucas reports that video recordings were made at two of the stations. Thick clouds obscured the Moon until about ten minutes before the graze.

Paul Maley, Charles Herold, and Gary Neal is (all from Houston, TX) and I traveled to New Mexico to observe the graze. We were the same observers who went to Sudan for the alpha-2 Librae lunar eclipse graze in 1985. As in Sudan, we decided to split into two groups, near Gage and Columbus, due to partly cloudy skies, and as in Sudan, all of us observed the graze. Since we each had videorecorded the graze, six videos were obtained altogether, possibly equalling the previous maximum number obtained during the Antares graze on January 25th (see p. 89). The observers at Gage got six events each, while Chuck and I recorded four events near Columbus. I thank Don Stockbauer for loaning me his equatorial wedge, picked up by Gary Nealis on his way to the Houston airport. I discovered that I had left mine at home shortly before my flight left Washington Dulles.

Although the last reappearance was gradual at all our sites, lasting a full second at my location, no step events were videorecorded. The Lowell photoelectric record indicates that the two components were too close to produce step events for most lunar slopes. Glare from the $79 \%$-sunlit Moon prevented video or visual detection of the possible faint third component. These were the first video records of multiple events during a dark-limb graze of a first-magnitude star.

