

FROM "DREAM" TO "REALITY"!

By: Judy Anne Rider

If you walk through your life looking downward
Never casting your gaze to the skies,
Then you miss one of Gods greatest treasures
There's a multitude there for your eyes.

And all you have to do is look! The degree of your commitment can lead you as deeply into the unknown frontier as you allow. And your equipment can range from a blanket out on the front lawn, to a telescope of infinite complexity, and always you are the recipient of the heavenly visions.

An amateur astronomical organization is really a much more complex group than most people would imagine. I've heard that some people say that we take ourselves too seriously because, after all, it is only a hobby and there is no real commitment. But few people can experience a crystal clear night high on some isolated mountain or the first breath-taking glimpse of Jupiter or a comet through a high quality telescope, without making a commitment, and joining an astronomical society is the first step to consumation.

Astronomy is an unlimited number of sub-divisions, and each one can be an entire new inspiration. Whether you bind yourself to one facet or open your mind to the infinity of the Universe, your commitment is the same. Seeing the unique and awesome look of wonder on the face of a fellow astronomer's face, can make one final step into the world of the future a steady and positive one. And each observation session will open new and beckoning doors, for the splendor of the sky is truly a beauty to behold.

The Salt Lake Astronomical Society, Our Society is now in a position that any group in the whole country would envy, and we have two very dedicated members to thank for having the courage to have a vision and follow it through. Bruce Grim and Jerry Montgomery have been working for an observatory for several years now and with the help of our new and enthusiastic members, it is fast becoming a reality.

Plans are currently under way to establish an Observatory Park at the community of Stansbury Park in Tooele Valley. The facility will initially consist of a 16" Newtonian reflector housed in a 15' dome plus a number of flat concrete pads with electric outlets for SLAS members to set up portable instruments for star parties.

A lease agreement with Terracor, the owners of Stansbury Park is in the final stages of being negotiated. The contract will probably be signed and in effect by the time you read this article. The lease is more than fair and asks us for nothing we can't provide with the help of our members. More will be said about the obligations and our agreement next issue, but now more about the exciting plans.

A telescope in the 24"--40" size range is being constructed by members of SLAS. To date the large steel yoke and tube center section have been fabricated, but work has been temporarily halted on this project until the 16" observatory is completed this summer. When completed this scope will be used primarily for photography and photoelectric photometry. This project will take several years to complete and if you would like to become involved, contact Judy Rider at 298-5581.