

A Journey Through the History and Statistics of ArASNews

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Abstract

A review of ArAS Electronic Newsletter ArASNews (e-newsletter of the Armenian Astronomical Society – ArAS) is given. ArASNews has been published since 2002 and during these years it has largely contributed to the circulation of information among the Armenian astronomical community, as well as other astronomical societies and organizations. It is being distributed monthly to all ArAS members. ArASNews publishes informative materials on ArAS, Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO), and Armenian astronomy in general, reports on ArAS Annual Meetings and other astronomy-related events in Armenia, participation of the Armenian astronomers in important international meetings. Additionally, it features articles commemorating notable Armenian astronomers, announcements of new ArAS members, and discussions on various astronomical topics including archaeoastronomy and public outreach initiatives, acceptance of new ArAS members, achievements of the Armenian astronomers, ArAS Annual Prizes for Young Astronomers and other international and local prizes, Astronomical Education and Public Outreach in Armenia, Armenian Archaeoastronomy, as well as scientific articles (reviews) on important studies. We will give some statistics on the number of published articles and pages, the distribution of articles by topics, and more. ArASNews' numerous useful articles may be accessed through its Reference List.

1. ArASNews Foundation and History

ArASNews has been a beacon of information for astronomers and enthusiasts alike, since its inception in 2002. Founded by the Armenian Astronomical Society (ArAS), ArASNews chronicles the advancements, achievements, and events within the Armenian astronomical community.

Initially released quarterly (2002-2009), the e-newsletter published 8 issues per year from 2009 to 2014 and has been releasing a monthly issue since 2015. Despite its electronic format, a few copies remain available in different locations including the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO) library, the ArAS secretariat, and archives, serving as tangible reminders of Armenia's contributions to the field.

Over the years, ArASNews has seen a succession of dedicated editors. From Tigran Magakian, the inaugural editor (2002-2004, 1-12 issues), to Lusine Sargsyan (2005, 13-16 issues), Lilit Hovhannisyan (2006-2007, 17-24 issues), Areg Mickaelian (2008-2014, 25-76 issues), and Sona Farmanyan (2015-2020, 77-117 issues), each editor has played a pivotal role in shaping the content and direction of the Newsletter. Since May 2021, Meline Asryan has been leading the editorial team, continuing the tradition established by its predecessors (2021-present, 141-177 issues).

2. ArASNews Contents and Topics

The creation of ArASNews consists of five main steps: topic research, content writing, review by the astronomer, design, and dissemination via email and on the web.

ArASNews serves as a platform for disseminating information on a myriad of topics. From updates on ArAS itself to reports on annual meetings and the participation of Armenian astronomers in international conferences, the newsletter provides a comprehensive overview of Armenian Astronomy. Articles commemorating the anniversaries of notable Armenian astronomers, introducing the readers to the biographies of more than 100 astronomers, presenting new ArAS members, and highlighting achievements within the community underscore the rich history and vibrant present of Armenian astronomy.

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A testament to its commitment to education and outreach, ArASNews also covers topics such as astronomical education in Armenia, Armenian Archaeoastronomy, and science reviews of seminal studies. By providing insights into these areas, the Newsletter not only fosters a deeper understanding of astronomy but also promotes the exchange of knowledge among enthusiasts and professionals alike.

The breadth of topics covered in ArASNews is vast, encompassing everything from international astronomy awards to announcements, news, and cultural insights related to astronomy. Topics range from ANSEF grants or the participation of young Armenian astronomers in international summer schools, the Newsletter serves as a hub of information for those invested in the advancement of astronomy in Armenia and beyond.

Over the years, the e-newsletter has developed a separate section where discoveries or the latest papers by Armenian astronomers are presented.

Here are ArASNews topics that we have presented over these years:

Local News

- ArAS activities (current projects, new collaborations)
- BAO activities (current projects, new collaborations)
- Meetings and Schools held in Armenia
- Participation of Armenian astronomers in international meetings
- Participation of young Armenian astronomers in international summer schools
- Release of new research papers and important studies
- Popular articles and review papers on the research of BAO astronomers and Research Departments
- Achievements of Armenian astronomers (prizes, other awards)
- Viktor Ambartsumian International Science Prize (calls and awards)
- ArAS Annual Prize for Young Scientists (calls and awards)
- Publication of books and other materials by BAO/ArAS astronomers
- ArAS new members acceptance
- Astronomical Education in Armenia
- Armenian Archaeoastronomy and Astronomy in Culture
- Public Outreach activities
- Announcements, news and other info
- Mass Media and Scientific Journalism

International News

- Meetings and Schools held abroad
- IAU events (General Assemblies, Symposia, ISYA) and announcements
- EAS events (Annual Meetings) and announcements
- NASA and ESO news
- International Prizes (IAU, EAS, Nobel Prize, Shaw, Kavli, Balzan, Gruber, etc.)
- International Astronomy/Science special days
- International Astronomy discoveries
- Release of other astronomy-related newsletters and information bulletins

Anniversaries and Obituaries

- ArAS members
- BAO researchers
- Foreign Armenian astronomers, astrophysicists and physicists
- Other famous scientists
- Anniversaries of important historical astronomical events

3. Publication History

In Table 1, we give the history and some statistics of the ArASNews publication. Unfortunately, there was a gap in its regularity in 2018-2020 and the beginning of 2021. We plan to collect the corresponding events and news and post them on ArASNews webpage to preserve this information and to recover the missed issues as well.

Table 1: History and statistics of ArASNews publication.

Years	ArASNews Issues #	Number of Issues	Periodicity (Issues per year)	Editors
2002-2003	1-8*	6	3	Magakian
2004-2008	9-28	20	4	Magakian, Sargsyan, Hovhannisyanyan, Mickaelian
2009-2014	29-76	48	8	Mickaelian
2015-2020	77-117	41	12**	Farmanyanyan
May 2021-	141-177	37	12**	Asryan
Total	1-177	152	3-12	TM, LS, LH, AM, SF, MA

* Issues ## 3/4 and ## 7/8 were combined and published as single Issues.

** Missed Issues in 2018-2020 and the beginning of 2021. Not yet complete for 2024.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, ArASNews stands as a testament to the commitment of the Armenian Astronomical Society (ArAS) to foster collaboration and outreach within the astronomical community. By its regularity, the total volume of information, variety of covered topics, ArASNews is one of the most informative newsletters among such for all astronomical societies. Some ArASNews articles are even republished in other newsletters (e.g. EAAS Newsletters).

The dedication of its successive editors has ensured the continuity and evolution of its content, developing new topics over time. In order to facilitate and guide readers through the newsletter's previous issues, we have created a reference list, which allows easy navigation through its general topics.

Looking ahead, ArASNews remains committed to its mission of informing and inspiring readers about Armenian astronomy and the wonders of the universe.

Acknowledgements

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Related Links

ArAS: <https://www.aras.am/>

ArASNews: <https://www.aras.am/ArasNews/arasnews.html>

ArASNews Reference List: <https://www.aras.am/ArasNews/arasnewsreference.html>

Related References

Asryan, M. A.; Farmanyan, S. V.; Mickaelian, A. M. 2020 – *BAO Outreach Activities and Scientific Journalism in Armenia*, Communications of BAO, Vol. 67, p. 119

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Farmanyan, S. V.; Mickaelian, A. M. 2018 – *Promotion of Science Communication through Regional Office of Astronomy for Development*, Communications of BAO, Vol. 65, p. 155