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6 October 2021

Memorandum

To: Trialists

Fr: Curtis Meinert

Re: How we measure distance

Astronomers measure distance by speed of light. In a vacuum 299,792,458 meters per second; approximately 186,000 miles/second.

The sun is 93 million miles from earth. It takes over 8 minutes for light from it to reach earth. That means when we see the sun come over the horizon, it is, in reality, higher in the sky than it appears.

Here we measure distances in feet, meters, miles, or kilometers – or in the case of Jules Verne’s **Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas** by leagues. We need the definition of league to determine if Verne’s title is about distance traveled or depth under the sea.

A league is a measure ranging from 2.4 to 4.6 statute miles, depending on where you are. So whatever the definition, it is obvious the title is about distance traveled, not about depth.

Suppose I ask how far it is to an area attraction near where you live? How do you answer? The time it will take to get there or the distance you have to travel?

Being the PITA I am, if the answer is in time, I usually ask if by foot, bicycle, or car?

I grew up on a farm. If somebody asked how far it was to Rudy’s place, they got the answer in miles.

I am a miles person! What are you?