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A total of 175 *Circulars* were issued during 1988, down from the record 230 of the preceding year, but significantly more than enough to put 1988 in second place. A large number of the *Circulars* reported continuing observations of SN 1987A in the LMC, but many were also due to residual activity from the record 16 discoveries and 17 recoveries of comets announced in 1987.

Nevertheless, with 26 new discoveries of supernovae 1988 was the first year the alphabet was exhausted in real time—although 1954 still holds the record when objects recognized much later are included—and while there were only three recoveries of periodic comets, the number of new comets given provisional designations, 15, was second only to 1987. Considering also two objects observed in 1987 but not announced until 1988, there were no fewer than seven detections of new sungrazing comets with the coronagraph/polarimeter on the orbiting Solar Maximum Mission. Two other comets, 1988e and 1988g, represent the first definite example of ordinary long-period comets traveling in the same orbit.

Among the other items mentioned on the *Circulars* during the year were two optical and one x-ray galactic nova and two novae in the Large Magellanic Cloud. An optical counterpart was discovered to the eclipsing millisecond pulsar PSR 1957+20, and binary millisecond pulsars were reported in 47 Tucanae. There were for the first time confirmed observations of an occultation by Pluto and the detection of an anomalous brightening of (2060) Chiron.

As noted in the 1987 report, the availability of SPAN dramatically increased the impact of the Bureau's Computer Service, allowing remote logins for reading the *Circulars* as soon as they are issued. In July 1988 arrangements were made to mail the *Circulars* electronically to Computer Service subscribers who could conveniently be reached by SPAN or BITNET. These subscribers are warned that e-mail frequently tends to disappear permanently or temporarily into a black hole and that it is impossible for the Bureau to undertake to provide electronic replacements other than by having the subscribers log in to the Computer Service to obtain the issues they are missing.