

FOCAL



POINT

Issued by the

MILWAUKEE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

- : FEBRUARY 1984 : -

CALENDAR:

- *Fri., Feb. 17 - February Program-Meeting.
- Fri., Feb. 24 - Board Meeting, 7:30 P.M., at the home of Dr. R. Wiesen, 4305 Cherokee Dr., Brookfield (781-4757).
- * Sat. Nights - Member's night at the observatory.
- * Please read on for details.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM-MEETING: The short business meeting will be followed by an interesting program by Dr. Al Harper of Yerkes Observatory. The subject of his talk will be "Infrared Spectroscopy."

WHEN: Friday, February 17, 8 P.M.
WHERE: The UW-Milwaukee Physics Bldg., corner of Kenwood & Cramer, room 133.

Newer members are especially welcome. Guests are welcome.

NEW OBSERVING PROGRAMS OFFERED: Interest in Halley's Comet is mounting dramatically as it accelerates in its journey towards the sun. At least five space craft from Japan, the Soviet Union, and the European Space Agency will be launched to welcome it between December 1984 and August 1985. The United States will offer limited effort owing to the space shuttle program.

March, 1986, should be the best time for viewing Halley's Comet. Look southeast at dawn.

Brian Cieslak has volunteered to coordinate the MAS Halley watch program.

A new asteroid occultation program is being planned. Observatory Director Gerry Samolyk needs someone to coordinate it. Please call 475-9418.

To encourage greater observing participation by members of the Astronomical League of which the MAS is a member, Dan Koehler suggests that someone should coordinate the Herschel Object observing program.

YOUR 1984 OBSERVER'S (CANADIAN) HANDBOOK may be picked up at the February Program-Meeting or at Treas. Jim Toeller's home at 407 W. Mall Rd., Milwaukee. Please call 352-7144 first.

GRAZING OCCULTATIONS that will occur in the near future are tabulated below.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME (CST)</u>	<u>MAG.</u>	<u>CUSP</u>	<u>% SUNLIT</u>	<u>RATING</u>
Mar. 12-13	7:53 P.M.	6.3	3.40S	74	Favorable
Apr. 4-5	6:45 P.M.	8.1	7.10S	6	Marginal
Apr. 25-26	4:18 A.M.	7.1	4.00S	20	Favorable

Please call John Asztalos at 258-5626 for detailed information.

Grazing occultations occur when the moon passes so close to a star that the moon "grazes" the star, causing the viewer to see the star disappear behind the moon's mountains and reappear in its valleys.

The observing technique can be quickly learned on site. A 6" or larger reflector or equivalent refractor is preferred for viewing.

ALCON '84: Chairman Dan Koehler is getting good response on the information packets. They are now available at the Program-Meetings or by contacting ALCON '84, P. O. Box 275, Mequon, Wi. 53092 (414-242-2369). These packets give complete information about the forthcoming Astronomical League national convention.

Dr. Richard Wiesen and Brian Cieslak intend to conduct a computer workshop at the convention, one of at least a half dozen different workshops that will be offered.

FEBRUARY 29 IS THE DEADLINE for the March issue of "Northern Lights," the North Central Region Quarterly Newsletter.

In addition to interesting, unusual astronomical articles, news from Midwest NCRAL Societies is presented.

Annual subscriptions for four editions is a reasonable \$2.50. Please remit to Mr. James Fox, 14601 55th St. S., Afton, Minnesota, 55001.

Mr. Fox could use a lot of astronomical articles. If you have some personal activity or have read something that might be of interest to another observer, jot it down or send the clipping to him even if you are not a subscriber.

OBSERVATORY NEWS:

26" TELESCOPE: All drawings are nearly finished. Most of the materials have been acquired. Tube parts are almost done. "Off the shelf" or commercially available gears will be used for the drive mechanism. In general, recent telescope meetings have been encouragingly productive and parts are being made. Good! Maybe the 26" will be ready in time for ALCON '84.

President Peter Smitka has appointed Observatory Director Gerry Samolyk as head of the 26" Telescope project. In this position he will oversee its completion. Gerry replaces William Tuerck Jr. who has done a good job of work in developing the project to its present status.

IN GENERAL: The light pollution reduction filter donated to the Society by John Asztalos has been installed on the 5" apogee scope.

Terrance Ross has machined a new replacement worm gear and donated it to the MAS for use on the patrol camera.

Our stolen meteor samples and Sputnik pieces have been recovered and the thief has been caught!

The observatory is short on eyepieces. Somehow they disappear. Newly purchased eyepieces will be altered to make them special and thus prevent theft or use on telescopes other than ours.

MEMBER'S NIGHT KEYHOLDERS:

Feb. 11	P. Smitka	785-0926	Mar. 3	J. Asztalos	258-5626
18	V. Tangeny	327-7976	10	P. Borchardt	445-1181
25	H. Auchter	542-2158	17	R. Berry	442-4267

Saturday night is member's night at the observatory. All members are invited to come out to observe, learn how to use the equipment available, or just chat. Call the keyholder the Fri. before his night - cancel Sat. if necessary. Keyholder should report anyway. He will also oversee tours during the week ending with his assigned night. Mr. J. Toeller (352-7144) will act on requests.

- : FULL SNOW MOON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16 : -

DIRECTORY:

President - Peter Smitka - 785-0926
Vice President & Program Chairwoman - Eileen Korenic - 541-3999
Secretary - Brian Ganiere - 425-1384
Treasurer - James Toeller - 352-7144
Observatory Director - Gerry Samolyk - 475-9418
Asst. Obs. Director - John Asztalos - 258-5626
ALCON '84 Chairpersons - Dan Koehler (662-2987), Eileen Korenic (541-3999)
FOCAL POINT Editor - LeRoy Simandl - 933-3052
MAS Observatory - 18850 W. Observatory Rd., New Berlin - 542-9071

MARCH FOCAL POINT DEADLINE - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1984.