



Issued by the

Milwaukee Astronomical Society

February 1989

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Apollo Fund

To the great benefit of the MAS, Treasurer Dan Koehler has accepted a \$2,500 check from Apollo Fund Limited, headed by MAS member Orin Purinton.

The contribution will be used exclusively for capital improvements (hardware and construction purposes), and will benefit all MAS members.

February Program-Meeting

A video tape of a NOVA program presented in December of 1988 will be shown at the February meeting. Its title is "Gaia - the Goddess of Earth."

Gaia, or Gaea, in Greek mythology, was the Greek Earth goddess and mother of the Titans. The program is not necessarily about mythology but will tell about the close relationship of plants and the atmosphere and the importance of oxygen and the constant mix of atmospheric gasses as a key to life.

WHEN: Friday, February 17 at 8:00pm

WHERE: The Helen Carey Day Hospital Building
9201 W. Watertown Plank Road

There is a traffic light at the intersection of 92nd Street and Watertown Plank Road. Enter through the red-orange doors at the A-frame entrance which will be open only from 7:30pm to 8:15pm. Turn right after entering to the auditorium.

MAS Members Featured

Telescope makers John Asztalos, Dave Kriege, and Peter Smitka are highlighted in the winter 1988/89 edition of "Telescope Making #35" which has just been published.

The extensive and detailed articles by Dave and Pete quite thoroughly describing the construction of their 20" and 17.5" respectively, Dobsonians is "must" reading.

John has built a 12" f/4.8 Dobsonian.

Calendar of Events

- | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Friday, February 17 | - | February Program-Meeting. Be sure to read the "February Program-Meeting" notice. |
| Monday, February 20 | - | Full Snow Moon. |
| Monday, February 20 | - | Focal Point Deadline. |
| Monday, February 20 | - | Moon occults Regulus at 5:00am CST. |
| Wednesday, March 1 | - | First Wednesday at the observatory, 7:30pm, weather permitting. All members and their guests welcome. |
| Monday, March 13 | - | Board meeting at 7:30pm. Call Dr. Wiesen for location. |
| Saturdays | - | Observatory maintenance and improvements. Help wanted. Call 547-3400. |
| Saturday Nights | - | Member's night at the observatory. |

Mars Meeting

Anyone wishing to contribute slides, pictures, drawings, or to participate in the March MAS program meeting on MARS, should attend a meeting at the observatory during the First Wednesday meeting on March 1 at 6:30pm. Bring all materials to the meeting. For info call Lee Keith at 961-8752.

New Members

New members recently added to the MAS roster are Jay, Carol, Erica, and Natalie Jannsen, Oshkosh; James and Patricia Rapp, Waukesha; Bart and Chris Sierenpiper, Waukesha; Jerry and Peggy Timmons, Brookfield. All will be introduced at the next meeting.

New members are not initiated or embarrassed during introduction. They merely acknowledge their presence if they so desire.

Observer Handbooks

The Observer's (Canadian) Handbooks are here. Your preordered copy can be picked up at the February meeting. There are no extra copies.

Observatory News

Hats off the Observatory Director Gerry Samolyk. He just completed his 40,000th eclipsing binary observation. We must also laud Assistant Directors John Asztalos and Paul Borchardt for taking over for Gerry during his absence.

Please close the observatory darkroom and toilet doors tightly to conserve heat.

DONOT open the "B" dome slit too far, it may stick open.

Be careful how you handle the Portascopes, especially the bases. The mounting bearings can be broken off if door jambs are bumped. Some have been damaged.

Please, please let the keyholder know much in advance if you are coming out to the Saturday night watch. Some people call at the last minute and stay a short time. Also let the keyholder know if you change your mind about stopping out. Some have made long round trips for nought.

Amateur Astronomer's Series Classes

by Lee Keith

These classes are informal, low key classes on basic observing techniques and telescope selection, use and maintenance. If you are a beginner to astronomy or an intermediate observer looking for specific info, these classes are right up your alley. You don't even have to take notes, as there will be handouts summarizing salient points. After class, stick around for the hands on workshop. To register, call the UW-Waukesha Office of Continuing Education at 521-5460 and register for the "Astronomy With Telescopes" class. Be sure you identify yourself as an MAS member.

DATES: March 31, April 7, 14, 15, 22.

TIME: 6:30pm to 8:30pm at the Observatory

At least 2 dates will be used for observing and using telescopes, weather permitting. Members are encouraged to bring and use their own telescopes during observing sessions. Remember: Dress warmly!

Reading the Celestial Roadmap

The Small, Faint & the Diffuse: Finding Celestial Objects

Workshop: Take out Portascopes & find a few Messier objects or Burnham Club double stars!

Neophyte's Guide to Telescopes

All the Extras - Accessories

Workshop: Those amazing Nebular Filters!

What's Your Power?

Workshop: Finding the field of view of your eyepieces by timing stars.

Cleaning & Collimation of a Newtonian Telescope

Workshop: Bring in your dirty telescope mirror for cleaning!

If weather permits, there will also be an opportunity for all who attend to be given instructions on the use of the large 12.5" telescope, so you can use this telescope on Saturday member's nights.

Bored? Lonely? Depressed? Got Warts?

Join an Observing Club just for fun!

Many observing programs are offered to MAS members. These include variable star timings, the Messier Club (finding 101 objects), the Herschel Club (locating 400 objects), and now, as something new, the S. W. Burnham Double Star Club. Many stars appear as single dots of light but actually are doubles. Some are visible to the unaided eye (Mizar and Alcor in the Big Dipper handle, for example). The observatory has a filar micrometer for measuring the distance between double stars.

As a reminder to observers, the MAS offers the Messier Club Observer's Handbook or the new Burnham Club Observer's Handbook if you send a 8.5" x 11" SASE with \$1 postage to:

Lee Keith

MAS Observing Clubs Coordinator

1239B E. Randolph Court

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212.

They contain a wealth of information on observing techniques and hints, as well as detailed maps to find the more elusive objects. Best of all, they're FREE!

Keyholders

Feb. 11	Dan Koehler	662-2987
Feb. 18	Nick Nichols	628-4059
Feb. 25	John Pfannerstill	475-6494
Mar. 4	Paul Borchartt	781-0169
Mar. 11	Terry Ross	784-2093
Mar. 18	Gerry Samolyk	475-9418
Mar. 25	Tom Schmidtkunz	784-0253
Apr. 1	Peter Smitka	785-0926

Word From Bill & Anne Albrecht!

Both are faring well at their home near Pahala, Hawaii. Despite the ground-shaking antics and tempestuousness of nearby Kilauea, Bill continues to add to his long, long list of recorded observed variables down to -61° latitude.

Bill is an MAS Founder Member and has been a member since 1933. He is our southernmost and westernmost observer. Pahala is located north of and near latitude $+19^{\circ}$.

Wanted

Member Rick Moscow has room for a rider to the Texas Star Party. He can also accommodate a telescope of any size. Please call 691-1088 for details.

Library News by Sally Waraczynski

Once again, we thank Sally-Jo Michalko for providing photographs of the great ASTROFEST campout and confabulation. Prominent among all the telescopes and their exhibitors pictured are, of course, the members of the MAS contingent. Other unique specimens also have been captured on film for historical documentation. These and the 1987 photos are to be found in the History file at the observatory.

At the November meeting, Gary Simpson presented the library with a booklet he brought back from the People's Republic of China. This little collection of articles, written in Chinese with English synopsis, is located in the vertical file under ASTRONOMICAL INSTRUMENTS.

An unaccountable gap in our library collection has been graciously filled in by Paul Hess. "*All About Telescopes*" by Sam Brown (1987 ed.) contains over 200 pages of blueprint-type drawings, calculations, and diagrams explaining in the simplest terms the design and use of various telescopes and their accessories. Many an amateur has used this classic as a guide for building and testing complete telescope systems, including the eyepieces. The introductory section of general observing information includes an extensive discussion of the techniques of astrophotography.

Finally, for the astrophotographers who find it inconvenient to travel with an equatorial-mounted telescope for piggybacking their camera, we have purchased "*Handbook for Star Trackers: Making and Using Star Tracking Camera Platforms*" by Ballard (1988). This is an extremely practical guide to building simple hand or motor-driven mechanisms which will enable you to make non-trailing images during 10-15 minute exposures. When mounted on these platforms, the camera follows the apparent motion of the stars. Most designs can be made with just a few dollars worth of hardware; but if you prefer, the book includes references to commercially available units.

Directory

President	Dr. Richard Wiesen	781-4757
Vice President	Mathew McNeeley	354-5347
Secretary	Ms. Karen Wesener	961-8752
Treasurer	Dan Koehler	662-2987
Observatory Director	John Asztalos	547-3400
Librarian	Mrs. Sally Waraczynski	321-0918
Assistant Librarian	Mrs. June Regis	962-0896
Program Director	Mathew McNeeley	354-5347
FOCAL POINT Editor	LeRoy Simandl	933-3052
	4201 W. Highland Blvd. Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208	

MAS Observatory	18850 W. Observatory Road	542-9071
	New Berlin, Wisconsin	



Happy Valentine's Day!





ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE

A FEDERATION OF ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETIES
A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

- ★ *To promote the science of astronomy.*
- ★ *To encourage and coordinate activities of amateur astronomical societies.*
- ★ *To foster observational and computational work, and craftsmanship opportunities in the various fields of astronomy.*
- ★ *To provide a medium for correlating amateur activities with professional research.*

SCIENCE SERVICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON D.C. 20036

Please reply to:

Daniel L. Koehler, NCRAL Chairman
W248 S7040 Sugar Maple Drive
Waukesha, WI 53186
414-662-2987
January 26, 1989

To all NCRAL ALCORS:

Please note the following with regard to NCRAL Region business:

1. I have enclosed a separate letter detailing nomination rules and procedures for the 1989 NCRAL Region Award. Please read this information and discuss it with your fellow members at your next membership meeting or make it available to them through your group's newsletter.
2. The 1989 NCRAL Convention will be held Saturday, April 29, 1989 at the Clock Tower Inn, just off Interstate Highway 90, outside of Rockford, Illinois. Information should be forthcoming shortly. Chairman of this year's convention is Barry Beaman, 6804 Alvina Road, Rockford, IL 61103 (815-962-6540). Please direct all correspondence concerning the convention to Barry.
3. As of this date, I have not received an offer from an NCRAL-member group to host the 1990 regional convention. If your group is interested in hosting this event please contact me. I would be happy to discuss the specifics of convention planning with you by telephone or mail. The first group to contact me with a firm bid for this convention will have precedent over all later bids received by mail or at the 1989 business meeting in Rockford.
4. Nominations for the NCRAL offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary-Treasurer for 1989/90 are now being accepted by Nominating Committee Chairman Frank Roldan, 5585 Balsam Court, Greendale, WI 53129 (414-423-0210). If you need further information about the duties of these offices or wish to suggest a nominee for any of the open positions please contact Frank directly. Larry Jahn is currently serving the first year of a three year term as Regional Representative, thus that position will not be open until 1991.



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Daniel L. Koehler, NCRAL Chairman
W248 S7040 Sugar Maple Drive
Waukesha, WI 53186
414-662-2987
January 26, 1989

To: All NCRAL ALCORS:

In some past years since the NCRAL's formation the Region Chairman has presented a certificate known as the 'Region Award' to a deserving individual of the NCRAL for meritorious service to the Astronomical League, the NCRAL, or for some other special reason. The Award has been presented infrequently over the years, and guidelines for the selection of a recipient have been sketchy. It is my intention to present the Award this year, however I wish to change its nature and the recipient selection process somewhat. I am writing to you for help in this matter.

Beginning in 1989, and hopefully in all years thereafter, the Region Award will be given in a special ceremony at the banquet concluding the NCRAL convention (this year on April 29, 1989 in Rockford, IL). I will accept nominations for the Award beginning today through Monday, March 27 by mail only. On March 29 I will enlist the aide of my fellow Special Committee members (Vice-Chairwoman Marion Bachtell, Secretary-Treasurer Richard Wend, and Region Rep. Larry Jahn) by circulating the nominations to them, and asking for their top three selections, ranked in order. I will compile the votes of all four Committee members, and the nominee receiving the most first-, second-, and third-place votes will receive the award for 1989. In the event of a tie vote among members of the Special Committee, the nominees capturing the highest vote total will receive the Award. In other words, two or possibly three nominees may receive the Award in one year if a tie vote develops. Votes will be cast by mail, and members of the Special Committee will vote independently of each other. Only the Chairman will know the actual outcome of voting.

Rules for nomination are as follows:

1. Any individual who has a membership in good standing with a member organization of the NCRAL (including the Member-at-Large program) is eligible for nomination for the NCRAL Region Award. Members of the Special Committee are not eligible for nomination. As accurate records of prior recipients have not been kept, any past winner of the Award (that is, prior to 1989) is eligible for nomination under this new format.

2. Nominations should be made by the ALCOR of the NCRAL-member organization (or other person familiar with the nominee) and should be received by the Chairman at the above address by March 27, 1989. It is hoped that nominations would be made without the knowledge of the nominee in order to add an element of surprise at the award ceremony.

3. Only one nomination per nominee is necessary, although second and successive nominations of the same individual will be accepted.

4. Nominations should include detailed descriptions of your nominee's achievements including: the name of the nominee's astronomical society or club; offices held within his/her astronomical society or club, the Astronomical League, and/or the NCRAL; the specific years and duration of terms involved; names and purposes of committees served; astronomically-related public service positions held; special projects headed; observing programs pursued; allied organizations served (ALPO, IOTA, AAVSO, etc.), in addition to other criteria you feel are important with regard to your nominee.

5. Members of the Special Committee will vote on their top three selections based upon the information submitted for each candidate. As the Award is one of merit, each voting member will use his/her own discretion when selecting the most meritorious individuals who they feel should be cited. There will be not other rules in the voting process at this time. Decisions of the Special Committee will be final.

6. Voting will be completed by April 10, 1989. It is suggested that nominees be encouraged to attend the NCRAL Convention in Rockford on April 29. The NCRAL Chairman will present an engraved plaque to the 1989 Region Award winner(s) at the banquet. The names of nominees not selected will not be revealed.

7. Nominations should be signed and dated by the nominator. Also, include your address and evening telephone. Nominees not receiving the 1989 Award will be eligible for nomination in succeeding years.

I have attempted to make the nomination and selection process for the Region Award as fair and concise as possible. Obviously, there will be a certain degree of subjectivity in the selection process by members of the Special Committee. I am certain we will all be as objective as possible in order to select the most deserving person(s) for the Award. If you or other members of your organization require additional information concerning the Region Award, please contact me at the above address or telephone.

I look forward to receiving your nomination in the very near future.

Regards,



Daniel L. Koehler, Chairman
The North Central Region of the Astronomical League