

The Newsletter of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society

September- October 2000

President's Message

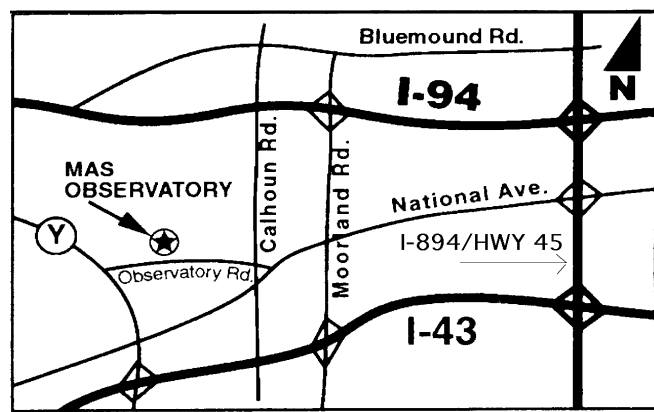
By the time you read this, we will have started training members on the new scope in the roll-off shed. Things have changed considerably from the way they were in late spring. Efforts to improve the mount of the 10-inch so that it was reliable proved fruitless and your president decided to install the heavy duty German equatorial that was originally on the 10 inch when I bought it. I had my 15-inch on it for 6 months but felt we needed a sturdy mount for this telescope. In that period I had installed a beautiful 7.5-inch Byers drive that worked very well. The board elected to purchase this mount and drive and it is now fully operational. Recently we installed the digital setting circles and are now ready to train members in its operation and issue keys. Please contact Gerry Samolyk or me if you're interested in getting unlimited access to the grounds and this scope. Thanks to the donation of an additional 8-inch Meade on a German equatorial by Dave Wierzba, we now have two scopes available. This one should be taken out to one of the concrete observing pads near the observatory. Access will be on a first-come, first- use basis and if use becomes heavy we will have to have a sign up procedure.

The board of directors has also approved the construction of an additional roll-off shelter to house the 18-inch Obsession telescope. The club has owned this scope for a number of years but its storage location in Z building has limited the use of this heavy scope. The new shelter will be similar to the one built last year and should be finished before the winter sets in. Most importantly, this scope will also be available to all members with a yard and shed key. I have used this scope on many occasions and it is excellent for those faint fuzzies!!

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Continued on Page 2, Column 1



Regular MAS monthly meeting is on Friday Sept. 15 at 8:00 PM. We meet at the Observatory (shown on the above map)..

The featured Speaker will be Professor Jim Lattis of the UW-Madison Physics & Astronomy Department. Dr Lattis will talk on "Galileo and his Contemporaries". Additionally Dr. Lattis will give a status report on the new large scale telescope being built in South Africa (of which UW is a partner). Lastly, Jim will describe "The Space Place", a UW sponsored Madison facility to foster public interest in Astronomy. The talk(s) should be of interest to all members, young and otherwise, so mark your calendars.

The MAS Board will meet at 7:00 PM preceding the regular meeting. All Directors are requested to be there.

The October meeting will be held on Friday, Oct 20th at MAS with a speaker to be announced. With the Focal Point starting publication every two months, we may have to use an interim postcard mailing to announce speakers for the second month. Members with Internet access should monitor our web page: www.milwaukeeastro.org for updated

September 29, 30 is MAS Campout Time at the Greenbush, Kettle Moraine Park
Shake out your Safari gear, scopes etc.
See Details in article on Page 2, Col. 1

September is Member Renewal Time
If you plan on taking advantage of the reduced subscription rates for Astronomy and/or Sky & Telescope, now is the time to get that renewal application sent in!

President's Message continued from page 1

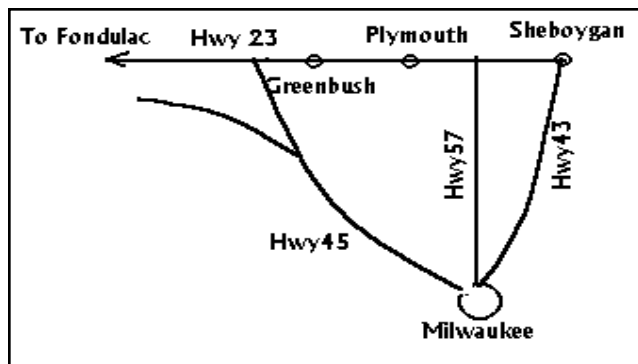
and first images should be on the website soon. Color takes much longer exposures and great care but the results can be quite beautiful. The first time I saw the colorful Ring Nebula almost floating above the starry background makes the effort worth while.

So Lots of new capabilities, more hours of darkness, fewer mosquitoes and cooler temperatures are signaling the start of the prime observing fall season so come on out and join us at our beautiful site. Don't forget the campout, even if the weather is not cooperating the camaraderie is great.

Scott Jamieson, MAS President

MAS Fall Campout Sept. 29, 30

This is a reminder to all to try giving the MAS Fall Campout a shot this year. It's being held again at the Greenbush (North Unit) Kettle Moraine State park (see map inset). It's a great time of the year and Paul Borchardt is planning to have extra scopes available including the Weisen 18 inch Dobsonian (made by



Obsession).on hand. More importantly, sharing the company of fellow astronomers around the campfire is a lot of fun. During the day, hiking the park trails during a grand time of the year can be invigorating. Remember, you don't have to be a camper to participate. It's only an hours drive from the Milwaukee area and guests are welcome as well. The campsites are paid for by MAS, but a State Park sticker is needed to enter. For more info, contact Paul Borchardt at 781-0169 or email at pjb924@aol.com. The map above gives the general locale of the Greenbush in the Kettle Moraine (North) State Park.

New Members

We welcome the following new members into our club.

-**Keith Mausner** from New Berlin

- **Gerald Graef and Margaret Malay** from Merton, WI.

-**Gary Ertel Family** from Brookfield, WI.

Please feel free to join us at our meetings and other activities listed herein. We're happy to have you join our ranks.

Carlos Garces, New Member Chairman

Bits And Pieces

Highlights from the August Board meeting include,

*Margaret Warner was appointed to fill the remaining Board term of Dan Koehler. Dan resigned his board position due to work and other commitments.

*Member David Wierzba donated an 8" Meade equatorial Newtonian to MAS.. The Board felt this would be a good training scope especially for newer members and will pursue installing in the remaining metal roll off shed for ease of use.

*Board approved \$1500 for the building of another roll-off roof to house the 18" Weisen (made by Obsession) to facilitate more active use of this excellent scope. This Alti-Azimuth mount scope will eventually be fitted with digital locating and pointing capability. (See Presidents message).

*The board discussed the possible future acquisition of an SBIG STV, an integrating, video like, imager/display. Its utility for tracking and teaching will be further pursued for future purchase.

* The Board reaffirmed the renaming of the roll-off roof "C" scope to the Jamieson Scope (J Scope). This was done in recognition of Scott's donation in materials, time, and effort to this project. Scott protested the renaming, but to no avail..

* A new one page brochure, with photos, will be prepared to emphasize the sheer scope of our observatory facilities. When compared to other club's fixed facilities, it is mind boggling.

Remaining Open Houses

The following is a list of the remaining MAS open houses. These are part of the MAS public outreach program and are a source for attracting new members, as well as teaching the attendees about this universe of ours.

At the Aug 11 Open House, we had close to 120 plus visitors. We need both MAS personnel to man the scopes, parking lot, and help answer questions. We can also use any old (within the last five years) Astronomy and Sky & Telescope Magazines that can be used as sample handouts for those who are more interested in exploring this hobby further.

The remaining dates are:

September 8 Summer Milky Way

October 6 See Uranus & Neptune

MAS Library News

- Please return any books or video tapes that have been borrowed more than three months, unless you have pertinent reasons.

-**Astronomy 2001 Calendars** are available to MAS members for \$7.00 (usually \$12.95 from Kalmbach Publishing). Available at monthly meetings.

1. The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark by Carl Sagan -1996. Embracing reason, Fundamentalist and pseudoscience beliefs are declared defunct. Astronomers are said to be the most honest people. C.S. has done his best in this regard.

2. The Perfect Machine: Building the Palomar Telescope- by Ronald Florence- 1994. A bit of history, the 200" is the legendary giant telescope and this is its story.

3. The Immortal Fire Within: The Life and Work of Edward Emerson Barnard- by William Sheehan - 1995. This is the first full-length biography of E. E. B., one of the most prolific astronomers of the last and this century. His accomplishments include discovering 16 comets, the fifth moon of Jupiter, the star with the largest known proper motion that bears his name, and photographing the rich fields of the Milky Way with the intervening dark nebulae. This is a scholarly historical reference illustrated with photos throughout and resources by chapter.

4. Exploring the Moon: The Apollo Expeditions- by David M. Harland- 1999. "It is the story of the great adventure of exploring the Moon..." Harland's emphasis is mainly science, the lunar geology done in the last three missions to the Moon. But, this book may be of interest to the casual reader for the astronauts' impressions and dialogue about the farthest -out of mankind's experiences yet. Also there are a myriad of photos and a glossary for those not familiar with lunar and geologic terms. Tom Pelnar, MAS member, called this the best about the Apollo missions that he has seen.

—Sally Waraczinski, John Briggs, members and other amateurs from across the country have highly recommended all these books. The MAS Library is "our" great asset. Take advantage of it!

Scott Laskowski, MAS Librarian

Another Great Picnic

For the third year in a row the weather was great for the annual picnic. There were approximately 45 attendees that shared in good fun, games, food, drink and great prizes. The night sky was clear and like last year, many people stayed around to observe. The three domes, the new roll off building, both CCD cameras, and the 18" Weisen scope, were all in use.... plus a few porta-scopes and many telescopes brought by members. It was nice to see all the equipment out and people enjoying what the club is for. The weather and sky was so nice some of us were out observing until after 3:00am.

I would like to thank the following companies for their generous donations. Sky & Telescope for the Book and T-shirt, Jim's Mobile Inc for the Video and Gift Certificate, Astronomy Magazine for the 1 Year Subscription, Scope City for the 3 Gift Certificates, Yerkes Observatory for the 2 Shirts, and of course Meade Instruments for the 6" Dobsonian Telescope.

I would also like to thank the following people that helped me out in making the picnic a success. Scott Jamieson, Mary Ann Tangney, Rudy Poklar, Chris Weber, and a special thanks to my wife Diane for all her help and support.

I hope everybody enjoyed the picnic and let's hope for great weather next year.

Vern Hoag, MAS Picnic Chairman

MAS ASTRONOMY SOFTWARE LIBRARY AVAILABLE

The MAS has many megabytes of shareware astronomy software for IBM PCs that is available for no charge. Just send enough diskettes to hold about 17 MB of data (13 3.5" 1.44 MB floppies) to Lee Keith, MAS Computer Group, 8150 S. Legend Dr., Franklin, WI 53132-9623. Please include return postage and a mailing label with your return address.

E-MAIL ME PLEASE!

Would all MAS members with an e-mail account please e-mail me at leekeith1@juno.com. I would like to get everyone's e-mail address to facilitate communications for membership reminders or some other MAS official purpose. These addresses will NOT be distributed beyond the MAS. They are for internal use only. We may even use them for general announcements or whatever.

Eds note:

Lee Keith has a great idea in putting together an email data base that can be used to alert members of forthcoming events on a more timely basis. Between the MAS Web page, Email, Focal Point, and postcard alerts we should be able to cover all the bases.

MAS Officers/ Staff

President	Scott Jamieson	262-896-0119
Vice President	Lee Keith	414-425-2331
Treasurer	Dan Yanko	414-453-3382
Secretary	Margaret Warner	414-327-7427
Observatory Director	Gerry Samolyk	414-529-9051
Assistant Observatory Director	Paul Borchardt	262-781-0169
Focal Point	Rudy Poklar, Editor	262-786-8931

Future MAS Events

Sept. 8, Oct 6 MAS Open houses
 September: MAS Membership Renewal Time
 Sept 29, 30 MAS Annual Campout
October 20, monthly meeting at MAS, 8:00 PM

MAS Membership is open to all with an interest in Astronomy and expanding their knowledge of the Universe. Yearly Membership Dues are: Individual \$28/yr.; Family \$32; Non-resident (individual \$18, Family \$22); Student (under 18) \$12.
 For more information, contact Membership Chairman, Carlos Garces,

Focal Point Publishing Guidelines

Focal Point Newsletter is published bi-monthly (Sep Nov Jan Mar May) with a Mid-summer issue in July. Articles, Announcements, Graphics, Photos, Swap/Sale Ads etc. should be submitted at least 10 days prior to the first of the month (of the desired issue). Article inputs are preferred via E-Mail, or diskette in a text or Word compatible format, if possible. Submit FP inputs to:

MAS Focal Point c/o Rudy Poklar
 12905 W. Crawford Drive

Saturday Keyholders**September**

2	Neil Simmons	262-889-2039
9	Chris Weber	262-789-7128
16	Dan Yanko	414-453-3382
23	Wanda Berner	262-646-8229-
30	Paul Borchardt	262-781-0169

October

7	Tim Burrus	262-783-6572
14	Brian Ganiere	414-961-8745
21	Carlos Garces	262-786-2623
28	Brian Garness	262-538-3888

November

4	Chris Hesseltine	414-482-4515
11	Vern Hoag	262-548-9130
18	Tim Hoff	262-662-2212
25	Scott Jamieson	262-896-0119

Loaner Telescopes (available to members for local use)

Lee Keith (Franklin)	425-2331	8" Dob reflector
Rich Sterle (Greenfield)	543-7479	8" Dob reflector

MAS Observatory 542-9071

MAS Web Page: www.milwaukeeastro.org

New and timely, Check it out

The Milwaukee Astronomical Society

2933 N.68th Street
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****Dr. Jim Lattis, UW-Madison speaks on "Gallileo & His Contemporaries" at MAS, Sept. 15th, 8:00 PM***

****MAS Open houses, Sept. 8th, Oct. 6th at 8:00 PM***



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Another Season.....Another Reason...

Membership renewal time seems to herald another observing season....but not really. If you had stopped in at the observatory during this Spring and Summer, you would have noticed a lot more activity from the observing elves. In fact there were nights when the number of elves showing up to observe were close to setting records. This has been very gratifying to the officers and board. It looks like the Facilities upgrade program, the new J scope observatory are starting to pay off.

MASS has always been, first and foremost, an active observers group. The addition of computerization and CCD imaging capability has provided a quantum leap in deep space imaging. As this issue goes to press, new three color images of many objects are being generated and they are as good as any you see in S&T or Astronomy.....thanks to the new three color filter wheel added to the CCD imagers.

In exploring other ways to further expand the club's observing facilities, it was realized that we have an under-utilized 18 inch Obsession Dobsonian. This scope was donated as a memorial by the family of Dr. Weisen, a former MAS President. This is a finely crafted scope with superb optics is made by member Dave Kriege. The board approved another \$1500 to build a second Roll-off roof observatory to house this super scope. It will be fitted with digital readouts and pointing capabilities similar to the recently added J scope (formerly known as C scope). It promises to be an extremely popular, and convenient to use ,visual observing tool. In case you were looking for another reason to try observing at MAS, this it. - *Editor*