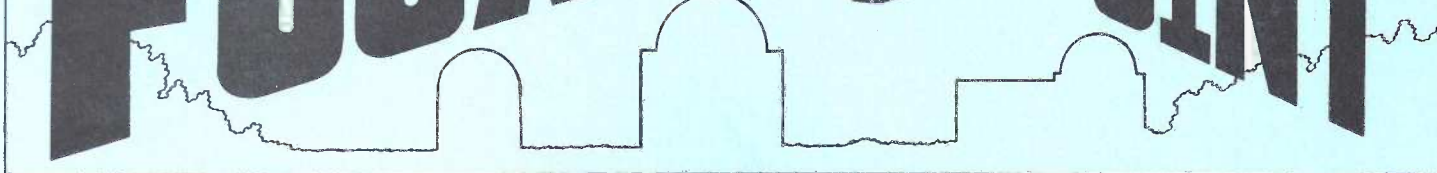


FOCAL POINT



Issued by the

MILWAUKEE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

- : JUNE 1984 : -

ALCON '84: Following is a very detailed ALCON '84 update by Chairman Dan Koehler:

ALCON '84 UPDATE

The ALCON '84 committee has been working diligently on completion of plans for the 38th annual convention of the Astronomical League. The convention will be hosted by the MAS and held at Carroll College in Waukesha August 1, 2, 3, and 4, 1984. In addition to the AL the convention will serve as this year's national meeting of the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers (ALPO), The Nat'l Deep Sky Observing Society (NDSOS), and the Int'l Amateur and Professional Photoelectric Photometers (IAPPP), as well as the regional convention for the North Central Region of the AL of which the MAS is a member society.

To date, the committee has received requests for information about the convention from hundreds of amateur astronomers representing nearly every state in the U.S. and several foreign countries. Registered persons total over 150 so far, and convention chairman Dan Koehler expects to have about twice that many people registered by July 1st. He anticipates a total attendance of 400 people for the four day event.

Suspiciously absent from the roster of those signed up to attend the convention are many names of MAS members. ALCON '84 will be one of this year's largest gatherings of amateur astronomers and it will be occurring right in our back yards! Don't miss it!!! If you haven't yet mailed your registration form do it today. If you need a form write to ALCON '84, P.O. Box 275, Mequon, WI 53092. Registration fees are \$16 for an individual or \$20 for a family until July 1. After July 1 and at the door the fees are \$19 and \$23. There will be a one day fee, for those not able to attend the entire convention, of \$8 per person or \$10 per family.

The ALCON '84 committee is busily preparing the schedule of events for the four day run of the convention. A number of noteworthy professional and amateur astronomers will address attendees during the convention. They include Dr. William J. Kaufmann III, famous author of many books about astronomy and a noted authority on the topic of cosmology; Stephen Edberg, coordinator of the International Halley Watch program at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena; and Dr. Doug Hall, Professor of Astronomy at Vanderbilt University in Nashville and co-author of the book "Photoelectric Photometry of Variable Stars". The committee is currently considering the addition of several more professional astronomers to the agenda as time and money permit.

Another fascinating aspect of the convention is the workshop program. Workshops allow a closer look at specific areas of amateur astronomy presented by amateurs who have a particular expertise and interest in those specialized areas. This year eight workshops are planned and the topics to be covered include computers in astronomy, astrophotography, variable stars, telescope making, optical design, lunar and planetary observing, and deep sky observing. Tom Renner, Dr. Richard Wiesen, John Wiesen, Jim Schweder, Jeff Kirk, Richard Berry, and Dave Eicher, all MAS members, will conduct a number of the workshops. The two-hour-long workshops are currently scheduled mornings, afternoons, and evenings Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

The traditional paper sessions, presented by a number of amateur astronomers from around the country on a wide variety of topics concerning everyone, will be held throughout the duration of the convention. Papers detail projects, ideas, problems, theories, innovations, and solutions and are presented by people just like you. Most of the presentations will be 15 minutes in length with a 5 minute question and answer period. The paper sessions demonstrate the vast amount of talent that exists among amateur astronomers and in the Astronomical League. They serve to enrich all amateurs regardless of their specific interests. To date, approximately 20 papers have been received by the committee.

Many other major events will take place during the convention. Astromedia Corp. of Milwaukee is sponsoring *Astromart '84*, a convention of astronomical equipment manufacturers and retailers at Carroll College during ALCON. At last word, 12 firms have signed up to display materials and equipment of interest to amateur astronomers. You may wish to take part in a special tour of Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay, WI on Friday afternoon, August 3. Many of the convention participants will be visiting Yerkes that day. Astronomy Magazine will hold an open house for ALCON delegates on Thursday afternoon, August 2. The MAS will sponsor an astronomical "flea market" on Saturday afternoon in the Carroll College Union. Do you have any old, unwanted, but useful astronomical equipment, books, magazines, etc. you want to sell? The MAS flea market is the place to do it!!! Our neighbors to the South, the Racine Astronomical Society, will open the doors to their Modine-Bensted Observatory to the ALCON group on Friday evening for a special star party. A cook-out/mixer will take place Wednesday evening, August 1 at Carroll followed by a star party at the MAS Observatory in New Berlin. The cookout will feature Wisconsin brats and beer. Hopefully the 65-cm telescope will be ready for dedication that evening. The convention will close with a banquet (Prime-rib) on Saturday night. Star Parties are planned at the Observatory for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings, so bring your 'scope! Check out the Astrophotography, Astro-art, and Telescope making contests too! Do you want to enter any of them? Entry forms are included in the ALCON '84 information packets.

Help is needed to staff the registration desk during the convention. The desk will be located in the lobby of the Carroll College Student Union and duties will be divided into morning and afternoon shifts. Duties include handing out ready-made envelopes which contain tickets, programs, and other information to pre-registered delegates, registering "walk-ins", answering questions, selling T-shirts and Proceedings books, and helping serve as a messenger/relay station. This is a very important aspect of the convention and helps things run smoothly. If you can spare some time during the convention, the committee would be very grateful!

We also need help at the nightly star parties at the observatory! Can you help park cars, direct traffic, set up equipment, man a telescope, give directions, answer questions, serve refreshments, and so forth?

Perhaps you can help with any one of a number of tasks which need to be completed at the MAS Observatory before the convention opens August 1. Work parties take place every Saturday--rain or shine beginning about 9:00 am. Please come out and help for just a few hours--and bring anything in the way of tools and equipment for painting, cleaning, or lawn trimming. We need your help now!!!

Contact ALCON '84 Chairman Dan Koehler (662-2987 evenings after 5:00) if you want to help with any of these important convention duties.

A complete up-to-date schedule of events for ALCON '84 will appear in a special July convention issue of *The Focal Point* to be mailed to all MAS members about July 20.

ELECTION RESULTS: All incumbent MAS Officers were reelected to serve during the 1984-'85 MAS year. Members elected to serve on the Board are John Asztalos, Sharon Mason, Nick Nichols, Peter Smitka, and John Wiesen. Gerry Samolyk and John Asztalos will continue to serve as Observatory Director and Assistant Observatory Director respectively.

The outgoing governors have done a great job in helping to move the MAS forward and, doubtless, the current leadership will guarantee another year of progress.

WITH SYMPATHY: The Milwaukee Astronomical Society extends its sympathy and condolences to the family of Joseph Loepfe who died Sunday, April 29, at the age of 68 years.

Joe was an active MAS member who joined the Society in 1936, nearly 50 years ago. He was a congenial fellow, well versed in celestial mechanics, and more often than not attended MAS meetings and functions.

Joe will be conspicuous by his absence.

LET'S GET TOGETHER Sunday, June 24, at the annual MAS picnic. Bring the family, a basket(s) of goodies and relax a bit. New members are especially welcome. And if someone brings equipment, there'll be games. See the progress on the 26" 'scope.

Starting time is 2 P.M. at the observatory.

OBSERVATORY NEWS:

26" TELESCOPE PROGRESS: Good news! Another very generous donation was received from Apollo Fund Limited of which MAS member Orin Purinton is President. This gift will be used for a photometer or other necessary instrument for the 26" telescope. Declination and R.A. drive motors have been ordered and a gear box is on the way. Framing has been installed to pass electrical inspection.

IN GENERAL: A new pump has been installed in the well. The parking lot driveway has been widened and paved with asphalt, a tremendous improvement. Work must proceed at a frantic pace if the 'scope and grounds are to be ready for ALCON '84! Gerry (475-9418) and John (258-5626) have lists of tasks.

MR. CARL NEWTON, founder of the Southwest Washington (state) Astronomical Society, visited our New Berlin observatory during the June 1 Open House.

He was not only greatly impressed by what we have as an amateur society, but also by the quantity and quality.

OPEN HOUSES for the remainder of the O. H. program are listed on the 1984 Calendar of Events in this issue.

Frank Roldan is O. H. Chairman, and he'd appreciate volunteers to direct traffic, guide, operate 'scopes, or to spell other helpers.

DUES ARE PAYABLE starting in September. You can make Treasurer Jim Toeller's task easier by paying now:

Rates are \$30 for a General Membership, \$30 plus \$1.00 for each additional family member for a Family Membership, \$20 for Non-Residents, and \$15 for Junior Members (under 16).

Send your remittance made payable to Mr. James Toeller, 407 W. Mall Rd., Milw., Wis. 53217 (352-7144).

NORTHERN LIGHTS, the North Central Region Astronomical League quarterly newsletter will publish its next issue in September. To subscribe, remit \$2.50 for an annual subscription of four issues to Mr. James Fox, 14601 55th St., South, Afton, Minn. 55001.

THIS WILL BE THE LAST FOCAL POINT newsletter until September. An ALCON '84 update will be mailed in July.

The MAS Officers and Board wish everyone a pleasant summer.

MEMBER'S NIGHT KEYHOLDERS: Please save this list!

June 16	J. Asztalos	258-5626	July 7	W. Collins	255-4169
23	P. Borchardt	445-1181	14	B. Cieslak	679-9663
30	R. Berry	442-4267	21	B. Ganiere	425-1384
			28	G. Hall	786-8579
Aug. 4	C. Hesseltine	482-4515			
11	P. Murn	464-1539	Sep. 1	F. Roldan	344-2354
18	N. Nichols	542-7557	8	T. Schmidtkunz	276-9675
25	J. Pfannerstill	475-6494	15	G. Samolyk	475-9418
			22	P. Smitka	785-0926

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.

DIRECTORY:

President - Peter Smitka - 785-0926
Vice President & Program Chair - 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 Chairs - 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

SEPTEMBER FOCAL POINT DEADLINE - WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1984.

MILWAUKEE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER SCHEDULE 1984



- June 18 - Board meeting 7:30 p.m. Observatory
- 21 - Summer begins 12:02 a.m. CDT
- 24 - Picnic at Observatory (tentative)
- 26 - ALCON committee meeting 7:30 p.m. Carroll College student union
- 29 - Open House 8:00 p.m.
- July 11 - Staff meeting Observatory 7:30 p.m.
- 17 - ALCON committee meeting 7:30 p.m. Carroll College
- 20 - Open House 8:00 p.m.
- 23 - Board meeting 7:30 p.m. Observatory (tentative)
- 28 - Delta Aquarid meteor shower (peak)
- 30 - ALCON committee meeting 7:30 p.m. Carroll College
- August 1 - 4 ALCON '84 : "Astronomy, the Amateur Science", Carroll College, Waukesha
- 8 - Staff meeting Observatory 7:30 p.m.
- 12 - Perseid meteor shower (peak)
- 17 - Open House 8:00 p.m.
- 24,25 Greenbush campout
- 31 - Open House 8:00 p.m.
- September 5 - Staff meeting Observatory 7:30 p.m.
- 21 - September general meeting 8:00 p.m. at the Observatory