

FOCAL POINT



Newsletter for the
Milwaukee Astronomical Society
November 1991

From The Editors

Mid-Autumn. Soon, cool, frosty nights with snow flakes abounding. On upcoming clear, cool nights the arms of Andromeda reach out, inviting and reminding us that the Pleiades, the Crab, Orion and countless other sky delights await our gazes. Let us, in this Season of Thanks, ever be grateful for a cosmos to contemplate and friends to share it with.

-Matthew McNeely

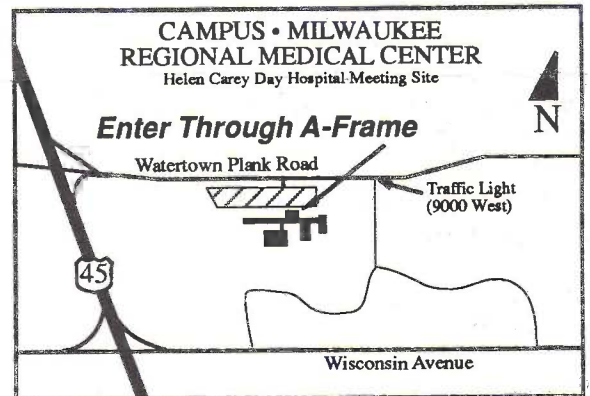
This is also a good time (as is always) to share yourself with the Society at large. Volunteers are still needed to prepare our Observatory for the upcoming regional convention. Contact the Observatory Director, Gerry Samolyk for details and a work detail.

And we still need your feedback regarding the survey questions or anything else on your mind concerning MAS. Your involvement can make a difference.

-Tom Gill

Program/Meeting

The November Program/Meeting will feature MAS member Alan Dyer. Alan is an associate editor for ASTRONOMY magazine and has addressed our society in the past. Alan's talk this month will focus on "Getting the Most Out of Your Telescope" and he invites your questions and comments. Topics include, but are not limited to: cleaning, polar alignment, setting circles, filters, finders, eyepieces, accessories, etc. Alan's vast knowledge and easy-going style insure an entertaining and informative evening. Whether you are a new or seasoned member, don't miss this great opportunity to learn more about telescopes!



Reminder: We're back at the Helen Carey Day Hospital Meeting site. Meeting starts @ 8:00 pm and for security reasons, the doors are open from 7:30 to 8:15 only.

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Calendar of Events

November 11, Monday	MAS Board Meeting 7:30pm at the Observatory
November 15, Friday	8:00 pm Program-Meeting
November 21, Thursday	Full Beaver Moon
November 22, Friday	Deadline for next <u>Focal Point</u>
December 4, Wednesday	First Wednesday Meeting 7:30 at the Observatory
December 13, Friday	8:00 pm Program-Meeting
Saturday Nights—Member night at Observatory—Call key holder	

Library News

Isn't it nice to have friends! One of ours preferred to remain anonymous when leaving these two books on our doorstep:

Challenger: A Major Malfunction, A True Story of Politics, Greed and the Wrong Stuff by Malcolm McConnell - 1987. The author, an experienced space journalist, recreates the unsettling history behind that fated day in January 1986. Integral to this very readable analysis are the glimpses of personalities and the immediacy evoked by attention to details.

The Fabric of the Heavens: The Development of Astronomy and Dynamics by Toulin and Goodfield covers the usual ground from the Babylonians through Kant and is the first of a projected four-volume cosmology. At the time of publication, Dr. Toulin was director of London's Nutfield Foundation for the History of Ideas. Accordingly, the steps in man's understanding of the heavens are interpreted in context with the general philosophy and theology of the successive eras.

Another thoughtful friend, Alan Dyer, representing ASTRONOMY magazine, has supplied the vertical file with several astro-photography bulletins and these additions to our bookshelves:

Yardsticks of the Universe by Owen Bishop - 1984 is a splendid example of the saying "good things come in small packages." The history of measurements begins with units based on human arm length or the distance a horse could pull a plow without tiring. As various standardized systems and precision tools evolved, man became able to measure the earth and the speed of light, atoms and personality traits. Already rich in anecdotes and information, the book includes the bonus of instructions for making five early measuring devices, among them a sextant and pendulum clock.

Deep Sky Objects: A Photographic Guide for the Amateur by Jack Newton - 1977. Each Messier object and a few additional splendors have been photographed and printed to about the same scale in full page illustrations. Accompanying the photos are sky charts (of questionable value at the telescope) and brief descriptions. A constellation observing list, organized by month and including major stars, is appended.

Space Shuttle: The Quest Continues by George Torres - 1990 is an outstandingly illustrated capsule history of the entire U.S. space program, its aims and its hardware. It is an excellent reference which even includes criteria for astronaut selection and a guide to the NASA Research Centers.

Space: The Next Twenty-five Years by Thomas McDonough - 1987 is an unusual and impassioned mix of space science, cosmology and futurism. The book is liberally sprinkled with exhortations by visionaries of which Andrei Sakharov and Jacques Cousteau are but two examples.

ATTENTION: Teachers, Scout and Young Astronaut Leaders

Juvenile literature donated by ASTRONOMY and by member Jim Mayer, dealing specifically with space science and exploration, will be made available at the November general meeting. It is believed that these materials would enjoy wider readership within a school or youth group setting. For more information or to pre-register your interest in these books, call me.

-Sally Waraczynski

Apollo Fund Ltd., Donations

The MAS received two donations from the Apollo Fund, LTD in 1991. The first check in the amount of \$2,500 arrived in January. A "surprise" second check in the amount of \$5,000 came in July. A very special "thank you" to MAS member Orin Purintun, President of the Apollo Fund and all the members of the Fund's Board of Directors for their generous consideration this year.

Over the past seven years, the Apollo Fund has donated over \$15,000 to the MAS. The money has been used to finance numerous building projects at the Observatory, including the 65-cm telescope and building as well as the new garage. The MAS also purchased a photometer, refurbished one of the Society's two Alvan Clarke refractors, and rebuilt the library with Apollo Fund donations.

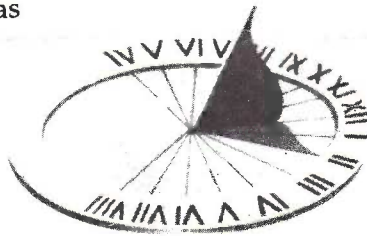
According to Orin's letter accompanying the \$5,000 check in July, the Apollo Fund will probably not make additional contributions to the MAS in the future. The MAS' Board of Directors decided in August to invest the last donation for later use in other capital improvement projects at the Observatory. We should all be very grateful for the many years of aid the Apollo Fund has given to the MAS. Thanks to everyone at the Apollo Fund LTD, and good luck to them in the future!

Editor x 2

Yours truly was recently appointed the editor of a new newsletter called the ASTRONOMY Network News. Put out by Kalmbach Publishing, the bi-monthly newsletter provides clubs with a place to exchange ideas and information. The Network News is sent free of charge to club officers or other members with a hand in club direction.

The first issue, sent in early November, includes a photo of several dozen newsletters with the Focal Point amongst them, and the second issue will feature an interview with MAS club librarian, Sally Waraczynski. It pays to know people in high places.

-Tom Gill



Special Thanks...

...To **Paul Borchardt** for organizing the Greenbush Campout and to **Richard Wiesen** for braving the wind, cold and rain (a triple whammy!) to claim the campsite. Although Friday was a complete washout, Saturday did provide about four hours of viewing pleasure to that intrepid observer **Mike Wolkomir** and family. Looking forward to Spring's campout with a gallery of galaxies.

...To **Tom Renner** for organizing our Annual Banquet. Once again a tremendous effort extended by him for our benefit. Speaker **John Briggs**, superb food and a fine setting combined for a most enjoyable and memorable evening.

John Briggs speaks again!

John Briggs (this fall's MAS banquet speaker) will be the featured speaker at November's meeting of the Northern Cross Science Foundation. Northern Cross extends an invitation to all MAS members to attend the meeting held in Cedarburg at the First Wisconsin Bank, Thursday, November 14 at 7:45 pm. For details and/or directions, contact **Tim Burrus** at 783-6572.

You asked for it

Here it is. The recipe for the much touted (and devoured) **Zucchini Slices**, a MAS picnic favorite, from **Charlotte Nelson**.

Crust: 4 cups flour, 2 cups sugar, 1/2 tsp salt. 3 sticks oleo. Combine the dry ingredients and cut in the oleo until crumbly.

Filling: 6-8 cups peeled and sliced zucchini. Cut as for apple pie. Cook in 2/3 cup of lemon juice until tender. Add 1 cup sugar, 1/2 tsp cinnamon and 1/4 tsp nutmeg and simmer 1 minute. Add 1/2 cup of the crust mixture to thicken. Cool.

Pat 1/2 of the remaining mixture onto a jelly roll pan (cookie sheet). Bake 10 minutes at 375 degrees. Pour on the cooled filling. Add 1 tsp cinnamon to the remaining crust mixture and sprinkle on top of the filling. Bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes.

Helping MAS Feels Good

Ask anyone who has been a volunteer—it feels good. Our Society is what it is today because of people who gave their time and energy for the good of all members, present and future.

For those who have given their time in the past and for those considering lending a hand sometime soon, here is a tribute to volunteers, submitted by **Dorothy Kube**. Some of the slogans have been updated, but the spirit of the piece remains timeless.

Volunteers are like Ford—they have better ideas.

Volunteers are like Coke—they are the real thing.

Volunteers are like PanAm—they make the going great.

Volunteers are like Pepsi—they've got a lot to give.

Volunteers are like Dial Soap—because they care more: Don't you wish everyone did?

Volunteers are like VO-5 Hair-spray—their goodness holds in all kinds of weather.

Volunteers are like Hallmark Cards—they care enough to give their best.

But most of all, volunteers are like Frosted Flakes—They're Great!

Wanted

Telescope: Though very much an amateur, looking for and need some fair used equipment to pursue this beautiful hobby I've been reading about for many years. If you have a refractor or reflector telescope capable of mounting a camera on, or information about either, I wish very much to hear from you. **F. P. Rinke**, Rt. 5, Box 206, New London, WI 54961

Eyepieces: .965" diameter, any focal length. Call **Nick Nichols** at 628-4059.

Eyepieces: 1.25" diameter, any focal length, <\$20 Call **Tom Gill** 476-6986.

Saturday Nite Keyholders

Nov. 9	Terry Ross	784-2093
Nov. 16	Gerry Samolyk	529-9051
Nov. 23	T. Schmidtkunz	784-0253
Nov. 30	Peter Smitka	785-0926
Dec. 7	Virgil Tagney	327-7976
Dec. 14	Jim Toeller	352-7144
Dec. 21	Richard Wiesen	781-4757
Dec. 28	Paul Borchardt	781-0169

After the Meeting— Join us for Drinks!

It's been a tradition for some years now to "go out on the town" after a monthly MAS meeting. Sometimes, up to twenty MAS'ers get together at a local "watering hole" to relax and catch-up on the latest astronomical gossip. It's been said that more business gets done at these get-togethers than at a regular Board or membership meetings!

Those who've enjoyed the tradition would like to extend an invitation to ANYONE attending the November meeting to join us "after hours" for an informal get together. Our usual spot is the Ground Round on Hwy. 100 in West Allis (just south of National Ave.), but we'll take suggestions on a different spot after the November meeting. Anything is fair game! Come join the fun!

Have You Paid Your MAS Dues?

For those members who have still not paid dues for the 1991/92 fiscal year it's not too late! Keep your membership benefits coming by paying now. Rates are: Regular (Adult) \$40, Junior (under age 18 or full-time students under age 22) \$25, Non-Resident (outside Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington, and Ozaukee counties) \$30. All classes of membership receive either *Sky & Telescope* or *Astronomy* as a benefit. You may still order *Astronomy* magazine, or 1992 RASC Handbooks and Ottewell calendars at a discount. Use the renewal form and return envelope enclosed with your September *Focal Point*. If you can't find them, mail a check with an explanation of your desired "benefit periodical" and other subscriptions to: Daniel L. Koehler, Treasurer, W248 S7040 Sugar Maple Drive, Waukesha, WI 53186. If you need pricing on periodicals call Dan at 414-662-2987, evenings.

Treasurer's Report for Fiscal Year 1990-91

Fourth quarter and year-end fiscal reports will be available at the November Program-Meeting. In summary, the MAS had gross revenues of \$33,822.23 and gross expenses of \$30,478.84 for the year ended August 31, 1991. Excluding an extraordinary income item from members related to the 1991 solar eclipse trip brings "net" revenues to \$23,255.23. Likewise, excluding extraordinary expense items related to the 1991 solar eclipse trip the MAS spent \$19,911.84. An insurance premium payment made in September, 1990 (which was actually charged to expenses in the 1989/90 fiscal year) actual "net" expense for the year (the amount of expense actually incurred for operations in 1990/91) was \$19,161.84. True net income for the year is then \$4,093.39.

Thirty-three MAS members remitted \$10,567.00 for round-trip airfare to/from California to participate in the Twilight Tours expedition in Mexico for the 1991 solar eclipse. This was done to take advantage of group fare discounts. The MAS Treasury was used as a "neutral" collection and disbursement point for the convenience of these members. The activity in the MAS accounts from these actions was slightly "revenue positive" in that some interest was earned on the money between collection and disbursement.

Further details concerning last year's financial reports and the financial condition of the MAS will be discussed at the November meeting.

-Dan Koehler

Sunset Annular Eclipse Update

A reprint of an article appearing in the November/December 1991 issue of *The Griffith Observer* will be available at the November meeting concerning the January 4, 1992 sunset annular eclipse mentioned in last month's *Focal Point*. The annular phase of the eclipse will be visible from much of southern California just minutes before sunset. Plans are progressing on the formation of an informal MAS expedition to view the event from Griffith Observatory on Mt. Hollywood overlooking the city of Los Angeles, as well as from other sites around southern California. It's not too late to join the expedition. Call me soon, or talk to me at the November meeting.

-Dan Koehler



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