



From The Editors

Summertime once again: High overhead flows mightily the Milky Way with its glimmering globulars. A wonderful time to participate in MAS activities which include: Open Houses, the Summer Campout, and our Annual Family Picnic. Hope to see you at these events!

This is the last *Focal Point* until September. Best wishes for a safe and enjoyable summer. The next general meeting is on September 11 at the Observatory.

-Matthew McNeely & Tom Gill

May Election Results

Elected to the Board of Directors: **Tim Burrus, Brian Ganiere, Tom Gill, and Ken Waraczynski.** Re-elected as officers were: **Richard Wiesen, President; Matthew McNeely, Vice President; Dorothy Kube, Secretary; Dan Koehler, Treasurer.**

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Calendar of Events

- July 13, Monday MAS Board Meeting
7:30pm at the Observatory
 - July 14-18 Cosmocon National Convention
San Jose, California
 - July 25, Saturday **MAS Family Picnic**
at the Observatory
 - July 30-August 2 Summer Campout
at Wildcat Mountain State Park
 - August 5, Wednesday First Wednesday Meeting
7:30 at the Observatory
 - August 10, Monday MAS Board Meeting
7:30pm at the Observatory
 - August 21, Friday Deadline for next Focal Point
 - September 2, Wednesday First Wednesday Meeting
7:30 at the Observatory
 - September 11, Friday **8:00 pm Program-Meeting**
8:00pm at the Observatory
 - September 14, Monday MAS Board Meeting
7:30pm at the Observatory
 - September 18-20 ASTROFEST
 - September 25-27 Greenbush Fall Campout
- Saturday Nights—Member night at Observatory—Call key holder**

Open House Dates

July 24; August 7 & 21; September 4; October 2 & 23
8:00 pm at the Observatory

Imagine owning a drawing of Saturn made in 1898 by E.E. Barnard or a photograph of M51 taken with the 82-inch McDonald reflector by Ban Biesbroeck! The Yerkes Observatory catalog of prints for sale is now in our CATALOGS-AUDIO/VISUAL file, thanks to **Tim Burrus**. The MAS History Collection includes a few of these prints if you wish to preview the quality.

Ever had the urge to drop in for another society's meeting or join in some dark sky viewing with another group situated near your favorite vacation spot? Now it's easy. Marion Bachtell, Chairman of the North Central Region of the Astronomical League, compiled a Regional Directory which was distributed at the April convention. Our copy is available for reference at the Observatory in the Astronomical League-North Central business file. In a nearby folder, you'll find the group photograph and program, etc. from that same convention.

As a "spin-off" of Ray Villard's visit, we received another set of images and descriptive literature from the Hubble Space Telescope Science Institute. These slides are now cataloged and available for member use. Also, Robert Friedman, NASA Lewis Center, who spoke at the convention on terrestrial benefits of space technology gave us a satellite view of Milwaukee for our slide collection.

We've left the light on for them...

Last seen, they were on a shelf with the rest of their companions. Today they lie forgotten in some dark corner of your home or office—their messages wasted, their illustrations unadmired. Help return these wanderers to their rightful places in our library:

Scientific Instruments You Can Make, Davis, Ed.

Introduction to Observing and Photographing the Solar System, Dobbins et al.

The Grand Tour, Miller and Hartmann

REWARD: You'll know it's the "right thing to do."

-Sally Waraczynski

A Retrospective Of The 1992 NCRAL Convention

With great relief, and some sadness, I am in the final stages of "closing the books" of the 46th Convention of the North Central Region of the Astronomical League held at the Country Inn in Pewaukee the weekend of April 24-26. The convention attracted just over 180 participants from seven states.

The "kickoff" occurred Friday evening with an excellent tour and reception, sponsored by the staff of Astronomy magazine. Saturday's program consisted of three invited speakers, seven amateur papers, seven astronomical vendors displaying equipment and related goods, a large display of astrophotos and art, an astronomical trivia contest, twenty doorprizes, and an auction of items to benefit the League's Trust Fund. The auction, the first of its kind anywhere in the League, raised \$863.50. In addition, a general collection at the Regional Business meeting for the Fund yielded nearly \$200 for a total of over \$1,050. This is the normal amount collected by the Fund in an average year! To end a nearly perfect day, 135 guests enjoyed an excellent dinner and evening program on the Hubble Space Telescope program. The weekend's festivities concluded Sunday morning with over 50 convention participants exploring Yerkes Observatory for several hours. Many convention attendees visited the MAS Observatory over the weekend as well.

I was extremely pleased with the manner in which convention plans unfolded over the weekend. If you attended all or any part of the Convention, I'm sure you'll agree that the 1992 NCRAL Committee gave everyone a nearly flawless event. And

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while I'd love to take most of the credit for the convention's success, I cannot in all honesty and fairness, as so many other MAS members deserve our gratitude — some many times more than myself.

First, I'd like to thank the other 15 members of the Convention Committee for believing in this project, and adding their time, talent, and hard work to it: **Cheryl & Brian Awe** (Silent Auction), **Wanda Berner** (Vendors & Doorprizes), **Tom Gill** (Vendors, Doorprizes, & T-Shirts), **Karen & Lee Keith** (Trivia & Astrophoto/Art Contests), **Martha Kelty** (Convention Art, Nametags, & Program), **Mary Koehler** (Registration), **Dorothy Kube** (Registration), **Jim Kube** (Invited Speakers & Papers), **Matthew McNeely** (Publicity & Program), **Frank Roldan** (Program), **Sally & Ken Waraczynski** (Observatory, Breaks, & Dinner), and **Dick Wiesen**.

Second, we should all thank those who, for the past year, worked so many hours preparing the Observatory for this spring's event: **Gerry Samolyk**, **Paul Borchardt**, **Marty Brunet**, **Wanda & Tom Berner**, **Charlotte Nelson**, **Tim Burrus**, **Jerry Glocka**, **Dick Adduci**, **Jim & June Regis**, **Paul Hess**, **Jim & Dorothy Kube**, **Scott Laskowski**, **Lew Riley**, **Peter Smitka**, and **Sally & Ken Waraczynski**. My greatest fear in listing those who I know contributed to Observatory readiness is that there are others I'm omitting. This list was prepared from memory and if I left anyone off, the error is absolutely unintentional. Thanks to all who helped in any way, large or small! If you haven't visited the Observatory in a while, take the time to stop by this summer during an Open House or on a Saturday Member's Night. You'll be amazed by what's been accomplished this past year.

Next, I wish to thank **Alan Dyer**, **Dave Eicher**, **Dave Bruning**, **Tom Hunt**, and **Richard Talcott** for their hospitality and fine work in hosting the reception at Kalmbach Publishing on Friday evening. We are very fortunate to have the Astronomy editorial offices here in the Milwaukee area. The professionalism exhibited by these gentlemen in plan-

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ning and hosting the reception added greatly to the overall success of the 1992 NCRAL Convention.

My thanks also to **John Briggs** and **Richard Drieser** of Yerkes for conducting the tour on Sunday. It is always a pleasure to visit the Observatory, and their hospitality made everyone feel very welcome. The tour's participants got an excellent look at Yerkes today, as well as a good feel for its vast history and past accomplishments.

Also deserving thanks are our three invited speakers, **Alan Dyer** (Astronomy), **Bob Friedman** (NASA-Lewis), and **Ray Villard** (Space Telescope Science Institute), for taking time to share their expertise with us. Each presentation was informative and enjoyable. We were quite fortunate to have each presenter with us to share the weekend. Likewise, our line-up of amateur papers represented a good cross-section of talents and interests in amateur astronomy today. Thanks to each presenter for their time and talent given to the convention program.

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone who attended the Convention, and for the many compliments I received during the weekend. The high level of participation and the kind words expressed to me made the hard work and anxiety over the details much more bearable. I was quite honored to receive the 1992 NCRAL Region Award. The Award plaque will always have a special place in my home.

When Convention planning began in the fall of 1989, I established some goals for the Committee. We agreed that the Convention had to be enjoyable, of substantive content, affordable, and a bit unusual. Above all, though, it had to be a fitting tribute to an organization celebrating its 60th anniversary, and its membership. I believe we exceeded those goals.

I'll soon be turning my attention to new pursuits, both personal and astronomically related. This year's Convention will likely be the last I'll work on for many years. I have served on three convention committees in the last 10 years, the last two as Chairman. I may never do another — I don't know what the future holds. But in closing, it has been a distinct privilege to work with so many M.A.S. members on this project, and I'll retain fond memories of our work in the years ahead. Thanks again for everything!

-Dan Koehler

And thank YOU, Dan Koehler for all of your input, enthusiasm and hard work on the convention—a professional, classy and successful event!

Convention Financial Report

The registration fees charged for the convention were based on an expected paying attendance of 200 people. Actual attendance was 181, and unfortunately, the convention suffered a financial loss of \$205. The MAS Board of Directors approved my request to underwrite \$168 of the loss as a contribution toward the travel expenses of Ray Villard, the evening dinner speaker. The Convention dinner was also the M.A.S.' annual banquet for 1992. Ordinarily, we invite a speaker from outside the area to provide the dinner program, and this can run into hundreds of dollars. I felt this was an inexpensive alternative, and the Board agreed. The remaining loss of \$37 is due to a returned check, which will be forwarded to the Secretary-Treasurer of the NCRAL for reimbursement.

-Dan Koehler

MAS Membership Dues Info

Important information concerning MAS dues is included as an insert to this month's *Focal Point*. Please read and respond! Note that the MAS Family Picnic is also designated as a special meeting to vote on proposed changes.

Saturday Nite Keyholders

July 11	John Pfannerstill	475-6494
July 18	Frank Roldan	608-787-1730
July 25	Terry Ross	784-2093
Aug. 1	Gerry Samolyk	529-9051
Aug. 8	T. Schmidtunz	784-0253
Aug. 15	Peter Smitka	785-0926
Aug. 22	Virgil Tagney	327-7976
Aug. 29	Jim Toeller	352-7144
Sept. 5	Ken Waraczynski	321-0918
Sept. 12	Richard Wiesen	781-4757

For Sale

8-inch f/6 Meade reflector on German equatorial mount, clock drive, counterweights, 6x30 finder & mounting brackets, tube covers, accessory tray. **5-inch f/6 Celestron Spotting Scope** with tripod mount. Rear flange is drilled & tapped for acceptance of finder scope. Right angle viewfinder accepts 1-1/4" eyepieces. Thousand Oaks solar filter (full aperture). **11x80 Celestron Binoculars**, with tripod mount. All equipment is in very good condition (or better). I haven't determined asking prices yet. If interested, please call Dan Koehler, evenings, at 662-2987.

6-inch f/9 Dobsonian with 25mm Meade eyepice, \$200. **11x80 Celestron binoculars**, excellent condition, with tripod mount, \$175. Tom Gill 476-6986.

New Members

The Board recently approved the following new members. Join us in extending a warm welcome to:

Barbara, John, and Melissa Fitzgerald, Brookfield
Christopher Noegel, Milwaukee
Scott Jamieson, Waukesha
Randall and Brian Culp, New Berlin
David A. Gunn, Westminster, CA
Richard Susan, Matthew and Elizabeth Nuccio, New Berlin
Richard Kessler, Milwaukee

Upcoming Star Parties

The Summer and Fall has plenty to offer the serious Star-Party Animal or those of you who like to make the most of a weekend under the stars. Here are several which may interest you:

STARFEST

The Chippewa Valley Astronomical Society (Fall Creek, WI) invites all amateurs to the Fourth Annual Northwoods Starfest, July 24-26, 1992 at Hobbs Observatory. The fee is \$25 per person and includes camping or cabin fees for Friday and Saturday nights, breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday, and breakfast on Sunday. Saturday's program includes a two hour paper session in the afternoon, a speaker presentation in the early evening, and observing on Friday and Saturday evenings. The event is held at the Youth Camp (where the Observatory is located) near Fall Creek. The Wise Nature Center is located across the road from the Youth Camp, and there are many hiking trails. Registration forms and a fact sheet are posted on the bulletin board in the 'A' building at the M.A.S. Observatory, or you can call Bob Elliott (715-877-2657) or Bill Childs (715-834-3204) for more information. Registration forms should be mailed by July 20.

MAS SUMMER CAMPOUT

Enter the land of the Giants! Member Dave Kriege, owner of Obsession Telescopes, has reserved group camping at Wildcat Mountain State Park for July 30-August 2. All members and their families are welcome. Wildcat Mt. is about 3 hours from Milwaukee and there is plenty to do for the entire family. For more information, Contact Dave at 1-648-8284 or Paul Borchardt at 781-0169.

ASTROFEST

The MAS always has had a good number of members attending ASTROFEST, one of the best star parties in the Midwest. Speakers, observing, telescope and astrophotography contests, swap tables, and commercial sales are just the beginning—we have a lot of fun too! Dates are September 18-19 in Kankakee, IL (40 mi. SW of Chicago). The event is sponsored by the Chicago Astronomical Society and over 500 amateurs are expected to attend and there will be nearly as many astronomical instruments. If you want to know more, ask either editor (we're multi-year veterans!). Previous attenders receive registration materials automatically, others should contact: ASTROFEST, PO Box 596-A, Tinley Park, IL 60477

HIDDEN HOLLOW

Hidden Hollow & Greatcon occur the weekend of September 25-26 in Mansfield, OH. (Greatcon is the yearly meeting of the Great Lakes Region of the Astronomical League and is held in conjunction with the star party). The event features speakers, displays, observing, swap tables and commercial vendors. In addition the the many amateur instruments, participants can savor the night sky through the 31-inch f/7 telescope at the Warren Rupp Observatory. For registration information, call editor Tom Gill at 476-6986. Reservations must be received by September 5, 1992.

GREENBUSH

The MAS Fall Campout will be held at Greenbush in Northern Kettle Moraine on September 25-27. Details in the September Focal Point.



MAS INFORMATION

MAS OFFICERS

President	Dr. Richard Wiesen 781-4786
Vice President	Matthew McNeely 354-5347
Secretary	Dorothy Kube 453-8858
Treasurer	Dan Koehler 662-2987
Obs. Director	Gerry Samolyk 529-9051
Ast. Obs. Director	Paul Borchardt 781-0169
Librarian	Mrs. Sally Waraczynski 321-0918
Assist. Librarian	Mrs. June Regis 962-0896
Program Dir.	Tom Renner 392-2799

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354-5347

Tom Gill (Editor/Publisher)
1391 N. 72nd Street
Wauwatosa, WI 53213
476-6986

MAS Observatory

18850 W. Observatory Rd.
New Berlin, WI
542-9071

Three Proposals Concerning MAS Dues

Soon, membership dues to the Society will again be due. Before you pull out that checkbook, please read this:

Our present dues structure of \$40 per Regular adult member, \$30 per Non-resident adult member, and \$25 per Junior member was established on December 1, 1988. During the fall of that year, I prepared numerous financial statements showing the Board of Directors and members alike that a dues increase was necessary. My proposal for the increase was approved at the November 1988 membership meeting. Prior to the change, dues were \$30, \$20, and \$15 for the respective classifications of membership.

From the date of the dues increase until July 1, 1990, a discount subscription for *Sky and Telescope* obtained through Society membership cost \$16. Until last year all members, according to *Sky and Telescope* policy (and MAS policy as well), had to subscribe to the magazine in order for any member to qualify for the discounted rate. When, for example, the dues rate for Regular members was increased to \$40, only \$24 remained in the MAS treasury to pay organizational operating costs. The other \$16 went directly to Sky Publishing to pay for the subscription. Even if a member didn't want *Sky and Telescope* they were charged for it anyway. And if a member really preferred *Astronomy*, they wound up with two subscriptions at additional cost.

All of this was changed unofficially last year when, at the request of a growing number of MAS members, I asked the Board to "dump" the past policy, and offer two new alternatives to Society membership. In effect, we chose to ignore Sky Publishing's policy concerning the "all or none" stance on discounted subscriptions. The first change gave members a choice of either magazine as a benefit of membership. For the first time ever last year, all members had the opportunity to subscribe to *Astronomy*, and pay only the basic rate for their membership class. Members were no longer required to subscribe to *Sky and Telescope*. The other change concerned members who didn't want either magazine. Membership rates for "non-subscribers" were established at the December 1, 1988 levels (i.e. \$24 for a Regular membership (\$40 minus \$16) \$14 for a Non-Resident (\$30 minus \$16) and \$9 for Juniors (\$25 - \$16).

Well, Sky Publishing must have been listening. I received a letter recently indicating that effective May 18, 1992, they no longer require every member to take the magazine. However, there was some bad news in that letter as well.

On July 1, 1990 *Sky and Telescope's* discount subscription price was raised from \$16 to \$18. This meant that an additional \$2 per Regular, Non-Resident, and Junior member was required to meet the cost of subscriptions. The effect of a *Sky and Telescope* price increase is easily calculable. In the 1990/91 fiscal year (the first full year after the price increase) 210 member subscriptions cost the treasury an additional \$420 from the prior year's rate. In the 1991/92 year, 156 subscriptions cost an additional \$312. On July 1, 1992, the discount rate will increase again to \$20 per year. The loss to the treasury from these two "back-to-back" increases will continue to accelerate unless steps are taken to alleviate the situation.

I have proposed the following to the Board of Directors concerning the dues structure of the Society, and the Board is asking all members to vote on these issues at the Family Picnic on July 25 at the Observatory:

Proposal #1: Permanently separate Society dues from all subscriptions obtained as a benefit of membership. Dues are hereby defined as money owed to the Society in order to obtain the benefits of membership only, and excludes any and all discount subscriptions offered as a benefit of membership. There is no obligation to subscribe to any publication, however annual payment of dues will be necessary for a member to remain in good standing, and to obtain discounts on publications offered by the Society.

Proposal #2: Establish dues at the December 1, 1988 rate of \$24 per Regular (Adult) member, \$14 per Non-Resident (Adult) member, and \$9 per Junior member. Family member rates will also remain at \$1 per member per year and are not available to Juniors. Note that this is not a dues increase, as it simply returns to the treasury the amount for each membership classification that was approved in November 1988. These rates will be adequate to meet the financial needs of the Society for at least the next several years. Payment of dues entitles the member to participate in a

group discount subscription to any and all publications offered (in accordance with the By-Laws). Members must remit additional funds for the subscriptions they wish to receive, above and beyond the amount paid for dues. The dues rates mentioned herein can be increased by a majority of members present at any meeting, provided a one month advance notice is provided in the newsletter (again, in accordance with the By-Laws).

Proposal #3: Allow the Treasurer to establish the fees charged for subscriptions to any and all publications offered at discount rates. These fees are to be the exact amount charged to the Society by the publisher, with a reasonable amount allowed for postage and shipping costs in the case of items like the R.A.S.C. Handbook and the Ottewell Calendar in the event a member requests the mailing option.

Simply put, these proposals allow greater flexibility for all members, and allow individuals to "customize" their memberships to suit their needs and budgets. It also protects the treasury, permanently, from price increases in discount subscription rates. Everyone will get what they pay for, and the financial health of the Society will be strengthened by these changes.

The Board of Directors has voted to hold an official membership meeting during the Family Picnic. These issues will be discussed prior to taking a vote, and you will have the opportunity to voice your opinion at that time. We expect to hold the meeting no earlier than 5:00 p.m., depending on the turnout. If you cannot attend the picnic, you can still voice an opinion and cast a ballot or ballots by writing to me at W248 S7040 Sugar Maple Drive, Waukesha, WI, 53186, or by calling me at 414-662-2987 any evening. All members holding any kind of paying membership with the Society are eligible to vote!

If approved, these proposals will become effective on August 1, 1992. I ask all members to delay payment of dues and subscriptions until they receive their September *Focal Point*, which will contain the 1992-93 Membership Renewal Form. As always, dues should be mailed by September 30, 1992 to insure uninterrupted membership and subscriptions.

-Dan Koehler, Treasurer