

From The Editor

I was saddened to learn of the death of Walter Scott Houston, the renowned amateur astronomer, columnist for *Sky and Telescope* magazine and former member of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society.

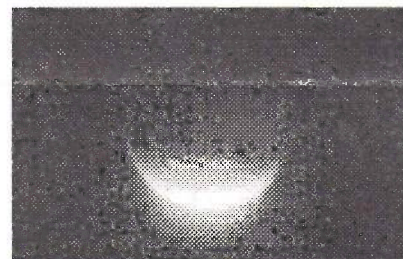
Houston's monthly column, describing his visual impressions of deep sky objects, helped many amateurs learn the skies. Deep Sky Wonders is often the first item I read in the magazine.

Founding MAS member William Albrecht, now living in Hawaii, remembers taking a photograph of Houston when members were building the observatory in the 1930's. He recalled meeting him years later in Cambridge, with Houston recalling Albrecht as "the snot-nosed kid running around."

Edward Halbach, another founding MAS member, recalls gathering at LaVerne Armfield's home observatory -see *Houston*, page 4

Novemeber's eclipse

Member Matthew Genack took this shot of last year's unusual lunar eclipse. Many areas were clouded out (or fogged out). Genack used a 350 mm lens and Fujicolor 100. Exposure time was several seconds.



Astronomy at the South Pole

The February 18th program's guest speaker will be Dr. James Sweitzer, the assistant director for astrophysical research in Antarctica.

The University of Chicago professor will speak on his involvement with astronomy from the South Pole.

Sweitzer is involved in the design and research of infrared telescopes based in Antarctica.

Calendar of Events

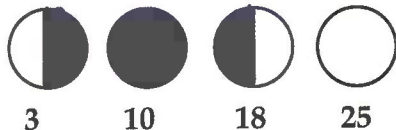
- Feb. 14, Monday, 7:30 pm.....**MAS Board Meeting**
-home of Tim Burrus, 3325 Meadowcroft Ct., Brookfield
- Feb. 18, Friday, 8:00 pm..... **Program Meeting**
-Regency retirement home, 13750 W. National Ave.
- March 2, 7:30pm.....**First Wednesday Meeting**
at the Observatory
- March 14, 7:30 pm.....**MAS Board Meeting**
-home of Brian Ganiere, 2212 E. Stratford Ct., Shorewood

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Late Newsletters

It came to my attention that many January newsletters were late. For this we apologize. The problem seemed to be with the Postal Service. All newsletters were mailed out on Jan. 6. We'll try to work a little farther ahead in the March issue. Call the observatory phone, or Tim Burrus, for program information.



Light pollution update -

-by Dan Koehler

Assembly Bill 344 relating to the regulation of outdoor lighting fixtures now being debated before the Wisconsin State Legislature passed its first critical test on January 12. By a margin of 8 to 3, the twelve member Environmental Resources, Energy, and Utilities Committee (EREUC) voted to pass the legislation on to the Senate/Assembly Joint Finance Committee. The vote came after Rep. Judith Robson attached a Substitute Amendment relating to holiday lighting to the Bill. There were no other changes to the Bill as reprinted in the December 1993 Focal Point.

AB 344 again needs your support as debate on it begins in the Joint Finance Committee. As with the EREUC members, I am asking that you write or phone one or more (preferably all) of the legislators on this committee and voice your strong support of the Bill. Their names, addresses, and telephone numbers are (608-)

Senator Joseph Leraan 115 S. State Capitol 266-0751
(Co-Chairman)

Senator Timothy Weeden 37 S. State Capitol 266-2253
Senator Margaret Farrow 134 S. State Capitol 266-9174
Senator Dale Schultz 4 S. State Capitol 266-0703
Senator Robert Cowles 28 S. State Capitol 266-0484
Senator Mary Panzer 131 B State Capitol N/A
Senator Gary George 40 S. State Capitol 266-2500
Senator Charles Chvala 419 SW State Capitol 266-9170

Rep. Barbara Linton 127 S. State Capitol 266-7690
(Co-Chairman)

Rep. James Holperin 221 N. State Capitol 266-7141
Rep. Gregory Huber 6 N. State Capitol 266-0654
Rep. Mary Hubler 7 N. State Capitol 266-2519
Rep. Spencer Coggs 214 N. State Capitol 266-5580
Rep. Shirley Krug 209 N. State Capitol 266-5813
Rep. Ben Brancel 37 S. State Capitol 266-7746
Rep. Steve Foti 131A S. State Capitol 266-8551

-see *Light*, page 4

Observatory Committee -Jim Kube, Observatory committee Chairperson

The School District of Waukesha's Charles Z. Horwitz planetarium offers a public program schedule. The planetarium is located in the southwest corner of the Lindholm Building, the main offices for the School district of Waukesha, at 222 Maple Ave.

A Viewex Apollo star projector demonstrates the skies seen from earth any time of year, past years or future.

Scheduled public programs are

FREE. -call 521-8858 for reservations. Private groups are \$35. Shows include:

Feb. 15, 7 pm-"To Worlds Beyond", narrated by Patrick Stewart. This new solar system program combines special effects and spectacular closeup images. Modern views of the planets are explored, as well as speculation on past and future life.

-see *Planetarium*, page 4

Double Clicks

- by Lee Keith

Computer group meets

The next meeting of the MAS computer Group will be on Sunday, February 20 at 7:30 pm at my house, which is at 8150 S. Legend Dr. in Franklin.. Call me at 425-2331 for directions. We will be demonstrating the Newton shareware reviewed below. Members should bring an IBM formatted floppy if they want a copy of the software.

Astronomy Lab-shareware for Windows from Personal Microcosms.

Quick! When is Easter this year? When is the next full moon?. When does the earth reach the next perihelion and how far away from the sun will we be? When does spring start in 1998? When is Jupiter's next opposition? Speaking of Jupiter, how will its moons appear at 1:00 UT on April 28, 1994? How many minutes does the true sun differ from the mean sun on any date? You get the picture.

Astronomy Lab can answer this and much more. It's like having your own personal interactive almanac on your desktop.. It can tell you about lunar and solar eclipses, planet info, moon info, three types of twilight times, meteor showers and more.

Much of the information can be shown graphically. For example, a planet's position can be shown as a function of R.A. or Jupiter's moons from earth or above., planet diameter as a function of time. You can follow the size, brightness and position of Mars' change over the course of an apoparition.

There are even animated movies of Jupiter's moons from earth or above, as well as the planets projected on an all-sky map as they move along the ecliptic. Some actual binary stars are animated so you can see their movement around eachother over the decades. There is a planetarium mode, but it is only so-so. If you want lots of stars, look elsewhere. Computer group rating: Four stars out of five. (Five stars is best).

NCRAL 1994 Convention

It's About Time! It's About Space! is the theme of the 48th convention of the North Central Region of the Astronomical League to be held Saturday, April 30, 1994. The event will be sponsored by the Southeastern Iowa Astronomy Club of Burlington, Iowa and held at the PZAZZ! Motor Inn and Conference Center, a Best Western motel, in Burlington.

The convention kicks off with a tour and observing party at the SIAC's John H. Witte Observatory, home of a recently restored 12-inch f/15 Clark refractor, on Friday evening, April 29. Saturday's activities begin with Keynote Speaker Carl Wenning of the Twin City Amateur Astronomers. Mr. Wenning is an Astronomy and Physics instructor at Illinois State University and will talk about today's amateur astronomers.

Dr. Raymond Anderson, Professor of Geology at the University of Iowa, will discuss his research in and around the Manson Meteor Crater in North Central Iowa after Saturday evening's dinner. The convention will also feature astrophoto and astro-trivia contests, displays, vendors, and paper sessions. All M.A.S. members should have received information packets with registration forms in mid-January. If you didn't receive the mailing or have misplaced yours the convention organizers can be reached at:

NCRAL CONVENTION '94, 1901 South 10th Street, Burlington, IA 52601. I have extra registration materials as well. Call me at 414-662-2987. Anyone interested in organizing a car pool or two (perhaps with early and late departure times) from the Milwaukee area? Call me if you're interested. Burlington is a 4 to 4-1/2 hour drive from Milwaukee.
-Dan Koehler

Messier search and chili dump

What's a chili dump? How do I start (or finish) my Messier list? Find the answers on March 12th at dusk at the observatory. We're having a star party to help us get going on our lists. Lee Keith will have the Messier information and logs available at the February meeting. This party is a go, rain or shine. Bring a batch of chili, your own bowl(s) spoon and coffee cup. We will dump everyone's chili onto a large pot and keep it simmering all night. Toppings will be provided. Coffee and hot chocolate will be steaming

Tom Gill has volunteered to print a list of Messier objects which will be observable that night and a suggested order for finding them. We could use some volunteers to help get newer members started. Bring new or interesting equipment for show and tell

Dress appropriately. This is a night to observe if the weather cooperates. Porta-scopes will be available for those who don't have a scope. Bring binoculars, too. There is a Messier certificate for those as well. If it is clear, we'll stay all night or until everyone tires out. Questions? Call Wander Berner at 646-8229 or 691-2360. Berner would also like those with the MAS Equipment Tour videos to return them to the library.

Oxendorf's work featured in national magazine

M.A.S. member Eric Oxendorf recently photographed the world-renown Taliesin, the Spring Green, Wisconsin home of Frank Lloyd Wright for Historic Preservation magazine. He's a professional photographer and studio owner on Milwaukee's east side. Eric's photos accompanied an article in the magazine's November/December 1993 issue detailing the restoration of Taliesin now underway. A copy of this issue is in the M.A.S. historical files.

Saturday Night Keyholders

Feb. 12.....	Wanda Berner 646-8229
Feb. 19.....	Paul Borchardt 781-0169
Feb. 26.....	Marty Brunet 544-1342
March 5.....	Tim Burrus 783-6572
March 12.....	Greg Cieslak 529-0584
March 19.....	Brian Ganiere 961-8745

1994 Membership rosters available

A newly formatted and up-to-date membership roster (dated January 1, 1994) is now ready for distribution. You may pick one up at the February 18 meeting. If you can't make it to the meeting and would like one mailed to you forward a self-addressed stamped envelope (\$.52 postage) to me at W248 S7040 Sugar Maple Drive, Waukesha, WI 53186.

For Sale:

Great Beginner's scope! Meade #4420 4.5 inch reflector, only a year and a half old. Includes German equatorial mount, tripod, 6x30 or 6x24 finder-scopes (use whichever works best for you), Telrad, 25 mm eyepiece and 2x barlow. All this and the box the scope came in for only \$300. Call Andy Manning at 289-0242.

Adventures in Astronomy

is a class offered by UW Waukesha at the Observatory beginning March 30. Call Lee Keith at 425-2331 or Don Bracco at UW-Waukesha, 521-5460 for details. Space is limited.

-Houston, from page 1

-vatory in West Allis with other members, including Houston. The 12-inch reflector they looked through has since been modified and improved and now stands in the observatory and is known as the A-scope, according to Halbach.

He also said that Houston was a member of MAS during the mid-thirties, who went to high school in Milwaukee and college in Madison.

Halbach also recalls a time when he and his wife were in Mexico City. He saw out of the corner of his eye what reminded him of a Scotty Houston pipe. Turning around, he saw the pipe and then saw Houston. "I recognized the pipe first!"

Houston's talents as an observer and a journalist brought many people the joy of observational astronomy. He nurtured an entire generation of amateurs, leaving a wonderful legacy with those who read his columns then look into the night sky.

Wiesen scope to be dedicated in April

President Matthew McNeely says that he hopes to dedicate the Richard Wiesen Memorial telescope at the April general meeting. The 18" Obsession Dobsonian, manufactured by member Dave Kriege's Lake Mills company, should be delivered by then.

-Ernie Mastroianni

-Light, from page 2

In addition to the Capitol Office designation use the following in each address:

For Senators: P. O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882

For Representatives: P. O. Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708

AB-344 has already come a long way but it faces a very uncertain future in this committee, and it still has a long way to go. Your help in supporting the legislation is very, very critical. We need all the positive comments and affirmative support we can muster! Please consider writing at least a brief note of support and forwarding it to the legislator(s) of your choice. A good bet if you're short of time but want to help is to write to at least the Co-Chairs of the Committee.

A one-page letter of several paragraphs describing your thoughts and feelings about AB 344 and why you feel it should continue moving toward law is best however. If you need help pulling your ideas together about light pollution or if you just don't know where to start give me a call (414-662-2987, evenings). I'll be more than happy to point you in the right direction.

-Dan Koehler

-Planetarium, from page 2

On April 12, 19, 26, at 7 pm, will be the show "Cosmic Catastrophes". On the surface of the earth, a complex web of life is dependent on a delicate balance of sunlight, air, water, and other factors for its continues existence. The show investigates potential catastrophies of outer space as well as catastrophes of our planet's human and technology lifestyle.

MAS INFORMATION

MAS Officers

President Matthew McNeely
354-5347

Vice President Tim Burrus
Program Dir. 783-6572

Secretary Dorothy Kube
453-8858

Treasurer Marty Brunet
544-1342

Obs. Director Gerry Samolyk
529-9051

Ast. Obs. Director Paul Borchardt
781-0169

Librarian Sally Waraczynski
321-0918

Assist. Librarian Mary Ann Tangey
327-7976

New Member contact Sally Jo
Michalko
524-9499

Focal Point

Editor Ernie Mastroianni
5821 N. Santa Monica Blvd.
Whitefish Bay
964-5821--Mornings only
224-2228--After 5 pm

Distribution Charlotte Nelson
466-2081

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