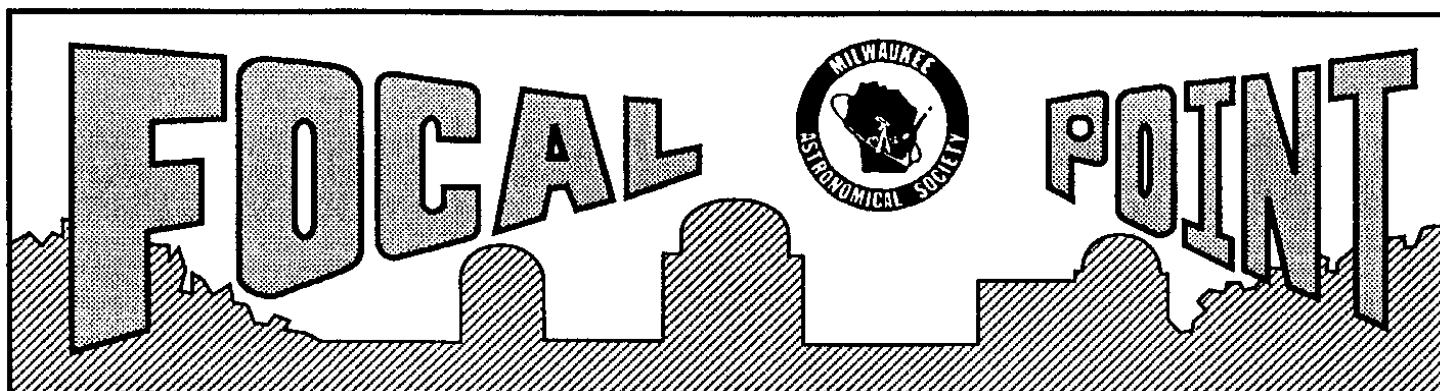




The Newsletter of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society

MidSummer 1999

May 1999 MAS Election Results

As a result of the May 15th meeting, the following is a current list of officers and board members.

<u>Director</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Term</u>
<u>Expires</u>		
S. Laskowski		2001
R. Poklar		2001
*V. Hoag		2002
*D. Yanko	Treasurer	2002
*T. Hoff		2002
*C. Weber		2002
J. Frey		2000
G. Stroud		2000
M. Warner	Secretary	2000
**D. Koehler		2001
**V. Tangney		2001

Ex Officio

S. Jamieson	President
L. Keith	Vice President
G. Samolyk	Observ. Director

Founder Members

E. Halbach	1964
W. Albrecht	1978
M. Lange	1986

Notes:

* Denotes Board member returned to office.

** Denotes newly elected Board member.

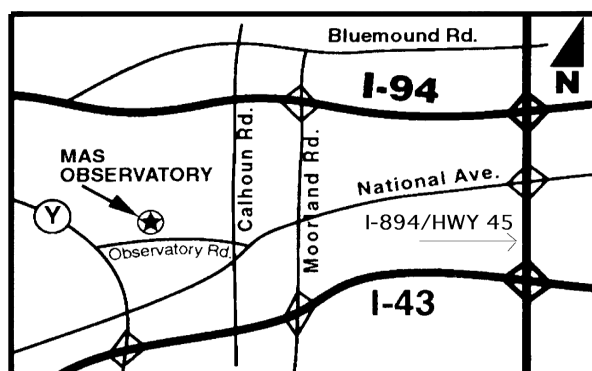
All officers from the previous year were returned to office.

It's MAS Picnic Time!

The Annual MAS picnic will be held on the MAS Observatory grounds on Saturday, July 17th starting around 3:30PM. If last years event is any criteria, this should be marked on your calendars as a must attend event. Treasurer Dan Yanko has again agreed to organize this event. The Board was so impressed with last years bash that they authorized Dan an even larger budget, the bulk of which is for picnic gourmet fixins. Back by popular demand, Chefs Dan, Chris, Vern, et al are reviewing their skills in Parisian culinary arts (smoke em and burn em) in an effort to top last years performance. Its kind of a member appreciation day and a way to encourage people to get to know one another. Members are encouraged to bring family or a guest. Among the activities planned, are a scratch volley ball game for the more athletically inclined. to a torrid Lawn Croquet series of matches. . Also, there will plenty of shady spots under the trees for those who just like to sit around, pop or suds in hand, and visit with one another. Do bring your own lawn chairs though, since our meeting room chairs are neither that comfortable and tend to sink into the lawn. Lastly, JMI has donated a \$50 gift certificate for our picnic. The odds of winning that are good.

Last year, a late staying group lasted until evening descended and did what this group is good at.....got out telescopes and binocs and started watching the universe unfold. **To help Dan with his planning please call him, if possible, if your your going to be there. Dan can be reached at 453-3382 .**

There will be a brief Board meeting at 6:00PM at the picnic . Board members are requested to attend.



Library News

1. **Explore Your Universe: Redshift 2;** CD-ROM for Windows & MacIntosh. (donated by Lee Keith).
2. **Philip's Color Star Atlas Epoch 2000**, John Cox & Richard Monkhouse - 1991. Located in the Charts and Atlas area.)

The following 5 VHS video tapes and 1 audio cassette with explanatory booklet were donated by Tom & Joan Pelnar. These are not prerecorded tapes, so they will not be accessed into the MAS Library, but will be available for member use by the usual sign out procedure.

3. **Asteroids: Deadly Impact**
4. **Asteroid Impact.**
5. **Astronomy & Physics: Science Odyssey.**
6. **Aliens: Are We Alone?**
7. **The Space Shuttle.**
8. **The Winds of Mars** (audio).

Thank you to everyone who has donated materials to the MAS Library. We all have access to a tremendous store of astronomical knowledge.

-Scott Laskowski, MAS Librarian

New Members

Welcome to Scott C. Jorgensen and family whose membership was approved at the June board meeting.

Letter to the Editor

Wanted: A good home.

The ERDT Shared Exchange Program is looking to place a German boy in the US for a 5 month exchange program. The boy is an A student who is fluent in English from Bonn, Germany who loves astronomy. If you would like to sponsor the boy or want more information, call Pat Morris at 321-1232.

Lee Keith & Karen Wesener
leekeith1@juno.com
Voice: (414) 425-2331

Membership Renewal is Coming!

Under separate mailing and later this summer, Membership Chairperson Julie Frey will be providing membership renewal forms to all of us along with reduced rate options for Astronomy and/or Sky and Telescope magazines plus some reduced rate buys on various calendars and handbooks. Please be responsive to her requests by renewing early and keeping this task down to a dull roar.

Humble Thanks for a Humble Task.....

MAS offers humble thanks to Chris Weber for volunteering to cut the grass at the Observatory site. If you haven't noticed, the place is really looking great! If you see Chris, give him your personal thanks!

An Offer We Shouldn't Refuse

On August 11 through 14 there are going to be 25,000 kids at the Oshkosh airport camping for 4 days. Jim's Mobile Inc. will be there doing a number of educational displays, including H-Alpha solar viewing, along with a couple of large telescopes --at least 25 or 30 inch. We are looking for more telescopes for this event. Obviously, not all 25,000 kids are going to get to look through a telescope, and there will be a thousand other displays there.

Nevertheless, If there is anyone from The Milwaukee Astronomical Society that would like to bring a telescope up for one of the nights or all of the nights, JMI will offer a gift certificate for JMI products. The gift certificate would be for a total of \$5 for every inch of in diameter of telescope. In other words, a 20 inch scope would receive a \$100 certificate per night. The event would end each night at 10:30PM, or no later than 11:00pm. With this size of a crowd security will be tight so anyone interested needs to contact Jim Burr. Please call 800-247-0304 to register, and get security clearance. I know that Milwaukee is a fair drive to Oshkosh But I thought that we would make the offer anyway. Does the MAS want to participate in this event and possibly get some gift certificates for the MAS? B scope needs a focuser and JMI sells good ones. JMI also donated a \$50 gift certificate as a door prize for the MAS picnic on July 17.

I would like to here from any interested members to see if we want to bring some scopes to Oshkosh during that time. **Please call Dan Yanko at 453-3382 and let me know if there is any interest.** I will call JMI and get more details.

DAN YANKO

Bits and Pieces

* Other options to replacing the Observatory meeting room were discussed at the June 15 th Board meeting, ranging from fund raising for improving the present building to scaling down the meeting room to scope storage facilities etc. The session was primarily brainstorming one and no decisions were made.

*CCD Camera usage has picked up. CCD ability to work in high ambient light conditions is extending useful life of the Observatory. Club may consider acquiring another Imager and accessories in the future

*Some consideration to allowing Observatory shed (on tracks) scopes being available with the yard access key.

*Neil Simmons was approved as a new keyholder.

Observer Report -Tracking Pluto

The writer had read the manual on the Santa Barbara ST6 a lot more than he reads most manuals and decided some “hands on” use of the ST6 and software was a needed step to really grasp the use of the club’s CCD imager.

On Friday evening, June 18th, I found both Gerry Samolyk and Scott Jamieson working in A Scope. Gerry had imaged Pluto the night before and was attempting to get a second nights shot at Pluto to illustrate the use of the CCD as a tracking tool (showing Pluto’s motion, in this case). Friday night turned out to be mostly cloudy with infrequent and brief “holes”. As a result, a second day’s Pluto image could not be clearly accomplished and the attempts were halted for the evening. The thing that astonished me was that the CCD would come up with partial images of Pluto and some stars when I would have sworn that no hole in the clouds was obvious! However, thick clouds eventually rolled in ending the nights effort

The following night was my night to open the Observatory and I again prevailed on Scott to come out and continue my “hands on” tutoring with the CCD (as well as a review of some Scope operations). This Saturday nite was relatively clear with a half Moon. Scott arrived and asked what objects I would like to image. I said I’d like to try and image Pluto again in an attempt to get a second image to illustrate its motion against a star field. Scott pointed out that the ST6 used with our A- scope looked at a 11 x 8 arc minute sector of the sky. Trying to center this field on Pluto, a 14th magnitude source, amongst other 14th mag, stars may involve more than just setting the scope to the RA/Dec for Pluto. In spite of our best efforts to get an accurate RA calibration and then set the scope to Pluto’s coordinates, the resulting imaged star field did not look like the star pattern (containig Pluto) that Gerry imaged on Thursday nite. Instead of incrementally stepping our 11 x 8 field around (could be very time consuming) we opted to use Gerry’s map matching technique demonstrated the nite before.

Gerry had called up Guide 6.0, a comprehensive computer star chart/catalog, centered it on Pluto, and overlayed an 11’x 8’ outline box (also centered on Pluto). The star field

continued next column

Observer’s Report continued

3

was oriented in the same N/S direction as our CCD image. Further , the Guide 6 displayed field was commanded to display up to 17th mag stars. The Guide 6 star chart was displayed together with the CCD image (that was continually being updated) on the same monitor. Using Gerry’s scheme, Scott and I were able to find our imaged pattern of stars on the Guide 6 star chart, approximately 20 arc minutes east of Pluto! Instead of an area type hunt, we were able to “beep” the fine slew paddle and match the imaged star field patterns with Guide 6 as we walked the CCD 11x8 field into the Pluto region. I call it the “Rand-McNally drive your scope approach” to finding the right locale! Having the scope properly centered, a refined CCD image was then obtained.

Shown on the lower left is the image of Pluto (arrow) obtained by Gerry on Thursday nite (06/17/99). Shown on the lower right is the Pluto image obtained primarily by Scott (with a trainee assist from me) on Saturday nite (06/19/99). One image appears to be more sharply focused than the other but, if you look closely, the fixed star patterns in both images are identical. The motion of Pluto (arrows) in the two day period is also readily apparent. It has traversed roughly 3 arc minutes in 48 hours and is a good illustration of the CCD as a tracking tool.

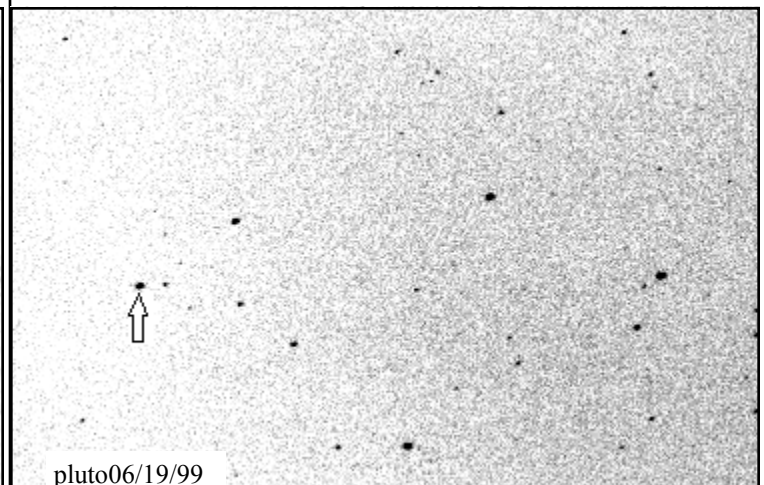
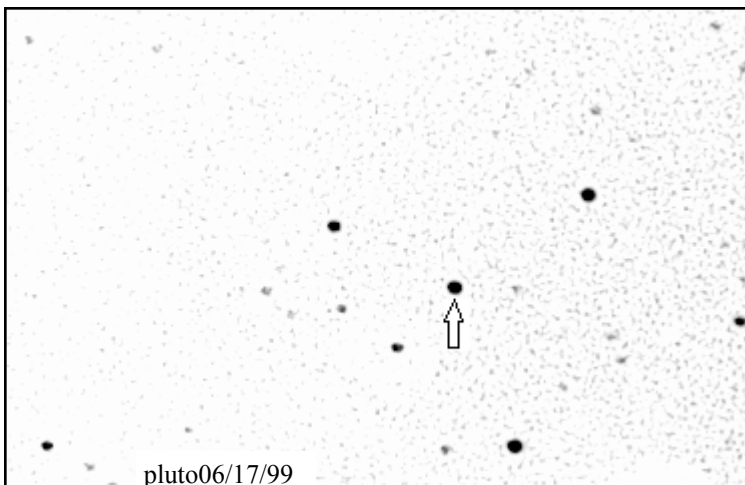
Pluto’s motion is obviously well defined in today’s environment but if you replace Pluto with Asteroid or Comet, (especially something new on the scene), you now have a tool for helping to define the orbital or trajectory parameters. With an accurate time hack on the recorded image, extrapolating the coordinates of the object (from coordinates of nearby stars) shouldn’t be difficult. When this data is added to observations made by others, refining the orbital or trajectory parameters can be done by interested agencies.

Anyway , this particular exercise was a fascinating event for me. My personal thanks to Gerry and Scott for their willingness to work with me.

-Editor

Ed’s note:

I would really appreciate inputs from other observers, including new members. In the case of new members, their observation reports would help encourage others.



“A” Scope CCD images taken two days apart and showing Pluto’s motion (see arrows).

MAS Officers/ Staff

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

Future MAS Events

MAS Open House: Aug 13, 27; Sep 24; Oct 1
 Annual Picnic (Observatory) Sat. July 17
 Greenbush (North Kettle Moraine) Campout Oct. 8 & 9

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 Chairperson Julie Frey, 11040 W. Meinecke Avenue, Milwaukee WI.**

Focal Point Publishing Guidelines

Focal Point Newsletter is published monthly from Sept through 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**July**

3	Tim Burrus	783-6572
10	Terry Ross	784-2093
17	Gerry Samolyk	529-9051
24	Tom Schmidtkunz	352-1674
31	Dan Yanko	453-3382

Aug.

7	Wanda Berner	646-8229
14	Paul Borchardt	781-0169
21	Brian Ganiere	538-3888
28	Brian Garness	538-3888

Sept.

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

** If members want to be assured of observatory access on a given Saturday nite, they should call the keyholder ahead of time.*

PLEASE NOTE: The above keyholder list reflects additons and deletions to previous lists. Please discard any prior list.

MAS Observatory 542-9071

The Milwaukee Astronomical Society

2933 N.68th Street
 Milwaukee, WI. 53210-1208

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**Annual MAS Picnic, Saturday July 17th at 3:30PM*

** MAS Open houses, Aug. 13 & 27, Sept. 24, Oct. 1*

**September is membership renewal time*

