



The Newsletter of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society

January 2000

Moving Forward Into 2000

The last couple of months have been full of interesting events for our club.

* The new gearbox for the dome drive on "A" scope has finally arrived and will be installed this month.

* Work has been started on the improvements to "C" shed. It is a 12x12 roll-of-roof design with elevated walls and rails to allow use even in the winter snow season.

* A 10 inch F/6 Meade Research Series Newtonian reflector has been donated to the club for use in the "C" shed. This fast Newtonian has a nice wide field and is very heavily built. Mounted on the Cieola German-type mount, the telescope will be available with a yard key and will be capable of visual, film or CCD work. As the shortest focal length telescope on a permanent mount on the hill, and with the digital setting circles being added this spring, I believe it will be one of the most heavily used telescopes we own.

* The new St-9 CCD imager has arrived and looks great! With its increased overall sensitivity and vastly improved blue sensitivity we should be able to penetrate even deeper into the cosmos. (see related article)

* I got to try my first grazing occultation! It was great fun and even though we had recorder problems, I can easily see the thrill of mapping the mountains of the moon. When I think about the fact that I personally saw 3 different mountains eclipse the star, it seems to make the moon seem a little more three-dimensional. It was also nice to work with a number of our friends from the Madison Astronomical Society. There is another graze in January and I plan to be there.

* We had an excellent general meeting in November where Robert Naeye and his own guest from the Netherlands, Govert Schilling, discussed 21st century telescope technology and the search for extra-solar planets. Govert's talk on the possible detection of a planet crossing in front of a stars disk was thrilling, particularly since it has since been confirmed!

* Super novas seem to be popping up all over lately, one even hitting magnitude 4 before starting to fade.

As much fun as these events were, probably the most fun I've had in astronomy lately was watching the excitement of one of our own members as he learns the thrills of astronomy.

Continued on Col.1, Page2

We Meet at UWM on Jan. 21 at 8:00 PM

in Room 133 of the Physics building of the Kenwood Campus (See map inset below). **Our featured speaker will be Richard Kron, Director of Yerkes Observatory reporting on the status of the Sloan Digital Sky Survey.**

This is a large scale program attempting to map the positions of over 100 million galaxies, and establish distances to over one million of these galaxies and Quasars, all being mapped through a 2.5 meter telescope at Apache Point, N.M.. Dr. Kron also directs this survey, which is being accomplished through a consortium of University of Chicago, Fermi Labs, US Naval Observatory et al. The sheer magnitude of this undertaking boggles one's imagination, not to mention the data storage facilities being used. The program was started in 1998 and is expected to be complete in another five years. This talk is an excellent lead-off into the year 2000 and is another one of those in the "don't miss" category.

Directions to the Kenwood campus are pretty straight forward. If your coming from west of Milwaukee, take I94 east to 794, then north on N.Lake Drive. N. Lake Drive turns into Kenwood Blvd. If your coming from north or south of the city, take I 43 to 794 or Locust, then east to the campus.

The monthly MAS board meeting will precede the general membership meeting at 7:00PM. All Board members are requested to attend or advise the President otherwise.

Forward into 2000 continued from Page 1

Carlos Garces has been doing some wonderful work with his video camera on the planets and with film on the moon. His presentations at our meetings in October and November meetings reminded me of the sheer joy that can result from hard work in astronomy. Taking astronomical pictures with film, video cameras or CCD imagers takes careful work and dedication, but the personal satisfaction can be great. Thanks Carlos, for reminding us that this sometimes lonely hobby can be a great deal more fun when you share your enthusiasm with others.

Scott Jamieson, MAS President

Eds Note:

The donated 10 inch F6 newtonian mentioned in the above article was donated by Scott Jamieson himself. Scott is too modest to mention the donor, but on behalf of myself and other MAS members who will use the C facility, thank you Scott for a very generous donation.

Bits & Pieces

* The MAS Christmas Party at Giuseppe's wound up being a good evening of fellowship interspersed with intermittent servings of pizza, pop, and brew. Approximately 35 plus turned up for the event and had a good time.

*The renovation of the "C" scope building and scope have been finalized. The walls will be 4 1/2 feet high and the gabled roof will roll back on a pair of 4 inch I-beams, unveiling a clear shot at the heavens in all directions. The 10 inch F6 newtonian scope (donated by Scott Jamieson) will mount onto a modified Ceola mount to provide all members with access to a superb visual and imaging capable scope. The slab is already in, the I-Beams are on order and the Ceola mount is currently under modification. See the Presidents message on page 1 for added details.

*The new ST9 camera has been received and has already shown its potential for added imaging capability. See the photos on page 3.

* The Lunar graze on Dec.11 had twelve observers show up from the Madison and MAS clubs. They were located along the cable supplied MAS and had a good shot and tracking the moons mountains modulating the grazing star and recording the event, An unfortunate failure of the recorder didn't dampen the enthusiasm for participating in this type of event. Five MAS members participated in this event and most plan to take part in the January 10 th graze. See next column. Several newcomers were involved and all agree its an exciting way of using observing skills to help define Lunar topography. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to partake. If your interested, contact the people listed in the next column.

Library News

Telescopes: How To Choose and Use Them- by Terry Maloney-1968. Though dated, this book is still a fine reference on basic telescope principles. Quaint historical perspectives, how and what to observe still apply today. Again, the descriptions of telescopes and their optics are complete and informative. Donated by Chris Hesseltine.

Scott Laskowski, Librarian

Observers Corner

Graze

We have an opportunity to observe a star graze the south limb of the Moon of Monday night Jan. 10-11. The 6.4 mag star, SAO 165233, will graze about 6 deg. off the south cusp of the 16% sun lit moon at about 7:31 CST. the event will take place 10 degrees above the west horizon. The probable location of our expedition will be just north of Madison.

If it is very cold, we will not use the cable. In that case each observer will need a tape recorder and a shortwave receiver for time signals. Samolyk has radios that may be used for this event. If it's not too cold and enough people are interested, we will use the cable. in this case observers only need to bring a scope. The MAS portascopes were built for this.

If you are interested contact Gerry Samolyk at 414-529-9051 or Bob Manske at 608-849.5287. Final update information can be found on the web at www.madisonastro.org.

More SuperNovas

The SN in NGC 1637 (Eri) is still bright enough to image (image in Dec. newsletter). Additional SN have been discovered in NGC 3184 (UMa), NGC 2986 (Hya), and M61 (Vir). These are great targets for our CCD imagers.

Asteroid Occultations

Looking at Sky & Tel, there are a few good asteroid occultations coming up.

Jan 16-17 1:11 UT (7:11 CST) 49 Pales will occult a 9.6 magn star (TRC1880 1817). The predicted path is just south of Chicago. If an occultation occurs the combined magn will drop by 2.2.

On Feb 14-15 we get a possible double header. At about 4:06 UT (10:06 CST) 195 Eurykleia will occult an 8.3 Magn star (SAO 58392) dropping the light by over 5 mag's. This path is predicted to run down the west shore of Lake Michigan putting the Milwaukee area in prime location.

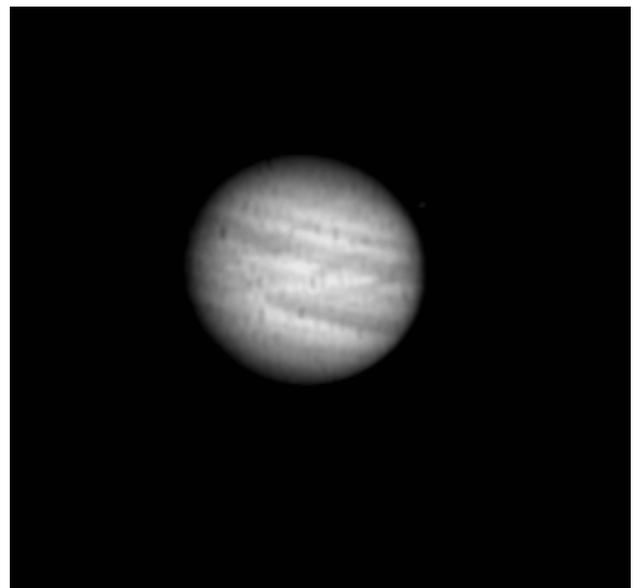
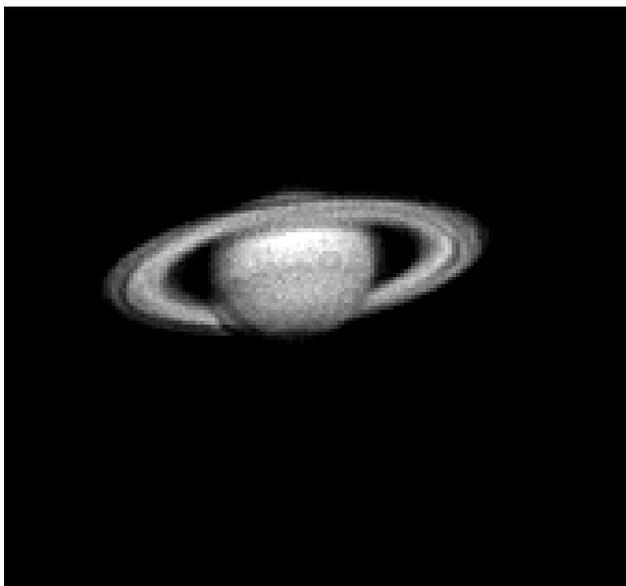
Later that night at 6:58 UT (12:58 AM CST), 6.8 Magn SAO 97095 will be occulted by 102 Miriam dropping the brightness by 7 mag's. Although this path is predicted to run thru Nebraska and Missouri, a north shift may put it in our area.

Charts and last minute shift updates can be found at:

<http://lunar-occultations.com/iota/asteroids/astrndx.htm>.

Information may also be posted at www.madisonastro.org.

All of these stars are within easy reach of small scopes, even in light polluted areas. Observers with shortwave radios and tape recorders are encouraged to time these events recording if and when the target star dims and brightens. The Feb. issue of Sky & Tel shows some of the results that have been obtained from this type of observing.



First images taken with the new Santa Barbara ST9 Imager. Top image show M42, Orion nebula centered on the Trapezium cluster of stars. Lower right is Saturn and lower left is Jupiter, all taken on the 25" Z scope and without eyepiece projection. Images by G. Samolyk, Observatory director

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

Jan. 10-11, Lunar graze near Madison
Numerous occultations and Supernova oppurtunities (See inside).

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**January**

1	Tim Burrus	783-6572
8	Brian Ganiere	961-8745
15	Bryan Garness	538-3888
22	Chris Hesseltine	482-4515
29	Vern Hoag	548-9130

February

5	Tim Hoff	662-2212
12	Scott Jamieson	896-0119
19	Lee Kieth	425-2331
26	Dan Koehler	662-2987

March

4	Scott Laskowski	421-3517
11	Rudy Poklar	262-786-8931
18	Jill Roberts	427-4495
25	Terry Ross	784-1674

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

MAS Observatory 542-9071

The Milwaukee Astronomical Society

12905 W. Crawford Drive
New Berlin, WI. 53151

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit # 4775
Milwaukee, WI.

****We meet at 8:00PM, UWM Kenwood Campus on Friday, Jan. 21, 2000
- Featured speaker will be Dr. Richard Kron on the status of the
Sloan Digital Sky Survey.***

