

# FOCAL POINT

The logo is circular with the text "MILWAUKEE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY" around the perimeter. In the center, there is a stylized map of Wisconsin with a telescope and a star.

Issued by the

MILWAUKEE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

- : FEBRUARY, 1985 : -

## CALENDAR:

Thu., Feb. 14 - St. Valentine's Day

Fri., Feb. 15 - General Program-Meeting, 8 P.M.

Wed., Feb. 27 - March Focal Point deadline

Saturdays - Observatory maintenance and improvement. Call 475-9418 or 258-5626

Sat. Nights - Members night at the observatory

FEBRUARY PROGRAM-MEETING: Not much time goes by before another wonder is discovered in far, far out space. The pulsar is one.

A rapidly spinning neutron star, likely produced by a supernova, may contain a spot of high energy that flashes or pulses like the beam of light from a lighthouse as the star rotates, hence the name pulsar.

In November of 1982, a very regular pulsar turning at 642 revolutions per second was discovered. Our speaker, Dr. John Friedman, will discuss the class and models that fit this type of star in his talk, "How Fast Do Pulsars Spin?"

Dr. Friedman is a professor of physics at UW-Milwaukee, and received his MS at Harvard, PH.D at Univ. of Chicago, and is a Post Doctorate Fellow in physics at Yale.

Hear what he has to say Friday, February 15, 8 P.M. in the Child and Adolescent Treatment Center Auditorium, 9501 W. Watertown Plank Road, Wauwatosa. Guests are welcome.

ONCE AGAIN, MANY THANKS to Apollo Fund Limited for the \$1,000 donation to your Society. MAS member Orin Purinton is President of this organization which has made other generous contributions to the Milwaukee Astronomical Society during the past three years.

The stipulation that the contribution be used for new equipment only will be carried out.

The Milwaukee Astronomical Society greatly appreciates this donation and other monies it receives to advance this great organization towards realization of its aims.

GOOD PUBLICITY! The Milwaukee Astronomical Society observatory was considered worth a stop in the Thursday, Jan. 31, Milwaukee Journal's "Hi, Neighbors" feature in the Accent Section.

The informative article concentrated on Milwaukee's neighbor to the southwest, New Berlin.

NEW MEMBERS recently added to the MAS roster are Nolan Zadre and wife Diantha of Milwaukee. They will be introduced at the February Program-Meeting.

More often than not, new members are not present for the introduction to other members. There is no initiation or embarrassment. All you need to do is make your presence known if you like. Furthermore, you're missing a good program and a chance to meet some congenial people.

SOME MEMBERS MAY NOT BE AWARE that MAS general meetings are held on the third Friday of each month from September through May. First Wednesdays have been discontinued until further notice. Saturday nights are reserved for any member to pursue a pet project, poke around the sky, or partake in the Comet Halley, or Messier and/or Herschel object searches.

Regarding use of the observatory during the winter months, it might be best to call the keyholder in charge for a particular week before coming out. Keyholders may come out any time.

OBSERVATORY NEWS: Owing to member Nick Nichols' generosity, deep snow was cleared from the observatory parking lot. Our filar micrometer, a device used for measuring celestial object size, is nearly finished. Do not run the B-dome shutter all the way up or it will bind. We now own an overhead projector.

Special thanks to Mike Zahorik for doing a super job as our grounds-keeper. It's a big task.

COMET HALLEY will be the star feature this year and in 1986. It will be the main topic at all Open House programs. MAS observers will begin looking for it in March. Unfortunately, it may be somewhat dim owing to its position and that bug-a-boo, light pollution. The 16th magnitude object is now in Orion north of Lambda Orionis (the brightest star in the hunter's head), and is now crossing Jupiter's orbit.

The Earth will pass through Comet Halley's orbit in May, 1986. Debris should provide some spectacular meteor showers. The Eta Aquarids (May, 10-40/HR) and the Orionids (Oct., 10-70/HR) are associated with Comet Halley.

MAS member Brian Cieslak is the leader of the Society's effort in the international Halley's Comet Watch. If you'd like to join in this activity, call 679-9663.

GRAZES: Interested MAS members are invited to join expeditions to observe the following grazing occultations:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>MAG.</u>	<u>% SUNLIT</u>	<u>CUSP ANGLE</u>
3/0-1	12:18	6.3	62	3.8°N
3/25-26	7:04	6.4	17	2.6°S
4/22-23	8:02	4.5	7	4.3°N
4/29-30	10:46	4.7	71	9.5°N

More information will follow.

A graze occurs when the Moon passes a star so closely that the star intermittently disappears and reappears as the Moon's mountains and valleys pass by.

People participating in graze expeditions can deduct expenses for tax purposes. Gerry Samolyk has forms.

"NORTHERN LIGHTS" will soon publish its March edition.

Considered official newsletter of the North Central Region of the Astronomical League, this interesting quarterly "Roams the Region" and publishes news and unusual astronomical items.

Subscriptions for the four issues are a bargain at \$2.50 per year. Remit to J. H. Fox, 14601 55th St. S, Afton, Minnesota 55001.

He will appreciate short astronomical articles whether you're a subscriber or not.

LOOKING FOR AN UNUSUAL GIFT? Have a star named after yourself or someone else! An ideal Valentine gift. You may name a nameless star in any constellation for \$35.00. It will be registered in the Library of Congress. Call International Star at 1-800-282-3333 for details.

WANTED: Issues 17 through 20 of "TELESCOPE MAKING." Please call Librarian John Wiesen (781-4757).

CANADIAN HANDBOOKS ARE HERE: If you've ordered a copy, please pick it up at the February Program-Meeting or at the home of Treas. Jim Toeller, 407 W. Mall Rd. (352-7144). The price is \$6.00.

ORDERS MAY BE PLACED for "DEEP SKY" magazine. The price is \$6.00 for four issues. Please call Treas. Jim Toeller.

MEMBER'S NIGHT KEYHOLDERS:

Feb. 9	R. Berry	442-4267	Mar. 2	G. Hall	786-8579
16	W. Collins	255-4169	9	C. Hesseltine	482-4515
23	B. Ganiere	425-1384	16	D. Koehler	662-2987

Saturday night is member's night at the observatory. All members are invited to come out to observe, learn how to use the equipment available, or just chat. Call the keyholder the Fri. before his night - cancel Sat. if necessary. Keyholder should report anyway. He will also oversee tours during the week ending with his assigned night. Mr. J. Toeller (352-7144) will act on requests.

- : FULL WORM MOON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6 : -

MARCH FOCAL POINT DEADLINE - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1985

THE UNIVERSE IS FULL OF MAGICAL THINGS PATIENTLY  
WAITING FOR OUR WITS TO GROW SHARPER (EDEN PHILLPOTS).

DIRECTORY:

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