


# FOCAL POINT



Issued by the  
MILWAUKEE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

- : MARCH, 1985 : -

## CALENDAR:

Fri., Mar. 15 - March Program-Meeting, 8 P.M.  
Wed., Mar. 20 - First day of spring!  
Mon., Mar. 25 - Light pollution meeting, 8 P.M.  
Wed., Apr. 3 - April Focal Point Deadline  
Sun., Apr. 7 - Happy Easter!  
Sat., Apr. 20 - NCRAL 39th Annual Convention, Batavia, Ill.  
Saturdays - Observatory maintenance and improvement. Call 475-9418 or 258-5626  
Sat. Nights - Members night at the observatory

MARCH PROGRAM-MEETING: Generally accepted is the theory that stars are born from the chance collisions of particles, which, owing to gravitational attraction, join with other nearby particles. A mass is formed which, over an enormous period of time, grows to a critical size, self-ignites, and becomes a star.

This simple explanation omits the complicated internal processes that occur to create, for example, a star like the Sun. And stars are still being created.

The speaker at our next meeting is Mark Wolfire whose talk entitled "Star Formation," will tell more about this fascinating phenomenon.

Mr. Wolfire has an undergraduate degree from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and will receive an astronomy doctorate from UW-Madison this summer.

Hear him Friday, March 15, 8 P.M., in the Child and Adolescent Treatment Center Auditorium, 9501 W. Watertown Plank Road, Wauwatosa. Guests are welcome.

KUDOS FOR KAREN! MAS member Karen Wesener was awarded a Messier Club Certificate at the February Program-Meeting by Dan Koehler for observing 71 Messier objects from June through November of 1984. This is quite an achievement, and, to the best of our knowledge she is the first person in the Society to accomplish this feat. There are 107 nebulae, clusters, and galaxies in the Messier catalog. All are visible from the observatory's latitude.

To qualify for this certificate, your observing log must contain (1) the type and size of telescope, power used, (2) seeing condition, which is the magnitude of the faintest visible star, and (3) notes on shape, color, number of stars, etc. Seventy objects qualifies for a certificate. For observing all 107 objects, you'll receive an Honorary Citation.

Brian Cieslak (679-9663) and Dan Koehler (662-2987) are the Messier Club officials.

Only 36 more to go, Karen!



LIFE IS FULL OF SECOND CHANCES: The popular MAS Amateur Astronomer's Series classes, so well attended recently, will be repeated starting early in April. All classes will begin at 7:30 P.M. in the observatory auditorium, and will be taught again by Lee Keith.

Even those who aren't sure which end of the telescope to look through will know more than the average bear when they finish the course. Member Karen Wesener never touched a telescope until last summer. She recently received an award for locating and observing 71 Messier objects!

These classes are another benefit you get for your dues. Folks who braved the recent Wisconsin winter found the effort worth while. The Wednesday dates will likely have some of the Society "pros" there to answer questions and give advice or guidance.

Lee is looking for MAS members who have expertise in a particular field of astronomy to lead classes. Ring him at 962-2856, 961-8752, or write to 1230 E. Singer Circle, Apt. 106, Milwaukee, 53212.

The following programs will be presented on the following dates:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
The Neophyte's Guide to Telescopes	Wed., 4/3
"What's Your Power?" and other pressing telescopic questions.	Sat., 4/6
Owner's Guide to the Collimation of Cleaning of a Newtonian Telescope.	Sat., 4/13
All the Extras: Telescope Accessories	Sat., 4/20
Reading the Celestial Roadmap	Wed., 5/1
The Small, The Faint & The Diffuse: Locating Celestial Objects	Sat., 5/4

THANKS AGAIN, MISS ZEMLOCK! The MAS has received a final distribution of \$2,000 from the estate of the late Cora Zemlock.

It was her contribution of the mirror blank that started the 26" Telescope project.

WATCH FOR THIS:

Lee Keith, in charge of the MAS Amateur Astronomer's Series classes, has had an article written by him accepted for publication in Milwaukee's Astronomy Magazine. Entitled "Defeating Dew," the article is scheduled to appear in the April, 1985 issue. It will soon be available at your local news stand.

OUR NEWEST MEMBERS ARE Kenneth Waraczynski and wife Sally. They are residents of Milwaukee. Welcome to the Milwaukee Astronomical Society.

LIGHT POLLUTION is not only a serious problem but wasteful as well. Those whose work or pleasure is to view the skies may find seeing increasingly difficult, especially if they're seeking Comet Halley which is now rushing to within view of thousands of large and small viewing devices.

John Asztalos is having an organizational meeting to form a committee to at least do something about existing and future light pollution in the vicinity of the observatory. Anyone interested (there must be many) should meet at John's home at 411 N. 61st St., Monday, March 25, at 8 P.M.

An inexpensive, simple solution would be cooperation. We hope the City of New Berlin will consider our suggestions and proposals.



MANY DIFFERENT TALENTS can be found in any large group of people and MAS members are no exception.

One of our members, Henry Witkowski, is a philosopher and a prolific poet and has written many philosophical poems.

Here is one:

IN THE TELESCOPE'S ARC

The wind doesn't ask where it may blow,  
for it has no mind, or will to know,  
And it whirls, and swirls as blind can be  
where God's Laws lead, as in you and in me:

And sure, those Laws--- awake, or asleep  
are with us now, as they are in the deep----  
Whereto we look in the telescope's arc  
for the lights out there in Creation's mark:

And though we believe no wind is in space,  
nor thoughts, or hopes, or faith, or grace---  
We certainly know that God is there,  
for He lives in us, in the rocks and the air!

OBSERVATORY NEWS: The filar micrometer, a device for measuring celestial objects, is in use. The A-dome will need repainting. Electrical work will soon begin in the Zemlock Building. Need observers for grazes (see February Focal Point) and timers for Jupiter's satellites as they occult one another. We have an occultation timer for testing your reaction time as you observe the disappearance of a star when occulted by the moon. Shows image of simulated moon and star. The rest room door is still being left open, a very costly oversight. Please pick up your pre-ordered OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK from Treas. Jim Toeller. R.A. and declination drive designs for the 26" 'scope are continuing. Cub Scouts will plant trees at the observatory this spring.

CONVENTIONS:

REGIONAL: The 1985 Annual Convention of the North Central Region will meet in the Fermilab National Accelerator Laboratory in Batavia, Illinois. The date is Saturday, April 20. The host is the Naperville Astronomical Association.

Obtain complete information from Frank Roldan (344-2354).

NATIONAL: TUCSON '85, this year's Astronomical League National Convention, will meet in Tucson, Arizona, Monday, June 17 through Saturday, June 22, 1985.

TUCSON '85 will host a number of other groups so this convention will be a big bang with much, much going on! The warm, dry, sunny weather and the many research telescopes around Tucson makes this an astronomer's paradise.

Read your February, 1985 THE REFLECTOR for full details or write Joe Stanley, University Conference Dept., Univ. of Arizona, 1717 E. Speedway, Tucson, AZ 85719.

COMET NEWS: This is the year of the comet! Comet Halley will be featured at all of the MAS public Open Houses.

Please see your February, 1985 THE REFLECTOR for a lot of articles about Comet Halley.

The comet is now located in Orion, east of star Aldebaran, at about 5 hours R.A. and plus 17° decl., approx. 17.7 mag., moving eastward.

MEMBER'S NIGHT KEYHOLDERS:

Mar. 9	C. Hesseltine	482-4515	Apr. 6	F. Roldan	344-2354
16	D. Koehler	662-2987	13	T. Schmidtkunz	276-9675
23	N. Nichols	542-2055	20	P. Smitka	785-0926
30	J. Pfannerstill	475-6494			

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 PINK MOON FRIDAY, APRIL 5 : -

APRIL FOCAL POINT DEADLINE - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 1985

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THE MOST INCOMPREHENSIBLE THING ABOUT THE UNIVERSE  
IS THAT IT IS COMPREHENSIBLE (Albert Einstein)