



The Newsletter of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society

May-June 2002

Presidents Corner

By Scott Jamieson

I have been very gratified by the enthusiastic response to our efforts to find a permanent dark sky site to relocate the MAS facilities. For some reason there has been very little negative response and a great deal of excitement over the possibilities. My own view is that this is the ideal time to make this move if we are ever going to do it. I recently made an early morning trip to the Southern Kettle Moraine to take a look at the skies for myself. While there was a 70 % moon on the horizon and the dim glow of dawn was visible in the north-east, I was able to enjoy a beautiful dark sky for a short time. It has been a long time since I have seen the North American Nebula with my eyes, but there it was just as plain as day (Almost said day!). The Milky Way was very distinct and I was able to trace the major dark lanes easily. There were several dim glows in the south indicating Messier objects that I have always heard were actually visible to the eye but have never seen before. I remembered to check for faint stars and later determined that I had seen 5.3 magnitude even in the beginning dawn. I would expect the sky is even darker with no moon in the middle of the night, but several trips over the next two months will explore how good it can be..

It is well known that the CCD cameras are capable of incredible work, even with bad light pollution due to the ability to process the images mathematically. A dark sky site would make these instruments capable of even more amazing feats, but this by itself would not justify this move. The real reason we are considering this move is to dramatically improve the ability to do visual astronomy and film photography for all of our members. I am convinced that many more members would come out to the MAS site if the skies were much darker. Many people I have talked to over the past 5 years have told me that it is not worth bringing their telescopes out to the hill when

they have better skies at home. I must agree and find that I only take my big scope out to the hill on rare occasions more connected to the social aspects of the club than the belief that I can actually see more from the hill. Visual observing is still the biggest joy in astronomy and the heart of the future of this, and any other astronomy club.

All of us have seen beautiful color pictures of the Milky Star clouds taken with a guided camera and small telescope. This requires a dark sky since the same degree of "processing" (developing) possible with CCDs is not practical with film. Even more difficult is deep sky photography through the telescope. The long exposures required and manual guiding take too much effort only to find that sky glow has ruined your hard work.

Our intention is to continue to hold meetings in the Milwaukee area as there is no real reason to drive a long way for a meeting. This also eliminates the need to construct a large building on a new site. Moving of all of the current observatories is going to be enough of a project and will probably be a two year effort.

So what are the real chances of us getting some property within a state park area? We don't really know at this point. We will be meeting with other clubs that have observatories on state owned land to get a feel for the advantages and disadvantages of this approach. The obvious advantages include the possibility of low cost land. The disadvantages include having to make a much larger commitment to public viewing, which in turn requires much more of a commitment by you, our members.

Another difficulty may be severe restrictions on how the facilities are constructed (i.e. require architects, professional construction etc.) which could wipe us out financially. Please be assured that we are looking at this very carefully and your board is considering all aspects of this project. Over the next few months a summary of

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2 the possible sites and full project cost estimates along with a summary of our clubs' assets will be completed and presented to your board of directors, so make sure they know how you feel!

The final answer may be that we can't afford to move or should not move for various reasons, but this decision must be made with the knowledge that this may be the last time it is possible to find a suitable site. The sky is not getting darker and land is not getting cheaper or more available.

My correct e-mail address is SJamiem16@aol.com if you want to contact me directly.

Some great images by our Observatory Director

Gerry Samoylk sent me the images seen below and I thought they were stunning. The first one is of Jupiter in all its colorful splendor.



This Jupiter image was taken on January 12, 2002(UT) thru the Z scope. Three images thru Red, Green and Blue filters were combined to produce the color. All images were 0.11 seconds. One advantage of the short exposures that is possible with the CCD is the ability to freeze the seeing.



The second one is of the Comet I-Z. The comet I-Z image was made up of several exposures combined totaling 100 seconds. It was taken with the Tangney observatory with the ST-9 unfiltered on March 11, 2002.

MAS open house schedule for 2002

April 26th.....Saturns Rings

May 3rd.....Constellation Myths

May 24th.....Women are from Venus, Men are from Mars.

August 9th.....Perseid Meteor shower

September 6th.....The Milky Way

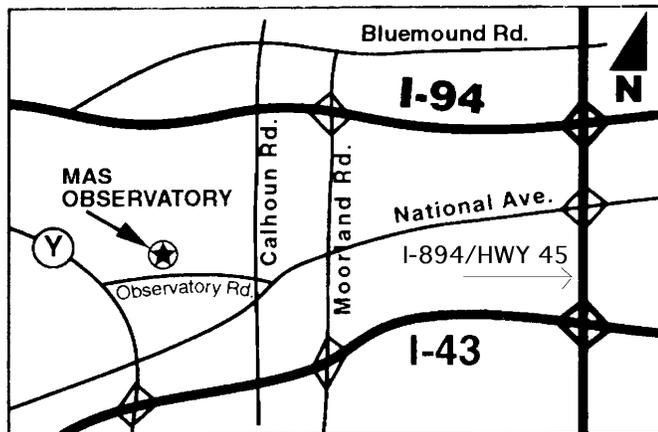
September 27th.....Planets around other stars?????

Volunteers Needed!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

MAS is in need of volunteers to speak for the May 24th and August 9th open houses. Please contact Lee Keith at leekeith1@juno.com or phone him at 414-425-2331 if you are interested.

3 MAS May Meeting

The next meeting of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society will be held on May 17th at the observatory. The Board meeting will be at 7:00pm all board members are expected to attend and the general meeting will be at 8:00pm. Don't forget elections will be held this meeting.



MAS Picnic

By Vern Hoag

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the annual picnic at the observatory on July 13th this year. You're welcome to come out early and have a beverage or two and try some hot delicious popcorn. The picnic is a great time to meet our newer members and catch up with old friends. Come see our newer equipment and have a good time with your fellow members. Hope to see you all there.

Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome the following new members to MAS. Peter and Laurie Bartsch, Sean, Sarah and Rachel Haggerty and Stacey Haggerty. We hope you will enjoy your membership and please don't be afraid to get involved and please don't be afraid to ask questions.

Announcements!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Got the old magazines Blues!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Donate those old unneeded back issue's of Astronomy and Sky & Telescope magazines to the MAS, to give out at open houses. They will be put to good use inspiring the next generation of Astronomers. Just leave them at the observatory with a note that they are to be given away or call Lee Keith at 414-425-2331

How to find it?

by Gary Parson

I would like to apologize for the shortness of this newsletter and the absence of my normal column **How to find it**. Health reasons have curtailed my normal efforts. I hope to be back at 100% by the July-August issue. Once again I am sorry.

Gary Parson
Editor

Do you have an email Address

If you have an email address that is new or changed please contact me via email at gpar1951@prodigy.net or call me at 262-895-3015.

Library News

By Scott Laskowski MAS Librarian

There are several new books in our library. The first is: **Photoelectric Photometry of Variable Stars** A practice guide for the smaller observatory by Douglas S. Hall and Russell M. Genet-1989. **P.E.P.** is more for the technically advanced MAS members that will gain data for scientific research. Variable star observations can be visual, or the use of CCD-which is more accurate but time consuming or PEP which is slow but more accurate than visual. PEP may be outdated by CCD observations of variable stars but can still be valuable of real-time observations, such as asteroids occultation's. The whole method of PEP and the evolution of equipment and history is described in very technical terms. Recommended by Chris Hesseltine.

For the History Section- Available to members upon request.

Nearby Galaxies Atlas: by R. Brent Tully & Richard Fisjer-1987. This book contains charts of galaxies, there types but no foreground star to guide us as a usable search aid. But a conception of perspective for local extragalactic structure is mapped. (Donated by Lee Keith)

The Stars: A new way to see them by H.A.Rey-1952-66. Not a 1st edition but a classic for history, this is an old and very forthright guide for learning the night sky. There is a copy in the **Take and Borrow section** of the MAS library.(Donated by Rudy Poklar) (The hard cover for the MAS history section was donated by Virgil Tangney).

4 MAS Officers/ Staff

President Scott Jamieson 262-896-0119
Vice President Lee Keith 414-425-2331
Treasurer Dan Yanko 414-453-3382
Secretary Henry Gerner 414-362-4441
Observatory Director
 Gerry Samolyk 414-529-9051
Assistant Observatory Director
 Paul Borchardt 262-781-0169
Focal Point Gary Parson, Editor 262-895-3015

Future MAS. Events

May 17th regular monthly meeting at the MAS observatory at 8:00pm, The June 21st, Regular monthly meetings at MAS observatory 8:00pm July 13th there will be a board meeting at the MAS picnic.

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 Chairman, Carlos Garces, 16430 Melody Drive, New Berlin, WI. 53151. Phone: **262-786-2623**. Email : cgarces@wi.rr.com

Focal Point Publishing Guidelines

Focal Point Newsletter is published bi-monthly (Sep Nov Jan Mar May and 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 Mail, or diskette in a text or Word compatible format, if possible. Submit FP inputs to:

MAS Focal Point c/o Gary Parson
 7521 E Wind Lake Rd
 Wind Lake, WI 53185-1513 – Email glpar1951@prodigy.com.

Saturday Key holders

May

4 Carlos Garces 262-786-2623
 11 Brian Garness 262-538-3888
 18 Chris Hesseltine 414-482-4515
 25 Vern Hoag 262-548-9130

June

1 Tim Hoff 262-662-2212
 8 Scott Jamieson 262-896-0119
 15 Lee Keith 414-425-2331
 22 Dan Koehler 262-662-2987
 29 Scott Laskowski 414-421-3517

MAS Open House's

April 26.....Saturn's Rings
 May 3.....Constellation Myths
 May 24.....Women are from Venus and men are from Mars
 August 9.....Perseid Meteor showers
 September 6...The Milky Way
 September 27...Planets around other stars????????????

Loaner Telescopes (available to members for local use)

Lee Keith (Franklin) 414-425-2331 8" Dob reflector
 Scott Jamieson (Waukesha) 262-896-0119 8" Dob reflector
 Paul Borchardt (MAS site) 262-781-0169 6" Dob reflector

MAS Observatory 262-542-9071

MAS Web Page: www.milwaukeeastro.org

The Milwaukee Astronomical Society

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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**The MAS May 17th and June 21st meetings will be at the observatory. The board meeting will be at 7:00pm and the general meeting will be at 8:00pm.*

