

Focal Point



The Newsletter of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society

Sept.-Oct. 2003



Picnic Wrap-up

By Vern Hoag
MAS Vice President



Members signing up and checking out the great door prizes given by our generous sponsors this year.

Even with the uncertain weather and the rain hanging over our heads we had a very nice crowd for the annual picnic. In fact more people than in the last couple of years. Seems like we're getting more and more people every year. What looked like our first wet picnic in years turned out to be a very nice day. We had some nice conversations with new members and of course us long time members. Even some Frisbee and football tossing going on. The buildings were open, tours given, equipment training and keys given out. There was a lot going on, just to bad the skies didn't clear to get some observing in. Even at that there were members here until around 8:30 or so.

As always our sponsors played a big part in our door prizes. I'd like to thank Anacortes Telescope and Wild Bird, Astronomy Magazine, Jim's Mobil, Meade Instruments, Orion Telescope and Binocular, Sky & Telescope

Magazine, and Yerkes Observatory. Most of these companies have showed support for our club for a number of years. Please show your appreciation by purchasing your astronomy equipment from them.

And like every year I get a lot of help from the members, I'd like to thank two of the regulars Gerry Samolyk and Chris Weber. Also the Diesso's; Steve, Sean, David and Genny for helping unload setup and run the door prize table. I'd like to give a special thanks to my wife Diane. Every year she puts a lot of work and effort into helping me with the picnic. To all the people that offered to help out but we didn't need the help at the time (you know who you are), thank you I appreciate you offering.

To all of you that came out, thank you, I hope you all enjoyed yourselves.

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The picnic is about getting together with fellow members enjoying each other's company, sharing knowledge, having some grilled food, maybe winning a door prize and just having fun. We enjoy doing the picnic and would like to see the grounds full of members. If you have any questions or comments about the picnic please feel free to contact me at vern.hoag@bradleycorp.com thank you again and I hope to see you all next year.

Another Successful Asteroid Occultation

By Gerry Samolyk
MAS Observatory Director



On the night of July 12, the shadow of the star TAC +02#09343 cast by the asteroid (747) Winchester passed across Wisconsin. There were a few factors that made this event a challenge to observe. The occultation occurred late in the evening twilight leaving a small amount of time to locate the target star. In addition, the field was only 40 degrees from a full Moon.

The moonlight prevented the target star (mag 12) from being seen visually in any scope smaller than the Z Scope, where the event was successfully observed visually. Scott Jamieson and Gerry Samolyk set up CCD cameras in the most rapid capture mode possible in an attempt to record the event. This is the second time this year that we have successfully recorded an occultation of a star by an asteroid. More on this event will be covered in the program at the Sept meeting.

Observatory Cleanup

By Gerry Samolyk
MAS Observatory Director

Anyone who has been to the observatory in the last couple of months probably noticed some changes. All of the unused concrete has been removed. This includes the pier from the old satellite shed; the pier for the patrol camera; and the concrete mount and pier along the west side of the property have been removed.

The credit for this work goes to our member (and neighbor) Jeff Wild. Jeff is working toward the rank of Eagle Scout. As part of his community service, Jeff organized the donation of the equipment and labor to break up the concrete and the dumpsters for its removal.

He also organized a work party of scouts who removed much of the buckthorn that has been growing along our parking lot and along the property lines. They also spread topsoil in the areas where the concrete was removed.

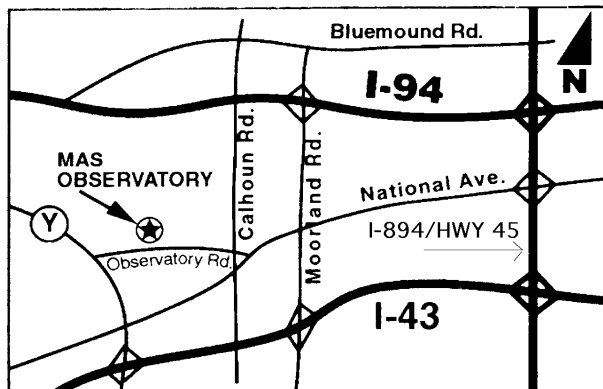
Jeff's family also pitched to help on these projects. They also cut our grass while our lawn tractor was in the shop for repair.

I would like to extend a thank you to Jeff and the Wild family for their help. Donated efforts like this are what built our observatory and keeps us going.

MAS General Meetings Return

General meetings return this month on September 19th at 8:00pm. Gerry Samolyk will be talking about asteroid occultation's and I'm sure variable stars will also be discussed. The meeting will take place at the observatory and will be preceded by a board meeting at 7:00pm. Hope to see you there.

See Map on Page 3



MAS Open House Schedule

By Lee Keith

September 5th.....Craters of the Moon
 October 3rd.....Mars at its Best

All open houses start at 8:00pm and all MAS members are invited to come down and help if possible. For non-members we ask for a \$2.00 donation per carload for parking and we also ask that they bring a jacket along to protect themselves from not only the cool night air but also the MOSQUITOES!!! There will be slide programs and an opportunity to look at the moon, planets and stars through the many telescopes we have, weather permitting.

Welcome New MAS Members

We would like to welcome Seven new members:
Margery O'Brien and Family from New Berlin
Gary Edwardson and family from Pewaukee
Jonathan Kinney from Milwaukee
Nora O'Brien and family from Cottage Grove WI
Charles Miklos Jr and family from Monroe WI
Antonio Vargas and Family from Wauwatosa
Wayne Wielebski and family from New Berlin.

Library News

By Scott Laskowski

Finder Charts of the Messier Objects: Vol. 1-M 1 thru M55, Vol. 2-M M56 thru M110 by Brent Watson-1993 Some experienced amateur astronomers have said that the only good use for a telrad is to pound nails and that doesn't work. But seriously many stargazers find that 1X magnification device or sighting mechanism with an illuminated reticle or bulleye very useful for finding deep sky objects. Find it in the telrad; find it in the finderscope, find

it in the telescope.

These two finder charts with the exact position for the Messier objects have a Telrad position on the star maps. Point the telescope to the area in the sky with the telrad bulleye and there it is, or at least very close by. Useful information is also included for each designated object such as: Its description, Type, magnitude, distance, apparent size and real diameter. (Donated by MAS member Rudy Poklar)

For Sale:

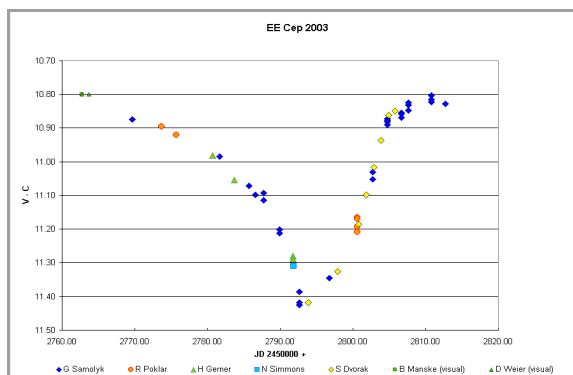
Now is the time to see Mars up close. 2 Celestron 8" Schmidt-Cassegrain C-8's, one w/Super-Polaris mount and the other on a fork mount w/clock-Drive Both complete w/tripods. Optically and Mechanically both telescopes are as good as the day they left the factory. Also available is a virtually new C-90, with carrying case and tripod. All telescopes open to offer. Please contact MAS member Aris Penikis at (414)354-9708.

EE Cep – 2003 Project Results

By Gerry Samolyk
 MAS Observatory Director

Last spring, this newsletter put out a call for observations for this years EE Cep eclipse. Several of our members made visual and CCD observations during the eclipse this spring. We also got some help from Shawn Dvorak, an active observer from Florida. The resulting light curve is shown below.

One quick look at the lightcurve makes it obvious that this is not an ordinary binary system. The asymmetrical shape is beyond anything that can be caused by two stars in an elliptical orbit. It turns out that the occulting object is very unusual. This will be one of the topics discussed in our program at the September meeting.



6 MAS Officers/ Staff

President	Scott Jamieson	262-896-0119
Vice President	Vern Hoag	262-548-9130
Treasurer	Chris Weber	262-789-7128
Secretary	Henry Gerner	414-774-9194
Observatory Director	Gerry Samolyk	414-529-9051
Assistant Observatory Director	Paul Borchardt	262-781-0169
Focal Point	Gary Parson	262-895-3015

Future MAS. Events

MAS general meetings will resume on Sept. 19th. The board will meet at 7:00pm and the general meeting will be at 8:00pm

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 email, Mail, or diskette in a text or Word compatible format. Submit FP inputs to: email gparson@wi.rr.com or

MAS Focal Point c/o Gary Parson
7521 E Wind Lake Rd
Wind Lake, WI 53185-1513

Keyholders list

Sept

6	Terry Ross	262-784-2093
13	Gerry Samolyk	414-529-9051
20	Tom Schmidtkunz	414-352-1674
27	Wanda Berner	262-691-2360

Oct.

4	Chris Weber	262-789-7128
11	Dan Yanko	414-453-3382
18	Neil Simmons	262-889-2039
25	Paul Borchardt	262-781-0169

Nov

1	Tim Burrus	262-548-6372
8	Steve Diesso	262-641-0331
15	Brian Ganiere	414-961-8745
22	Carlos Garces	262-786-1623

MAS Open House's

The open house schedule will be Sept 5, craters of the moon and Oct 3, Mars at its best.

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
Chirs Weber(New Berlin)	262-789-7128	8" Dob reflector

MAS Observatory 262-542-9071

MAS Web Page: www.milwaukeeastro.org

The Milwaukee Astronomical Society

C/O Gary Parson
7521 E Wind Lake Rd
Wind Lake, WI 53185

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**The Next MAS General and board meetings will be held on September 19th.
The board will meet at 7:00pm and the general meeting will be at 8:00pm at the Observatory.*