



Focal Point



September, 2012

Inside this issue:

Membership Meeting	1
Griffin Observatory	1
Public night	2
Treasurer's report	2
In the News	3
Adopt a Scope	4
Officers/Staff	4
Keyholders	4

Upcoming Membership Meeting

Following the summer break, we will resume our regular schedule of Membership Meetings held on every third Friday of the month. The upcoming Meeting will take place on **September 21st, at 8:00 PM** at the MAS Observatory.

The guest speaker of the night will be Brian Schwartz, an Assistant Professor of Physics and Astronomy at the Carthage College in Kenosha. His talk will give a brief history of the Griffin Observatory – including the restoration of the dome at the Kemper Center on Kenosha's

lakefront. He will describe the current facilities, some of the outreach programs they have with the public, and plans for future use by both students at Carthage and others in the community.



Brian Schwartz

The Griffin Observatory has received generous support from the Kemper Center Foundation, the Kenosha County Board, Carthage College and Clarence Griffin.

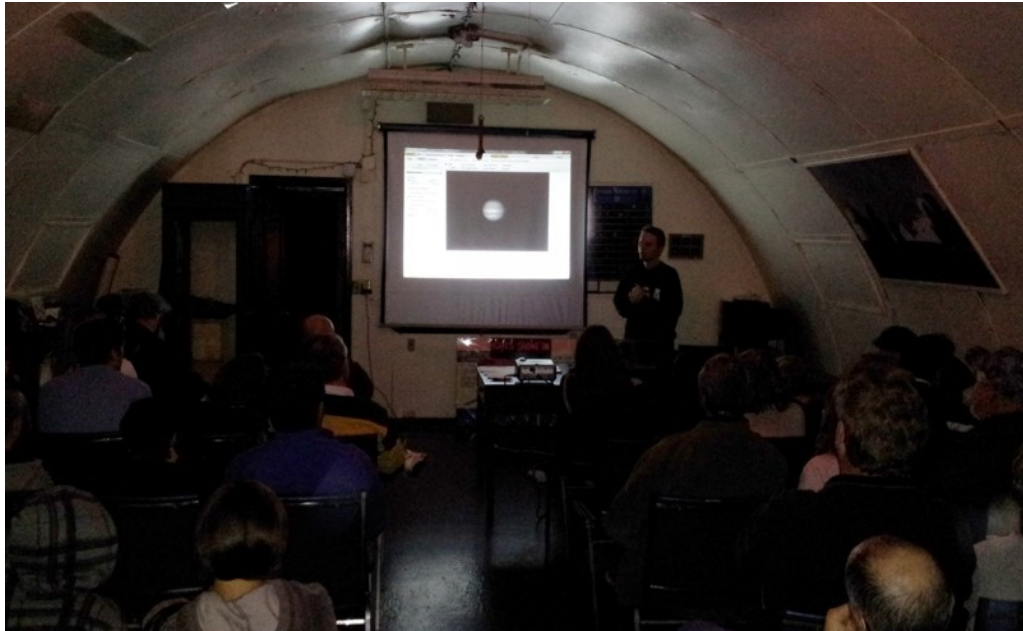
The Griffin Observatory

The idea to restore the observatory atop the Kemper Hall Conference Center started in the mid 2000' s. Carthage College Professor of Physics and Astronomy Doug Arion approached Kemper about the possibility of using the observatory for Carthage astronomy classes. An exploratory committee was then formed. Saving the existing dome was the first choice of the committee, although after significant testing of the superstructure supporting the dome it was decided that a new dome would be easier and more cost efficient solution. A



classroom for the Carthage astronomy students and a control room for the new, automated telescope were also included in the proposal. Unforeseen conditions resulted in delays and cost overruns. It became a major challenge to comply with modern building and safety codes while retaining the historic architectural elements of the observatory. Many redesigns of the new observatory were necessary, and almost all improvements needed to be custom built. The Griffin Observatory became operational on May 5, 2011.

Public Night on Ice Giants



The Milwaukee Astronomical Society held a Public Night on September 14th at the MAS Observatory in New Berlin. In the perfectly clear weather a pretty big crowd (~50-60 visitors) gathered. First Henry Gerner gave a guided tour through the Observatory. Then Lee Keith (see picture above) gave a presentation in the packed Quonset Hut. The topic was the Ice Giants, which according to the new nomenclature include Uranus and Neptune. These outer planets are distinguished from the “gas giants” Jupiter and Saturn by having more

core than gas around those. The cores of Ice Giants are made of heavier stuff, including oxygen, carbon, nitrogen and sulfur.

Both Ice Giants were visible during the night, so the guests have a chance to view them through the B-scope.

The final Public Night of 2012 will be held on October 12, at 7:30 PM. The topic will be “Is the world going to end?”. It will try to give a scientific answer to “popular” doomsday theories.

Treasurer's Report

The MAS has received \$75 donation from Girl Scouts of America for the star party organized by Paul Borchardt, \$144 in membership fees and \$25 in key deposit.

Payments of utility bills, insurance premiums and maintenance totaled \$433.34 in August.

Total Checking balance as of August 8, 2012 is \$4937.36. Scott Jamieson donated

the cost and effort of repairing the lawnmower. Taking into consideration that this value includes money going to expected bills, project money, and donations to the endowment fund, we have \$1719.91 free of any obligation.

The Albrecht Fund balance is \$8070.80.

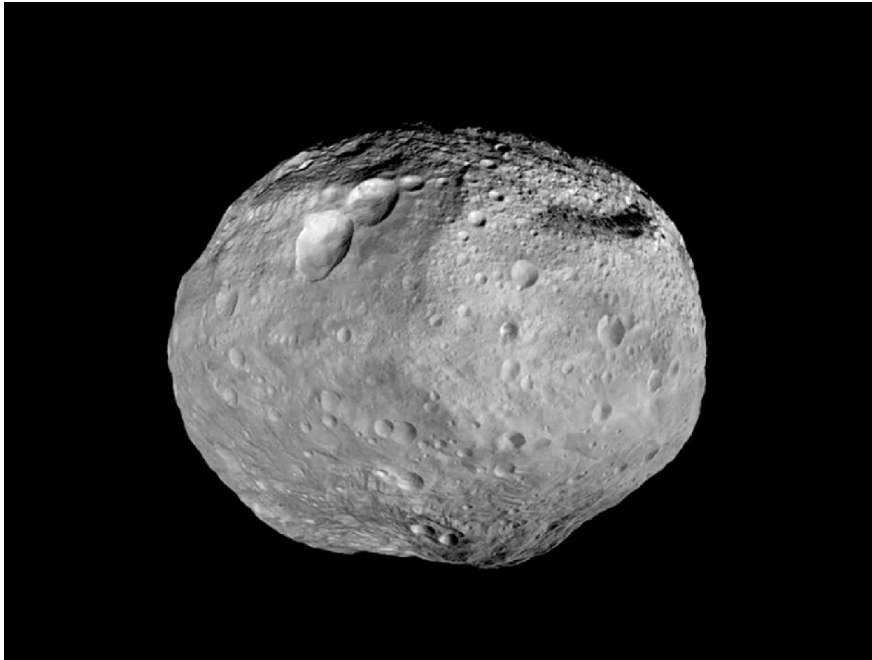
Respectfully submitted,
Neil Simmons, Treasurer

In the Astronomical News

Vesta in Dawn's Rear View Mirror

NASA's Dawn mission is releasing two parting views of the giant asteroid Vesta, using images that were among the last taken by the spacecraft as it departed its companion for the last year.

The first set of images is a color-coded relief map of Vesta's northern hemisphere, from the pole to the equator. It incorporates images taken just as Dawn began to creep over the high northern latitudes, which were dark when Dawn arrived in July 2011. The other image is a black-and-white mosaic that shows a full view of the giant asteroid, created by synthesizing some of Dawn's best images.



As NASA's Dawn spacecraft takes off for its next destination, this mosaic synthesizes some of the best views the spacecraft had of the giant asteroid Vesta. Dawn studied Vesta from July 2011 to September 2012. The towering mountain at the south pole — more than twice the height of Mount Everest — is visible at the bottom of the image. The set of three craters known as the "snowman" can be seen at the top.

"Dawn has peeled back the veil on some of the mysteries surrounding Vesta, but we're still working hard on more analysis," said Christopher Russell, Dawn's principal investigator at UCLA. "So while Vesta is now out of sight, it will not be out of mind."

These will be the last daily images during the cruise to Dawn's second destination, the dwarf planet Ceres. Other images will be highlighted as findings are made. Other data will be archived at <http://pds.nasa.gov>.

Dawn left Vesta on Sept. 4, 2012 PDT (Sept. 5, 2012 EDT). The spacecraft is using

its ion propulsion system to travel to Ceres. It is expected to arrive in early 2015.

JPL manages the Dawn mission for NASA's Science Mission Directorate in Washington. Dawn is a project of the directorate's Discovery Program, managed by NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville,

Ala. The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) is responsible for overall Dawn mission science. Orbital Sciences Corp. in Dulles, Va., designed and built the spacecraft. The German Aerospace Center, the Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research,

the Italian Space Agency and the Italian National Astrophysical Institute are international partners on the mission team. The California Institute of Technology in Pasadena manages JPL for NASA.

For more information about Dawn, visit: <http://www.nasa.gov/dawn> and <http://dawn.jpl.nasa.gov>

by Jia-Rui Cook

Adopt a Telescope Program - Signup Sheet

	Adoptee	Scope	Location
1	Sue Timlin	18" F/4.5 Obsession	Wiesen Observatory
2	Neil Simmons	12.5" F/7.4 Buckstaff	B Dome
3	Russell Chabot	12.5" F/9 Armfield	A Dome
4	Dan Yanko	18" F/4.5 Obsession	Albrecht Observatory
5	Tamas Kriska	25" F/15 Zemlock	Z Dome
6	Henry Gerner	12" LX 200	Tangney Observatory
7	Jeffrey Fillian	14" Z-Two scope	Ray Zit Observatory
8	Kevin & John McCarthy	10" LX 200	Jim Toeller Observatory

At Your Service

Officers / Staff

President	Henry Gerner	414-774-9194
Vice President	Brian Ganiere	414-961-8745
Treasurer	Neil Simmons	262-889-2039
Secretary	Agnes Keszler	414-475-6267
Observatory Director	Gerry Samolyk	414-529-9051
Asst. Observatory Director	Russell Chabot	414-881-3822
Newsletter Editor	Tamas Kriska	414-475-6267
Webmaster	Robert Burgess	920-559-7472

Board of Directors

Robert Burgess	920-559-7472
Russell Chabot	414-881-3822
Henry Gerner	414-774-9194
Chris Hesseltine	414--379-5744
Al Hovey	262-524-5510
Agnes Keszler	414-475-6267
Tamas Kriska	414-475-6267
Neil Simmons	262-889-2039
Michael Smiley	262-825-3981
Sue Timlin	414-460-4886
Dan Yanko	262-255-3482

September Key Holders

9/22	Neil Simmons	262-889-2039
9/29	Dan Yanko	262-255-3482
10/6	Paul Borchardt	262-781-0169
10/13	Russell Chabot	414-881-3822
10/20	Brian Ganiere	414-961-8745
10/27	Henry Gerner	414-774-9194



MAS Observatory

18850 Observatory Rd
New Berlin, WI
Phone: (414) 477-6220

www.milwaukeeastro.org