

The Newsletter of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society

November 1988

## In Memory - Jim Toeller

It is my sad duty to report that Jim Toeller, a long time member, passed away last month. Whatever the activity, Jim was supportive of the MAS and its members. When he retired and moved to North Carolina, he was elected to founder member status.

Jim served as our president for a year, then as treasurer for ten years. These included the difficult period when we were constructing the 25" Zemlok telescope and the building that houses it, all on a shoe string budget.

As an observer, Jim was active in our grazing occultation program, traveling around Wisconsin and Illinois with our cable trailer, chasing Moon shadows. He also attended our campouts and group observing sessions.

Jim loved building telescopes. In addition to helping out with the maintenance of our observatory he worked on the 10 inch portascopes project. He also was involved in the early designs for the Zemlok telescope and worked on the 22 foot dome it is housed in. Before he retired and moved, he helped on the work to motorize the slit on the big dome. Jim was willing to lend a hand with any project we had going.

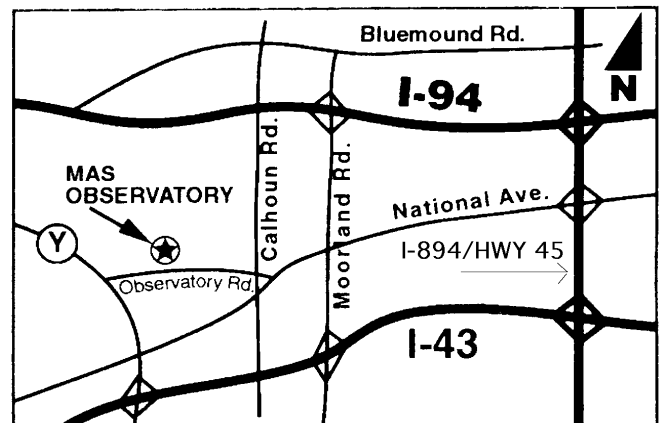
Whatever the situation, Jim was always a good time. He liked to kid around and we often exchanged some good natured barbs. He was a friend to us who knew him and will be missed.

*Gerry Samolyk, MAS Observatory Director*

***It is with sadness that we announce the death of  
MAS Founder Member***

***James Toeller***

The Milwaukee Astronomical Society extends its sincere sympathy and condolences to Jim's wife Elaine and family.



## We Meet Fri. November 20th at 8:00 PM

The MAS monthly meeting will be at the Observatory hall at the above place (see Map) and time. The Board is betting on no early snows to inhibit our meeting attendance, **The featured guest speaker will be Robert Naeye, an Associate Editor of Astronomy Magazine. Robert will be discussing the latest Mars Surveyor Photos and findings.** Robert has the knack of digging thru NASA files and data bases and putting together an enlightened presentation that brings us up to date on these programs. This is a great program for all members including the kids. Put it on the calendar. MAS is fortunate to have members like Robert who willingly updates us as new data warrants.

The December MAS meeting is usually held as an off-site informal get together at a local restaurant/pub to be announced in the December issue of FP. The sites for succeeding January thru April will also be announced in the December issue. - Stay tuned.

### Other MAS November events

**First Wednesday Nite Meeting Nov. 4 7:30PM** - Gerry Samolyk discusses forthcoming observing events and holds an informal question and answer session. Observing sessions, weather permitting.

**First Saturday Nite Nov. 7-** Scott Jamieson hosts informal sessions on scope use, CCD, etc.. From Dusk on.

**The MAS Board will meet just prior (7:00 PM) to above general meeting.**

## From The President

Work on the Z-scope is continuing with several major steps completed. Bryan Garness and Tim Hoff have completed final modifications and updates to the hardware and software on the control system. The software was then loaded onto the new computer built up for us by Lee Kieth. Tests show that the system is now fully functional and performing very well.

The project to rebuild the mirror mount system got a big boost from Paul Borchardt who machined new adjustment pieces for the mount. This clears the way for us to remove the mirrors (The main weighs 175 lbs) and have them re-coated in Chicago. When completed, the improvement in light transmission will be dramatic and allow it to gather 4 times as much light as the 12 inch scopes. The scope will be down for about one month while this effort is underway.

More people have been trained on the CCD camera and on a recent night it was in continuous use for over ten hours by 3 different people! Many interesting objects have been imaged, such as the Horsehead Nebula and the Galaxy NGC 7331 and will be included in the next Newsletter.

*Scott Jamieson, President MAS*

## Bits and Pieces

\* Gerry Samolyk gave a talk (Oct.23 Meeting) on the Sept.12 Aldebaran Graze. Gerry had rigged a video camera to his Scope and taped an excellent demonstration of the actual graze taking place. The modulation of Aldebaran through the Lunar edge terrain was easily visible with even some dimming phenomena through the peaks and valleys

\* MAS approved \$300 for the Library fund for book purchase by Scott Laskowski. Scott also mentioned Kalmbach offers significant discounts on some book purchases. If you are in the process of buying a book, check with Scott first.

\* Vern Hoag, The Rebuilding committee chairman, says plans are well along for the replacement hall. A model will be built for design review. The main hall will make provisions for adequate meeting area, A separate library room, direct rollout provisions for the Weisen 18" scope etc. Vern needs an Architect for plan approval of submittal to city hall.

\* Z scope software effort is essentially complete. With the new computer, the software is ready to use. The President and Observatory Director expressed a vote of thanks to Brian Garness and Tim Hoff for their yeoman digital interfacing effort. New parts have been machined for the mirror mount and the mirror itself is scheduled to be re-aluminized within the next month.

\* Mother Nature did not cooperate with our Greenbush Campout. Frequent overcast skies and occasional rain put a damper on things. However, eight or so souls persisted and enjoyed the fellowship and yarn swapping.

## Focal Point Lateness

Due to some technical and other problems (not enumerated here), the Focal Point has been arriving in the mail one to two weeks into the month. The slow delivery of bulk mail is a factor as well. Your editor will strive to get back on schedule. Usually the notice of the first Wednesday and the First Saturday meetings are not timely. However, Please realize these monthly events are there each month

## Membership News

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By the end of August, roughly 90 renewal cards were returned. Way to go folks! As of the present, we have 120 cards returned out of a possible 168 that were mailed out. If you began your membership after June 1st of this year, you do not need to renew, but you are welcome to order a magazine subscription or book with the use of the card.

It seems that I have hit upon a renewal process that works! The cards were of three types, specifically worded for current and new members. I moved the official return date to August 31st. I mailed the cards mid August. The standard postcard size reduced costs and simplified the process. The return envelopes were typically smaller, so they could fit more easily into my small apartment mailbox. Overall, the response to the cards was favorable and so it looks like I will stick with this method, with only a few minor modifications.

If you have not renewed, please do so now. I have to send updates to Kalmbach Publishing, Sky Publishing, our newsletter editor and the Astronomical League. If you do intend to continue your membership, please at least call me (456-0864 eves) or speak to one of our Board Members. If you did not receive or cannot find your renewal post card, you can use an ordinary note card, which should include your name, address, phone number, and membership classification option.

Presently, my PC is undergoing an upgrade to a Pentium 233MHz, therefore I have not been able to do any maintenance on our website. I am looking for any ideas as to features that you, the members, would like to see. If there are any current features that you would like to manage yourself (such as the Events Calendar), you are more than welcome to offer your help. A few ideas: alternative hosting sites, "Members Only" access areas, private bulletin boards. My present working email address is a new WebMail account, mail to:JKFrey@netscape.net

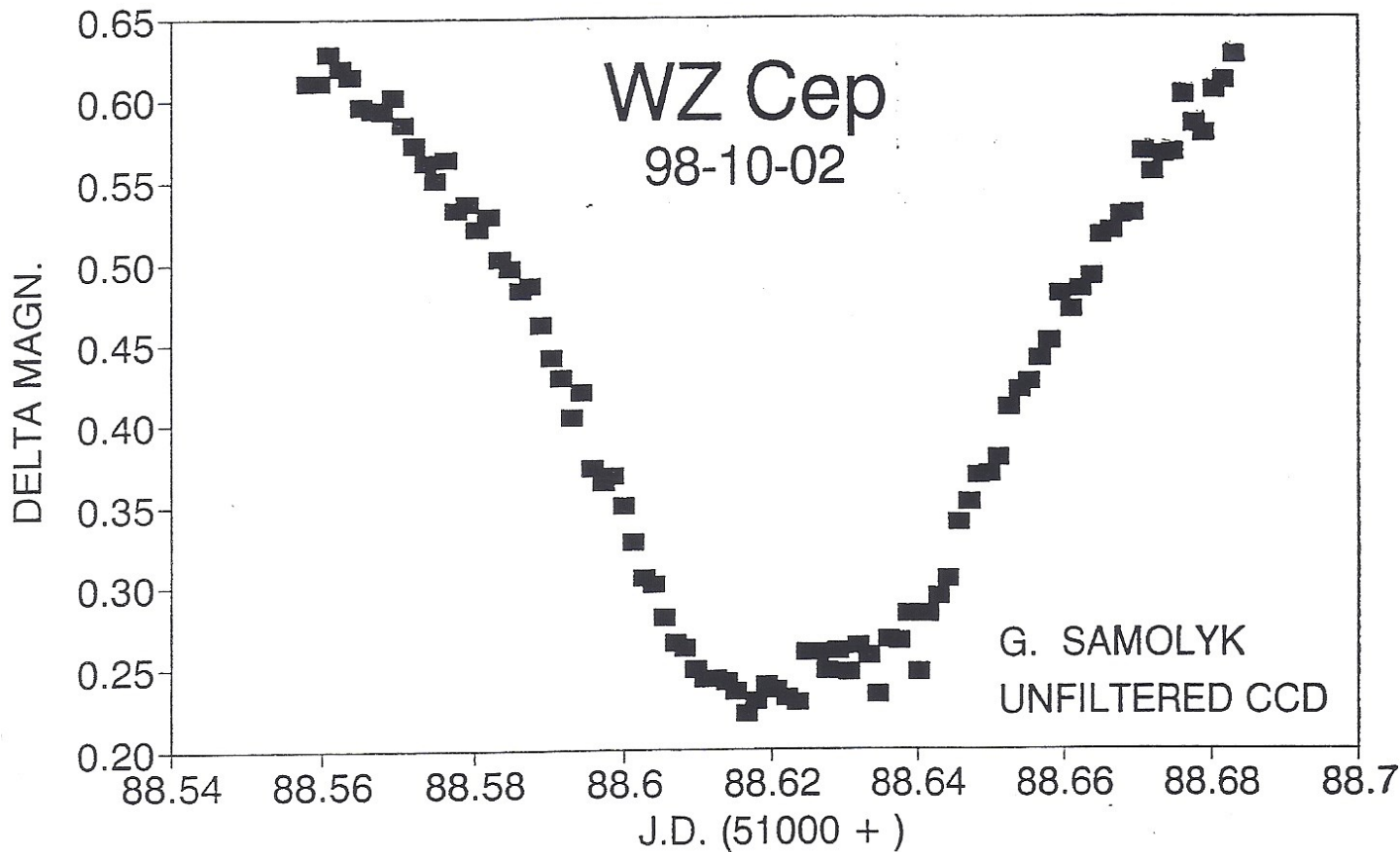
*Julie Frey, MAS Membership Chairperson*

## MAS CCD Imager as a Precision Photometer

The light curve shown below represents a two and one half hour segment of the eclipsing binary WZ Cephei (Cep). Its total orbital period is 0.471 days. The plot was achieved by a series of CCD images taken at the times indicated on the horizontal axis (in Julian Days). Each image had a dark frame subtracted and was flat field corrected. The vertical axis shows the difference in magnitude between WZ Cep and a nearby comparison star. The brightness of a third star was also monitored to verify that the comparison star did not vary. The catalog lists the magnitude range of WZ Cep as 11.4 to 12.0 (photographic).

The precision of the measurements is apparent by the minimal noise on the plot. Typical scatter is on the order of one to two hundredths of a magnitude! Most visually determined data is fortunate to be within a 0.2 magnitude. From this type of data, the time of minimum light can be determined to an accuracy of about 30 seconds. Gerry Samolyk, our Observatory Director, who took these measurements also cites that the image field of the CCD, approx. 10 arc minutes, makes it more of a challenge to locate the variable stars in question.

If any members have an interest in doing variable star observing (using either visual or CCD method) and contributing to our knowledge of variable stars, they should contact Gerry at the first Wednesday nite meetings. Most of this data is collected by amateurs and can be a very satisfying endeavor.



## MAS Library News

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Brian Ganiere, a veteran MAS member, has generously donated a multitude of books for our club's library. This is only a partial list. Succeeding issues will list the remainder.

1. **Voyage to the Great Attractor:** Exploring Intergalactic Space; Alan Dressler - 1994
2. **Skywatching:** David h. Levy- 1994
3. **Aurora:** The Mysterious Northern Lights; Candace Savage - 1994
4. **Through A Universe Darkly:** A Cosmic Tale of Ancient Ethers, Dark Matter, and the Fate of the Universe; Marcia Bartusiak - 1993
5. **Discover Planetwatch:** A Year-round Guide to the Night Sky with a Make-your-own Planetfinder; Clint Hachett - 1993.
6. **The Planets: Portraits of New Worlds;** Nigel Henbest - 1992
7. **Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors:** A Search for Who We Are; Carl Sagan & Ann Druydan - 1992
8. **Unveiling the Edge of Time:** Black Holes, White Holes, Wormholes; John Gribbin - 1992
9. **Mapping the Next Millenium:** The Discovery of New Geographies; Stephen S. Hall - 1991
10. **Space Age:** A Companion Volume to the PBS Television Series; William J. Walter -1992.

*Scott Laskowski, MAS Librarian*

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*Scott Jamieson, President MAS*

**MAS Officers/ Staff**

President	Scott Jamieson	896-0119
Vice President	Lee Keith	425-2331
Treasurer	Dan Yanko	453-3382
Secretary	Margaret Warner	327-7427
Observatory Director	Gerry Samolyk	529-9051
Assistant Observatory Director	Paul Borchardt	781-0169
Focal Point	Rudy Poklar, Editor	786-8931

**Future MAS Events**

**November 20**, General Membership meeting, see Page 1.

**Saturday Keyholders**

**November**

7*	Terry Ross	784-2093
14	Gerry Samolyk	529-9051
21	Tom Schmidtkunz	352-1674
28	Ken Waraczynski	321-0918

**December**

5*	Dan Yanko	453-3382
12	Wanda Burner	646-8229
17	Paul Borchardt	781-0169
26	Brian Ganiere	961-8745

*\*First Saturday Observatory nite meetings will be held in parallel with standard Observatory operations. If members want to be assured of observatory access on a given Saturday nite, they should call the keyholder ahead of time.*

**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 Chairperson Julie Frey, 11040 W. Meinecke Avenue, Milwaukee WI.**

**Focal Point Publishing Guidelines**

Focal Point Newsletter is published monthly from Sept through May with a Mid-summer issue in 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 E-Mail, or diskette in a text or Word compatible format, if possible. Submit FP inputs to:

MAS Focal Point c/o Rudy Poklar  
12905 W. Crawford Drive

**Loaner Telescopes** (available to members for local use)

Scott Jamieson (Waukesha)	896-0119	4"	f/15 refractor
Lee Keith (Franklin)	425-2331	8"	Dob reflector
Rich Stearle (Greenfield)	543-7479	8"	Dob reflector

**Visit our MAS Website:**

<http://members.aol.com/masmemb/index.html>

**The Milwaukee Astronomical Society**

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

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**\*MONTHLY MEETING ON FRIDAY NOV. 20TH  
-UPDATE ON THE MARS SURVEYOR**

