



# Capitol Skies

The Newsletter of the Madison Astronomical Society

February/March 2006

## From the Treasurer      From the President

by Mary Ellestad

MAS welcomes new observing members Tim Metcalfe and Michael Lombard.

Life-time member Doris Koster sent us a donation and member Martin Barrett added a donation to his membership renewal. MAS thanks them both for their continuing generosity to our society.

A very big thank you from MAS to member Bill Jollie for remembering us with a third donation from the Elizabeth Brinn Foundation. The Madison Astronomical Society truly appreciates Bill's on-going efforts on our behalf. His letter appears below. The Brinn gift supports, among other things, the handicapped accessible ramp, deck and roll-off that will put the Celestron C-11 back in service at YRS this year. At the January meeting, we also discussed and will be establishing a MAS Donor Scope Program that will enable us to share some of our telescopes and other resources

### Elizabeth Brinn Foundation Donation

It is my pleasure to present the MAS with a \$1,000 donation from the Elizabeth Brinn Foundation, to recognize the Society's efforts to educate and inform children of all races and economic backgrounds about the wonders of the universe we inhabit.

The gift comes with no strings attached, but it is my hope that it will serve to augment an operating improvements fund, to accomplish the constructive maintenance and completion of infrastructure projects at Yanna Research Center.

Thanks for your work to share the joys of Astronomy with a wide audience. Good luck utilizing this gift.

Sincerely, William Jollie

by Neil Robinson

Greetings Fellow Members. The club has received several donations of telescopes recently. Member Don Martin donated a 10" Dob and Jim Neese donated an 8" SCT with all the trimmings. Please join me in thanking Don and Jim for their generous support. These telescopes might make good instruments for the student scholarship program. In any event, I encourage input from all MAS members with thoughts on how to put these generous donations to good use.

### Annual MAS Banquet Gala

On Friday March 10th, the MAS banquet will be at CJ's East with cocktails at 6:00 and dinner at 7:00 (the banquet replaces the meeting for the month of March). March seems like a very good month for some socializing and good food so please plan on attending—we would love to see you there. The speaker will be from the U.W. Astronomy Department with a presentation on SALT and its debut last September. I have included a short piece below to tweak your interest.

### SALT Telescope: First Light

*Exactly five years after groundbreaking, the Southern African Large Telescope (SALT) project has released its first colour images, marking the achievement of 'first light' and the successful debut of full operation for SALTICAM, a \$600,000 digital camera designed and built for SALT at the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO). SALT is the largest optical telescope in the southern hemisphere, and equal to the largest in the world. Gathering more than 25 times as much light as any existing African telescope, SALT can detect objects as faint as a candle flame on the moon.*

The menu choices are Prime Rib \$26, Chicken Cordon Bleu \$19, Broiled Walleye \$23, Vegetable Stir Fry \$13. Prices are up a little this year but include tax, tip, bartender, room charge and chocolate sundae! Please send your check to Mary Ellestad, 2810 Mason St., Madison, WI 53705 by March 1st.

### Calendar of Events

- March 10 **Annual MAS Banquet** at CJ's east (802 Atlas Avenue). See notice above for details.
- March 14 Space Place Guest Speaker (2300 S. Park St., in the Villager Mall), Dr. Howard Bergman will give a talk about satellite remote-sensing of recent severe hurricanes. 7:00 pm.
- March 15 MMSD Planetarium Public Program. Memorial High School, 201 S. Gammon Road. 6:30 and 7:45, all tickets \$2. "Skywatching." Call 663-6102 for info.
- April 11 Space Place Guest Speaker (2300 S. Park St., in the Villager Mall), Prof. Patricia Loewwill give a talk on Native American cosmologies. 7:00 pm.
- April 14 MAS monthly meeting at Space Place (2300 S. Park St., in the Villager Mall). Business meeting 7:00 pm, main meeting 7:30; Prof. John Valley will give a talk about "A Cool Early Earth?"
- May 12 MAS monthly meeting at Space Place (2300 S. Park St., in the Villager Mall). Business meeting 7:00 pm, main meeting 7:30; Chuck Forster will give a talk about radio astronomy.



*Capitol Skies*  
2810 Mason Street  
Madison, WI 53705

**First Class**

*MAS would like to thank:*

**IDC**

*for hosting our web presence*

### *Officers*

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**Madison Astronomical Society** members are active in sharing the pleasures of astronomy with the public, acting as a resource for students and teachers, and exchanging information at Society meetings which occur monthly. The Society continues to pursue its original goal to "promote the science of astronomy and to educate the public in the wonders of the universe."

For more information about the Society, please contact one of the officers listed at left or visit us on the web at:

**[www.madisonastro.org](http://www.madisonastro.org)**

## *MAS Membership Form*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/email \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle membership type:

Student (\$5.00)

Regular (\$30.00)

Observing (\$70.00)

Enclose check and make payable to the Madison Astronomical Society.

Mail to MAS Attention Mary Ellestad,  
2810 Mason St., Madison, WI 53705