



The Eyepiece

NEVILLE PUBLIC MUSEUM ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Volume 22, Issue 10

October 2010

October Meeting

Please join us for the October monthly meeting. This month will be an observing night. If the weather is clear, we will go outside and observe from the museum parking lot during the speaker portion of the meeting. The club scopes will be available or feel free to bring your own. We will try to observe a few objects from the Ron Parmentier Observing Program as well.

If the weather doesn't cooperate, Joe Celmer will be giving a presentation entitled *The Basics of Star Testing*. This is the evaluation of telescope performance by examining focused and de-

focused star images.

The meeting will be held from 7:00pm until 9:00pm, October 13th at the Neville Public Museum, 210 Museum Place, Green Bay, WI 54303.

We will be heading to Happy Joe's for pizza after the meeting. Hope you can join us! ☐



NCRAL Meeting

NPMAS will be hosting the 2011 North Central Region of the Astronomical League (NCRAL) Convention on April 29th through May 1st, 2011. This date is quickly approaching.

Our next planning meeting will be held 7:00pm, October 19th at the home of Don and Katrina DeWitt, 1081 Raleigh Street, Green Bay.

We are always interested in your ideas or suggestions. This will be a big event and we will need a lot of help from the club. Please participate and share you ideas! ☐

Parmentier Observing Weekend

This month's Parmentier Observing Weekend will be held on October 8th and 9th. All club members are welcome to come out and observe through the observatory's 30" Classical Cassegrain telescope and/or 6" Astrophysics Refractor. You can also set up your own

telescope in the observing field below the observatory or just come out and be a part of the group.

Some of the objects we will be targeting this month, from the Ron Parmentier Observing Program (RPOP), are: planetary nebulas (M27, NGC 40, NGC 7662-The

Blue Snowball, NGC 7009-The Saturn Nebula), open clusters (NGC 7889), globular clusters (M71, G73, NGC 7006) and double stars (31 Cygni a triple, Otto Struve 525, a triple and Alberio).

RPOP is an observing pro-

(Continued on page 2)

Upcoming Events

Board Meeting

- October 6—WAYNE KUHN BUSINESS

COW

- OCTOBER 8 THROUGH 10

POW

- OCTOBER 8 THROUGH 9

Monthly Meeting

- OCTOBER 13—OBSERVING NIGHT/COLLIMATION

NCRAL Meeting

- OCTOBER 19—DEWITT RESIDENCE

POW

- NOVEMBER 5 THROUGH 6

Inside this issue:

EYE IN THE SKY	2
URBAN OBSERVING	3
HUNTING EXTRA-SOLAR PLANETS	4
PUBLIC OBSERVING	4
CLUB LIBRARY	5
COW	6
MEMBERSHIP SERVICES	8



Night Sky Network Member Society

Astronomy Clubs bringing the wonders of the universe to the public

Eye in the Sky

October 2010	
Sep 30— 3	Prairie Skies Star Party
7	New Moon
21	Orionid Meteor Shower Peaks
22	Full Moon

November 2010	
6	New Moon
17	Leonid Meteor Shower Peaks
21	Full Moon

POW, continued

(Continued from page 1)

gram created by our club to generate more interest within the club to observe at Parmentier Observatory, help members improve their observing skills, allow member to compare objects through two different type and sized telescopes and observe in a fun, group

atmosphere as well as to honor Ron Parmentier, a founding member of the NPMAS.

If you would like to participate in the program, booklets can be purchased for \$10.00. Remember, everyone is welcome and observe! ☐



Above from left to right are: 31 Cygni, a triple star; globular cluster NGC 7006; and the Saturn Nebula, NGC 7009.

Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be held October 6th at Wayne Kuhn's place of business: Commercial Laundry Sales, 1130 Elizabeth Street, Green Bay WI. We will planning club activities and speakers for 2011 as well as working on other topics.

We would love to have other club members attend and give their input and share their ideas on what would be fun to do in 2011. So if you have any ideas on events, field trips, topics you would like to hear about at a monthly meeting, please come out and join us! ☐

And the Winner is...

All members should've received their renewal letter in the mail. I won't take up your time going over it in detail, but a copy has been included in *The Eyepiece* (page 7) for anyone who didn't receive one. Please note the three changes from last year's renewal letter: no Sky & Telescope magazine renewals this year, a one or two year option for Astronomy magazine, and a "shipping" line for those who want to order something and can't get to the meeting to pick them up. I'm trying to get the calendars out to all the members before they are six months old! Please return the renewal forms ASAP, especially those who are ordering or renewing Astronomy or ordering calendars or handbooks. You don't want to miss an issue and I want to order the calendars and handbooks early enough to get them for the December meeting.

I'm always curious who will be the first to return their renewal form. This year I got three on one day. And the "winners are"... Joe Celmer, Bryan Becker, and Mark Revall. WOW, fast work as I set them out late on Thursday the 9th and got these three back on Monday the 13th. I don't remember all the past years winners, but I do recall Joe Celmer was a recent winner (now a two time winner), as were Ed Smith and Kevin Nasal.

Thanks, your treasurer Dick Francini. ☐

The Urban Observing Program (or observing you can do from your backyard)

By Dick Francini

I recently completed the AL Urban Observing Program, and I was very pleasantly surprised by how much I enjoyed the experience. Those of you who know me are aware that I have completed a number of AL programs. I started with the “normal” easier or beginner programs like the Lunar and Messier programs and have worked my way up the scale of program difficulty as my observing skills improved and I upgraded to a larger 16” scope. I am currently working on the Herschel II, Galaxy Groups and Clusters, and Local Group and Neighborhood programs, all difficult advanced programs (the last two probably the most difficult ones in the AL program list). The problem with these more advanced programs is that you are forced to travel to darker skies, like star parties or Dave Jorgensen’s place in Crivitz, in order to get a good look at these faint dim objects and you probably need to own a fairly large scope, which is more difficult to transport.

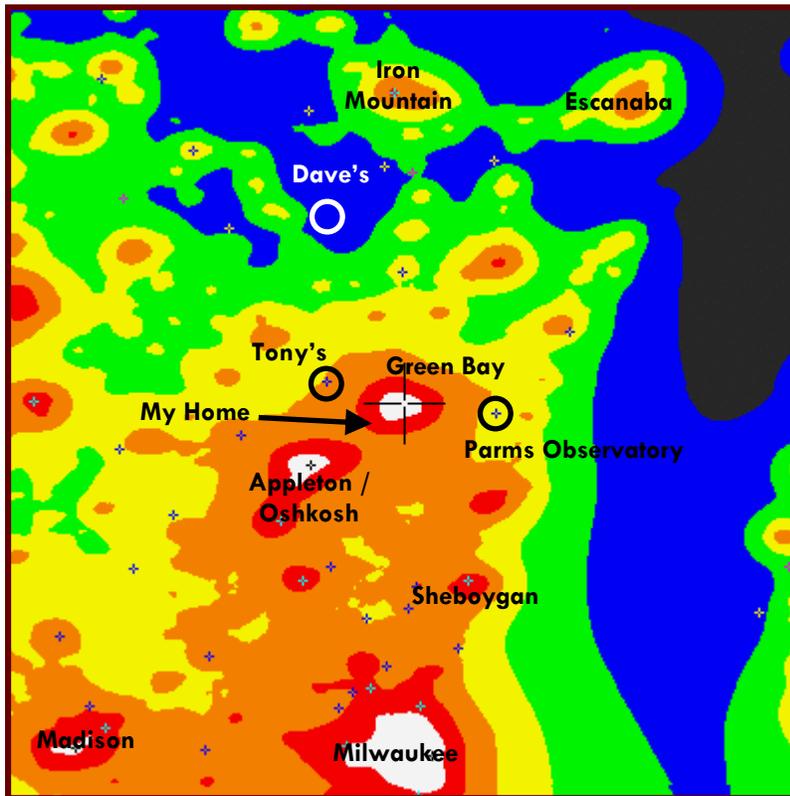
It occurred to me that there are times when packing up all your astronomy stuff and travelling is impractical, but I would still like to take advantage of good conditions and do some observing from my backyard. Don’t get me wrong, I ALWAYS enjoy observing from really dark skies much more than from my backyard; but you might be surprised by how much can be accomplished from your backyard. I decided I would see what programs were available from the AL for backyard observers for these times I wanted to pull out a smaller scope

for an hour or two of quick observing from my house. Two jumped out, the Urban Observing program and the Earth Orbiting Satellite program (a naked eye program). I will cover the Urban Program in this article. It must be done from a “light polluted site”.

My first question was, does my backyard in Lawrence qualify as a “light polluted” site? The program defines light polluted skies as “any area where you cannot see the Milky Way with the unaided eye”. My backyard half qualifies. My skies are extremely variable; to the north the Milky Way is not visible due to the Green Bay light dome. In my better portions of the sky, straight up just to the south of the zenith and to the South and Southeast, I can see the Milky a bit on average nights and a bit better on good nights. I checked the light pollution maps and determined my location is still in the

“bad” red or white color regions (see the map of eastern Wisconsin).

For those of you unfamiliar with these maps let me explain it. The large cross is Green Bay, just to the southwest is another blob of white and red, it’s Appleton/Oshkosh. The large blob at the bottom is Milwaukee. White indicates real bad skies, red is bad, orange is improving skies which can be good on better nights, yellow somewhat better, green good, blue very good, and grey and black are spectacular skies (what deep sky observers dream about). Some examples are: Ron’s observatory is the small cross in yellow just east of Green Bay, Tony’s observatory is the small cross on the edge of orange and yellow just northwest of Green Bay. Dave’s place in Crivitz is in blue north of Green Bay, and the site for WOW is yellow but near green.



Sky Pollution map of the eastern half of Wisconsin. Areas in white and red have the highest amount of light pollution and areas in blue and black have the least amount of light pollution or the darkest skies. Credit: P. Cinzano, F. Falchi (University of Padova), C. D. Elvidge (NOAA National Geophysical Data Center, Boulder).

So I decided my site marginally qualifies as a light polluted site as it’s still in red. I would say that any site in the white or red areas should qualify, and that includes most of your backyards!

The program is a very well designed combination of 100 bright deep sky objects (mostly open clusters, planetary nebulas, globular clusters, and a few bright galaxies), double stars, and one variable star. All objects are visible from poor skies and not that difficult to locate. The 100 objects cover all four seasons, so expect to need a full year at a minimum to complete the program. You are not expected to use a large scope, a 6 inch or less is preferred but

(Continued on page 6)

The Hunt is On!

By Carolyn Brinkworth

The world of astronomy was given new direction on August 13, 2010, with the publication of the Astro2010 Decadal Survey. Astro2010 is the latest in a series of surveys produced every 10 years by the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences. This council is a team of senior astronomers who recommend priorities for the most important topics and missions for the next decade.

Up near the top of their list this decade is the search for Earth-like planets around other stars—called “extrasolar planets” or “exoplanets”—which has become one of the hottest topics in astronomy.

The first planet to be found orbiting a star like our Sun was discovered in 1995. The planet, called “51 Peg b,” is a “Hot Jupiter.” It is about 160 times the mass of Earth and orbits so close to its parent star that its gaseous “surface” is seared by its blazing sun. With no solid surface, and temperatures of about 1000 degrees Celsius (1700 Fahrenheit), there was no chance of finding life on this distant world. Since that discovery, astronomers have been on the hunt for smaller and more Earth-like planets, and today we know of around 470 extrasolar planets, ranging from about 4 times to 8000 times the mass of Earth.

This explosion in extrasolar planet discoveries is only set to get bigger, with a NASA mission called Kepler that was launched last year. After staring at a single small patch of sky for 43 days, Kepler has detected the definite signatures of seven new exoplanets, plus 706 “planetary candidates” that are unconfirmed and in need of further investigation. Kepler is likely to revolutionize our understanding of Earth’s place in the Universe.

We don’t yet have the technology to search for life on exoplanets. However, the infrared Spitzer Space Telescope has detected molecules that are

the basic building blocks of life in two exoplanet atmospheres. Most extrasolar planets appear unsuitable for supporting life, but at least two lie within the “habitable zone” of their stars, where conditions are theoretically right for life to gain a foothold.

We are still a long way from detecting life on other worlds, but in the last 20 years, the number of known planets in our Universe has gone from the 8 in our own Solar System to almost 500. It’s clear to everyone, including the Astro2010 decadal survey team, that the hunt for exoplanets is only just beginning, and the search for life is finally underway in earnest.

Public Observing

By Brian Chopp

Last month we held our fall public observing night at Bay Beach. The theme was lunar observing as it coincided with International Observe the Moon night.

The night started out a little iffy. There were a lot of thin clouds especially to the south over the Moon; enough to mostly obscure the Moon. But as it got dark, the clouds started to break up and we had some decent viewing after that. Finally, decent weather for public observing!

Many club members participated. There were eight telescopes/ binoculars set up for the public to view



Explore Spitzer’s latest findings at <http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu>. Kids can dream about finding other Earths as they read “Lucy’s Planet Hunt” at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/storybooks/#lucy>.

This article was provided by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. □

through. We targeted the Moon of course as well as the double cluster, Alberio, M13, Jupiter once it rose over the trees, and other fall favorites.

The attendance was good. About 25-30 people attended including some families with younger children. Everyone was thrilled to see the lunar craters as well as Jupiter and its moons.

I thought the location worked well. It was easily accessible to the public. The lights in the parking lot were to our north and the baseball field and sanctuary to our south allowing for decent southern viewing and horizon.

Thanks to all that helped out! □

Photos by Brian and Ann Chopp



Astronomy from the Warmth of Your Home

By Brian Chopp and Tom Cashman

The days are getting short and the leaves are falling from the trees. The colder months may not be a great time for outside astronomy, but they are an excellent time for armchair astronomy. The NPMAS has an extensive collection of astronomy and astronomy related books and movies, many of which were generously donated by club members.

Club members are welcome to check out, fee of charge, any of the material in our library. Please see Tom Cashman or another NPMAS officer at the monthly meetings if you would like to check something out. The following is a list of items available for your reading a viewing pleasure:

Charts and Maps

- *A Field Guide to the Stars and Planets* by Donald H. Menzel, 1964
- *Astronomy's Guide to the Night Sky 2008* by Astronomy Magazine
- *Burnham's Celestial Handbook - Volumes 1 - 3* by Robert Burnham, Jr., 1978
- *Getting Started in Astronomy* by Sky & Telescope
- *Guide to Observing Deep Sky Objects* by Jeff A. Farinacci, 2008
- *Moon Map* by Sky & Telescope
- *Night Watch - A Practical Guide to Viewing the Universe* by Terence Dickinson, 1998
- *Philips Color Star Atlas - Epoch 2000* by John Cox & Richard Monkhouse, 1991
- *Photo-Guide to the Constellations* by Chris Kitchin, 1998
- *Star Atlas* by Dr. Jacqueline Mitton and Dr. Simon Mitton, 1979
- *The Six-Inch Lunar Atlas* by Don Spain, 2009

Equipment

- *Eyepiece Selection* by Al Lawrence, 2005 (2 copies)
- *Radio Astronomy and How to Build*

Your Own Telescope by John Heywood, 1964

General Astronomy

- *1001 Things Everyone Should Know About the Universe* by Wm. A. Gutsch, Jr., PhD, 1998
- *Amazing Universe* by Herbert Friedman, 1975
- *Astronomy - An Introduction for the Amateur Astronomer* by Jacqueline Mitton, 1978
- *Astronomy in Color* by Peter Lancaster Brown, 1972
- *Atlas of Deep Sky Splendors* by Hans Ehrenberg, 1983
- *Catalogue of the Universe* by Paul Murdin and David Allen, 1980
- *Cosmos* by Carl Sagan, 1980 (2 copies)
- *Don't Know Much About the Universe* by Kenneth C. Davis, 2002
- *Exploring the Solar System - Other Worlds* by J. Kelly Beatty
- *Heavenly Errors—Misconceptions About the Real Nature of the Universe* by Neil F. Comins, 2001
- *Measure Solar System Objects and Their Movements for Yourself* by John D. Clark, 2009
- *Observational Astronomy for Amateurs* by J. B. Sidgwick, 1957
- *Photographic Tour of the Universe* by Gabriele Vanin, 1996
- *Stars and Planets* by Ian Ridpath, 1978
- *Stephen Hawking's Universe - The Cosmos Explained* by David Filkin, 1997
- *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Astronomy and Space* Editor Ian Ridpath, 1979
- *The Natural History of the Universe* by Colin A. Roman, 1991
- *The New Cosmology* by Harold W. G. Allen, 2002
- *Through the Eyes of Hubble - The Birth, Life, and Violent Death of Stars* by Robert Naeye, 1998

- *Your Guide to Planets, Stars, and Galaxies* by Richard Talcott - Astronomy Magazine

Lists

- List of Notable Asteroids - from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
- List of Periodic Comets - from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
- List of Meteor Showers - from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Video Tapes/DVD's

- *All About Telescopes and Binoculars* by Bob Bonadurer
- *Comets & Asteroids - Volume 1*, 1997
- *Cosmos Series - Volumes 1-6 & 8*
- *Cosmos Series - DVD set*
- *Legacy of GENINI - Original NASA Film*, 1994
- *Star Gaze - Hubble's View of the Universe*, 2000 - (DVD)
- *The Planets* - Patrick Stewart narrates
- *The Solar System CD-ROM*
- *Star Trek - The Motion Picture* (2 copies)
- *Star Trek II - The Wrath of Khan*
- *Star Trek III - The Search for Spock*
- *Star Trek IV - The Voyage Home*
- *Star Trek V - The Final Frontier*
- *Star Trek VI - The Undiscovered Country*
- *Star Trek - First Contact*
- *Star Trek - 25th Anniversary Special*
- *Star Trek - Generations*
- *Back to the Future - Volumes 1 - 3*
- *2001: A Space Odyssey*
- *Sphere*

Other

- *Jesus Christ's Meteorite Prophecy* by Edward W. Plouff, 1999



ITS ASTRONOMICAL!

NOTABLE CATALOGS

110

THE NUMBER OF OBJECTS IN THE MESSIER CATALOG. THE CATALOG WAS COMPILED IN LATE 1700'S BY CHARLES MESSIER AND PIERRE MECHAIN AND IS AN EXCELLENT LIST OF DEEP SKY OBJECTS

7,840

THE NUMBER OF OBJECTS CONTAINED IN THE NEW GENERAL CATALOG (NGC). THE CATALOG WAS COMPILED IN THE 1880 USING OBSERVATIONS FROM WILLIAM AND JOHN HERSCHEL AND CONTAINS ALL TYPES OF DEEP SKY OBJECTS

4,073

THE NUMBER OF OBJECTS IN THE ABELL CATALOG OF RICH CLUSTERS OF GALAXIES. THE INITIAL LIST WAS PUBLISHED IN 1958 BY GEORGE OGDEN ABELL AND CONTAINS MANY INTERESTING INTERACTING GALAXIES.

1022

THE NUMBER OF STARS CATALOGED IN THE ALMAGEST, A SET OF ASTRONOMICAL TEXTS COMPILED BY PTOLEMY IN 120AD. IT ALSO CONTAINED 48 CONSTELLATIONS.

Urban Observing, continued

(Continued from page 3)

you can use a larger scope if that's all you have. I used my 8 inch. I would roll my 8 inch out of the garage (it's on wheels) and observe a few objects at a time when sky conditions were good; an easy setup and easy tear down when you only have limited time available to go outside and observe.

They ask you to include the normal data with each observation: date, time, location, object name, type of equipment, transparency and seeing, and observing notes.

I have an observing form I would share with anyone who wants to try this program. As this is a beginner program, it is not required that you do a super detailed description, I toned mine down from what I would submit for a more difficult program like the Herschel II program. You can go to the AL website and download the list of objects, so no need to buy the book if you don't want to spend the money.

Although I'm a very strong proponent of the Lunar and Messier programs as great places to start if you are a beginner and want to try an AL program, this program is equally good as a starter program, especially if you are only going to observe from a light polluted site.

I have not tried this from an extremely light polluted site like downtown Green Bay or a larger city (white on the light pollution map), but the people who developed the program indicate it is designed to be done from some very poor conditions. Of course the views will be somewhat better from less light polluted sites like mine. I would be curious to hear how others make out with these objects under more light polluted conditions than

mine.

In keeping with the theme of programs you can do from your backyard, I have completed all of these programs (or am working on one) which can be done from your backyard. I would highly recommend all of these. They are: Lunar I, Urban, Meteor, Satellite,

Planetary, Double Star, Asteroid, and Lunar II. They are listed somewhat in order of difficulty, easy to harder. There are other AL programs which certainly qualify to be on this list but I have not tried them.

So, you can no longer use the excuse, "I don't have time to pack up and drive to a dark location". It's amazing how much interesting and worthwhile observing can be done from your own backyard with a small scope! Give it a try. □



COW

This month is the first Crivitz Observing Weekend of the year! COW will be held October 8th through the 10th at the residence of Dave Jorgenson and Carol Eggleston.

Located in the north woods of Wisconsin on 100 acres of land, this site offers some of the darkest skies around. The field is equipped with electricity and the far cabin is available for use. □

NPMAS Renewal Form

Dear Ursula Minor,

It's once again time to send out the NPMAS membership renewal forms so you can renew your club membership and order *Astronomy* magazine, observing handbooks, and calendars for 2011.



There are three changes to this year's form. We are no longer offering *Sky & Telescope* subscriptions through the club. Their new system requires you to renew directly with them. I have added a one or two year renewal option for *Astronomy* magazine. I have also added a shipment option for people who can't make it to the meetings to pick up their orders. If you would like your order shipped, please indicate this by adding the \$4.00 on the shipment line and include it with your payment. Your order will only be shipped if you include the \$4.00 with your payment.

You can order either of two different calendars; the RASC wall calendar or The Year in Space desk calendar. The *RASC Observing Handbook* is also available; it's a very useful book which contains volumes of information about observing and astronomy in general, and specific information about things happening in 2011.

Club membership benefits include attending our monthly meetings, the monthly newsletter, use of the club telescopes, a reduced price on *Astronomy* magazine and calendars, scheduled monthly observing sessions at our member's observatories, the opportunity to attend local and national star parties, the use of your new upgraded website, and membership in the Astronomical League. **What a deal for \$20 or \$30!** The Astronomical League sends out a quarterly newsletter and has developed numerous interesting observing programs (from beginner to expert level), to help guide you along the path of learning to become a better observer and having fun while doing it.

Below is an order form that includes both membership renewal and a list of items you can order through the club at a reduced rate. I would also like to take this opportunity to update our database. It is very important we have up to date information, **especially email addresses** so we can tell you when the newsletter is ready to download and communicate important information about club activities to you.

(1) Database section. Name(s): _____
 Address: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Email Address: _____

(2) Renewals and purchases. Please indicate your type of membership and the items you wish to order.

Dues..... Individual @ \$20 _____
 Or Family @ \$30 _____

Magazine Subscriptions..... *Astronomy*—1 year \$34 _____
Astronomy—2 year \$60 _____

Other items.....
 2010 RASC *Observing Handbook*, \$20 each, # ordered _____ Total \$ _____

2010 RASC Wall Calendar, \$13 each, # ordered _____ Total \$ _____

2010 Year in Space Desk Calendar, \$11 each, # ordered _____ Total \$ _____

Shipment of my order..... \$4 _____

Total Due for Membership and Purchases \$ _____

Please make checks payable to NPMAS and remit with this form. Mail to: Dick Francini, 1805 Christie Court, DePere, WI 54115. Thank you very much for continuing your membership in the Neville Public Museum Astronomical Society. Clear skies and good observing!

Dick Francini—Treasurer NPMAS

Club Member Services

LOANER TELESCOPES

NPMAS members are welcome to use, free of charge for a one month period, one of the five club telescopes available. Please contact one of the board members to make arrangements. The five telescope available are:

- 10 inch Dobsonian Telescope
- 60 mm Bushnell Voyager
- 8 inch Triple Axis Newtonian Telescope
- 13 inch f/4.5 Dobsonian Telescope
- Meade ETX125 Cassegrain Telescope with Auto Star



Club Library

NPMAS has a collection of astronomy related books and videos covering a wide variety of topics including observing, the solar system, stars and more. Items can be checked out at monthly club meeting or by contacting Tom Cashman at 920-432-2261.



NPMAS OBSERVING SITES

NPMAS members have access to three observing sites located on private land and belonging to members of our club.

Parmentier Observatory

Parmentier Observatory is home to a 30 inch classical Cassegrain telescope, the largest private observatory in Wisconsin. Members may view through the 30 inch or set up their own telescopes in the adjoining field.

Observatory Contact
George McCourt—920-468-9296



Crivitz Observing

This is the private residence of Dave Jorgenson and Carol Eggleston. Located in the north woods of Wisconsin on 100 acres of land, this site offers some of the darkest skies around. The field is equipped with electricity and the far cabin is available for use. Please call ahead to make arrangements.

Dave Jorgenson and Carol Eggleston Home—715-757-3296

Cedar Drive Observing

This is the private residence of Tony and Tara Kroes, located Southwest of Pulaski on 10 acres of land. Members are welcome anytime but please call ahead to make arrangements.

Tony Kroes Home—920-822-4959.

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