

The American Association of Variable Star Observers

It is a great pleasure to present the fourth **AAVSO William Tyler Olcott Distinguished Service Award** to

Edward A. Halbach

“for his untiring promotion of variable star observing through his activities since 1933 as an observer, mentor of countless amateur astronomers and young people, leader of organizations, creator of innovative and efficient equipment and procedures, and through his generous willingness to help those who share his astronomical interests.”

Ed has been involved in astronomy at least since 1933. His interest in the field, his natural gifts in engineering, creative problem-solving, and teaching, and his delight in helping others enjoy a subject he loves have made him a respected and beloved member of the astronomical community.

Since becoming a member of the AAVSO in 1934, Ed has contributed over 98,000 observations of variable stars to the AAVSO International Database, focusing on variable stars in need of particular attention - and contending with Wisconsin and Colorado winters while carrying out his observing! He has also helped to develop, check, and revise many AAVSO finder charts for variable star observing.

Ed’s astronomical observing interests also include solar astronomy and occultations, and he has made important scientific and engineering contributions to both of these fields, in addition to the many observations he has made.

Ed has always been a mentor to those interested in astronomy. As Director of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society (MAS) Observatory for over 30 years, he was a guiding force in its development, and he helped set up many observing programs and mentored a tremendous number of young people in astronomy, an activity he continues to this day. A number of today’s leading amateur astronomers are “graduates” of MAS and as such are beneficiaries of Ed’s contributions. As the first President of the Astronomical League, and as a frequent eclipse expedition leader for the U.S. Military, Ed influenced amateur and professional astronomers from many disciplines and backgrounds.

The common denominators in all of Ed Halbach's work as an amateur astronomer have been his love of the stars and his eager willingness to help all others who shared his interest in astronomy. Through his observing, mentoring, dedication, and devotion to astronomy, he has always given generously of his time, wisdom, and abilities in every way he can. Ed is an inspiration to all of the amateur and professional astronomers he encounters, and we are proud to present him with the AAVSO William Tyler Olcott Award.

Daniel H. Kaiser
President

Janet A. Mattei
Director

Tucson, Arizona, April 26, 2003