

# Ashton Observatory Public Nights

The Des Moines Astronomical Society invites you to visit the Ashton Observatory Saturdays, 8:00 p.m., April through October.

Most Saturdays include a classroom presentation, followed by stargazing as sky conditions allow.

Meet one of our presenters this season:

## Ken Young

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Ken Young is a native of Des Moines. At age seven he received his first telescope as a gift, and he ground and polished his first telescope mirror in 1970. Ken jokes that he rashly abandoned a high school job at Taco Johns to work for Herb Schwartz as a “console operator” at the Sargent Planetarium during the mid-1970s.

Ken initially joined the Des Moines Astronomical Society in 1971. He earned a B.A. in Physics and Math at Carleton College in 1980, and says he took an embarrassingly long time to earn a Ph.D. in Astronomy from Caltech in 1994. His thesis work was on mass loss from AGB stars, using data from the

IRAS satellite, the Kuiper Airborne Observatory and the Caltech Submillimeter Observatory (CSO).

Ken has worked as a radio astronomer for 25 years, first at the CSO, and later at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory’s Submillimeter Array. He helped achieve “first light” on both of those telescopes. Most of his research involved mass loss from, and the carbon chemistry of, AGB stars, and planetary nebulae. He was also a member of the Event Horizon Telescope collaboration.