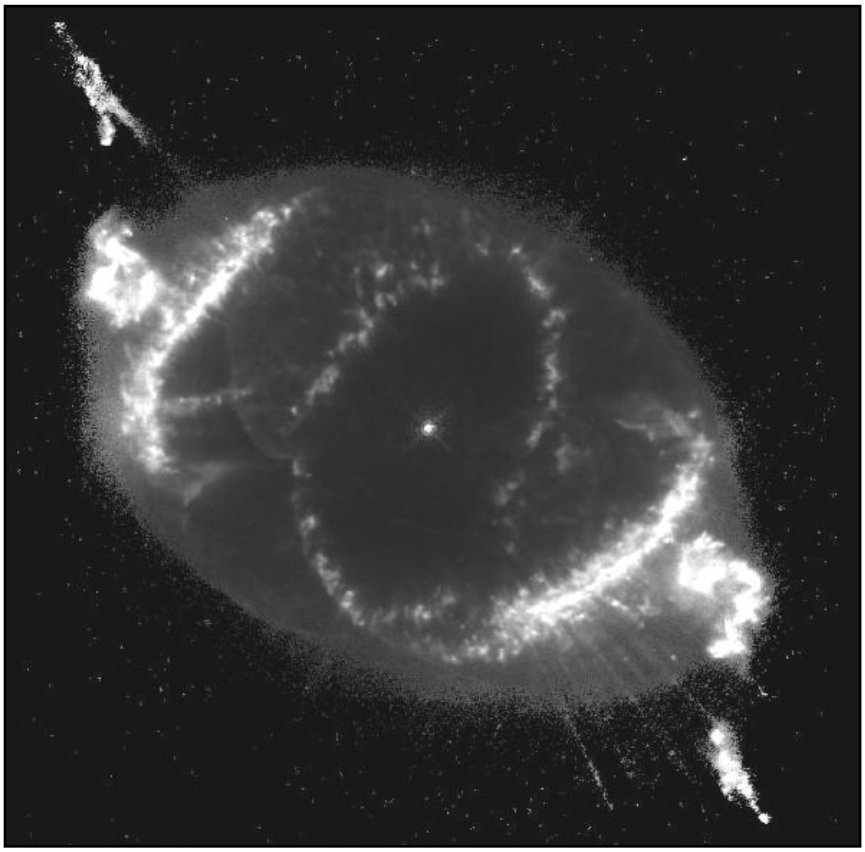
Kaler Gives Harlow-Shapley Lecture

Astronomy and astrophysics are areas of investigation from which we have come to expect spectacular discoveries, usually associated with pictures from the Hubble Space Telescope and "further details in the news at 10:00 pm". Articles in Scientific American occur slightly later. Astronomers know a good thing when they see (i.e. observe) it, and the public knows it, too. Over 100 adults and children typically show up at the monthly public Visitor's Nights at the UMR telescope when the event coincides with decent weather. Each year the Physics Department tries to bring in one or two astronomy speakers to give talks on cosmic themes aimed at a general public audience.



"Cat's Eye" planetary nebula

This past November astronomer **James Kaler** of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign visited UMR under the sponsorship of the Harlow Shapley Visiting Lectureship Program of the American Astronomical Society. Kaler gave a popular evening talk on "Birth of Stars: Where We Came From". (To physicists this translates as where the elements in the periodic table came from.) The lecture was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by the general public and by students from both Rolla High School and UMR.

Kaler also presented a technical colloquium about his research on planetary nebulae. This type of nebula is a product of the late stage of a sun-like star's evolution, and comprises the distended envelope of mass that has been thrown off of a star that is rapidly becoming a white dwarf.

While at UMR, this astronomer also talked shop with the students taking the department's astrophysics course, did an interview with KUMR radio, and made contacts with department faculty doing work that may have application to astronomical problems.

It was a very successful visit in terms of furthering interest in astrophysics and physics in general.

We think Harlow Shapely, a graduate of the University of Missouri, would have approved.

Charles Rice Adds Funds to Physics Scholarships

Charles M. Rice (MS '50) has donated additional funds to be used for physics scholarships. Last summer he provided a month's funding so graduate student **Dan Storey** could work towards his MS degree, which Storey expects to earn this summer. This year, Chuck has generously provided two $1,000 undergraduate scholarships and one $2,000 graduate fellowship to the department.

Charles M. Rice

Last fall Rice came to UMR to deliver a lecture to the Chancellor's Leadership Class, which consists of 35 freshman selected for their high academic abilities and leadership potential. While here, he was given a personalized tour of the physics department and chatted with many of our students about physics and careers. He listened with interest as several undergraduate students presented short talks to him on their on-going research efforts.

As reported in last year's Newsletter article about him, Rice received a Master of Science Degree in Physics from UMR in 1950, and a Professional Degree in 1996. He currently serves on UMR's Nuclear Engineering Advisory Board. Chuck will continue to play a leadership role at UMR as a member of the Board of Visitors, a group of individuals selected by Dean **Russell Buhite** to assist with strategic planning for the College of Arts and Sciences.

Chuck was awarded one of the first master degrees in physics from MSM and remembers very fondly working with Dr. **Harold Fuller.** He went on to head the government's nuclear aircraft program for several years, and also to found several companies.

Chuck Rice has eight children and fifteen grandchildren, and makes his home in Idaho Falls, ID. He has been honored by the State of Idaho as one of the 100 people in that state who "make a difference."