



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

August 2008

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Outreach Report

July was full of small outreaches, with one cloudout and one smokeout. AU outreaches Andy Allen, Chad Caprio, Bill Clausen, Krissie Cook & her Quasars, Tim & Jason Crawford, Joe Doyle, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, Chris Larson, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Ron Nixon, Edgar Ocampo, Helen Osenga, Javier El Magnifico Rivera, Nancy Rohrer, David Salvia, Tom Whittimore, and Tim Wittenburg showed the sky to 474 customers.

August AU Outreach

August is full of outreach opportunities. Remember, if you help out at just 6 outreaches in a calendar year, your membership gets extended for a year. Events are subject to change and cancellation, so contact Chuck at 964-8201 or macpuzl@west.net for the latest information. Here's what's scheduled so far:

Telescopes at the Bacara Resort continues every Sunday at 8 PM. Contact Chuck if you want to join in.

Friday, August 8, setup 7:30 PM

Show the sky to campers at Refugio Beach State Park, in the day use parking area.

Saturday, August 9, 5:30 PM

Goodbye for Krissie and AU Planning Meeting in the McVeagh House at SBMNH, west of the observatory.

Saturday, August 9, 8 PM

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH. It's always fun!

Sunday, August 10, setup 8:30 AM

Solar scopes for the Santa Barbara Amateur Radio Club's Hamfest event at the Elk's Club in Goleta. See their event description at <http://www.sbarc.org/>

Tuesday, August 12, 4 AM

Peak of the annual Perseid Meteor Shower for our longitude.

Tuesday, August 12, setup 7:30 PM

Telescope Tuesday at the Camino Real Marketplace in Goleta. We set up in the plaza between Borders and the movie theater.

Friday, August 15, 7:30 PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at the observatory at Westmont College.

Saturday, August 16, setup 8 PM

Slide show and telescopes for campers at Cachuma Lake Campgrounds. We'll be setting up in the field at Dakota Plains.

Friday, August 22, setup 7 PM

Telescopes for an event at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. Look at celestial birds and other gardenlike things like the Butterfly Cluster and the Wild Ducks.

Saturday, August 23, setup 7 PM

Telescopes for campers at Refugio Beach State Park, in the day use parking area.

Wednesday, August 27, ???

Around this date the Earth will pass through the orbit of Comet Boattini, right where the comet was just over a month ago. Will we get a nice meteor shower?

Saturday, August 30, setup 8 PM

Slide show and telescopes for campers at Cachuma Lake Campgrounds. We'll be setting up in the field at Dakota Plains.

How I Got Started In Astronomy (And Why I Still Love It)

Over the years, I've enjoyed the newsletter articles written by members who discuss their "conversion" to amateur astronomy. You manage to sustain such a great passion for what you do, and it really is contagious. So maybe in sharing my story with you, I can pass the bug on to some other first-time reader. I got my start in astronomy by playing "Eeny Meeny Miny Moe." No, really! As a high school student, I went to a job fair and picked up a flyer for the Museum's teen program, Quasars to Sea Stars. It seemed interesting enough that I decided to call the number on the flyer for an interview. Upon closer inspection, I saw that I would need to choose a focus area; I had my choice of marine biology, entomology, herpetology or astronomy. I randomly chose astronomy, subsequently interviewed for the program and was accepted.

That first summer in the teen program was huge for me. I started as a very shy 16-year-old who didn't know the Big Dipper from Orion's Belt. Within a matter of weeks, our public speaking training had me giving mini-presentations in the Space Lab during every shift, and loving it. But perhaps more importantly, my instructor had hooked me on astronomy. She has the kind of passion for astronomy that makes anyone who hears her want to be as excited as she is, and I finished that summer absolutely addicted to astronomy and sure that I would perfectly happy spending the rest of my life working at the Museum.

13 years later, it's hard to believe that so much time has passed. I'm still here, happy to be at the Museum and excited to transmit the mysteries of the universe to anyone who will listen. I've really enjoyed my time with all of you. You've taken the time to teach me and the talk with me, you've supported the Museum and our efforts in an incredible way, and you've touched many more lives than just mine. As I prepare to leave the Museum and move to Florida, I'll be taking each of you with me. I'll take the memory of your smile, the sound of your laughter in the dark at a star party, your friendly greeting at the monthly meeting, and especially your friendship. Don't worry, I've already contacted the club nearest my town and scouted out the closest planetarium. Even though I'll be "just" a stay-at-home mom, that still leaves

one person under my watch who has a lot to learn about astronomy!

Love to you all,
Krissie Cook
Astronomy Programs Manager
(Kevin and Stellan also send their greetings!)

Krissie's Going Away Party by the AU...

All photos courtesy of Jim Williams



AU President, Tim Wittenburg, presents the AU Lifetime Membership plaque to Krissie



Krissie admires her gift: an engraved green laser pointer!



Krissie and Timma Buck enjoy goodies entirely prepared by Timma. Thanks again, Timma!

OUTREACH REWARD

SBAU is in the forefront “nationally” when it comes to community outreach. In an effort to encourage continued participation, and help out with the astronomically high gas prices, there will be a monthly \$50 gas card given to the member who drives to the outreach sites the most. For the month of August you are asked to keep a tally of the outreach events you drove to and then email it to Club Treasurer Ruben Gutierrez at rubenalvag@aol.com before the end of the month. If you’re the one who drove to the most events, you’ll win 50 bucks in gas!

SBAU SWEATSHIRTS

There will be a new order of SBAU sweatshirts and T-Shirts submitted in September. If you missed out the last time and have been just itching to get your custom designed Santa Barbara Astronomical Unit sweat shirt, with the club logo beautifully displayed on the front upper left chest area and a second extra large size one prominently displayed on the back, this is your chance! Just email Ruben Gutierrez at rubenalvag@aol.com (you can also mail your order to the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, attn SBAU, 2559 Puesta Del Sol, SB, CA, 93105)

with the size, hooded or not, with or without zipper. Sweatshirts with no hood or zipper are \$19, with a hood \$23, or with added zipper, \$26.

AU Information Box

President: Tim Wittenburg 969-6945
black10@aol.com

Vice President: Chad Caprio 570-506-5378
capwil87@netzero.net

Secretary: VACANT

Treasurer: Ruben Gutierrez 450-7451
rubenalvag@aol.com

Outreach: Chuck McPartlin 964-8201
macpuzl@west.net

Webmaster: Paul Winn 886-2319
strg8zn@syvcomputers.net

Refreshments: Tim Crawford 962-3619
tcrawf3@cox.net

Newsletter: Tom Whittemore 687-2025
kometes@aol.com

AU Astronomy Information Pager

(Leave a short message) 564-9002

SBMNH Astronomy Program Coordinator

Krissie Cook 682-4711x173
kcook@sbnature2.org

SBMNH Astronomy Program Tape

Updated monthly 682-4711x405

AU AstroNews, the monthly publication of the **Astronomical Unit (AU)**, is mailed to the AU membership. For publishing consideration for the next month, submit astronomical items by the 20th of the current month!

AU annual membership rates:

Single = \$15 **Family = \$25**

AU mailing address:

Astronomical Unit
c/o Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
2559 Puesta Del Sol Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2998

On the Web: <http://www.sbau.org>

August 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 ●	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 ● Refugio State Beach 7:30PM	9 Krissie's Going Away Party Monthly Star Party SBMNH 8PM
10 Hamfest at Elk's Club 8:30AM	11	12 Camino Real Marketplace 7:30PM	13	14	15 Westmont College 8PM	16 ○ Cachuma Lake Campgrounds 8PM
17	18	19	20	21	22 Botanic Garden 7PM	23 ● Refugio Beach State Park 7PM
24	25	26	27 Comet Boattini Meteors?	28	29	30 ● Cachuma Lake Campgrounds 8PM
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The Astronomical Unit

c/o Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
2559 Puesta Del Sol Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2998