



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

December 2008

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Outreach Summary

Since the last newsletter, AU outreachers Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, Dale Lowdermilk, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Ron Nixon, Edgar Ocampo, Helen Osenga, and John West showed the night sky to 785 customers.

Outreach for December

Here are the AU events scheduled so far for December, which looks pretty quiet. Remember, events are subject to change, so to get the latest information on schedules, or directions, just contact Chuck at 964-8201 or macpuzl@west.net

Wednesday, December 3, setup 6:30 PM

Slide show and telescopes for Santa Barbara Junior High, behind the Marjorie Luke Theater.

Friday, December 5, 7 PM

A quick planetarium show, then it's Members' Night, with short presentations by AU members.

Tuesday, December 9, setup 6:30 PM

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

Wednesday, Dec 10/11, 1020 PM - 0155 AM

The Moon occults the Pleiades, perfectly placed at the zenith for Santa Barbara.

Thursday, December 11, 6 PM

Annual AU Holiday Party at the Beachside Bar & Grill at Goleta Beach.

Saturday, December 13, 5 PM

AU Planning Meeting in the classroom outside Javier's office at SBMNH. Come help plan your club's activities for the 2009 International Year of Astronomy celebration of 400 years of telescopic discoveries.

Saturday, December 13, 7 PM

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH. Bring a scope and have fun showing goodies in the sky outside Palmer Observatory, or just show up and enjoy looking at them. Maybe we'll catch part of the Geminid meteor shower, which peaks at 3 PM our time.

Friday, December 19, 7 PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont College, at the Carroll Observatory, next to Van Kampen Dormitory. The big scope survived the Tea Fire!



Mount Calvary Retreat House before the Tea Fire. Photo credit: Ruben Gutierrez

Shangri-La in Ashes

by Ruben Gutierrez

The recent Tea fire destroyed many beautiful places in Santa Barbara including the Mount Calvary Monastery and Retreat House, home of past AU Vice President Brother Laurence Harms. Brother Laurence, who is also a Solar System Ambassador of JPL, for years loved to share his vast knowledge of astronomy with guests of this beautiful Spanish-style guesthouse nestled in meticulously arranged gardens and pathways. Situated dramatically on a ridge 1250 feet above Santa Barbara with commanding views of both terrestrial and cosmic wonders, Mount Calvary hosted years of star parties

to the delight of countless star-gazers. Fortunately, Brother Laurence and others of the order of the Holy Cross Brothers in residence were not injured and are safe. It can only be hoped that this Shangri-La of Santa Barbara can return to its enchanting beauty and Brother Laurence continue with his mission to share the heavens above with all.

Outreach Award

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 December 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 prior to the end of the month. If you’re the one who drove to the most events, you’ll win 50 bucks in gas!

Looking back...



Telescope for Sale

Celestron CPC1100 – 11-inch computerized SCT with XLT coatings and premium eyepieces and accessories. Original total \$6000, asking \$3400 for everything. Contact Gary Parent at (713) 423-0848, or email solochampion2002@yahoo.com for description of items included.

Jupiter

by Nancy Rohrer

Enjoying night's starlit sky
viewing across the heavens
with soft warm breeze
bringing scent of jasmine.

Vast array of sparkling stars
one star shines most bright
then realize it's not a star
It is a planet...Jupiter

It's fifth planet from the Sun
fourth brightest after three others
Sun, Moon, and Venus
beaming proud of moons he controls.

Herds of moons he has corralled
biggest are Io, Europa, Ganymede, Callisto
going back and forth and around
with sixty-three others not named.

Jupiter is big, bigger than
all eight other planets together
if Jupiter were hollow
a thousand Earths could snuggle in.

Rings recently found around Jupiter
that are small and faint
made of rocky dust...maybe
wonder to whom he is engaged

Jupiter is a gaseous planet
what we see are cloud tops
with red bands of racing winds
four hundred miles per hour.

Known for its great Red Spot
so big it'll hold two Earths
a stormy high pressure place
not a site to star dream and relax

Really enjoyed starlit nights
dark so they all show bright
gazing at stars still in sight
not lost to Sun's dawning light.

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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:

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

December 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 SB Junior High 6:30PM	4	5 AU General Meeting 7PM 	6
7	8	9 Camino Real Marketplace 6:30PM	10	11 AU Holiday Party! 6PM	12 	13 AU Planning Meeting 5PM SBMNH Star Party 7PM
14	15	16	17	18	19 Westmont College 7PM 	20
21	22	23	24	25 Ho ho ho!	26	27 
28	29	30	31			

The Astronomical Unit

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