



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

December 2011

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

OUR DECEMBER MEETING

Our December meeting will feature our annual Members' Night along with the elections of our club officers. If you would like to serve our wonderful club as an elected official, this is your chance to step up and be counted!



*With Orion looming above, Chuck takes a peek at the night skies at a recent dark sky get-together at the Gun Club.
Photo: Andy Allen.*

OUTREACH SUMMARY

Since the last newsletter, AU outreaches Andy Allen, Tim Crawford, Carolyn & Ed Edwards, Mike Farris, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, Jackson Kwiatkowski, Chris Larson, Janet & Martin Meza, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Max Neufeldt, Edgar Ocampo, Scott Orlosky, Rosemary & Al Rice, Javier Rivera, Melissa Romo, Danny Runkel, Gary Schneider, David Snyder, Colin Taylor, Tom Totton, and Tom Whittemore showed the night sky to 1650 customers.

OUTREACH FOR DECEMBER

Here are the AU events scheduled so far for December. 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

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, SETUP 6PM

Telescopes for Peabody Elementary School, at 3018 Calle Noguera in Santa Barbara.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 7PM

Monthly AU meeting in Farrand Hall at the SBMNH. Short planetarium show at 7, followed by the meeting at 7:30. Lectures and Members' Night.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, SETUP 6:30PM

Slide show and telescopes for campers at Carpinteria State Beach. We set up in the grass between their ranger station and the railroad tracks, just to the right of the main entrance.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, SETUP 6:30PM

Telescopes and slide show for Santa Barbara Junior High School. We set up behind Marjorie Luke Theater on the campus, and get in via the gate on the East Ortega and North Quarantina intersection.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 6PM

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

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 4:45AM TO 6:58AM

Total lunar eclipse. For us, the Moon will set just as totality ends, so find a viewing spot with a good low western horizon.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 5PM

AU planning meeting in the classroom next to Javier's office.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 7PM

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.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, SETUP 7PM

Telescope Tuesday at Camino Real Marketplace in Goleta. We set up in the plaza next to the theater, under the Christmas tree.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 7PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont College, at their new observatory, next to the baseball field.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, SETUP 6PM

Telescopes for Bacara Resort and Spa. We set up on their Miró Lawn. Contact Chuck for access if you haven't come before.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 9:30PM

Winter Solstice!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, SETUP 6PM

Ring in the New Year with telescopes for Bacara Resort and Spa. We set up on their Miró Lawn. Contact Chuck for access if you haven't come before.

IN MEMORIAM...

Long-time SB Astronomy Club and AU member Jim Billig has recently passed. He was a local well-loved science teacher who interested a lot of people in astronomy. A wonderful tribute to Jim can be found at:

<http://www.newspress.com/Top/Article/article.jsp?Section=LOCAL&Subsection=Obituaries&ID=566250408960458787>

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN...

Ruben Gutierrez

2011 Look-Back for Our Award-winning Club...

The Holiday Season is now in full swing, and the AU is ready to wrap up the year. What a year 2011 has been! I believe the membership truly excelled this year, and we have a lot to show for it. Starting with the announced completion date of the UC2 wheelchair-accessible telescope-viewing system - designed by our own AU Secretary Jim Williams - this year had all the makings of an extraordinary one. The long-term goal was not only to continue with the usual, as Astronomy Magazine Associate Editor Bill Andrews put it, "almost prolific" community outreach event schedule, but to enhance it. We did that by having our first AU Member Summer Star Party in July, conducting a second Astronomy Day in the Fall, followed the next week by having two observing sites on International Observe the Moon Night, and starting a new outreach program for the wheelchair-bound. And to

top the year off, the Santa Barbara Astronomical Unit was awarded the Out-Of-This-World Award for having the most outstanding outreach and innovative astronomy program by Astronomy Magazine: "The number one selling astronomy magazine in the world." It has been very gratifying to be recognized as the number one astronomy club in the nation, and the membership can certainly say "This year was one for the books."

December 2nd Members Night and Elections...

I'm looking forward to seeing you at our December general meeting to experience "Members Night", which is when we enjoy the interesting, and entertaining, show-and-tell from our very own members, and to elect the AU Officers for 2012. If you have not yet submitted your nomination to Vice President Michael Farris, please do so. Or, if you want to submit a nomination from the floor during the meeting, you're also welcome to do that, as well. As I mentioned last month, this is always a very fun night, so don't miss it!

December Holiday Party...

(Note: last day to sign-up is Thursday, December 1, 2011; contact AU Treasurer Pat McPartlin).

Another fun-filled evening in December is our annual Holiday Dinner at the Beachside Bar and Cafe. Thanks to Tim Crawford, the menu this year is, once again, simply superb - with a choice of 4 delicious entrees. This, along with the always fun-filled Secret Santa Exchange, is a great way to enjoy the Holidays, and your AU friends. See you there!

A Hint of Things to Come for 2012...

How about observing International Astronomy Day at the Camino Real Marketplace next year! Then, having an all-out Museum Astronomy Day like we've never seen before in the Summer. Yes, we'll be changing things around, but only to enhance our outreach to the community, which includes giving away not one, but two deluxe 8-inch Zhumell Dobsonian telescopes. Wow!

Ideas for Planning Meetings...

The AU, with fantastic sponsorship from the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, will continue to be the community-minded astronomy club it's always been. The AU will always look at how to enhance our positive contributions to Goleta, Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, and the Santa Ynez Valley.

Remember: for the December Planning meeting (Saturday, 12/10/11), please let me know your ideas, suggestions, or any other item for the club to consider. This also goes for any of the monthly planning meetings. Please send me an email at rubenalvag@aol.com. I'll be sure to respond to you and add it to the agenda.

Members...

This month I wish to give a jingle bell thank you to William Gourley, Marvin and Janie Johnson, Gerald Kopache, Jiri Polivka, Dmitrii Zagorodnov, and Laguna Blanca School (Peter Angeloff) for renewing their membership, and a HO HO HO Welcome Aboard to new members Chuck Keyser and Shib Mookherjea and Family. I wish to conclude by saying I feel I'm the luckiest Astronomy Club President in the nation because of all the marvelous contributions the AU makes to promote the Science of Astronomy, and because of the simply fantastic group of people that has made the AU what it is today.

A Special Thank You...

I wish to extend very special thanks to Vice President Michael Farris, Secretary Jim Williams, Treasurer Pat McPartlin, Webmaster Paul Winn, Newsletter Editor Tom Whittemore, Equipment Coordinator Art Harris, the Phantom Food Dude Tim Crawford, with his able foodie assistant and Museum Astronomy Programs Manager Javier Rivera, and the "Heart and Soul" of the AU - Outreach Coordinator Chuck McPartlin. All of you have made my job as an astronomy club president a dream come true. **THANK YOU AND MAY ALL OF YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!**

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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

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

December 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 PEABODY ELEMENTARY 6PM	2 GENERAL  MEETING 7PM	3 CARPINTERIA STATE BEACH 6:30PM
4	5	6 SANTA BARBARA JUNIOR HIGH 6:30PM	7	8 AU ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY 6PM	9	10 PLANNING  MEETING 5PM STAR PARTY 7PM SBMNH
11	12	13 CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	14	15	16 WESTMONT COLLEGE 7PM	17 BACARA  RESORT 6PM
18	19	20	21 WINTER SOLSTICE!	22	23	24 
25	26	27	28	29	30	31 BACARA RESORT 6PM

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