



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

February 2010

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

February Meeting Speaker

February's presentation is "The Science and Technology of the James Webb Space Telescope", by Dr. Till Liepmann, a senior systems engineer working on the JWST optical telescope. He received a BS from Caltech in 1979 and a PhD in Optical Sciences from the University of Arizona in 1983. He has been continuously active in optics and science for over 26 years. Currently, Dr. Liepmann is one of a team responsible for verifying that the telescope will provide the performance needed to achieve the science mission.

Outreach Report

Between the holidays and the clouds and rain, it's been a quiet month for outreach events, with just four since the last newsletter. AU volunteers Mike Farris, Art Harris, Justin & Tom King, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, David Salvia, Tom Totton, and Tom Whittemore showed cool things in the sky to **152** customers.

February Events

Here's the schedule so far for February. Remember, the events are subject to change, so for the latest updates, contact Chuck at 964-8201 or macpuzl@west.net.

Wednesday, February 3, setup 6 PM

Telescopes for kids and parents at St. Andrews preschool, on Arroyo Road near Auhay Drive in Goleta. The official address is 4575 Auhay Drive, but the entrance is off Arroyo.

Friday, February 5, 7 PM

Catch a quick planetarium show, followed by our monthly meeting at 7:30. This month's speaker is Dr. Till Liepmann, speaking about "The Science and Technology of the James Webb Space Telescope", the future successor to the Hubble Space Telescope.

Thursday, February 11, setup 6 PM

Telescopes for a group of students from Los Olivos School, at the dark skies of the Sedgwick Reserve, at the mountain end of Brinkerhoff Avenue in the Santa Ynez Valley.

Friday, February 12, setup 6 PM

Telescopes for a group of students from Ontiveros School, at the dark skies of the Sedgwick Reserve, at the mountain end of Brinkerhoff Avenue in the Santa Ynez Valley.

Saturday, February 13, 5 PM

Monthly AU planning meeting in the classroom outside Javier's office.

Saturday, February 13, 7 PM

Monthly Public Star Party at the Museum. Mars should be high enough to make an appearance at the party.

Tuesday, February 16, setup 6:30 PM

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

Thursday, February 18, setup 6 PM

Telescopes for Oak Valley School in Buellton, at 595 2nd Street (past Jonata School).

Friday, February 19, 7 PM

Monthly Westmont Public Telescope Night at the new observatory by the baseball field. The big 24-inch scope should be open for viewing.

Tuesday, February 23, 5:30 to 7:30 PM

Telescopes for El Camino School's Science Night. They're at 5020 San Simeon Drive in Noleta.

Thursday, February 25, 5:30 to 7:30 PM

Telescopes for Ellwood Elementary School's Science Night. They're at 7686 Hollister Avenue in Goleta.



Pat and Chuck McPartlin are interviewed by KEYT Television's Mike Klan. Photo: R. Gutierrez.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN....

Ruben Gutierrez

Clouds and Outreaches

What do star parties and rainy weather have in common you ask? Well, nothing. Due to heavy rain, cloud bursts, hail, snow, and even tornadoes (in Santa Barbara!), most of the AU's outreach events this month were cancelled. However, on the positive note, what great weather to take a short ride to the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and view a fascinating planetarium show and the other interesting exhibits it has to offer. Although the AU may have had a slumber month of star parties for January, I take great pride in stating that for the prior 6 months (during the International Year of Astronomy 2009), our club was rated number one in the nation in number of outreach events for the Night Sky Network! I wish to thank all of the membership for their hard work in reaching this milestone, with a special thanks to Chuck and Pat McPartlin, Edgar Ocampo, Art Harris, Michael Farris, and Javier Rivera. Keep up the great work! Also, I hope you were able to watch our own Chuck and Pat McPartlin interviewed on KEYT In Focus, which was broadcast live. It's certainly a pleasure to see members of the AU, and the Club itself, acknowledged for the excellent and notable work being done in Santa Barbara and the surrounding communities.

Telescope to Mexico

During IYA2009, the AU decided to reach out to another country and respond to a request from the blossoming "Cosmonavis" Astronomy Club in Merida, Yucatan, by donating a telescope to the Arcadio Poveda Planetarium. For the past several months we've been searching for the scope that their

Club felt would serve them best, and could be packaged up and shipped safely. Under the guiding hand of Equipment Coordinator Art Harris, the AU purchased a pre-owned Celestron Ultima 8 Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope for \$600. The package includes an 8X50 optical finder with a 90 degree diagonal, a Telrad finder, heavy duty tripod and wedge, a Celestron scope carrying case, a second case containing several eyepieces, battery connectors, power cabling, 90 degree diagonal for the OTA, and Astro Master electronic digital setting circles. Some club members also generously donated additional eyepieces. I'm sure Cosmonavis Club President Fernando Ayil Zapata, and the rest of the members, will enjoy and learn much from the AU's donation. Congratulations to them and a wish of clear skies!

International Astronomy Day 04/24/10

Although the AU's events in January were slowed down to a trickle due to the weather, time is passing by quickly. Before we know it, International Astronomy Day will be here. The event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, April 24, from 10 AM to 4 PM, at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. This is one of the Club's premier events of the year and we need the membership to volunteer in order to make this another successful AU event. We will have numerous telescopes, astrophotography, hands on exhibits, children's rocket launches, comet making, mirror grinding demonstrations, Club T-Shirts and sweatshirts for sale, a telescope/equipment flea market, a telescope clinic/star party (7-10 PM), and, of course, our fantastic free raffle. But, all these exciting events need AU members in order to take place. Please put your name on the volunteer sign-up sheet going around at the meetings, or contact Pat McPartlin at parsnip7@yahoo.com or at 964-8201 .

Membership Notes

As you can see, the AU is a club dedicated to the science of astronomy, local, and even international outreach, and just plain enjoying each other's company bonded with common astronomical interests. As President I can hardly say enough to praise and thank the membership for the wonderful work being done. At this time I would especially like to thank the following members for renewing their membership this past month: Joe Brown, Bob Kvass, John Martinez, and Dmitrii Zagorodnov. Another way of renewing your membership each year is by participating in 6 or more outreach events

throughout the year. The following hearty souls that qualified for this are: (Family Membership) Tim Crawford, Ed and Carolyn Edwards, Mike Farris, Art Harris, Chuck and Pat McPartlin, Tom Whittemore, (Individual Membership) Andy Allen, Chad Caprio, Bill Clausen, Joe Doyle, Ruben Gutierrez, Jürgen Hilmer, Chris Larson, Max Neufeldt, Edgar Ocampo, Bob Richard, Javier Rivera, Nancy Rohrer, Samantha Thompson, and Tim Wittenburg. Outstanding!



Mount Hamilton's First Snow of the season – December 2009.
Photo source: The Astronomy Connection.

The More Loving One

W.H. Auden

Looking up at the stars, I know quite well
That, for all they care, I can go to hell,
But on earth indifference is the least
We have to dread from man or beast.

How should we like it were stars to burn
With a passion for us we could not return?
If equal affection cannot be,
Let the more loving one be me.

Admirer as I think I am
Of stars that do not give a damn,
I cannot, now I see them, say
I missed one terribly all day.

Were all stars to disappear or die,
I should look at an empty sky
And feel its total dark sublime,
Though this might take me a little time.

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AU annual membership rates:

Single = \$15 Family = \$25

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

February 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 St. Andrew's Preschool 6 PM	4	5 AU General Meeting 7 PM	6
7	8	9	10	11 Sedgwick Reserve 6 PM	12 Sedgwick Reserve 6 PM	13 Planning Meeting 5 PM SBMNH Star Party 7 PM
14	15	16 Camino Real Marketplace 6:30PM	17	18 Oak Valley 6 PM	19 Westmont College 7 PM	20
21 	22	23 El Camino School 5 PM	24	25 Ellwood Elementary 5 PM	26	27
28 						

The Astronomical Unit

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