



# AU AstroNews

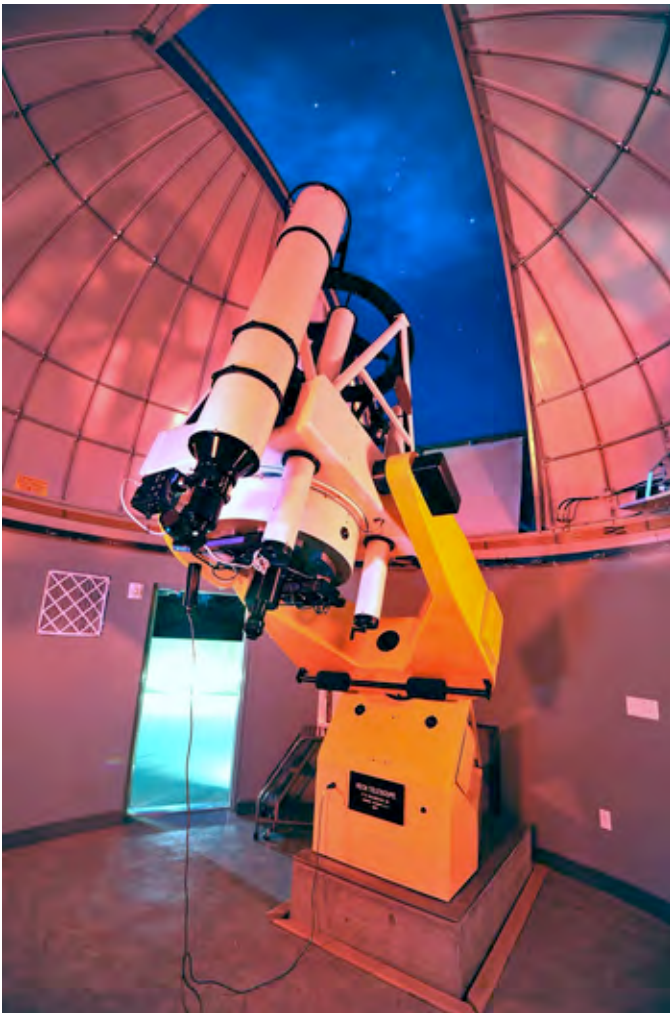
## The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

February 2012

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

### OUR FEBRUARY MEETING

Mike Farris has done it again! For the February meeting we will have a BBC film on “extreme astronomy,” highlighting some of Earth’s finest observatories!



*Seeing Orion at Westmont's Observatory. Photo credit: Tony Lazzari.*

### OUTREACH REPORT

It's cloud-out season, but we still managed to squeeze in some outreach. AU volunteers Bill Clausen, Tim Crawford, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, John Martinez, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Janet & Martin Meza, Rosemary & Al Rice, Javier Rivera,

Danny Runkel, Tom Totton, and Tom Whittemore showed cool things in the sky to 251 customers.

### FEBRUARY EVENTS

Here's the schedule so far for February. Remember, the events are subject to change and cancellation, so for the latest updates, contact Chuck at 964-8201 or [macpuzl@west.net](mailto:macpuzl@west.net).

#### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, SETUP 5:30 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.

#### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, SETUP 5:15 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Brandon School, at 195 Brandon Drive in Goleta.

#### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 7 PM

Catch a quick planetarium show, followed by our monthly meeting at 7:30. This month we have an astronomy video, and AU Academy Awards, plus outreach awards.

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, SETUP 8:30 AM

Solar scopes for Science Saturday at Hope School, at 3970 La Colina Road in Santa Barbara.

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, SETUP 6 PM

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

#### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, SETUP 5 PM

Telescopes for an astronomy night at Santa Ynez Charter School, at 3525 Pine Street in Santa Ynez. We get in through a gate at the end of Tyndall Street.

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 5 PM

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

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 7 PM**

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH, next to Palmer Observatory.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, SETUP 5:30 PM**

Telescopes for Science Night at Foothill School, at 711 Ribera Drive in Goleta. They should have a gate open for us at the NW corner of the playground, off Cathedral Oaks.

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 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.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, SETUP 6 PM**

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

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, SETUP 5 PM**

Telescopes for Family Science Night at El Camino School at 5020 San Simeon Drive in Goleta.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, SETUP 5 PM**

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

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, SETUP 5 PM**

Telescopes for an Astronomy Night at Santa Ynez Elementary School, at the corner of Pine Street and Calzada Avenue in Santa Ynez.

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, SETUP 6 PM**

Telescopes for Waldorf School, across Fairview from the Goleta Library, in the northwest back corner of the property.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 7 PM**

Telescope Tuesday at the Camino Real Marketplace in Goleta. We set up in the plaza by the theater.

**FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN...**

*Ruben Gutierrez*

***Astronomy Day – remember to sign-up to help***

We had a great start to the new year by having a most interesting first general meeting of 2012, and some simply fantastic goodies (thanks to Rosemary Rice and Javier Rivera). I wish to thank the membership for such a great showing of support that night by signing up to help out on International

Astronomy Day 2012, which will take place on Saturday, April 28th at the Camino Real Marketplace in Goleta. At the January Planning Meeting we figured out the details of that day. Suffice it to say, the AU will put on yet another crowd-pleasing, prize-winning, telescope-viewing, and exhibit-filled experience for the hundreds that are expected to attend. And, as with past Astronomy Days, the AU will reimburse AU volunteers for lunch. Save your lunch receipts. I'll talk more about this special day in the next AstroNews.

***Movie Night for General Meeting, (and popcorn!)***

Everybody knows February is Oscar month and Hollywood's Academy Awards night is the climax of the season. Well, not to be shortchanged, the AU will be having its own version of this glitzy evening by having MOVIE NIGHT at the AU, which will not only include some tasty goodies but also, yes, popcorn. But wait, that's not all. We'll also be passing out our own AU-Oscars in the categories of Best AU Supporting Actor, Best AU Actor, and Best AU Movie. So, make sure you come and enjoy this special February General meeting with your friends, then sit back with some popcorn and other delicious goodies, and enjoy the documentary movie of the Best Observatories and Telescopes Around the World (tuxedos and formal gowns optional).

***Museum's Refurbished Observatory: Update***

Here's a quick update on the Museum's Observatory. Bids on the excavation for the telescope mount are coming in and work is expected to get underway soon. As was mentioned last summer, the AU very much wants to stay involved with this most important project. To this end, our Club donated \$3,000 towards the construction of a new storage facility. After its completion, a hardy working group of AU members met one Friday afternoon, cleaned out the observatory, and moved its contents to the new storage place. Now that plans for the interior of the new observatory are taking shape, it has come to the Club's attention that a large flat screen monitor will be needed. At the January planning meeting we decided the AU would donate this, as well. We're all looking forward to the observatory's completion, and "First Light" for the new 20-inch telescope. Keep reading the AstroNews for continued updates.

### ***New and Renewing Members – Thanks!***

This month I wish to give a Happy Valentine's welcome to new members: Ken Edwards, Dennis Holst, and Steve and Ali Wilson, and a chocolate and rose thank you to renewing members: Bob Brown, Marciano and Sabine Chan, Bob Kvaas, Robert and Patty Piatek, and Carolyn Turner and Matt Wooddall. The membership is what has made this club of ours such a success, and with your continued support and involvement, I'm sure we'll reach whatever goals we set for ourselves.

### ***Give Agenda Items to AU President***

Please keep in mind that if you have something you feel should be added to our February planning meeting agenda (set for 2/11), simply send me an email at [rubenlavag@aol.com](mailto:rubenlavag@aol.com). I'll make sure to respond to you and add your suggestion to our discussion.



*Setting up at Bacara Resort & Spa. Photo credit: Tom Totton.*

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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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## February 2012

| Sunday | Monday                         | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday                                 | Friday                                       | Saturday  |
|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|
|        |                                |   | 1<br>ST. ANDREWS<br>5:30PM  | 2<br>BRANDON<br>SCHOOL<br>5:15PM         | 3<br>GENERAL<br>MEETING 7PM                  | 4<br>HOPE SCHOOL<br>8:30AM<br>BACARA<br>RESORT 6PM          |
| 5      | 6                              | 7<br>  | 8   | 9<br>SANTA YNEZ<br>CHARTER<br>SCHOOL 5PM | 10   | 11<br>PLANNING<br>MEETING 5PM<br>STAR PARTY<br>7PM<br>SBMNH |
| 12     | 13                             | 14<br> | 15  | 16<br>FOOTHILL<br>SCHOOL<br>5:30PM       | 17<br>WESTMONT<br>COLLEGE 7PM                | 18<br>BACARA<br>RESORT 6PM                                  |
| 19     | 20                             | 21<br> | 22<br>EL CAMINO<br>SCHOOL 5PM   | 23<br>ELLWOOD<br>ELEMENTARY<br>5PM       | 24<br>SANTA YNEZ<br>ELEMENTARY<br>SCHOOL 5PM | 25  |
| 26     | 27<br>WALDORF<br>SCHOOL<br>6PM | 28<br>CAMINO REAL<br>MARKETPLACE<br>7PM   | 29<br> |  |  |   |

### The Astronomical Unit

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