



# AU AstroNews

## The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

February 2016

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History



Ice ring around the moon. Photo: Bruce Murdock.

### OUR FEBRUARY MEETING

Our February General Meeting will take place on Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at 7PM. Our speaker this evening will be Dr. Rachel Street from the Las Cumbres Observatory Global Telescope Network. Rachel's talk is titled "Exoplanets from Space!" She describes her talk with the following: "The field of exoplanets has undergone rapid developments in recent years thanks to the extraordinary capabilities of space-based telescopes. I will present a review of the latest developments in the field, with particular attention paid to recent discoveries from the NASA missions Kepler and Spitzer. These include the new discoveries of warm transiting planets from Kepler's Extended Mission K2 as well as cool microlensing planets from the Spitzer program. Finally, I will look ahead to the near future to highlight what we hope to learn from the TESS, Gaia, and WFIRST missions...and why they depend on telescopes right here on Earth."

### 2015 OUTREACH SUMMARY AND NEWS

We had a decent year for outreach in 2015, with 228 events (13 cloud-outs), and attendance of 16,576. *Our total attendance since 2003 now stands at 164,538.*

*Volunteers with 6 or more events who get their membership extended for a year are Linda & Harold Yarbrough, Patricia & Jerry Wilson, Tom Whittemore, Chris Ulivo, Cez & Tom Totton, David Salvia, Javier Rivera, Edgar Ocampo, Max Neufeldt, Bonnie & Bruce Murdock, Janet & Martin Meza, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Zanna Lucy, Chris Larson, Sean Kelly, Jürgen Hilmer, Art Harris, Ruben Gutierrez, Mike Farris, Joe Doyle, Zak Dafaallah, Tim Crawford, Krissie Cook (Life Member), and Angela Bates.*

### OUTREACH REPORT

Since the last newsletter, rainproof AU volunteers Tim Crawford, Art Harris, Ken Kihlstrom, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Janet & Martin Meza, Bruce Murdock, Edgar Ocampo, Tom Totton, Deborah & Bob Umansky, Tom Whittemore, and Jerry Wilson managed to show cool things in the sky to 551 viewers.

### 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 3, 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 4, SETUP 5 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at La Patera School, 555 N La Patera Lane in Goleta. We set up on the grass next to the paved playground.

#### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 7 PM

Catch a quick planetarium show, followed by our monthly meeting at 7:30 in Farrand Hall at SBMNH. Hear about using gravitational lensing to find exoplanets.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, SETUP 5 PM**

Telescopes for an Astronomy Night for the Santa Ynez Valley, benefitting Los Olivos School, in the dark skies of the Sedgwick Reserve, at the end of Brinkerhoff near Los Olivos.

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 9-10 AM**

Hear the AU on Tech Talk with Baron Ron Herron on KZSB AM 1290.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 7 PM**

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

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 5 PM**

Monthly AU planning meeting **moved to Farrand Hall** at SBMNH.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 7 PM**

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

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

Telescopes for an Astronomy Night at Santa Ynez Valley Charter School, 3525 Pine Street in Santa Ynez. This is the campus on the eastern side - the one toward the west is Santa Ynez Elementary. Tacos for telescopers at 6 PM.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, SETUP 4:30 PM**

Telescopes for Ellwood Elementary School's Science Night. They're at 7686 Hollister Avenue in Goleta. We set up on the blacktop out back.

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 7 PM**

Monthly Westmont Public Telescope Night at their observatory by the baseball field.

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 9-10 AM**

Hear the AU on Tech Talk with Baron Ron Herron on KZSB AM 1290.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, SETUP 5 PM**

Telescopes for Science Night at Hollister Elementary School, 4950 Anita Lane in Goleta. We'll set up on their playground, entering through a gate on the eastern side.



*Another lively Tuesday workshop! Photo: T. Totton.*

***Earth***

*Nancy Rohrer*

*3-23-06*

Known as the Blue Planet  
really our Earth Mother  
She takes care of us  
Started life just for everyone  
provides air, water and good eats  
Now our turn, care for Mother Earth

She's come a long way, very old  
Four and a half billion years  
Many growing pains experienced  
from boiling mass of magma  
cooling to form land with blue ocean  
making good place for life to begin.

Earth is third Planet from the Sun  
Ninety-three million miles away  
one Astronomical Unit, or one AU  
Important making good life on Earth  
With great variety of plants and animals  
Yes, let's be good to our Mother Earth.



## ***The Red Planet***

*Nancy Rohrer*

7-15-05

In the sky on clear dark night  
three thousand stars to be seen  
one of them shines a red light  
named for God of Roman War

Mars, fourth planet from the Sun  
half the size of planet Earth  
has two moons just for fun  
small rocks orbit, Phobos and Deimos

Red Planet has tickled interest  
in many cultures through ages  
son of Jupiter and Juno, the best  
orbits Sun different from the rest.

Eons of wishes to see Mars  
finally, nineteen sixty-four  
Mariner Four flew around  
no Martian opened the door.

Twenty-one photos sent back  
signs of life they lack  
could be in distant past  
some say yes, some say no.

Showed high dry cold desert  
rocks covered with red dust  
iron oxide looking like rust  
first close up to see Mars.



*Club Hero... Photo: T. Totton.*

### **AU Information Box**

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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 = \$20 Family = \$25**

### **AU mailing address:**

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**February 2016**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> ST. ANDREWS PRE SCHOOL 5:30PM	<b>4</b> LA PATERA SCHOOL 5PM	<b>5</b> SBAU GENERAL MEETING 7PM	<b>6</b> SEDGWICK RESERVE 5PM
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> TECH TALK KZSB (AM 1290) 9-10AM	<b>9</b> CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> PLANNING MEETING 5PM STAR PARTY 7PM SBMNH
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> SY VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL 5:30PM	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> ELLWOOD ELEMENTARY 4:30PM	<b>19</b> WESTMONT COLLEGE 7PM	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> TECH TALK KZSB (AM 1290) 9-10AM	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> HOLLISTER ELEMENTARY 5PM	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>					

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