



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

January 2009

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

January's Meeting

To kick off the International Year of Astronomy, our first speaker is a special treat. Distinguished balloonist Julian Nott will tell us about his work with NASA, testing designs for balloon missions to Saturn's largest moon Titan. You can find out more about him at his website: www.nott.com

Year Events AU Volunteers Total Customers

Year	Events	AU Volunteers	Total Customers
2004	87	37	5,645
2005	99	52	7,473
2006	114	50	8,316
2007	88	40	7,116
2008	122	60+	9,132

As a reward, AU volunteers helping out at six or more outreach events in a year get their AU membership extended for a year. This year's list (and event count) is: Chuck McPartlin (110), Edgar Ocampo (76), Pat McPartlin (75), Art Harris (56), Chad Caprio (22), Helen Osenga (21), Jürgen Hilmer (19), Ruben Gutierrez (19), Tim Wittenburg (17), Tom Whittemore (17), Chris Larson (17), Jason & Tim Crawford (15), Bridget & Andy Allen (14), Javier Rivera (13), Ron Nixon (12), Mike Farris (11), Bill Clausen (11), Krissie Cook (10), Nancy Rohrer (10), Carolyn & Ed Edwards (6), and David Salvia (6).

*A big **THANK YOU** to all the AU volunteers who participated throughout the year!*

2009 is the International Year of Astronomy, celebrating the 400th anniversary of Galileo's astronomical use of the telescope. We'll be needing lots of volunteers throughout the year for public events. Please come out and share your love of astronomy with the community. It's loads of fun, so don't feel shy or intimidated! Our veterans will gladly show you the ropes.

January Events

Here's what's scheduled so far for January. Let's hope the weather cooperates! Remember, events are subject to change, so for the latest updates, contact Chuck at 964-8201 or macpuzl@west.net.

Saturday, January 3, 4:50 AM

Good year for Quadrantid meteor shower peak, known to be brief, but intense.



David Salvia and Chuck McPartlin share an outreach moment at Westmont in December 2008 – photo: R. Gutierrez

December Outreach

Since the last newsletter, AU volunteers Evelyn Alfago, Andy Allen, Chad Caprio, Brian Clark, Bill Clausen, Tim & Jason Crawford, Lori Flynn, Wen Gu, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, Chris Larson, John Martinez, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Edgar Ocampo, Javier Rivera & Samantha Thompson & their Quasars, Nancy Rohrer, David Salvia, Ryan Shapiro, and Jonathan Weber showed cool sky stuff to 338 customers.

2008 Outreach Summary

2008 was a busy year for outreach, reaching 9,132 customers. We had 122 events, and more than 60 AU volunteers who helped out at events. Here's how the last five years stack up:

Sunday, January 4, 7 AM

Earth is at perihelion, closest to the Sun for the year.

Tuesday, January 6, setup 7:30 PM

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

Wednesday, January 7, 3:20 AM to 8:50 AM

Saturn's moon Titan casts its shadow on the planet (sunrise 0706).

Friday, January 9, 7 PM

Catch a quick planetarium show, followed by our first monthly meeting of the year.

Saturday, January 10, 5 PM

Monthly AU planning meeting in the classroom outside Javier's office. Come help your club plan our activities for the coming year.

Saturday, January 10, 7 PM

Monthly SBMNH Star Party. Bring a scope, or just come out and mooch some views of the winter sky. We'll also be having a little party to celebrate the start of IYA 2009!

Thursday, January 15, setup 6 PM

Telescopes for the Science Fair at Santa Barbara Christian School, at 3723 Modoc Road, behind the church.

Friday, January 16, setup 7 PM

Monthly Westmont Public Telescope Night. The big 24-inch scope should be open for viewing.

Thursday, January 22, setup 5 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Monte Vista Elementary School, at 730 North Hope Avenue in Santa Barbara.

Thursday, January 29, setup 6 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Foothill Elementary School, at 711 Ribera Drive in Goleta.

A New Year in Astronomy

Letter to the SBAU by Ruben Gutierrez, SBAU President

The International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA2009) has arrived and will be a "Global celebration of astronomy and its contributions to

society and culture, highlighted by the 400th anniversary of the first use of an astronomical telescope by Galileo Galilei." The Santa Barbara Astronomical Unit has been making preparations for this worldwide event for the past year and has a busy schedule of community presentations that will answer the call of this unprecedented movement in astronomy. The SBAU has a new Board of Directors comprised of enthusiastic members looking forward to meeting the goals of IYA2009, and enhancing local astronomy related contributions as has been AU's tradition and mission. In this new year we will reach out to the Los Angeles Astronomical Society and attend their Star Party at the historic Griffith Observatory, participate in IYA2009 "100 Hours of Astronomy", celebrate National Astronomy Day that will include a free raffle of the largest and most sophisticated telescope the AU has ever given to a member of this community, provide outreach at local sites for thousands of star gazers to look through a telescope (perhaps for the first time), and have an SBAU Astronomy Day at the end of the year. These events and others (too many to list here), will be possible with the dedicated participation of SBAU members and the ever present commitment and sponsorship from the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. All are encouraged to attend the monthly General Membership Meetings and see what role you can take part in during this ever so fascinating year in astronomy!



Brother Laurence accepts an AU sweatshirt from club members at the annual AU banquet – photo: R. Gutierrez

Griffith Observatory Star Party Trip

On Saturday, March 7th, SBAU will take a charter bus trip to the Griffith Observatory. We will not only enjoy the many presentations of this beautiful facility, but also join a Star Party with the historic Los Angeles Astronomical Society as well! The Star Party actually starts at 2:00 PM (solar observations) with stargazers having access to a variety of telescopes through 9:45 PM. Our bus will leave from the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History at 2:00 PM and return at approximately 10:45 PM. A round trip ticket is only \$30. There is no admission fee to the observatory or the Star Party. Because of a smaller bus, we only have room for 23 people, so please submit your reservations right away. Please make your check payable to the Santa Barbara Astronomical Unit, mail it to 3078 Calle Fresno, Santa Barbara, CA, 93105, and get ready for yet another fantastic AU field trip!

Ocular BioTech for Winter Observers

As seen in the January 2000 AstroNews

Ever feared you'd freeze a vital body part while observing in frigid winter weather? Sorry you touched your tongue to that GM-8 counterweight right in the middle of a long exposure?

Ocular Biotech.com, a newly-formed subsidiary of Ocular Industries, ever watchful for the needs of amateur astronomers, is pleased to announce the availability of bioengineered replacement parts!

Astronomy clubs the world over used to have to seat their cold-maimed members in the back rows of their meetings to avoid frightening speakers and small children. With our help, these members can once again hold their noses (or ears, or fingers, or toes) high without shame, and we guarantee our results.*

Tycho Brahe had to observe for years with a bronze nose, which only made cold weather problems worse. He secluded himself for years on the island of Hveen because of his problem. At least he didn't die in Hveen (Kepler used his data), but he could have been much more productive with an Ocular thermo-snout replacement!

Call us today! As this month's introductory offer, reserve the part of your choice at no cost! 564-9002

*for 48 hours of observing, or one month from date of addition.

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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.org>

January 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 	5	6 Camino Real Marketplace 7:30PM	7 Titan's Shadow Dance!	8	9 AU General Meeting 7PM	10 AU Planning Meeting 5PM SBMNH Star Party 7PM 
11	12	13	14	15 SB Christian School 6PM	16 Westmont College 7PM	17 
18	19	20	21	22 Monte Vista Elementary 5PM	23	24
25	26 	27	28	29 Foothill Elementary 6PM	30	31

The Astronomical Unit

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