



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

January 2011

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

OUR JANUARY MEETING

Dr. Jatila van der Veen has been in the field of physics and astronomy education for nearly two decades, as a high school physics teacher, a lecturer in physics at UCSB, and as a Professor of Science Education at Purdue University-Calumet. She earned her Masters in Geophysics from Columbia University and her Doctorate in Education from UCSB. Her research in Education has focused on interdisciplinary arts-sciences education, math as a language, and applying research from sociolinguistics to improve physics education. Dr. van der Veen is currently a Visiting Project Scientist at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and serving as the E/PO Lead for the NASA collaborators on the Planck Mission. She also teaches in the Interdisciplinary Studies program at the College of Creative Studies at UCSB. This fall she has begun a new collaboration with Professor JoAnn Kuchera-Morin, director of the AlloSphere at UCSB, to utilize the visualization and sonification capabilities of Virtual Reality to teach cosmology. Some of this research, as it applies to the Planck satellite cosmology mission, will be part of this evening's presentation.

DECEMBER OUTREACH

Since the last newsletter, AU volunteers Andy Allen, Jason & Tim Crawford, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Chris Larson, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Max Neufeldt, Edgar Ocampo, Javier Rivera, Nancy Rohrer, and Tim Wittenberg showed cool astro stuff to 518 customers, despite 6 cloudouts.

2010 OUTREACH SUMMARY

Well, we managed to exceed even our IYA 2009 outreach results this year, so it was pretty remarkable. Thanks to everyone who came out and helped! We had 196 events (of which 20 were cloudouts), and at least 63 AU volunteers who showed up for events.

Here's how the last five years stack up:

Year	Events	AU Volunteers	Customers
2006	114	50	8,316
2007	88	40	7,116
2008	122	60	9,132
2009	191	65	15,398
2010	196	63	15,792

Remember, AU volunteers helping out at six or more outreach events in a year get their AU membership extended for a year. This year's "over 6 list" (and event count) is: Pat & Chuck McPartlin (154), Art Harris (57), Edgar Ocampo (52), Jeremy Kerby (28), Tom Whittemore (26), Ruben Gutierrez (23), Mike Farris (21), Max Neufeldt (21), Andy Allen (20), Chris Larson (19), Javier Rivera (19), Jürgen Hilmer (17), Tim Wittenburg (16), Jason & Tim Crawford (15), Tom Totton (14), Nancy Rohrer (14), Chad Caprio (9), Bill Clausen (9), Carolyn & Ed Edwards (9), Joe Doyle (8), Zanna Lucy (7), Jim Williams (7), Karleen & Dennis Cowan (6), and David Salvia (6).

We'll need lots of volunteers throughout 2011 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, and you're sure to know more astronomy than the general public.

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 1, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for Bacara Resort and Spa, on the Miró Lawn. Contact Chuck for access instructions if you haven't been there before.

MONDAY, JANUARY 3, 11 AM

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

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 7 PM

Catch a quick planetarium show by Javier, followed by our first monthly meeting of the year. We'll hear about the Planck satellite cosmology mission.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 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 8, 7 PM

Monthly SBMNH Star Party. Bring a scope, or just come out and mooch some views of the winter sky.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 7 PM

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

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for Vieja Valley School, at 434 Nogal Drive.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, SETUP 7 PM

Monthly Westmont Public Telescope Night. The observatory is next to the baseball field, and the big 24-inch scope should be open for viewing.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for Midland School, in the dark skies of the Santa Ynez Valley at 5100 Figueroa Mountain Road.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, SETUP 5 PM

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

From The President's Pen

Ruben Gutierrez

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYBODY! I hope the Holidays were everything you wished. I know the AU's annual Holiday Dinner and Secret Santa exchange definitely were. As always, the food was tasty and the party was lively. Thanks to Pat McPartlin for collecting the names and payments, as well as to the Food Dude (Tim Crawford) for making all of the arrangements. The AU can certainly throw a party.

Members' Night Kudos

Along with the annual holiday dinner in December, the AU also holds elections and members' night instead of the monthly general meeting. I wish to thank you for allowing me the pleasure of continuing as President another year. I also wish to thank Michael Farris for accepting to serve another year as Vice President and setting up all those great speakers for the AU to enjoy. While I'm talking about Mike, I hope you got the chance to see the AU documentary video he put together. Simply marvelous! Another gifted and dedicated member who accepted remaining as Treasurer is Pat McPartlin. Pat actually pulled double duty most of last year as both Treasurer and Secretary. THANK YOU, PAT! Which leads me to our new Secretary, Jim Williams. Jim has been a longtime member and his continuing support of the AU is very much appreciated. Another longtime and dedicated member who has accepted continuing the assignment as Outreach Coordinator is Chuck McPartlin. I can't say enough about Chuck. His hundreds and hundreds of hours conducting outreach events throughout the year has put the AU "on the map." The person who keeps the AU on the Internet map and maintains our excellent web site, and who has again accepted the assignment of Webmaster, is Paul Winn. Thanks to Tom Whittemore, who has accepted continuing his assignment as Newsletter Editor. The AstroNews will continue to provide the membership with updates on monthly events, interesting articles, and great photos of club events. Last, but not least, I also wish to thank Art Harris for once again accepting the assignment as Equipment Coordinator and putting up with all of the AU's arsenal of astronomical equipment.

Club Kudos

The running of the AU is really a joy for all of us! Every year our Club continues to reach out to the community, and the response is always filled with "thank you, what a great thing you're doing - when's your next one? - and how can I get you to come to my school?" I encourage all of you to attend a star party or two each month and help the AU provide astronomical viewing experiences to all those who simply want a chance to look through a telescope and see what's up there.

Warp Speed!

Thank you to renewing members Bari Federspiel, William Gourley, Gerald Kopache, John Martinez, and Jiri Polivka. I'm sure 2011 will be yet another exciting year for us, and with the continuing sponsorship from the Santa Barbara Museum Of Natural History and support from Museum Astronomy Programs Manager, Javier Rivera, the AU will truly go where no astronomy club has gone before!

A Glimpse at Another Wonderful Year of Outreach...

Photos courtesy of R. Gutierrez



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

January 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 BACARA 6PM
2	3 EARTH AT PERIHELION – WHOOSH!	4 	5	6	7 MONTHLY AU MEETING 7PM	8 PLANNING MEETING 5PM SBMNH STAR PARTY 7PM
9	10	11 CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	12 	13 VIEJA VALLEY SCHOOL 6PM	14	15
16	17	18	19 	20	21 WESTMONT COLLEGE 7PM	22
23	24	25 MIDLAND SCHOOL 6PM	26 	27 FOOTHILL ELEMENTARY 5PM	28	29
30	31					

The Astronomical Unit

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