



# AU AstroNews

## The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

July 2007

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

### OUTREACH SUMMARY

Since the last AU newsletter, outreach volunteers Andy Allen, Chad Caprio, Krissie Cook, Jason & Tim Crawford, George DeFilippo, Joe Doyle, Mike Farris, John Gomm, Ruben Gutierrez, Jürgen Hilmer, Tom King, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Edgar Ocampo, Helen Osenga, Javier Rivera, Nancy Rohrer, Tom Whittemore, Jim Williams, and Tim Wittenburg showed cool astronomical stuff to 686 customers.

### JULY AU OUTREACH

July looks like a busy month for outreach events. Come on out and join us for some fun showing off the sky! As always, events are subject to change and cancellation, so contact Chuck at 964-8201 or [macpuzl@west.net](mailto:macpuzl@west.net) for the latest information. Here's what's scheduled so far:

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 4, SETUP 7:30 PM

Start the month off with a bang showing the sky to campers at Refugio Beach State Park, in the day use parking lot.

### FRIDAY, JULY 6, SETUP 8 PM

Slide show and telescopes for campers at Cachuma Lake Campgrounds. We'll be setting up in the field at Dakota Plains.

### SATURDAY, JULY 7

Annual AU Starbecue at the Gun Club. Dinner, hiking, and observing just for us.

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 11

The rescheduled Griffith Observatory trip. No fires scheduled this time.

### FRIDAY, JULY 13, SETUP 8 PM

Telescopes for Los Padres National Forest Family Camp, at the Paradise Campground along the Santa Ynez River.

### SATURDAY, JULY 14, 8 PM

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH. Always fun!

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, SETUP 8 PM

Telescopes for campers at Refugio Beach State Park, in the day use parking lot.

### FRIDAY, JULY 20, 8 PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at the observatory at Westmont College.

### FRIDAY, JULY 20, TIMES TBD

Telescopes for the midnight debut of the last Harry Potter book at the Camino Real Marketplace (Big Box) in Goleta, probably outside the Borders Book Store. Contact Chuck if you're interested.

### SATURDAY, JULY 21, SETUP 8 PM

Telescopes for Los Padres National Forest Family Camp, at the Paradise Campground along the Santa Ynez River.

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, SETUP 8 PM

Telescopes for campers at Refugio Beach State Park, in the day use parking lot.

### FRIDAY, JULY 27, SETUP 8 PM

Slide show and telescopes for campers at Cachuma Lake Campgrounds. We'll be setting up in the field at Dakota Plains.

### FIFTH ANNUAL AU STARBECUE!

You are cordially invited to a BBQ Potluck and Outreach for AU members and friends. Come and enjoy the dark skies, good food and great company! *On Saturday, July 7, at 5:30 PM*, we will get together at the *Winchester Gun Club* for a potluck dinner which will be ready about 6:15. The AU will provide tri-tip and chicken, and the rest of the meal will be potluck. After dinner, we will clean up and set up telescopes. While the Gun Club is a short 20-minute drive from Santa Barbara, its skies are substantially darker and it has a nearly

unobstructed 360° horizon. With luck, maybe we can get Robert Bernstein to take some of the members and guests on what has become the “Annual walk to Lizard’s Mouth”. It’s a fun walk, but remember to wear sensible shoes – this is not a paved walkway!!!

The 7th is 3rd quarter moon with moonrise at 12:44 AM so we should be able to see the faint fuzzies of distant nebulae, globular clusters, and galaxies. The glories of Sagittarius will be prominent. The magnificent summer Milky Way will be visible soon after twilight. Jupiter will be well placed. All you need are your eyes to take it in!

If you have a telescope or binoculars, please bring them. No worries if you don't have any optics. AU members are happy to share their views of the night sky. If you have a favorite fold-up camp chair, bring it. For the potluck please bring garlic bread, salad, side dishes, beverages, dessert, or anything else that suits your fancy. Please bring an appropriate serving utensil. We need to pack our own trash out, so please plan your potluck contribution for a minimum of trash when done. Please plan on taking everything you bring back home with you. If anyone is willing and able to help haul trash, we would be most appreciative!

The AU has a history of having too much food, so no one needs to bring a huge portion. The gate will be unlocked, but we have to keep it closed. Let me know if you need directions. Please RSVP to me at [nmtbuck@aol.com](mailto:nmtbuck@aol.com) by Saturday, June 30th. If you don't use e-mail call me at 969-0070. Please let me know what food you will bring and how many people will be in your party. **Directions:** Drive up San Marcos Pass to nearly the top where you will turn left onto West Camino Cielo Road. Near the beginning of the drive there is a fork in the road. Take the left road (that's West Camino Cielo) and drive about 5-6 miles until you reach a gate (yellow iron poles) that is below pine trees. This is your destination. The Gun Club asks that we keep the gate closed while we are there. You don't need to lock the gate. Just keep it closed. If you are not sure of this, just ask someone inside. They will help. We will be using our own garbage setup, as they don't have a garbage service. Please respect their grounds, as we are their guests. It is truly a great spot for casual observing. There may be a few who have never been up before and I

encourage you to come on up. It is really a great time! You may want to bring some layering of clothes just in case there is a cool evening. You may also want to include some insect repellent. There have been evenings where the little pests are busy.

So, come and join us at the Gun Club for some chicken and tri-tip, and whatever you decide to bring as Potluck. (Bring a service for yourselves although there will be plastic utensils for those that don't). You may also want to bring something you enjoy to drink. That's it for now – looking forward to great food, good friends and hopefully, some really incredible viewing.

*Timma “The Food Dudette”*



### **GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY TRIP: RESCHEDULED FOR JULY 11TH**

Because of the fires near Griffith Park on May 9, the **NEW DATE** for our trip is **WEDNESDAY, JULY 11TH**. *As before, we will all meet at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History parking lot and our trusty airbus will leave at 9:30AM*. Please come early to check in and get your shuttle ticket. There’s not too many second chances in life for a great thing but here’s one of them. The trip is sold out and all of you who paid for a boarding pass are now scheduled to go on the July 11th trip. ***If anyone has a question, or would like to get on a back up list in case one of the original 40 can’t make it, please call Ruben Gutierrez at (805) 450-7451.***

### **MESSIER IT IS NOT**

*by Jurgen Hilmer*

At night the stars are sharp and clean  
In the darkness between hide objects  
So very pristine  
Messier looked and found  
The hiding pristine in the between  
We call them Ms by name for Messier  
Was first to have seen  
So, you look at the between  
And find the Ms for Awe-stronomy  
Will show them in its magic beam



## **WHAT'S UP WITH THE PLANETS?**

After the close conjunction of *Venus* and *Saturn* in late June, *Venus* takes a nosedive during the month of July. It starts the month setting about two and one half hours after the Sun, but by the end of the month Venus stays aloft for only forty-five minutes after sunset. High in the southeast, *Jupiter* dominates this part of the sky. As the month progresses, this lordly world creeps westward (in retrograde motion) and looks like it will soon arrive at a spot  $5^{\circ}$  due north of Antares. *Mars* brightens to magnitude +0.5, traveling by the head of Cetus and on its way to the Pleiades. Although summer begins for this yellow-orange planet on July 4th, it is still only  $6''$  wide and too small to show any detail in most amateur telescopes. *Mercury* puts on a good dawn apparition for those at moderate northern latitudes, and from July 18 to 28 lies at least  $10^{\circ}$  above the east-northeast horizon. The *Delta Aquarid* meteor shower is at its peak around July 26 but bright moonlight hinders its observation until night's final hours.

### **AU Information Box**

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### **AU Astronomy Information Pager**

(Leave a short message) 564-9002

### **SBMNH Astronomy Program Coordinator**

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### **SBMNH Astronomy Program Tape**

Updated monthly 682-4711x405

**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 20<sup>th</sup> 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>

**July 2007**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 Refugio State Beach 7:30PM	5	6 Cachuma Lake 8PM	7 AU Starbecue 5:30PM 
8	9	10	11 Griffith Observatory Trip	12	13 Paradise Campground 8PM	14 SBMNH Star Party 8PM 
15	16	17	18 Refugio State Beach 8PM	19	20 Westmont College 8PM Big Box in Goleta	21 Paradise Campground 8PM
22 	23	24	25 Refugio State Beach 8PM	26	27 Cachuma Lake 8PM	28
29	30 	31				

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