



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

June 2002

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Goodbye Steve ☹️

Steve Schmidt, the Museum's Astronomy Programs Coordinator, and a good friend to the AU for the past couple of years, is headed back to Texas. We're all really sad to see him go, we'll miss him a lot, and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors. **Good bye and good luck!**

May Meeting

Thanks to Dr. Omer Blaes of UCSB, who gave us a great talk on supermassive black holes, despite the fact that they're really very simple ☺️.

June Meeting

Friday, June 7 is picnic time for the AU. In place of our usual monthly meeting in Farrand Hall, we will gather across the creek for a potluck picnic at 6:00 PM, followed by some observing if the weather permits. The AU will provide soft drinks, paper plates, and napkins. See you all there! This is our last chance to get together before the next monthly meeting on September 6. If you're coming, call Gretchen at 569-9743 and let her know what kind of dish you'll bring, and your phone number.

Busy Volunteers This Month!

Since the last newsletter, AU volunteers John Boyd, Greg Brinser, Joe Brown, Laurence Harms, Art Harris, Marv Johnson, June Kelley, Marsha Lopez, Pat McPartlin, Edgar Ocampo, Barb O'Grady, Helen Osenga, Craig Prater, Lee Smith, Clem Walsh, and Jim Williams showed the night sky to **1175** customers at outreach events, including the Astronomy Week in Santa Ynez Valley arranged by the Womens Environmental Watch (WE Watch) group.

AU Events for June

Saturday, June 1, setup 8 PM – Slide show and telescopes at Cachuma Lake.

Friday, June 7, 6 PM – AU Picnic across the creek at SBMNH, followed by observing.

Saturday, June 8, 6 PM – Planning meeting at SBMNH.

Saturday, June 8, 8:30 PM – Monthly Star Party at SBMNH.

Saturday, June 15 – Slide show and telescopes at Lopez Lake Campground. Contact Chuck if you want to join in and stay overnight at a campsite.

Friday, June 21, 8:30 PM – Monthly Public Observation at Westmont's Observatory.

Saturday, June 22 – Picnic dinner, slide show, and telescopes at the Sedgwick Preserve in the Santa Ynez Valley with WE Watch. Wines will be available for purchase. Contact Chuck if you want to join in, as space is limited.

Saturday, June 29, setup 8 PM – Slide show and telescopes at Cachuma Lake.

Remember that outreach events often change at the last minute. Contact Edgar or Chuck for the latest developments.

Deep Partial Solar Eclipse

On June 10, the Santa Barbara area will be treated to a deep partial solar eclipse as the Moon covers up about 75% of the Sun. The eclipse will occur in the

afternoon, starting at 5:12 PM, and last until 7:24 PM, ending with the Sun still about 5 degrees above the horizon. **Make sure you have a safe filter** – Number 14 Welders Glass or an ND 5 filter, passing only 1/1000 of one percent of solar radiation. Crossed polarizing filters, mylar pop-tart wrappers, and CD-ROMs are **NOT SAFE**, as they can pass harmful UV and infrared radiation that will damage your retina.

Serious Deep Sky Observers

(The following submission is courtesy of Dean Mars.) You know you're a serious deep sky observer when:

- 1) You consider the Moon a major annoyance.
- 2) You consider Jupiter 'light pollution.'
- 3) You consider meteors 'light pollution.'
- 4) You consider the Milky Way 'light pollution.'
- 5) You contemplate ways of destroying the Earth because it's in the way.
- 6) You pack dry ice around your head to reduce the "noise" from your retina and optic nerve.
- 7) You refuse to use the ladder with your 20" f/6 at the Winter Star Party, stating, "If I use that, the objects are too far north."
- 8) You consider the H-II regions of distant galaxies as individual observing targets.
- 9) You spend most of your time looking at or for objects you can barely see.
- 10) Your favorite objects are objects you can barely see.
- 11) You enjoy looking at faint fuzzies with the smallest possible aperture.
- 12) You enjoy looking at faint fuzzies with the largest possible aperture.
- 13) You like to choose objects that are easier to imagine than to see.
- 14) Your observing schedule demands that you search for objects in twilight.
- 15) You wonder how your favorite objects missed getting included in the New General Catalog or the Index Catalog.
- 16) You're not sure that anything in this solar system counts as Astronomy any more.
- 17) You're amazed that anyone needs artificial light to read charts.
- 18) You could do a Messier Marathon from memory, if you still bothered with Messier objects.
- 19) You can read all the NGC abbreviated visual descriptions without using the key, but you have to be careful not to cheat by just remembering what things look like.
- 20) You

view a major earthquake as an opportunity for a close-in dark-sky star party. 21) You are attending a major star party (guess which one), and you ask the organizers to turn down the Milky Way. 22) You believe M13 ruined your dark adaptation. 23) You welcome (and have even considered instigating) power cuts, but only if they occur on clear moonless nights. 24) You observe M42 at the end of the sessions because it DOES ruin dark adaptation! 25) Your choice of a new vehicle is determined by the size of your scope. 26) Vacation time is planned around the Winter and Texas (or other) Star parties. 27) Arp is not a funny sound, but the name of one of your favorite galaxy catalogues. 28) You challenge friends by saying "Let's do something stupid" as you hunt for deep sky objects on a lazy, full-moon night because you are faint-photon starved. 29) You find auroras a complete annoyance because they ruin sky contrast and dark adaptation. 30) You memorize the NGC catalog and can recite type and magnitude off the top of your head when asked "What is a NGC 1000?" 31) Your ideal site would require oxygen. 32) Your ideal vacation would be in Namibia. 33) Your ideal telescope would be immovable. 34) You prep your eyes by applying pupil dilating drops until they open to 10mm. 35) You travel to Australia to read your star charts by the light of the Milky Way. 36) You plan a two month trip to Australia and spend all of it in the middle of the continent trying to find every southern DSO. 37) Instead of vitamins you take billberry pills. 38) You actually know where to get billberry jam, and make a point of consuming some prior to observing sessions 39) You'd rather observe than go on a hot date. 40) For some reason you're always depressed when that time of the month (full moon) occurs. 41) In preparation for another DSO bout, you carefully massage your eyes to make sure all your rods are discharged. 42) You pay \$3500 for a pupil enlargement operation even though you own a 1 meter light bucket. 43) You complain you can't really see the faint stuff because the Gegenschein is too bright. 44) You consider how to blow-up the Sun in order to reduce

light pollution. 45) While spot checking the collimation of your Dob, you note that with concentration you can just begin to detect spiral structure in the dust coating your primary. 46) You take deep-sky pictures during a total eclipse of the moon. 47) You whine about severe light pollution when the limiting magnitude is “only” 6.5. 48) You actually know how to USE setting circles. 49) You have NO use for setting circles. 50) Star hopping to a 18th magnitude smudge is a breeze.

New Product

(The following submission is courtesy of Warren Bitters.) Is your observing site plagued by flocks of birds that should be in San Juan Capistrano, but aren't? Then you need the Ocular Industries “Dew Dew” Shield. The “Dew Dew” Shield is a sturdy but flexible piece of plastic that wraps around the end of your telescope and is held firmly in place by strips of Velcro. “Dew Dew” Shields are available in a variety of diameters and lengths to accommodate all users. As an added bonus, the “Dew Dew” Shield prevents dew and other forms of condensation from collecting on your telescope's optical surfaces, thus improving overall viewability.

With a “Dew Dew” Shield in place you will no longer have to worry about your multi-coatings becoming multi-multi-coatings. So, don't cuss at this menace, protect your meniscus. Order an Ocular Industries “Dew Dew” Shield today.

* Warning- The “Dew Dew” Shield is not guaranteed to be effective for viewers who frequently view at or near the zenith.

New Moons!

Jupiter just passed Saturn for the title of most moons in the solar system. Saturn's total of 30 moons has now been bested with the discovery of 11 new moons of Jupiter, giving it a total of 39, and roughly 100 more small chunks of ice in Jupiter's neighborhood are being monitored!

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AU Astronomy Information Pager

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SBMNH Astronomy Program Coordinator Position Vacant!!!

SBMNH Astronomy Program Tape

(still updated monthly?) 682-4711x405

AU AstroNews is the monthly publication of the **Astronomical Unit (AU)**, mailed to the general membership. Submit stuff by the 20th of the month!

Current annual membership rates are:

Single	\$15	Family	\$25
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June 2002

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2 ⊕	3	4	5	6	7 AU Picnic	8 AU Planning Meeting <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 2px;">SBMNH Star Party</div> Dark Sky
9	10 <i>Deep Partial Solar Eclipse</i> ●	11	12	13	14	15 Lake Lopez
16	17	18	19	20	21 <i>Summer Solstice</i>	22 Sedgwick Preserve
23 / 30	24	25	26 <i>Charles Messier's Birthday</i>	27	28	29 Cachuma

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