



# AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit



June 2009

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History



*Chuck McPartlin holds the attention of museum visitors at International Astronomy Day. Photo: R. Gutierrez.*

## Outreach Summary

Since the last newsletter, volunteers Andy Allen, John Boyd, Timma Buck, Chad Caprio, Bill Clausen, Jason & Tim Crawford, Joe Doyle, Ed Edwards, Nancy Emerson, Mike Farris, Lori Flynn, Ruben Gutierrez, Laurence Harms, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, Tom King, Chris Larson, Dale Lowdermilk, John Martinez, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Ron Nixon, Dennis Nord, Edgar Ocampo, Barb O'Grady, Helen Osenga, Jiri Polivka, Bob Richard, Javier Rivera & the Quasars, Nancy Rohrer, David Salvia, Ryan Shapiro, Colin Taylor, John West, Tom Whittemore, Jim Williams, Jerry Wilson, Tim Wittenburg, and Paul Winn showed astronomical goodies to 952 customers. Please forgive me if I left anyone out! Almost half of our total came during the Astronomy Day events at the Museum.

## Outreach for June

Here are the AU events scheduled so far for June. Events are subject to change, so to get the latest information on schedules, or directions, just contact Chuck at 964-8201 or [macpuzl@west.net](mailto:macpuzl@west.net)

### Tuesday, June 2, setup 7:30 PM

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

### Friday, June 5, 6 PM

Annual AU potluck picnic at the Broder Building at SBMNH, across the creek from Farrand Hall.

### Tuesday, June 9, setup 7:30 PM

Telescopes for a Peabody School campout at El Capitan Canyon Resort. The actual site is TBD. Contact Chuck for details.

### Wednesday, June 10, setup 7:30 PM

Telescopes for the Biltmore. Contact Chuck for details.

### Friday, June 12, setup 8 PM

Telescopes for Refugio Beach State Campground, in the day use parking lot, southwest corner.

### Saturday, June 13, 6 PM

Planning meeting in the classroom next to Javier's office at SBMNH. Come plan your club's activities. All are welcome.

### Saturday, June 13, 8:30 PM

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

### Friday, June 19, setup 8 PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont College, just outside Carroll Observatory. See Saturn through the big scope.

### **Saturday, June 20, setup 8 PM**

Telescopes for campers at Cachuma Lake Campground. We set up on the grassy field at Dakota Plains. The Summer Solstice, the official start of summer, is at 10:46 PM.

### **Wednesday, June 24, setup 8 PM**

Telescopes for the children attending the Ocean Futures events at El Capitan Canyon Resort, in the Lower Loop area. **Pat and Chuck can't make this event, so we'll need extra volunteers!**

### **Saturday, June 27, setup 8 PM**

Telescopes for campers under dark skies at Lopez Lake, up by Arroyo Grande. Contact Chuck if you're planning to camp overnight Friday and/or Saturday.

### **Of Fire and Rebirth...**

*T. Whittemore*



*Thursday afternoon, May 7, as seen from our house on Northridge Road, the Jesusita Fire rages to the East of us. Shortly, we are forced to leave...*



*Sunday afternoon, Mother's Day. We return...*



*Monday, May 25, under our eaves, a promise of rebirth...*

### **Uplifted Again**

*Jürgen Hilmer*

The Hubble is recreated once more.  
Our Cosmos is ready to give up  
More of its secrets than ever before.

Let us see your new images that blow our mind,  
For then our understanding of the Cosmos  
Will be the latest kind.

After your parts are tired, your resting orbit  
Will be higher than before.  
At near zero-gravity you will become a monument  
To Man's achievement for evermore!

### **The Star Splitter (part one)**

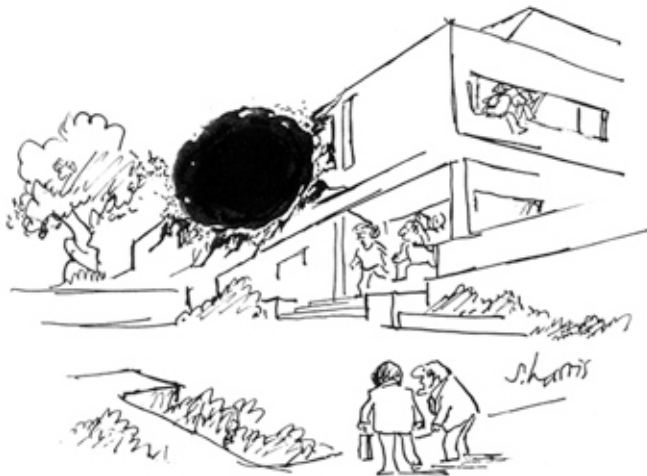
*Robert Frost*

'You know Orion always comes up sideways.  
Throwing a leg up over our fence of mountains,  
And rising on his hands, he looks in on me  
Busy outdoors by lantern-light with something  
I should have done by daylight, and indeed,  
After the ground is frozen, I should have done  
Before it froze, and a gust flings a handful  
Of waste leaves at my smoky lantern chimney  
To make fun of my way of doing things,  
Or else fun of Orion's having caught me.  
Has a man, I should like to ask, no rights  
These forces are obliged to pay respect to?'  
So Brad McLaughlin mingled reckless talk  
Of heavenly stars with hugger-mugger farming,  
Till having failed at hugger-mugger farming  
He burned his house down for the fire insurance

And spent the proceeds on a telescope  
To satisfy a lifelong curiosity  
About our place among the infinities.

‘What do you want with one of those blame  
things?’  
I asked him well beforehand. ‘Don’t you get one!’

‘Don’t call it blamed; there isn’t anything  
More blameless in the sense of being less  
A weapon in our human fight,’ he said.  
‘I’ll have one if I sell my farm to buy it.’  
There where he moved the rocks to plow the ground  
And plowed between the rocks he couldn’t move,  
Few farms changed hands; so rather than spend  
years  
Trying to sell his farm and then not selling,  
He burned his house down for the fire insurance  
And bought the telescope with what it came to.  
He had been heard to say by several:  
‘The best thing that we’re put here for’s to see;  
The strongest thing that’s given us to see with’s  
A telescope. Someone in every town  
Seems to me owes it to the town to keep one.  
In Littleton it might as well be me.’  
After such loose talk it was no surprise  
When he did what he did and burned his house  
down.



“The last I heard, Medwick was working on a  
model black hole in his lab.”

#### **AU Information Box**

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#### **AU Astronomy Information Pager**

**(Leave a short message) 564-9002**

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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 20th of the current month!

#### **AU annual membership rates:**

**Single = \$15 Family = \$25**

#### **AU mailing address:**

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## **From The President's Pen...**

International Astronomy Day 2009 was a yet another great day for the community, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, and of course, the Astronomical Unit. The weather cooperated and all activities, which included booths showing the art of mirror making, rocket blast offs, meteorite collection, a telescope flea market, and much more, were enjoyed by all. And, as expected, the high point was when the large crowd of astronomy enthusiasts gathered and the raffle prizes were given out, with this year's grand prize going to Ms. La Toya Henderson - Congratulations! I wish to thank all who helped make this annual event a great success. But wait, we won't have to wait a full year to enjoy another community oriented Astronomy Day. Yes, you guessed it - the AU will be putting together a second Astronomy Day in the Fall to wind up the International Year of Astronomy 2009. Keep reading AU AstroNews for more details.

The AU certainly owes much to our sponsor, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, for the great success the Club has enjoyed. However, continued participation and membership renewals are also a most vital part of AU's existence. I wish to thank Ibrahim Khogeer, Catherine Rose, and John & James Stewart for recently renewing their membership and being part of this remarkable association of individuals who want to enjoy, as well as share, their interest in astronomy.

The June monthly meeting will be replaced by AU's annual Pot-Luck Picnic in the Broder Building on the Museum grounds (June 5th at 6PM). This is always a very enjoyable event where one is surrounded by club members, the beautiful setting, and naturally, great food. See you there!

Ruben Gutierrez, SBAU President

## **Did You Know?**

On June 8, 1625, Giovanni Cassini was born, followed (well kind of) by Charles Messier on June 26, 1730. The Tunguska impact flattened a lot of trees on 6/30/08, all 200 inches of the Hale telescope were dedicated on 6/3/48, and Edward White was the first American to take a stroll in space on 6/3/65. Not to be outdone, the first woman to leave her footprints in space was Valentina Tereshkova on 6/16/67. If that doesn't catch your interest, well did you know that an Astronomical Unit (hmmm) is equal to 149,597,870 kilometers or 499.005 light-seconds?

**June 2009**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
	1	2 <b>Camino Real Market Place 7:30PM</b>	3	4	5 <b>SBAU Potluck 6PM</b>	6
7 	8	9 <b>El Capitan Canyon Resort 7:30PM</b>	10 <b>Biltmore Star Party 7:30PM</b>	11	12 <b>Refugio State Beach 8PM</b>	13 <b>Planning Meeting 6PM SBMNH Star Party 8:30PM</b>
14	15 	16	17	18	19 <b>Westmont College 8PM</b>	20 <b>Cachuma Lake Campground 8PM</b>
21	22 	23	24 <b>El Capitan Canyon Resort 8PM</b>	25	26	27 <b>Lopez Lake 8PM</b>
28	29 	30				

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