



# AU AstroNews

## The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

June 2010

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

### JUNE POTLUCK

In lieu of a general meeting, please bring a dish and join us for our annual potluck. *It will be held Friday, June 4, at 6PM at the Broder Building on the SBMNH campus.* It's always a fun event!



*How do you entertain 2000 Girl Scouts? Just ask Chuck!  
Photo: R. Gutierrez.*

### OUTREACH SUMMARY

Since the last newsletter, volunteers Andy Allen, Chad Caprio, Bill Clausen, Karleen & Dennis Cowan, Jason & Tim Crawford, Joe Doyle, Diane & Tom Farr, Mike Farris, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, Janie & Marv Johnson, Jeremy Kerby, Chris & Eric Larson, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Edgar Ocampo, Javier Rivera & Samantha Thompson & the Quasars, Nancy Rohrer, Tom Whittemore, Jim Williams, and Tim Wittenburg showed astronomical goodies to 2969 customers.

### 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 1, SETUP 7:30 PM

Telescopes for UCSB Manzanita Residence Hall. Contact Chuck for setup location.

### FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 6 PM

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

### SATURDAY, JUNE 5, SETUP 8 PM

Telescopes for Carpinteria State Beach, at 5361 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Carpinteria. The Casitas Pass offramp is best. We set up in the grassy area to the right of the main entrance, right across from their ranger office. Google Earth coordinates are: 34° 23' 36.51" N, 119° 31' 15.00" W.

### Tuesday, June 8, setup 7:30 PM

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

### FRIDAY, JUNE 11, SETUP 8 PM

Telescopes for campers at Cachuma Lake Campground. We set up on the grassy field at Dakota Plains. Google Earth coordinates are: 34° 34' 51.28" N, 119° 57' 31.36" W.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 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 12, 8:30 PM

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

### TUESDAY, JUNE 15, SETUP 7 PM

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

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, SETUP 8 PM

Telescopes for the A Rocha group, on their site off Cieneguitas Road. Contact Chuck for details.

### THURSDAY, JUNE 17, SETUP 7:30 PM

Telescopes for Montecito Country Club. Contact Chuck if you're coming for directions and to provide them with a count.

### **FRIDAY, JUNE 18, SETUP 7:30 PM**

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont College, at the new observatory, next to the baseball field. See Saturn through the big scope.

### **SATURDAY, JUNE 19, SETUP 8 PM**

Telescopes for campers at Cachuma Lake Campground. We set up on the grassy field at Dakota Plains. See June 11 for coordinates.

### **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, SETUP 7:30 PM**

Telescopes for the Biltmore. Contact Chuck for details. We set up on their Monte Vista lawn.

### **FRIDAY, JUNE 25, SETUP 8 PM**

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

### **SATURDAY, JUNE 26, SETUP 8 PM**

Telescopes for a group of teens at the Ojai Valley Inn, at 905 Country Club Road. Contact Chuck for details.

### **FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN...**

*Ruben Gutierrez*

May started off with a "Big Bang" taking place in the Santa Ynez Valley Live Oak Campground when not only did 2000 Girl Scouts meet for a jamboree, but about another 1000 family members and staff joined them! And yes, the Astronomical Unit was the main event of Saturday evening. We were well prepared with 15 telescopes set to provide a glimpse of the universe to the crowds that descended upon us. It was a delight to see so many young minds eager to learn about astronomy, and so many AU members eager to teach them. May was also the time selected for the ribbon cutting ceremony of the new Westmont College Observatory and 24-inch reflecting telescope. If that weren't enough, an AU squad traveled to the annual RTMC campout at Big Bear Lake, and another 10 Star Parties were held in Goleta, Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, and Cachuma Lake. But wait, that's not all! We're getting closer and closer to developing the first Astronomical Unit handicapped accessible telescope. This ever so important project is headed by our own Jim Williams. Please stay tuned. I also wish to welcome aboard the following new members: Eric Larson and Dennis Weston (individual), and Dennis & Karleen Cowan, as well as Jack & Wickie Rodenhi. I additionally want to thank individual members Catherine Rose and Colin Thompson, and the family of Dennis & Colleen Pease for renewing

their memberships. The Astronomical Unit is truly fortunate to have so many gifted people - thank you everybody.

### **HUNTING FAINT GALAXIES WITH AN 8-INCH SCOPE (WHY, IF YOU ARE ON AN OBSERVING LIST, YOU SHOULD OBSERVE)**

*Chad Caprio*

Yes, on great nights at the Winchester Canyon Gun Club, you can do such a thing. In fact, not only can you hunt galaxies, you can "kill" them. Therefore, I wrote this article to convey to readers of the SBAU newsletter, specifically members that are on observing email lists, that they can do such a thing or enjoy other astronomical objects at the Gun Club.

Last night, May 15, 2010, I went to the Gun Club. As usual, I sent out a mass email in advance to let others know of my trip up there. Yes, I know that some of my usual observing buddies were away at RTMC. However, I knew that it was going to be at least a very good night and I was hoping to have an okay turnout. Alas, Andy Allen was the only other observer to show up. Thankfully, he was gung ho about testing the limits of his 8-inch scope and he was very helpful in assisting me with my faint galaxy hunt. We had a great time observing!

We observed the Moon, Mars, Saturn (at 500x mind you), some globular clusters, an open cluster, and we observed many faint (11-12 magnitude galaxies with surface brightnesses as dim as 14<sup>th</sup> magnitude). The sky was amazingly transparent and the seeing was incredible. The galaxies I was hunting were in Canes Venatici and Coma Berenices. I was checking them off in my Volume 2 of "The Night Sky Observer's Guide."

Why do I tell you all this? I do it because I believe that people on observing email lists should actually observe once in awhile. Oh, I know the reasons why people may not, so let me list a few of those reasons for discussion. The wife/husband/etc wants to do this or that. "I made other plans to do this or that. It's so last minute so I couldn't possibly change my plans. It's too far to drive. It's cold. It's boring. That road is small and curvy." And, my favorite: "I don't have a scope or binoculars."

Let me assuage your fears and give some guidance; take it for what it is. First, the road there was repaved a couple of years ago and the trip there is

amazingly easy and smooth and doesn't cost much at all in gas. (I am dirt poor and do it) Second, it is going to be colder at 3000 feet, so that is just how it is. You should plan for cold or heat if you are serious about astronomy. Third, the boring part is my second favorite because if astronomy is boring to you then why do you claim to be into it? Fourth, the plans and changing plans thing is again preventable. New moon and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter moon are known thousands of years in advance, so that when someone says that or thinks that, they are only fooling themselves because they are making a choice not to do astronomy. Finally, my favorite, if you don't have a scope or binoculars, it's all right, because every member who does and actually goes to do astronomy is extremely happy to share the night sky with everyone and anyone.

So, the next time you are thinking about not going, just go instead. You can't imagine the fun you will have hunting faint galaxies!



*The SBAU at RTMC 2010 – Standing L to R: Edgar Ocampo, Dave Kary, JoAnn Eisberg, Annie Kary, Art Harris, Carolyn Edwards, Ed Edwards, Pat McPartlin. Low in front: Solar Oven, Chuck McPartlin.*

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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**

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**June 2010**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 UCSB MANZANITA 7:30PM	2	3	4 ☾ AU POTLUCK SBMNH 6PM	5 CARPINTERIA STATE BEACH 8PM
6	7	8 EL CAPITAN CANYON 7:30PM	9	10	11 CACHUMA LAKE 8PM	12 PLANNING MEETING 6PM SBMNH STAR PARTY 8:30 PM
13	14	15 CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	16 A ROCHA 8PM	17 MONTECITO CC 7:30PM	18 ☾ WESTMONT COLLEGE 7:30PM	19 CACHUMA LAKE 8PM
20	21 SUMMER SOLSTICE	22	23 BILTMORE 7:30PM	24	25 REFUGIO STATE BEACH 8PM	26 OJAI VALLEY INN 8PM
27	28	29	30			

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