



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit



March 2009

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

March's Meeting

Our speaker for the March meeting will be UCSB professor, Omer Blaes, whose talk is titled "Singing Black Holes." A theoretical physicist, Dr. Blaes joined the physics faculty at UCSB in 1993 where he specializes in Black Holes. He has held postdocs at Caltech and at the Canadian Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics in Toronto.



Ruben Gutierrez shows the skies to the public at the February SBMNH star party. Photo credit: Chuck McPartlin.

Outreach Summary

Since the last newsletter, AU volunteers Andy Allen, Warren Bitters, John Boyd, Chad Caprio, Bill Clausen, Tim Crawford, Mike Farris, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, Chris Larson, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Edgar Ocampo, Helen Osenga, Mark Parker, Javier Rivera & Samantha Thompson & Quasars, and Tom Whittemore showed the sky to 703 customers.

March Outreach Events

Here are the AU events scheduled for March. To get the latest information on schedules, or directions, just contact Chuck at 964-8201 or macpuzl@west.net

Tuesday, March 3, 7 PM

Telescope Tuesday at the Camino Real Marketplace in Goleta. We set up in the plaza between Borders and the theater. Show off the Moon, Saturn, and Comet Lulin.

Wednesday, March 4, setup 6:30 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Isla Vista Elementary School, just south of the old Francisco Torres towers. We'll set up on their playground, with entry through a gate in the fence at the southwest corner.

Thursday, March 5, setup 5:30 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Hope Elementary School, on La Colina Road.

Friday, March 6, 7 PM

Monthly AU meeting in Farrand Hall at SBMNH. Start with a quick planetarium show, then our speaker will be Dr. Omer Blaes of UCSB, who specializes in Black Holes.

Saturday, March 7, leaving promptly at 2 PM

AU field trip to Griffith Observatory and the LA Astronomical Society's star party there.

Sunday, March 8, 2 AM

Don't forget to switch to Daylight Saving Time!

Thursday, March 12, setup 5:30 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Hollister Elementary School, 4950 Anita Lane in Noletastan. We'll set up on their playground, entering through a gate on the eastern side.

Saturday, March 14, 5 PM

AU planning meeting in the classroom outside Javier's office at SBMNH. All members are welcome to help plan your club's activities for IYA 2009, and consume pizza before the star party.

Saturday, March 14, 7:30 PM

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH, next to Palmer Observatory. Comet Lulin will be dimming, but almost directly overhead in Gemini.

Monday, March 16, setup 7 PM

Slide show and telescopes for Midland School, on Figueroa Mountain Road past Los Olivos in the Santa Ynez Valley. Dark skies!

Friday, March 20, 0444 AM

Vernal Equinox - It's Spring!

Friday, March 20, 7:30 PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont College, at Carroll Observatory, near the Van Kampen Dormitory. Look through the big scope!

Wednesday, March 25, sunrise and sunset

Venus is 5 degrees up at both sunrise and sunset - try to see it at both times!

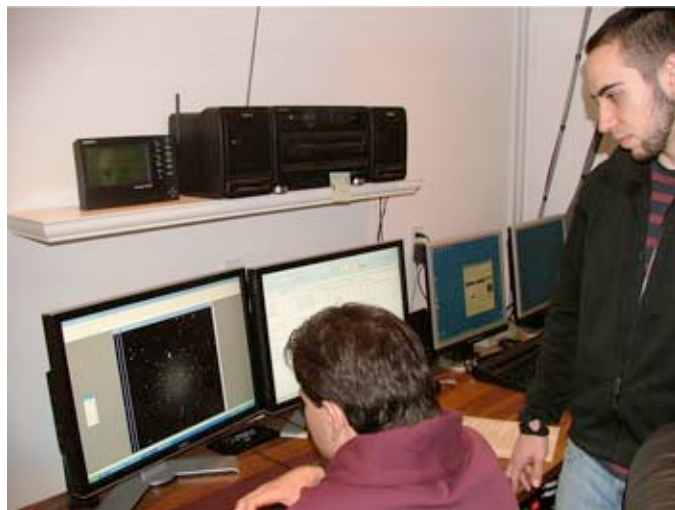
Saturday, March 28, all night

Extreme Observing at the annual AU Messier Marathon at the Gun Club. See how bad the weather can be.

hood and zipper are \$26, sweatshirts with hood and pullover are \$24, and sweatshirts without hood and zipper (crewneck) are \$22; all are in the easily-accessorizable color of light-gray. You save as AU members, too - non-members pay \$2 more for each! If you don't see a style and/or size that you want, please talk with or send an e-mail to AU Treasurer, Pat McPartlin, to find out about requesting what you'd like (Pat needs 36 pieces before she can place an order, and you pay when you have the goods). Her e-mail address is: parsnip7@yahoo.com. Remember, this is the International Year of Astronomy - show your support for the AU!



AU Club member, Dmitri Zagorodnov, took this "spooky" photo at a recent viewing at the Winchester Gun Club. He gave it the title, "Telescope Ghosts."



Westmont students, Chris Morse, and Chris Sullivan assist at the February "Third Friday" public viewing at Carroll Observatory. Photo credit: Ruben Gutierrez.

AU Tee Shirts and Sweatshirts!

The AU has lots of different styles and sizes in its clothing closet. Come to the AU meeting on Friday, March 6, 2009, and take a look at how you can show-off the AU and be stylish, too! Short-sleeved tee shirts are \$10 (a great buy - get two!), long-sleeved tee-shirts are \$12, sweatshirts with

Griffith Observatory Trip

For those lucky members going to the Star Party of the Los Angeles Astronomical Society held at the Griffith Observatory, ***please make sure you arrive at the SBMNH parking lot by 1:30 PM. We need to check you in and be on the road by 2:00 o'clock, sharp.*** We should arrive at the Observatory around 3:45. There is no charge for admission. Keep in mind that food is *not* allowed to be taken onto the grounds, but there is a very fine Cafe on the site. The star party starts at 2:00 and ends at 9:45, so there's plenty of time to enjoy all that Griffith Observatory has to offer. ***We will leave for the return trip at around 9:30 PM and should arrive back in Santa Barbara at around 10:45 PM.*** Get ready for a real fun trip, rain or shine!

From Our President's Pen...

SBAU is really picking up steam for International Year of Astronomy. This month we'll reach out to the Los Angeles Astronomical Society and attend their Star Party at the Griffith Observatory. The trip will be very exciting, educational, and a simply fun day! The Club continues attending numerous Science Night events at local schools and, of course, our monthly staffing of the Carroll Observatory at Westmont College. Recently, Kern County Astronomical Society reached out to our Club and sent an open invitation to attend Kern County Astronomy Day on 3/28/09. The event is packed full of astronomical activities. More information can be obtained by logging on to www.kernastro.org. Hope to see you there. Well, "100 Hours of Astronomy" is just around the corner, and SBAU will be in full attendance. From April 2nd through the 5th AU will set up telescopes at various sites. On 4/2 we will be at the Camino Real Market Place in Goleta from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM. We will also set up at a site in downtown State Street and be part of "1st Thursday Art-Music-Theatre" during the evening. On 4/3, AU will set up at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History all day and into the night for a Star Party until 10:00 PM. On 4/4 and 4/5, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, our Club will have a variety of telescopes, including our H- α solar scope and almost 100 square feet of high resolution astronomical images, as well as numerous handouts, at the Paseo Nuevo Mall. A Star Party will take place at the Museum (7 to 10:00 PM) on 4/4 and a final Star Party for this event (7 to 10:00 PM) on 4/5 at Carpinteria State Beach. Wow, and National Astronomy Day will follow all this in May!

Ruben Gutierrez
SBAU President

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

March 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Camino Real Marketplace 7PM	4 Isla Vista  Elementary 6:30PM	5 Hope Elementary 5:30PM	6 AU General Meeting 7PM	7 Griffith Observatory Trip 2PM
8 Daylight Saving Time!	9	10 	11	12 Hollister Elementary 5:30PM	13	14 AU Planning Meeting 5PM SBMNH Star Party 7:30PM
15	16 Midland School 7PM	17	18 	19	20 Westmont College 7:30PM Vernal Equinox!	21
22	23	24	25 Venus at Sunrise and Sunset!	26 	27	28 Messier Marathon at the Gun Club
29	30	31				

The Astronomical Unit

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