



AU AstroNews

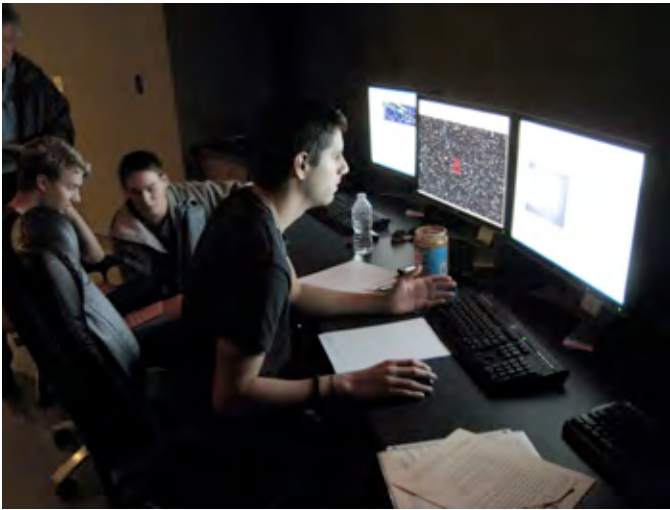
The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

March 2012

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

OUR MARCH MEETING

Our meeting will be held on the second Friday of March. Our speaker this evening will be John Martinez of LCOGT (Las Cumbres Observatory Global Telescope Network). John will give us the latest on what's going on at LCOGT.



Imaging a fast-moving asteroid with Westmont's 24" scope are Westmont students (from left to right) Danny Runkel, David Snyder and Jackson Kwiatkowski. Photo credit: Jerry Wilson.

OUTREACH SUMMARY

Since the last newsletter, AU volunteers John Boyd, Sabine & Marciano Chan, Bill Clausen, Karleen & Dennis Cowan, Tim Crawford, Mike Farris, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Jürgen Hilmer, Janie & Marv Johnson, Justin & Tom King, Chris Larson, John Martinez, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Janet & Martin Meza, Max Neufeldt, Edgar Ocampo, Jiri Polivka, Rosemary & Al Rice, Nancy Rohrer, David Salvia, Colin Taylor, Tom Totton, Javier Rivera & Evelyn Alfago & the Quasars, Barry White, Tom Whittemore & Melissa Romo & Danny Runkel & Dave Snyder, Jim Williams, Pat & Jerry Wilson, and Tim Wittenburg showed the sky to **1250(!)** 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. Remember, events are subject to cancellations and changes!

FRIDAY, MARCH 2, SETUP 6 PM

UC2 telescope and video scopes for residents of the Central Coast Nursing Home, 3880 Via Lucero.

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for Bacara Resort and Spa. We set up on their Miró Lawn. Contact Chuck for access if you haven't come before.

TUESDAY, MARCH 6, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for an astronomy night at the Goleta Public Library, 500 North Fairview Avenue in Goleta.

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, SETUP 5 PM

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

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 7 PM

Monthly AU meeting in Farrand Hall at SBMNH. ***** NOT FIRST FRIDAY ***** John Martinez will give us an update on what's new at the Las Cumbres Observatory Global Telescope Network (LCOGT).

SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 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 2012.

SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 7 PM

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 11, 2 AM

Don't forget to switch to Daylight Saving Time!

THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 7:30 PM

Wrath of the Gods - Lectures on Natural Disasters at SBMNH.

FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 7:30 PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont College, at their new observatory next to the baseball field. Look through the big scope!

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, NOON

Volunteer appreciation luncheon at SBMNH, in Fleischmann Auditorium.

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for Bacara Resort and Spa. We set up on their Miró Lawn. Contact Chuck for access if you haven't come before.

MONDAY, MARCH 19, 10:15 PM

Vernal Equinox - It's Spring!

TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 7 PM

Telescopes at the Camino Real Marketplace in Goleta for a fundraiser for Mountain View School. We set up in the plaza next to the theater.

FRIDAY, MARCH 23, SETUP 5 PM

Telescopes for Dunn School, 2555 Highway 154 (off Roblar) near Los Olivos in the dark skies of the Santa Ynez Valley. They will serve dinner for volunteers at 6 PM, so let Chuck know if you're coming!

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, ALL NIGHT

Messier Marathon at the Shotgun Range of the Gun Club, at the end of West Camino Cielo.

TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 7 PM

Telescope Tuesday at the Camino Real Marketplace in Goleta. We set up in the plaza by the theater.

THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 7:05 PM TO 9:35 PM

The Lunar X is visible along the terminator.

SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 8:30 PM

Earth Hour - turn off all unnecessary lights!

From The President's Pen...

Ruben Gutierrez

Telescopes, popcorn, and AU Oscars

February's "Movie Night" general meeting was certainly a fun one with popcorn, goodies, refreshments, a fascinating movie of the greatest telescopes on and off the planet, and presentation of the AU-Oscars. Congratulations to Chuck McPartlin for winning Best Supporting Actor, Edgar Ocampo for Best Actor, and Michael Farris for Producer, Director, and Editor of Best Picture.

Planning Meeting news

February's Planning Meeting was equally interesting with a report from John Martinez on the installation progress of the 20-inch PlaneWave telescope as part of the renovation of Palmer Observatory. As in most projects of this magnitude, some challenges need still to be addressed. However, we're all confident these challenges can be resolved and look forward to the Grand Opening of the new Observatory and First Light of the telescope donated and spearheaded by AU member John Martinez of LCOGT.

Color monitor for New Observatory

As mentioned last month, the AU will be donating a 42-inch flat screen monitor that will provide guests another option for seeing through the telescope without having to look through an eyepiece. John also brought up the possibility of adding a solar scope to this project, which could be spearheaded by the AU.

Come & learn how to use the new telescope

This new observatory is, indeed, a major project, which will provide the community with years of service and education. This is where AU members can become directly involved. Upon completion of the observatory, the Museum will be scheduling training where an individual will obtain certification to actually operate the observatory. Stay tuned!

AU Field Trip: always fun!

The AU will be offering a bus trip to the Griffith Observatory for a guided tour this year. The tentative date is Wednesday, September 19th. We will be traveling on a full size bus, leaving Santa Barbara in the early part of the morning and returning early in the evening. Cost will only be the cost for the bus service, which turns out to be a

good deal as there is no admission fee to the observatory. There is an admission fee to the planetarium if you desire to watch a presentation. This promises to be a fun-packed day. Griffith Observatory not only offers its grand telescope, but a solar scope, fabulous exhibits, a great gift shop, a very nice cafe, and wonderful views of the surrounding city including the HOLLYWOOD sign. Keep checking the AstroNews for updates and how to reserve your seat.

Update about the AU's Out-of-this-World Award

The month of March 2012 will mark the end of our year-long reign as Astronomy Magazine's number one astronomy club in the nation, since this year's winner of the Out-Of-This-World Award will be announced soon. For outstanding community outreach, this prestigious award has given me, as President of the Santa Barbara Astronomical Unit, great pleasure to mention during our many meetings and community events. The \$2,500.00 that came with this award was used exclusively for the cost of making the UC2 wheelchair-accessible telescope viewing system a reality, which provides all individuals who wish to see the wonders of the cosmos a chance to do so. This award will always be a big feather in the AU's cap and, who knows, there's always next year...

New and Renewing Members – Thank You!

I wish to give a solar flare thank you to new members, Daniel Godinez and Kim Miller, and renewing members, Jon Marinello and John Martinez. The AU is truly invested in our community and with your participation, the science of astronomy will continue to be enjoyed by all.

AU Information Box

President: Ruben Gutierrez 450-7451
rubenalvag@aol.com

Vice President: Mike Farris 637-3300
Mike1@mikewfarris.com

Secretary: Jim Williams 588-8823
j_alison_w@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Pat McPartlin 964-8201
parsnip7@yahoo.com

Outreach: Chuck McPartlin 964-8201
macpuzl@west.net

Webmaster: Paul Winn 886-2319
paul@sbau.org

Newsletter: Tom Whittemore 687-2025
kometes@aol.com

Equipment: Art Harris 968-4017
n6is@cox.net

SBMNH Astronomy Programs Manager

Javier Rivera 682-4711x173
jrivera@sbnature2.org

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AU annual membership rates:

Single = \$15 Family = \$25

AU mailing address:

Astronomical Unit
c/o Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
2559 Puesta Del Sol Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2998

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

March 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 CENTRAL COAST NURSING HOME 6PM	3 BACARA RESORT 6PM
4	5	6 GOLETA PUBLIC LIBRARY 6PM	7	8 ○ HOLLISTER ELEMENTARY 5PM	9 GENERAL MEETING 7PM	10 PLANNING MEETING 5PM STAR PARTY 7PM SBMNH
11 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME! 2AM	12	13	14 ◐	15 SBMNH LECTURES ON NATURAL DISASTERS	16 WESTMONT COLLEGE 7:30PM	17 SBMNH LUNCHEON NOON BACARA RESORT 6PM
18	19 VERNAL EQUINOX 10:15PM	20 CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	21	22 ●	23 DUNN SCHOOL 5PM	24 MESSIER MARATHON ALL NIGHT!
25	26	27 CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	28	29 PURBACH "X" VISIBLE THIS EVENING	30 ◐	31 EARTH HOUR 8:30PM TURN OFF YOUR LIGHTS!

The Astronomical Unit

c/o Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
2559 Puesta Del Sol Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2998