



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

November 2005

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

We're Number Three!

The AU is part of JPL's Night Sky Network, a group of astronomy clubs around the USA that do outreach to the public. NSN recently started posting the top outreach clubs in the country, and the AU is currently third on the list of most outreaches! See our name in lights at <http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/stars.cfm>

November Meeting

Please mark your calendars for Friday, November 4th, for the AU's November meeting. This month's speaker will be AU President, Chuck McPartlin, who will give a presentation on some of the results from the Cassini mission to Saturn, and the Mars Exploration Rovers. The meeting will begin at 7:30 PM in Farrand Hall at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.



Outreach Report

Since the last outreach report, AU volunteers Andy Allen, Warren Bitters, Joe Brown, Bill Clausen, Tim & Jason Crawford, Joe Doyle, Ruben

Gutierrez, Art Harris, Janie & Marv Johnson, June Kelley, Sherry & Larry Lang, Dale Lowdermilk, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Edgar Ocampo, Barbara Reid, Nancy Rohrer, Jim Williams, and Tim Wittenburg showed celestial wonders to **793** customers.

November AU Events

Here's the November schedule so far. The schedule is subject to change, so check the web page or contact Chuck for the latest and greatest.

Friday, November 4, 7:30 PM

Monthly meeting in Farrand Hall at SBMNH. Prepare for the Mars Party tomorrow - Chuck will give a presentation on some of the results from the Cassini mission to Saturn and the Mars Exploration Rovers.

Saturday, November 5, setup 7 PM

Telescopes for Mars Mania at the Museum, which will have Mars events all day long.

Monday, November 7, setup 7 PM

Slide show and telescopes for Goleta Valley Junior High School.

Wednesday, November 9, setup 7 PM

Slide show and telescopes for Franklin Elementary School.

Thursday, November 10, setup 6:30 PM

Telescopes for Roosevelt Elementary School.

Saturday, November 12, 5:30 PM

AU planning meeting in the classroom next to Krissie's office at SBMNH. Pizza and planning for upcoming AU events.

Saturday, November 12, 7 PM

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH.

Tuesday, November 15, setup 6 PM

Telescopes for a moon event for the third grade at Peabody Charter School. Show them it isn't made of cheese!

Thursday, Nov 17, setup 7 PM

Slide show and telescopes for La Colina Junior High School.

Friday, November 18, 7 PM.

Public telescope night at Westmont College.

Monday, November 28, 8 PM

Lecture "The Discoveries" by Alan Lightman at UCSB's Campbell Hall. Hear about the great scientific breakthroughs of the twentieth century.

Coyote Makes the Ursa Major



Coyote is always a trickster. Across North America he would often take on a human appearance to pull his tricks on unsuspecting people and fellow creatures alike. Coyote is never to be trusted. Never!

The *Wasco*, a Chinook tribe of southeastern Oregon, tell this story on how the stars came to be the pictures in the night sky, thanks to Coyote.

Once there were five brother wolves. They always traveled together. They always hunted together, they were inseparable. One night Coyote saw them staring at the sky,

“What are you looking at?” he asked. “Nothing,” said the elder wolf. The next night Coyote saw them again staring into the night sky. Again he asked the elder wolf and again the answer was the

same. After four nights of questions the youngest wolf convinced his brothers it would be okay to tell Coyote. You see, they didn't trust Coyote either but they were getting tired of him hanging around.

“We see two animals up there, but we can not get to them,” said the youngest wolf to Coyote.

Coyote puffed up and said, “let's go up and see them.” “How can we do that?” they asked together. “I will take you.” said Coyote.

And so he began to shoot arrows into the sky. The first stuck in the sky and second arrow stuck into the first and so on. Finally all the arrows made a path up to sky, like a ladder from the earth. “Let's go,” said Coyote. And so they went, Coyote; the elder wolf with his dog; and the four wolf brothers. They climbed for many days and nights until they reached the sky. There they looked across the darkness and saw the two animals they had seen from below, two grizzly bears.

Coyote warned them not to get too close because Grizzly is unpredictable. But the two youngest wolves headed for the bears, and then the other two brothers followed. Only the elder wolf stayed behind with his dog.

When the wolves got close to the bears nothing happened. The four wolves sat down and looked at the bears and the bears looked at the wolves. Then the elder wolf decided it was safe and went, along with his dog, and sat between with his brothers to watch the bears as well.

Coyote still wouldn't go. He did not trust the bears. But, he said to himself, “this makes a pretty picture, I think I will leave it like this for everyone to see. When people look up into the night sky they will see this and say there is a story about this picture and they will tell a story about me!”

Coyote quietly came back down, taking the arrows out as he descended. When he was back on the earth he looked up and admired his work. The bears and wolves and dog are still there today. They are the stars in the Big Dipper. Four of the wolves make up the handle, and the elder wolf still has his dog with him, in the middle of the handle. The dog is *Alcor*. The younger wolves make up the bowl under the handle on one side and the two bears are still there too, they are the pointers to the North Star.

After Coyote saw what he had made he added more stars, and made more pictures across the sky. When he was done he tossed the remaining stars across the night and made the Big Road which today we call the Milky Way.

One night he called Meadowlark over and said, Little brother, when I am gone and everyone asks who arranged the stars, tell them I put the stars in the sky.

And that is how Meadowlark came to tell of how the stars make pictures in the sky. But that's for another night of stories.

As told by Tony Galván
Illustrated by Tony Galván

For Sale

For Sale: Orion Skyquest XT6 Dobsonian in good condition. Ample light grasp, portable, stable mount, quick setup and takedown, easy to operate. \$225 purchase price includes: 1500 mm (6") primary mirror, 45" long enameled steel optical tube, cabinet quality Dobsonian wooden base, 8x50 right angle/correct image finderscope, 10mm and 25mm Plössl eyepieces, center-marked mirror for precise collimation. Would consider trade for ETX 90 RA or similar scope. If interested contact: Don French at: (805) 569-8539 or dsfrench@cox.net.

Holiday Party

Don't forget to get your menu choices and checks to the Food Dude (Tim Crawford) no later than Wednesday, November 30 if you want to attend the star-studded AU Holiday Party at the Beachside. You snooze, you lose!

Astronomy Calendars

It's not too late to get one of these cool 2006 calendars full of astro images for a stocking-stuffer, or just a great gift for yourself! Only \$12 - less than 4 cents a day – see Bob Brown at the next meeting to get one.

December Meeting

December's meeting is **Members' Night**, so sign up for a speaking slot (about 15 minutes of fame) at this month's meeting if you want to share something interesting with the AU. Also, it's **election** time, and we need members willing to step up and help keep your club going and having fun.

AU Information Box

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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

AU mailing address:

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

November 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 	3	4 AU Monthly Meeting 7:30 PM	5 Mars Party at the SBMNH 7:00 PM
6	7 Goleta Valley Junior High 7:00 PM	8	9  Franklin Elementary 7:00 PM	10 Roosevelt Elementary 6:30 PM	11	12 AU Planning Meeting 5:30 PM SBMNH Star Party 7:00PM
13	14	15 Peabody School 6:00 PM	16 	17 La Colina Junior High 7:00 PM	18 Westmont College 7:00 PM	19
20	21	22	23 	24	25	26
27	28 Alan Lightman at UCSB 8 PM	29	30 Last day to sign up for the party!			

The Astronomical Unit

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