



# AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit



November 2009

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

## Outreach Summary

Since the last newsletter, AU outreaches Andy Allen, Bill Clausen, Tim Crawford, Carolyn & Ed Edwards, Mike Farris, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Brian Kenny, Chris & Eric Larson, Zanna Lucy, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Max Neufeldt, Edgar Ocampo, Erin O'Connor, Ken Owen, Gustavo Ritterstein, Javier & Samantha & their Quasars, Nancy Rohrer, Tom Totton, John West, Tom Whittemore, Jim Williams, and Tim Wittenburg showed the night sky to 2,178 customers.



*An enthused observer takes a peek at the Guacamoon! Photo: R.Gutierrez.*

## Outreach for November

Here are the AU events scheduled so far for November. Remember, 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)

### Sunday, November 1, 2 AM

Daylight Saving Time ends. Fall back an hour, so it's dark sooner for astronomers!

### Monday, November 2, setup 6:30 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Coastline Christian Academy, in Goleta on Cathedral Oaks just northeast of the Fairview intersection.

### Tuesday, November 3, setup 6:30 PM

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

### Wednesday, November 4, setup 6:30 PM

Telescopes for students at Monroe Elementary School, on the Mesa at Cliff Drive and Flora Vista.

### Friday, November 6, 7 PM

Catch a short planetarium show, followed by the **AU monthly meeting** in Farrand Hall at SBMNH. Our speaker is **Dr. Paul Norton**, a specialist in infrared and night-vision detectors, and the subject is “**Detector Arrays**”.

### Wednesday, November 11, setup 6:30 PM

Telescopes for the Biltmore. We set up on their back lawn.

### Thursday, November 12, 7 PM

The Galileo Show in Fleischmann Auditorium at SBMNH, in celebration of 400 years of astronomy. Presented by UCSB and LCOGT. See the Museum's web page for details.

### Friday, November 13, setup 6 PM

Telescopes for Santa Ynez School Science Night, at 3525 Pine Street in Santa Ynez.

### Saturday, November 14, 3 PM

“How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming”, a talk by Dr. Mike Brown of Caltech, in Fleischmann Auditorium at SBMNH. See the Museum's web page for details. You don't want to miss this one!

### Saturday, November 14, 5 PM

AU Planning Meeting in the classroom outside Javier's office at SBMNH. Come help plan your club's activities.

### **Saturday, November 14, 7 PM**

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH. Bring a scope and have fun showing goodies in the sky outside Palmer Observatory, or just show up and enjoy looking at them.

### **Tuesday, November 17, setup 6:30 PM**

Telescopes for an astronomy night at the Goleta Public Library, on Fairview Avenue.

### **Thursday, November 19, setup 6:30 PM**

Slide show and telescopes for La Colina Junior High School in Santa Barbara, off Foothill near 154. We always get a lot of students coming out for this event.

### **Friday, November 20, setup 7 PM**

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont College, at the new observatory next to the baseball field, downhill behind the gym from the old observatory.

### **A Fall Triangle?**

*T. Whittemore*

The summer has its Summer Triangle consisting of the bright stars Altair, Deneb, and Vega. The winter sky boasts the Winter Hexagon, and some think of a triad of stars, which might comprise a Spring Triangle: Regulus, Spica, and Arcturus. But, where is the Fall Triangle? I thought about this the other night as I watched the southern horizon. I thought, looked, and said "Wow. There they are!" What I pictured was a group of stars, each from a different constellation. Each star was bright enough to make a statement. Together they formed an asterism, which just might define the fall. At any rate, here's my take on it. The first is Deneb Kaitos in Cetus, the Whale. In this imagined triangle, Deneb Kaitos lies furthest to the east. Its name means the "tail of the monster." This is the very same monster enlisted to devour Andromeda, tied to a rock on the shore as a sacrifice to appease Poseidon. At magnitude 2.04, Deneb Kaitos certainly seems bright enough to be a candidate for a Fall Triangle! The second star is Ankaa. Another name for Ankaa is Na'ir al Zaurak which, in Arabic, means "The bright one in the boat." Lying furthest to the south in our triangle, Ankaa, an orange giant, scorches the southern sky with a surface temperature of 4500K. And, with a diameter of sixteen Suns, Ankaa burns with a brightness 80 times that of our Sun! Finally,

completing our triangle, and furthest to the west, is Fomalhaut. The brightest star in Piscis Austrinus, Fomalhaut is part of a moving group of stars which contains Castor and Vega. This group has been traveling since birth for about 200 million years. More recently, a debris disk has been discovered around Fomalhaut where an exoplanet has been imaged. What an interesting triad of stars? So, please, the next time you get a chance to look at the southern horizon around sunset in October, take a look at these three. They just may become your Fall Triangle!

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

*Ruben Gutierrez*

This year's combined AU Star-B-Q and Annual Camp Out was a "hot" event. The delicious hot barbequed tri-tip and chicken from the Country Meat Market that the AU provided was only matched by the 106° temperature at lakeside. But, what a pleasant event it was! Plenty of club members made the scenic drive to Cachuma Lake to enjoy the beautiful surroundings. This, combined with a clear evening sky, plenty of telescopes, and a flyover by the International Space Station made for a great weekend. Many thanks to all those who put in so much work to make this event happen!

The "Guacamoon and Jupiter, Too" Astronomical Display and Star Party in Carpinteria that took place during the annual Avocado Festival also was a huge success. It is estimated that over 1300 people attended! The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History showed the moon phases and the making of a comet, and gave away 18 GalileoScopes to very grateful children. Many thanks to the AU members who took their telescopes and shared their own personal windows of the universe with all those happy people.

World-renowned astronomer Mike Brown will give a presentation titled "How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming" at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. The talk will take place on Saturday, November 14th, at 3 PM, in Fleischmann Auditorium. The cost is \$10 to Museum members and \$12 for non-members. Don't forget, all those who volunteered at the October 10th Star Party at the Museum get in free.

The Holidays are upon us, and this means the Holiday Banquet is coming up. It will take place Thursday, December 10th, beginning at 6 PM, at the Beachside Bar and Grill at Goleta Beach. This year the AU is paying a portion of the cost, which has reduced the price for a first class dinner and party to \$30. If you want to take advantage of this offer, please contact Pat McPartlin. As this issue goes to press, there are only **15** seats left. You are also encouraged to take part in the Secret Santa Gift exchange by bringing a wrapped gift whose worth is no more than \$10. The evening is a great way to end the International Year of Astronomy 2009, and start looking toward next year. The AU has big plans for 2010 which includes International Astronomy Day in April and another AU field trip. Please check the AU AstroNews for more information.

The Goleta, Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, and Santa Ynez communities have certainly displayed a big interest in Astronomy, which seems to be the case in other parts of the nation, as demonstrated by the recent Star Party that took place at the White House. Locally, the AU has touched the lives of many by sharing its telescopes at numerous star parties organized by Outreach Coordinator Chuck McPartlin. It's always encouraging when members of the public get so enthused by peering through a telescope, and subsequently join the AU. This month I wish to welcome new members John and Barbara Ahlman, Don French, Rick Hibbs and Gustavo Ritterstein's family. I also wish to thank Tony and Joan Galván as well as Laguna Blanca School for renewing their membership. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**

### **Did You Know?**

*Ruben Gutierrez*

The Mount Wilson observatory, located in the Pasadena Mountains, was founded in 1904 by George Ellery Hale, and is now operated by the Mount Wilson Institute. The first major instrument was the 60-inch reflector, completed in 1908. This was followed by the 100-inch reflector, which began operation in 1917 as the world's largest telescope. Mount Wilson is also the site of two solar telescopes. This is all very interesting, but what connection does it have with the Astronomical Unit, you ask? Well, keep reading the AstroNews and see if the Club's 2010 field trip leads you right up that mountain and see history first hand.

### **AU Information Box**

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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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## November 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <b>Daylight Saving Ends at 2AM</b>	2 <b>Coastline Christian Academy 6:30 PM</b> ○	3 <b>Camino Real Marketplace 6:30PM</b>	4 <b>Monroe Elementary 6:30PM</b>	5	6 <b>AU General Meeting 7PM</b>	7
8	9 ●	10	11 <b>Biltmore 6:30PM</b>	12 <b>Galileo Show! 7PM Fleischmann Auditorium</b>	13 <b>Santa Ynez School 6PM</b>	14 <b>Planning Meeting 5PM SBMNH Star Party 7PM</b>
15	16 ●	17 <b>Goleta Public Library (Fairview) 6:30PM</b>	18	19 <b>La Colina Junior High 7 PM</b>	20 <b>Westmont College 6:30PM</b>	21
22	23	24 ●	25	26 <b>Gobble, Gobble!</b>	27	28
29	30					

### The Astronomical Unit

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