



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

October 2010

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

OUR SPEAKER FOR OCTOBER

Chuck McPartlin, our outreach coordinator, will give a talk titled "Planets Beyond Neptune." He describes his talk as "a look at the cool stuff we're finding at the edges of our solar system, and the zoo of planets we're finding around other stars." His presentation is one of the talks Chuck has been giving at schools and campgrounds because of the interest in the Pluto flap as well as a nice hook for bringing in the extrasolars.

OUTREACH REPORT

Since the last newsletter, intrepid AU outreach volunteers Andy Allen, Bill Clausen, Karleen & Dennis Cowan, Tim Crawford, Coni Edick & Joe Doyle, Carolyn & Ed Edwards, Mike Farris, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Monica Harris, Jeremy Kerby, Chris Larson, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Ron Nixon, Edgar Ocampo, Bob Richard, Javier Rivera & Mike Bennett & their Quasars, Nancy Rohrer, David Salvia, Tom Whittemore, Jim Williams, Jerry Wilson, Paul Winn, and Tim Wittenburg showed cool astro stuff to 1028 customers.

OUTREACH SUMMARY

Here are the outreach events scheduled so far for October. Join us if you can! Just help out at six outreach events in a calendar year, and your AU membership gets extended for a year! Events are subject to change and cancellation, so contact Chuck at macpuzl@west.net or 964-8201 for the latest information.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 7 PM

Start with a short planetarium show, then our monthly meeting in Farrand Hall at SBMNH. Speaker is our own Chuck McPartlin.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, NOON TO 10 PM

Telescopes and activities on Linden Lawn in Carpinteria, in conjunction with the Avocado Festival.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7 TO SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10
CALSTAR at Lake San Antonio campground.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 5:30 PM

Monthly AU planning meeting in the classroom next to Javier's office at SBMNH.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 7 PM

Monthly Public Star Party outside Palmer Observatory at SBMNH. Always a fun gathering.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for Peabody Charter Elementary School, at 3018 Calle Noguera in Santa Barbara.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15, SETUP 6:30 PM

The monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont College, at their new observatory next to the baseball field. Just follow the road from the new entrance off Cold Springs Road until you see the dome.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, SETUP 7 PM

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

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, SETUP 4:30 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Kellogg Elementary School, 475 Cambridge Drive in Goleta. Pizza for volunteers.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, SETUP 5 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at La Patera Elementary School, 555 N La Patera Lane in Goleta (adjacent to Stow Grove Park).

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for a party by the Santa Barbara Newcomers Club, at the hang gliding hill at the south end of Elings Park. Contact Chuck for details.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

Halloween! Show the sky to trick-or-treaters wherever you are. Astronomical eye candy won't hurt your teeth!



"That's right, Joe. It is older than dirt!"

DARK SKY LOG

Joe Doyle

Last night at the Gun Club, while the AU's finest were observing the wonders of the heavens, Tim Crawford and I were left without a chaperone and realized that it was time for some new constellations. So we immediately set to work. Our first casualty is the Squashed Pumpkin. It is a fall constellation and so is just in time for Halloween. Its stars are former members of Andromeda and Lacerta. It is easy to find and, at least from a semi-dark site, easy to see. It is in the northern part of Andromeda that most people ignore and contains some of the brighter stars in Lacerta. Look up and you will find a large oval that is about 3 times as wide as it is tall.

This constellation might be from Norse mythology. As usual the jealous Loki was playing tricks on his stepbrother Thor. It was Halloween and he got Thor so drunk that he was able to convince him to dress as Helen of Troy for his costume. When Thor went out Trick Or Treating he came to a castle and inside there was a family of blue eyed trolls who were just starting to carve a face into their pumpkin. The trolls laughed at Thor for dressing like a woman and called him a foolish fella. Thor became so angry that he killed the trolls and hit the pumpkin with his famous hammer Mjollnir. The pumpkin was

flattened and flew into the sky where it remains to this day.

The pumpkin has some wonderful deep sky objects including the Blue Snowball (some say that this is one of the troll's eyes) and some very popular galaxies including NGC 7331 and Stephan's Quintet (other people say that each of the 5 galaxies represents each of the 5 members of the troll family).

Can you find any new constellations?

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN....

Ruben Gutierrez

You may notice that in this edition of the AU AstroNews the colorful picture and our club logo are in black and white. The reason for this was the printing cost. Our club was obliged to change printers and, in doing so, the cost went up dramatically. In fact, it more than tripled! Due to this, during the last planning meeting it was decided that not using color would almost return us to the previous monthly cost. Therefore, since there is still the option of acquiring the full color AstroNews via email, or at the Club's web site, our newsletter will now be printed in black and white; but we may throw you a full color spread once in a while.

Speaking of a great spread, the food and attendance at this year's campout was one of the best I can remember. Thanks to all those that worked to make this year's event up at the lake such a success. Special thanks to Tim "The Food Dude" Crawford, Tim Wittenburg, and his ever-helpful mom, Timma, for coordinating the delicious cuisine. I also wish to thank all the members who hauled their astronomical equipment over the pass and through the valley to share with all. Mohawk Shores at Cachuma Lake is, indeed, a beautiful place to enjoy friends, eat good food, and look up at the stars.

In addition to the many star parties scheduled for the month of October, one big event will be during the annual Avocado Festival in Carpinteria on Saturday, 10/2. Last year's "Guacamoon and Jupiter Too" star party drew over 1,200 star gazers to our telescopes. This year's Avocado Star Party promises to attract just as many. So, get on over to the Avocado Festival, grab some guacamole, and do some solar observing during the day and star-gazing

during the night. We will be set up at the very end of Linden Avenue on the grass, just look for all the telescopes.

BLACK FOREST STAR PARTY

Chad Caprio

After about a one and a half hour drive from Cogan Station to Cherry Springs State Park in Pennsylvania, we arrived to find a good number of people already set up early on a Friday morning of the Black Forest Star Party (BFSP). We set up almost the whole way in the back of the observing field.

We set up by 24-, 28-, 30-, and 32-inch scopes, plus many more scopes of all shapes and sizes. We met people from as far away as Canada, in addition to some people from Ohio and some lovely ladies from New Jersey.

Friday night was the only good night to observe, but we observed many different galaxies, star clusters, nebulae and the planet Jupiter. As usual, the Milky Way cast its shadow on the lovely dark observing field. This year, Fox's Pizza provided more than pizza through most of the night until about 2AM if I remember correctly. (The pulled pork sandwiches were the best!)

After most of the night enjoying some of the beef stew that my friend Blake is famous for and enjoying some great drink, I retired to my new tent and air mattress. Yes, the temperature was in the mid 30's so it was a bit cold.

The next morning my friend Jay provided and cooked a great breakfast. We knew it was going to be a horrible night for viewing and there was rain in the forecast, so we hung out for awhile with the Jersey girls and then packed it up.

Alas, the BFSP this year was a fun time, but I didn't actually remember to take any pictures from the actual event. I have pictures of previous ones. If you would like to see them just email me at sbcls2010@yahoo.com.

I hope that some of you all can make it to next year's event. Check out <http://www.bfsp.org> for more details about next April to find out the dates

and to see if registration is open. It is worth the trip and the \$30 fee for attending. Vendors are present and there is a door prize drawing on Saturday.

Until the next time...

	AU Information Box	
President:	Ruben Gutierrez	450-7451 rubenalvag@aol.com
Vice President:	Mike Farris	637-3300 mike@mikewfarris.com
Secretary/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
AU Astronomy Information Pager (Leave a short message) 564-9002		
SBMNH Astronomy Program Manager Javier Rivera 682-4711x173 jrivera@sbnature2.org		
SBMNH Astronomy Program Tape Updated monthly 682-4711x405		
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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		

October 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 MONTHLY AU MEETING 7PM	2 AVOCADO FESTIVAL NOON-10PM
3	4	5	6	7 ● CAL STAR	8 CAL STAR	9 PLANNING MEETING 5:30PM SBMNH STAR PARTY 7PM CAL STAR
10 CAL STAR	11	12	13	14 ◐ PEABODY 6PM	15 WESTMONT COLLEGE 6:30PM	16
17	18	19 CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	20	21 KELLOGG 4:30PM	22 ○	23
24	25	26	27	28 LA PATERA 5PM	29 NEWCOMERS 6 PM	30 ◑
31 Boo!						

The Astronomical Unit

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