



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

February 2018

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History



"Sorry. I didn't catch your names. Is that your sleigh out front?"

OUTREACH REWARDS

AU members who help out at 6 or more outreach events in a calendar year receive a free extension of their membership for another year. In addition, they are awarded a coveted Night Sky Network outreach pin. Starting at the February meeting, Chuck will be giving out the pins to Farshad Barman, Mike Chibnik, Krissie Cook, Tim Crawford, Michael Dilley, Joe Doyle, Susan Jackson & John Edkins, Mike Farris, Ruben Gutierrez, Art Harris, Baron Ron Herron, Jürgen Hilmer, Sean Kelly, Ken Kihlstrom, Chris Larson, Adrian Lopez, Pat McPartlin, Janet & Martin Meza, Bonnie & Bruce Murdock, Max Neufeldt, Edgar Ocampo, Erin O'Connor, Peggy O'Rork, Celeste & Gustavo Ritterstein, Javier Rivera, Dianne & Russell Ruiz, David Salvia, Colin Taylor, Cez & Tom Totton, Tom Whittemore, Patricia Forgey & Jerry Wilson, and Paul Winn. **Thanks!**

THE FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

Our February speaker will highlight club member Adrian Lopez, who will talk about his experiences in the Summer Science Program. Adrian took part in measurements made at the SSP site in New Mexico.

OUTREACH REPORT

Since the last newsletter, and with numerous cloudouts and cancellations, AU volunteers Farshad Barman, Mike Chibnik, Tim Crawford, Joe Doyle, Tessa Flanagan & Duff Kennedy, Alex Gabrielian, Art Harris, Baron Ron Herron, Sean Kelly, Adrian Lopez, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Janet & Martin Meza, Bonnie & Bruce Murdock, Max Neufeldt, Edgar Ocampo, Peggy O'Rork, Javier Rivera, Colin Taylor, Tom Totton, and Patricia & Jerry Wilson still managed to show cool things in the sky to 671 viewers.

FEBRUARY OUTREACH

Here's the schedule so far for February. Remember, the events are subject to change and cancellation, so for the latest updates, contact Chuck at 964-8201 or macpuzl@west.net.

The Telescope Workshop meets on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 PM at the Broder Building at SBMNH. Contact Tim Crawford at tcrawf3@cox.net for information. Listen to the AU on the radio at KZSB 1290 AM at 9 AM on the second and fourth Monday of each month.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, SETUP 4 PM

Telescopes for STEM night at Solvang School, upper campus, 565 Atterdag Road in Solvang. Contact Chuck for directions to the setup site.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 7 PM

Catch a quick planetarium show, followed by our monthly meeting at 7:30 in Farrand Hall at SBMNH. Adrian will speak about his experiences in the Summer Science Program.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, SETUP 5:30 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Adams School, at 2701 Las Positas Road in Santa Barbara. We get access to the playground setup area through a road just south of the auditorium.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 4 PM

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 6 PM

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

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, SETUP 5:30 PM

Telescopes for an Astronomy Night at Santa Ynez Valley Charter School, 3525 Pine Street in Santa Ynez. This is the campus on the eastern side - the one toward the west is Santa Ynez Elementary.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 7 PM

Monthly Westmont Public Telescope Night at their observatory by the baseball field.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 7 PM

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

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, SETUP 4:30 PM

Telescopes for Ellwood Elementary School's Science Night. They're at 7686 Hollister Avenue in Goleta. We set up on the blacktop out back.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, SETUP 4:30 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Hope School, 3970 La Colina Road. We set up in the plaza by their auditorium.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for Cleveland School, at 123 Alameda Padre Serra. We set up on the playground blacktop, accessed through a road on the west side of the entry lot.

SBAU CLOTHING AT MEETINGS

Pat McPartlin, SBAU Merch Manager

At monthly SBAU club meetings, please help your club by buying special **SBAU clothing!**

I have deeply discounted prices on the old blue logo SBAU clothing—you can still see the old blue logo clothing on the SBAU website, but prices for the blue logo clothing are deeply discounted now. New photos are in the works to show the new all-color logos on the clothing and tote bags. The new all-color clothing and tote bags are priced as you see on the website. And, don't forget AU calendars!

I also have a large inventory of SBAU patches, pins, and cups, as priced on the website. If you have any questions or would like to place an order, please contact me at parsnip7@yahoo.com

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Jerry Wilson

The place where I grew up was in a semi-rural suburb of Los Angeles. As some of you may recall, the city limits of LA were so large and frequently remote that it was the subject of jokes in movies and cartoons. During World War Two soldiers would post "Los Angeles City Limits" signs on remote South Pacific islands.

The suburb was the community of Sunland, on the edge of the Angeles National Forest at about the 2000ft level. When I was 5, in 1949, we moved to a home in Sunland that was literally in the middle of a grassy field. Air pollution, especially smog, was a distant scourge limited to the downtown area. We sometimes drove downtown just to see it. Where I lived was dark and clear, and that's what got me interested in astronomy.

One night, probably near midnight, I can recall being carried from the baby sitter's by my father. I was sleepily looking over his left shoulder as he bent forward to open the latch on the low picket fence around our front yard. This made me look up. The scene I saw was riveted into my memory. What I saw was a sky of vivid bright stars and the Milky Way directly overhead. I can close my eyes and see that scene to this day. It was a fall or winter sky with no moon. I don't recall being cold, but I seemed to be immune to that discomfort when I was young. My mother once had to order me to stop swimming in the Merced River at Wawona Campground in Yosemite because she was concerned about my extremities turning blue. I tried to protest but my lips weren't working well.

Later, when I was ten, a friend and I would use flash cards to memorize the constellations. We were left to our own devices to work out the correct pronunciation of words such as Boötes, Pisces, and a host of others, some of which still elude me today. About that time, I got a 30mm Monolux spotting scope. Now there were four of us with small scopes trying to spot objects. We'd have sleep outs in the back yard. We were in sleeping bags with a bench

from our redwood patio picnic set spanning two of us to make it convenient to look up through our telescopes. We had several cats that pretty well took care of the ever-inquisitive tarantulas that showed up.

We mostly looked at planets, the moon, and asteroids. Stars were puzzling. We knew they were so far away that they looked like points, so we weren't supposed to see their disk. But we could easily see their disks. After much arguing we finally realized we were just looking at an out of focus image. After all they couldn't all have rings around them.

In high school I built my first scope, a 6-inch f/8 Newtonian with parts from Edmund Scientific and money from mowing lawns and a paper route. I used it to look at Messier objects for the first time and start taking images. I've been addicted to it ever since.



“I’m sorry, sir, but you did pick door number three.”



“One more whack with this wrench and I think it will be polar-aligned....”

AU Information Box

President: Jerry Wilson 968-4056
jerrywilsonphd@gmail.com

Vice President: Adrian Lopez 898-9971
vicepresident@sbau.org

Secretary: VACANT
secretary@sbau.org

Treasurer: Colin Taylor 967-8140
dancingmagpie@cox.net

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

Outreach: Chuck McPartlin 964-8201
outreach@sbau.org

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

Refreshments: Tom Totton
tomcez@cox.net

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

Merch Manager: Pat McPartlin 964-8201
parsnip7@yahoo.com

SBMNH Astronomy Programs Manager

Javier Rivera 682-4711x173
jrivera@sbnature2.org

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Single = \$20 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>

The Astronomical Unit

c/o Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
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 Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2998

February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 SOLVANG SCHOOL 4PM	2 GENERAL MEETING 7 PM	3
4	5	6	7 ADAMS SCHOOL 5:30PM	8	9	10 PLANNING MEETING 4 PM STAR PARTY 6 PM SBMNH
11	12 TECH TALK KZSB 9AM SYV CHARTER 5:30PM	13	14	15	16 WESTMONT COLLEGE 7PM	17
18	19	20 CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7 PM	21	22 ELLWOOD ELEMENTARY 4:30PM	23 HOPE SCHOOL 4:30PM	24
25	26 TECH TALK KZSB 9AM CLEVELAND 6PM	27	28			