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# The FOCAL POINT

Newsletter of the Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.  
Volume V, Number X June 1993

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## THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

The Atlanta Astronomy Club will meet at the Fernbank Science Center Planetarium on Friday, June 18 at 7:45 p.m. to see the program entitled "Worlds of Fire and Ice."

After the show there will be a meeting in Classroom II followed by observing with Fernbank's 36-inch telescope.

## USING THE AAC BBS TO "REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEONE"

Doug Chesser, SYSOP

The Atlanta Astronomy Club BBS features two international Echo Mail Networks. These electronic mail networks allow BBS callers to send messages to any other BBS which carries the Echo Mail network in the WORLD! The largest echo mail network carried by the AAC BBS, is called "U'NI-Net" (pronounced "YOU N I.") This network has over fifty conferences and picks up and sends mail to over 250 BBS systems (or nodes) world-wide. Approximately 220 U'NI-Net messages are transmitted to the AAC BBS each day. Unfortunately, only a small percentage are destined for the U'NI Astronomy Conference. (THIS IS A HINT.)

The other Echo mail network, "Science Factor Net," is somewhat smaller but focused more towards the scientific community. This network is carried by about 50 BBS systems world-wide. Approximately 23 messages are transmitted to the AAC BBS each day. About a third of the messages transmitted go to the SFNet Astronomy Conference.

The AAC BBS only picks up the Astronomy/Science Related conferences on both echo mail networks.

In recent months a few of our members have had discussions via electronic mail with an Alabama Astronomy Club Member (on U'NI Net), a user of "STARGATE" (John Wagoner's BBS on U'NI Net) and a Maui Astronomy Club member (on SFNet); not to mention one Astronomy Buff in British Columbia (on SFNet.)

Some of the information transmitted on these echo mail conferences is very useful. For instance news of SN1993J was reported via echo mail and was posted on

the AAC BBS within 48 hours of the initial discovery. So, if you need to get the messages out (or in), just use one of the AAC BBS' echo mail networks.

## BASIC ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

David Riddle

A 'hands on' introduction to basic astrophotography skills will be held at the Villa Rica Observatory on the evening of Sunday, June 20th at 8:00 p.m. This course will be rescheduled in the event of rainy weather; Otherwise it will be held if the skies are clear or cloudy.

Good astrophotos do not require complicated equipment or cameras that cost as much as a Toyota. You will be shown how to get pictures of star trails and meteors using only a tripod-mounted 35mm camera. Camera selection, and choice of the right lens, film and exposure will be discussed.

Piggy-back photography using telephoto lens, prime focus photography with our 20-inch reflector and the use of filters for astrophotography will be demonstrated. I will bring some of my own equipment for demonstrations along with photos that will illustrate how a technically successful photo should look. Some photos from my 'oops' file will show some of the gremlins that can bedevil a photographer of the night sky.

Participants are encouraged to bring a camera, a short roll of high speed color slide film (ISO 400 to 1000) or color print film (ISO 400-3200), a tripod and a cable release if possible.

## TRIVIA

The answer to last month's question: The Kirkwood Gaps, named for the 19th American astronomer Daniel Kirkwood, are regions in the asteroid belt where asteroids are much less likely to be found due to orbital resonance effects with Jupiter. That is, asteroids tend not to have orbital periods that are one-half, one third, etc., that of Jupiter.

Trivia for June: What unusual "astronomical" event occurred twice in a period of eleven years in Wethersfield, Connecticut?

The *Focal Point* is published monthly by the Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of amateur astronomy.

Meetings are held on the third Friday of each month (the second Friday in December) at the Bradley Observatory of Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia.

For up-to-date information on Club programs and activities please call the AAC's telephone hot-line at (404) 621-2661 or log in to the Club's Computer BBS at (404) 455-3089.

Membership: \$20 annually for families and \$10 for students. Membership includes a subscription to the Astronomical League's *Reflector* newsletter and use of the Club's observatory in Villa Rica, Georgia. Optional subscriptions to *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy Magazine* are available for \$20 and \$16 per year, respectively.

Article submissions are strongly encouraged; please deliver to the editor for consideration. The submission deadline for the July 1993 issue of the *Focal Point* is July 5th. Permission is granted to duplicate and redistribute in a non-profit manner, in part or whole, provided credit is given to the authors, the Club and this publication. Please call the editor at (404) 294-6055 for more information.

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First Class

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