

# The Focal Point

The Atlanta Astronomy Club  
Established 1947  
December 2005

Vol XVIII No. 7

Editor: Kat Sarbell

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## Atlanta Astronomy Club Annual Holiday Potluck Dinner

By Rauna Long

It's that time of year again! The Atlanta Astronomy Club invites you to join us for a wonderful evening of food, fellowship, and astronomy. Bring your family and friends and of course a dish to share. For members and non-members alike!

**When** - Saturday, December 10th

**Where** - Agnes Scott College,  
Bradley Observatory

**Time** - Arrive by 6:30 pm for food set up.

**Bring** - See Instructions Below

**Questions** - Call Rauna Long @ 404-483-0518

AAC provides turkey, ham, paper products as well as beverages. You may bring your own bottle of wine or beer if you'd like. PLEASE BRING FOOD ITEMS FOR YOUR COVERED DISH, NOT DRINKS!

Everyone must bring a side item that will feed 8-10 people. AT LEAST one side item per 2 people (couple). If you are attending the event alone you MUST STILL BRING A SIDE ITEM THAT WILL FEED 8-10 PEOPLE!

Example: If you bring your spouse and 2 children then you will need to bring TWO side items that will feed 8-10 people EACH.



Email Rauna (raunalong@hotmail.com) with a description of what you will bring. I will send out an updated email regarding what we are lacking before our event.

We will have chafing dishes (food warmers) and a microwave on hand so feel free to bring warm food items. Don't forget to label your dishes and serving spoons!

The following is a general list of what we need:

- \* Vegetables/Casserole Side Items
- \* Salads of all kinds
- \* Breads and Butter
- \* Pies, Cakes, Cookies

PLEASE RSVP Rauna ASAP with the following:

- \* Number in your party
- \* Item (s) you will bring
- \* Number of children 12 and under that will attend.



## Upcoming Speakers and Programs

By Keith "Kosmic Kow" Burns

On Jan 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006, David King of Auburn University will come and speak on the Chicxulub Crater in Mexico. At press time, this is not a done deal.

On Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006, we will have Adam Block of Kitt Peak come to speak. Note that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month and not the third Friday. Adam is designing a brand new power point presentation just for this meeting. It will include many wonderful space images and an abundance of information on Kitt Peak. Plus Adam will talk about exactly what he does out there at his job.

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006, Rich Jakiel will speak on Galaxies. Plans are in the works to dive deep into galaxies. This will include the "what", "why", and "how" of galaxies. There will be more on this in the coming months.

## Special Photo Gallery: The Peach State Star Gaze 2005

This year, the Peach State Star Gaze (PSSG) was held from November 2nd through 6th at Whitewater Express Campground in Tennessee. The PSSG Committee, chaired by Peter Macumber and Joanne Cirincione, and many volunteers went to great lengths to secure speakers, vendors, refreshments, and door prizes for the star party. The following photos will give you just a glimpse of all the fun: interesting talks given by expert speakers, a concert under the stars, vendors exhibiting their products, and generous door prizes, and beautiful views!



PSSG Chairs Peter Macumber and Joanne Cirincione. Photo Tom Faber.



Frank Marchese (left), Peter Macumber, and Keith Burns set up the club's 24" Dobsonian. Photo by Tom Faber.



Katherine "Kat" Sarbell volunteers at the check-in tent on Wednesday morning, the opening day of the Peach State. Photo by Tom Faber.

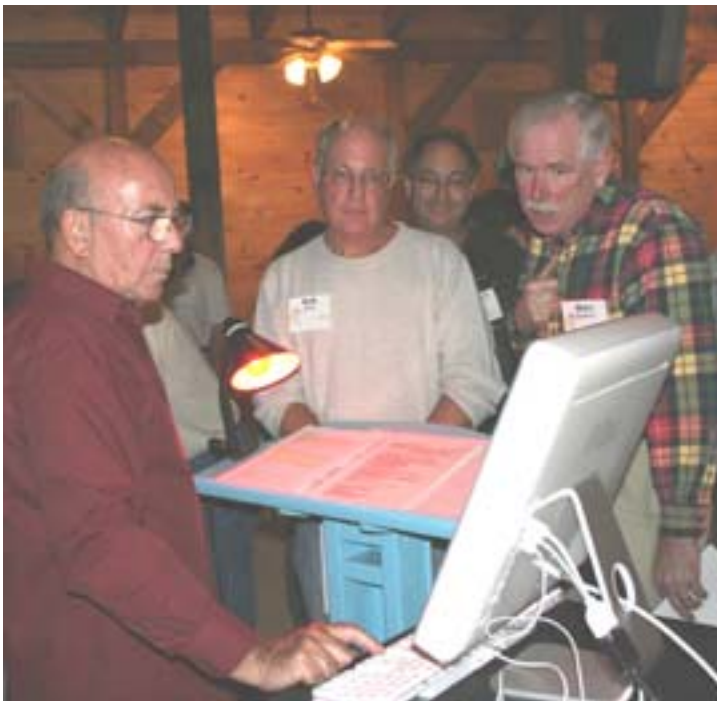


A view of the observing field at Whitewater Express. Volunteers used lime powder and orange traffic cones to designate driving areas. The field was surrounded by forested hills, and a few of the trees were starting to change color for the fall. Photo by Frank Marchese.



No, that's not snow - just a heavy frost that enveloped the field on Thursday morning. The temperature that morning dipped to 26 degrees Fahrenheit but reached the upper 50s by afternoon. Photo by Tom Faber.





## The Speakers and Presenters of the Peach State Star Gaze

Our speakers and presenters offered talks and shows on a variety of astronomical subjects to appeal to many different interests. Top left: Roger Venable discussed his personal experiences with video recording of asteroid occultations. Top right: Musician Jonn Serrie played music on his synthesizers under the stars Friday night. Middle left: Dr. Richard

Schmude (far left) explains polarized light to audience members during his lecture about Mars. Above: Richard Jakiel begins his talk about astronomical imagery on ancient coins. Below left: Richard DeLuca (left) talks to visitors after his presentation on Stonehenge. Right: A young visitor does some "stargazing" on the back of Dr. Schmude's star chart printed T-shirt. All photos by Frank Marchese.





## Viewers and Vendors on the Field

Clockwise from top left: Companies set up tables filled with merchandise in the coffee and snack shed next to the field. Abbeville Telescope Company set up a tent on the field to sell equipment. A father and son set up their Dobsonian. Who said great telescopes had to be giant? Here a man looks through a table-top solar scope. AAC member Alex Langoussis looks through his “Dob” with another visitor to the Peach State. Kids had fun learning about telescopes and astronomy. All photos by Frank Marchese.





## Come on down! You're the next winner at the Peach State!

On Saturday afternoon, the door prize drawing was held at the lecture hall. Clockwise from top left: Luke Moore claims his door prize from Joanne Cirincione. Vicki Brewer was the happy winner of an Astroscan. Peter Macumber congratulates another door prize winner. Julie Moore, an indispensable volunteer for the Peach State, won another of the four telescope door prizes. Holly and John Ritger claimed a Celestron refractor at the prize drawing. All photos by Frank Marchese.

## Closing Views from the Peach State



Friday evening's colorful sunset was one of many beautiful views of the sky. Photo by Tom Faber.



Jonn Serrie plays music with Mars as a backdrop on Friday evening. Photo by Frank Marchese.



The Moon and Venus set over the observing field on the last night of the Star Gaze. Photo by Frank Marchese.

## Charlie Elliott Chapter November Meeting Minutes and Future Meetings

by Clevis Jones, CEC Recording Secretary

Saturday November 12, 2005

### ATTENDENCE:

More than twenty-five guests and members attended the November meeting held at Oxford College. Jim Honeycutt and Bill McKibben of Oxford College were the hosts.

### BUSINESS:

Larry Owens welcomed the visitors from Macon and the rest of the attendees. Galaxy Optics has received the 16" mirror for the Truss Tube project with an estimated return ship date of 2006-02-01. If you'd like to help with the 16-inch truss tube project, please contact Larry at [planetographer@comcast.net](mailto:planetographer@comcast.net).

### CURRENT EVENTS REPORT:

Clevis Jones covered news concerning the new Astronauts (2), Cosmonaut (1), and the 2 new Taikonauts (Chinese) along with some information on China's ambitious space program. Additional coverage was on Cassini, the ESA Venus Express, the discovery of a Super Black Hole in SGR A, two new moon candidates for Pluto, and the recent close approach of Mars. He ended with a short "Hubble Minute" movie.

### OBSERVING REPORT - What's Up Tonight:

Steve Bieger presented "What's Up Tonight". This month's presentation covered objects in constellations including Andromeda, Aquarius, Delphinus, Equuleus, and Pegasus. As usual, he included information on history, myth, science (and scientists) for many of the objects, along with his ever-present humor. Very interesting was his information on Mira Type stars. Steve will have a list of objects for next month's viewing posted on the CEC web-site as well as links and information on this month's objects. If you have suggestions, Steve welcomes them and can be contacted at [sbieger@bellsouth.net](mailto:sbieger@bellsouth.net).

### FEATURED PROGRAM:

Larry Owens presented a superb program revealing all of the secrets the best imagers use to get those stunning images of the planets. From acquiring images with popular "WebCam" cameras from Philips and Celestron, to detailed processing techniques using RegiStax and PhotoShop, he described the best of how to, including how to determine the best frame size and rates. Then it was time for a hands on lab. Everyone got a chance to use one of many desktop computers (or his/her own notebook computer) to try his/her hand at processing Mars AVI files in an interactive workshop format. Mars won't be this close again until 2018! We are just past opposition, there is still time, so don't miss your chance to get some great images. You may have missed his program, but you can see his presentation here: [http://www.atlantaastronomy.org/CEWMA/images/planet\\_image\\_wkshop.pdf](http://www.atlantaastronomy.org/CEWMA/images/planet_image_wkshop.pdf)

### OBSERVING SESSION:

It looked good for some observing, so about a dozen folks took advantage of it.

### Future CEC Meetings:

December 3, 2005 - TIME CHANGE TO 5:00 PM SHARP until 6:30 PM (closer to dinner time) at the Charlie Elliott Visitor's Center.

- Astronomy Current Events - Clevis Jones

- What's Up Tonight - Steve Bieger

Feature : A POTLUCK DINNER, as in food, is scheduled - Bring something good and let's eat :-)

*Continued on next page*

Observing. Everyone is invited to the Charlie Elliott observing field after the meeting for an evening of viewing and imaging. PLEASE check the CEC website for the most current meeting information! The web site address is <http://www.atlantaastronomy.org/CEWMA/>

The 2006 Charlie Elliott Chapter meeting schedule is as follows: Jan 21, Feb 18, Mar 25, Apr 22, May 20, Jun 17, Jul 15, Aug 19, Sep 16, Oct 14, Nov 11, Dec 09. Any changes will be listed on the CEC Web site <http://www.atlantaastronomy.org/CEWMA/>

## Georgia Astronomy in State Parks (GASP) Events

Here are the currently scheduled upcoming GASP events:

March 25th - Unicoi St Park.

September 2nd - FDR State Park (Labor Day Weekend)

For more information about these events, contact Joanne Cirincione at [Starrynights@AtlantaAstronomy.org](mailto:Starrynights@AtlantaAstronomy.org).



*The GASP volunteers at FDR State Park on Labor Day weekend 2004 - From left to right: Joanne Cirincione, Keith Burns, Harold and Claudia Champ with Ginger, Peter Macumber, Sharon Carruthers, Tom Faber, Kat Sarbell, and Holly and John Ritger.*

## Next AAC Board Meeting

The next Board Meeting of the Atlanta Astronomy Club will be on Sunday, December 11th at 5:00PM at Bradford Map, Globe & Telescopes, 300 Hammond Dr, Sandy Springs.

## Atlanta Astronomy Club Website

While this newsletter is the official information source for the Atlanta Astronomy Club, it is only up to date the day it is printed. So if you want more up to date information, go to our club's website. The website contains pictures, directions, membership applications, events updates (when available) and other information. <http://www.atlantaastronomy.org>

The **Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.**, the South's largest and oldest astronomical society, meets at **8:00 P.M.** on the third Friday of each month at Emory University's White Hall or occasionally at other locations or times. Membership is open to all. Membership fees are **\$30** for a family or single person membership. College Students membership fee is **\$15**. These fees are for a one year membership.

Magazine subscriptions to *Sky & Telescope* or *Astronomy* can be purchased through the club for a reduced rate. The fees are **\$33** for Sky & Telescope and **\$34** for Astronomy. Renewal forms will be sent to you by the magazines. Send the renewal form along with your check to the Atlanta Astronomy Club treasurer.

**The Club address:** Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc., P.O. Box 76155, Atlanta, GA 30358-1155.

Atlanta Astronomy Club Hot Line: Timely information on the night sky and astronomy in the Atlanta area. Call **770-621-2661**.

AAC Web Page: <http://www.AtlantaAstronomy.Org>

Send suggestions, comments, or ideas about the website to [webmaster@AtlantaAstronomy.org](mailto:webmaster@AtlantaAstronomy.org). Also send information on upcoming observing events, meetings, and other events to the webmaster.

## AAC Contacts

**President:** Philip Sacco 404-296-6332  
[president@atlantaastronomy.org](mailto:president@atlantaastronomy.org)

**Program Chair:** Keith Burns 770-427-1475  
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**Observing Chair:** Daniel Herron [observing@atlantaastronomy.org](mailto:observing@atlantaastronomy.org)

**Corresponding Secretary:** Kat Sarbell 404-352-0652  
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**Treasurer:** Sharon Carruthers [Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org](mailto:Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org)

**Recording Secretary:** Art Russell  
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**Board Chair:** Tom Crowley 404-233-6886 [crowleytj@hotmail.com](mailto:crowleytj@hotmail.com)

**Board:** Tom Faber 770-923-6832 [tfaber@america.net](mailto:tfaber@america.net)

**Board:** Chris Hetlage 770-242-6584 [chrishet@comcast.net](mailto:chrishet@comcast.net)

**Board:** Larry Owens [planetographer@comcast.com](mailto:planetographer@comcast.com)

**Board:** Ken Poshedly 678-516-1366 [poshedly@bellsouth.net](mailto:poshedly@bellsouth.net)

**Board/ALCOR:** Art Zorka 404-633-8822 (H) 404-247-2474 (C)  
[star.myth@juno.com](mailto:star.myth@juno.com)

**Elliott Chapter Director:** Larry Owens  
[planetographer@comcast.com](mailto:planetographer@comcast.com)

**Elliott Observing Supervisor:** Steve Bieger - Contact Info TBA

**Elliott Recording Secretary:** Clevis Jones  
[cjones@aaahawk.com](mailto:cjones@aaahawk.com)

**Elliott Coordinator:** Alesia Rast [Alesia\\_Rast@mail.dnr.state.ga.us](mailto:Alesia_Rast@mail.dnr.state.ga.us)

**Webmaster Charlie Elliott:** Larry Owens  
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**The Telescope Workshop:** Dan Llewellyn 404-735-9661 or 404-633-7562  
[zoser@mindspring.com](mailto:zoser@mindspring.com)

**Georgia Astronomy in State Parks:** Joanne Cirincione 404-824-4751  
[starrynights@AtlantaAstronomy.org](mailto:starrynights@AtlantaAstronomy.org)

**Light Trespass:** Marc Sandberg 404-531-4227  
[sandberg235@earthlink.net](mailto:sandberg235@earthlink.net)

**AL Observing Programs Assistance:** Keith Burns 770-427-1475  
[Keith\\_B@bellsouth.net](mailto:Keith_B@bellsouth.net)

**PSSG Chairman:** Peter Macumber [pmacumber@nightsky.org](mailto:pmacumber@nightsky.org)  
**Co-Chair:** Joanne Cirincione [starrynights@AtlantaAstronomy.org](mailto:starrynights@AtlantaAstronomy.org)

**Sidewalk Astronomy:** Mark Banks 404-257-2766  
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**Woodruff Observ. Coordinator:** John Lentini 770-984-0175  
[johnlentini@yahoo.com](mailto:johnlentini@yahoo.com)

**Webmaster Atlanta Astronomy:** Peter Macumber 770-941-4640  
[pmacumber@nightsky.org](mailto:pmacumber@nightsky.org)

## Directions to White Hall at Emory

Meeting Location Information:

Turn onto Dowman Drive from North Decatur Road at the five way intersection (across from Everybody's Pizza). White Hall is located on the right across from the new Science & Math building. Parking is available along Dowman Drive on both sides of the road. There is also a gated parking lot on the left behind the Admissions Building. After 6PM there is no fee to park there. For more detailed directions on how to get to Emory University, visit [www.atlantaastronomy.org](http://www.atlantaastronomy.org).



## Calendar by Tom Faber (All times EST unless noted)

December 3rd, Saturday: DSO at Woodruff BSC. Contact Daniel Herron for details.  
December 4th, Sunday: Moon near Venus.  
December 7th, Wednesday: Earliest Sunset (~5:27 PM EST at Atlanta)  
December 8th, Thursday: Moon First Quarter.  
December 9th, Friday: Bradley Observatory Open House, 8PM, Agnes Scott College, "Medical Astrology and the Usefulness of Astronomy in Europe," Mike Lynn (Agnes Scott College)  
December 10th, Saturday: AAC Christmas Pot Luck Dinner, 6:30PM at Bradley Observatory, Agnes Scott College.  
December 11th, Sunday: Board Meeting, 5PM, Bradford Map Store. Moon near Mars.  
December 12th, Monday: Mercury Western Elongation.  
December 13th, Tuesday: Geminids Meteors.  
December 15th, Thursday: Full Moon.  
December 16th, Friday: Pluto Conjunction with Sun.  
December 21st, Wednesday: Solstice 1:35PM.  
December 23rd, Friday: Moon Last Quarter, Ursid Meteors.  
December 25th, Sunday: **Merry Christmas!** Moon occults Spica.  
December 31st, Saturday: New Moon. Leap Second inserted after 06:59:59PM (23:59:59UT ).  
January 1st, Sunday: Moon near Venus.  
January 3rd, Tuesday: Quadrantids Meteors.  
January 4th, Wednesday: Earth at Perihelion. Latest Sunrise (~7:42 AM EST at Atlanta).  
January 6th, Friday: Moon First Quarter.  
January 9th, Monday: Moon occults M45.  
January 13th, Friday: Venus Inferior Conjunction.  
January 14th, Saturday: Full Moon.  
January 20th, Friday: AAC Meeting at White Hall, 8PM, Emory University.  
January 22th, Sunday: Moon Last Quarter.  
January 26th, Thursday: Mercury Superior Conjunction.

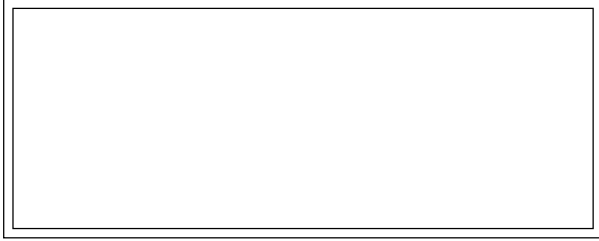
## Atlanta Astronomy Club Listserve

Subscribe to the Atlanta Astronomy Club Mailing List: The name of the list is: AstroAtlanta. The address for messages is: [AstroAtlanta@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AstroAtlanta@yahoogroups.com) . To add a subscription, send a message to: [AstroAtlanta-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AstroAtlanta-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) . This list is owned by Lenny Abbey.

### Focal Point Deadline and Info

Please send articles, pictures, and drawings in electronic format on anything astronomy related to [Kat Sarbell at focalpoint@atlantaastronomy.org](mailto:KatSarbell@focalpoint@atlantaastronomy.org). You can submit articles anytime up and including the deadline date. **The deadline for January is Thursday, December 29 at 4pm. Submissions will no longer be accepted after the deadline.**

FIRST CLASS



Newsletter of The Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.



FROM: Kat Sarbell  
2025 Peachtree Road, Apt #408  
Atlanta, GA 30309

We're here to help! Here's how to reach us:

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Atlanta, GA 30358-1155