

The Focal Point

The Atlanta Astronomy Club
Established 1947
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Editor: Tom Faber

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November General Meeting

by Keith "Kosmic Kow" Burns, AAC President

The November meeting of the Atlanta Astronomy Club will be held on November 14th. Location is room 207 of White Hall on the Emory University Campus. Directions to Emory are at the bottom of this article and also on our website. Meeting starts at 8PM with limited commercial interruptions. There will be a business meeting that will include announcements of up coming events and club happenings. There will be couple of short programs. Then comes the main event of the evening. Our featured speaker is AAC President Keith Burns.

The Talk

Keith will present part one of a program entitled "The Wonders of the Giants." For those who wonder, this is a program about the two giants of the solar system. Jupiter and Saturn are the "big dogs" on the block when it comes to planets in our solar system. This is a two part series. Part 1, about Jupiter, this month and part 2, about Saturn, next month.



This is a picture and music talk. So this is a talk without talk. Huh, What? Similar in the style to the Mars program presented last December, but more in the way of science this time. The Over Productive Imagination Productions staff has gone into over drive on this one. Come and enjoy. No Slim Whitman this time. No really hideous math equations or graphs either - I promise!

Speaker Biography

Keith is from McHenry County Illinois. In 1979, Keith's father decided it was not fun to spend winters in Illinois anymore, so the family moved

south to the much warmer climes of Marietta, Georgia. Keith attended Wheeler High School and College at Kennesaw College. First pursuing a career in weather forecast but decided the pay and the hours were not worth it. He decided to go for a career in computer programming but soon was bored with all the business classes, and then moved on to a career in home building.



Keith has always had an interest in sky watching. This included weather observing, sky imaging, and an interest in astronomy that was awoken years later, in 1991, thanks to his long time friend Jonathan Cory. Besides astronomy, Keith enjoys camping, hiking, artistic sketching, woodworking, imaging nature and the sky.

Keith originally joined the Astronomical Society of the Atlantic in 1991 and left in 1994 to start his own observing group with several fellow club members. After a few years, the Rockmart group as they were called became members of the Atlanta Astronomy Club in 1996. He spent a year as Observing Chairman. Not to be out done, he was the editor of the Club's newsletter for 4 years. Keith went on to become the Program Chairman for the 3½ years. Keith is currently serving as the AAC president.

Always having an artistic way of looking at things, Keith is currently pursuing a business venture in creating power points for money. Perhaps someday he will even get paid for doing this. Known as, Over Productive Imaginations Productions, it is anything but normal in its style. You have to experience it to understand. For those who have, I need not explain anymore.

His early instruments of choice were a pair of 7 X 35 binoculars and a pair 8 X 56 binoculars, which he still has. The current lineup of telescopes includes a 4-¼ inch Astroscan, a 10 inch XT10 IntelliScope Dobsonian and a 13 inch Computerized Dobsonian.

Directions to Emory and Parking

Emory University is in the process of making improvements to the parking and roads. So for the next year, we will have to endure road construction plus the closing of some of our favorite parking spots. For now, the best places to park are the Peavine Parking Deck and the Fishburne Parking Deck. Fishburne Parking Deck is located on Fishburne Drive. When driving on N. Decatur Rd, turn onto Dowman Drive (Dowman is now a one-way road into the campus now from North Decatur Road. Exit either by Oxford Road or Fishburne Drive) and then

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right on Fishburne Drive. You can also access Fishburne Drive from Clifton Road southbound on right before the N. Decatur Rd intersection. Note the Fishburne Parking deck is actually accessible from Fishburne Lane. When driving on Fishburne Drive, watch for the parking lot signs. The parking deck is located behind the Rich Building.

The Peavine parking deck is accessible from North Decatur Road. Take N. Decatur Rd to Oxford Road. Oxford is accessible from N. Decatur Road at two spots. If you are traveling east on North Decatur, then turn right onto Oxford. If traveling west, turn left onto Oxford. Take Oxford Road to the back entrance of Emory and turn onto Eagle Row. Take that to the Peavine parking deck. Note Peavine is across the street from the running track. You can also access Peavine from Clifton Road. Take Clifton south from Briarcliff Road. Turn right onto Asbury Circle. Asbury Circle changes names to Eagle Row. Parking deck will be on right side of road.

Upcoming Meetings

December 13th (Saturday), Christmas Dinner and New Planetarium Show. Titled "The Wonders of the Giants, Part 2" a Production of Over

October General Meeting Minutes

by Richard Jakiel, AAC Recording Secretary

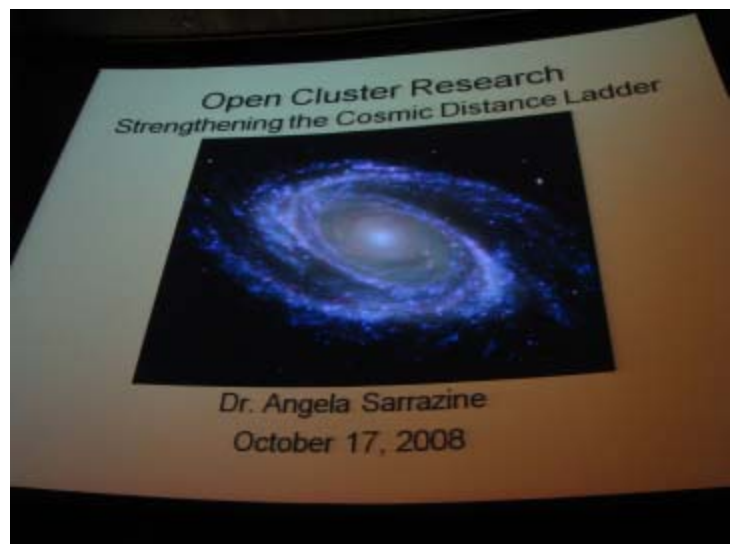
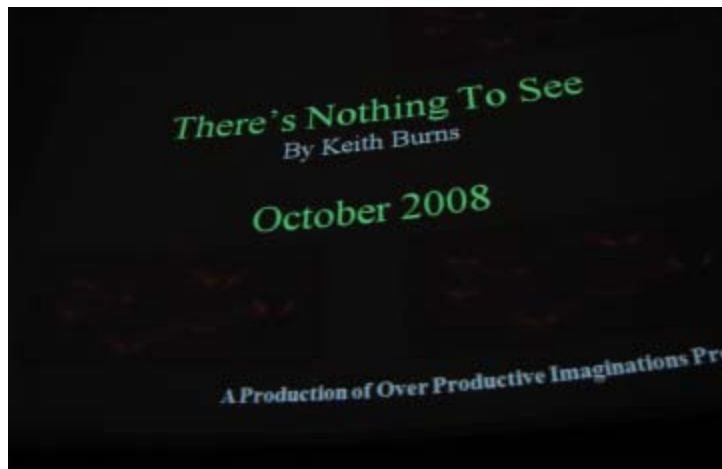
Meeting photos by Tom Faber

The October 17th General Meeting of the AAC started at promptly 8 PM at Emory's White Hall with president Keith Burns (photo top - left) presiding. Nearly 35 members and guests were in attendance. After general introductions and chatting with guests, Keith started off the evening by going over some of the upcoming sidewalk astronomy and GASP events. On top of the list was the November 8th GASP event at Redtop Mountain State Park.

Observing Chair David Lumpkin (photo right) discussed the upcoming Dark Sky Observing sessions (DSOs) and beginner orientations for the rest of the year. Upcoming DSO locations include DAV and Mentone; while on November 15th there will be a Beginner's Orientation at Villa Rica starting at 4 PM.



Keith's mini-observing program "There's Nothing to See" (photo below) was a bit different from the usual. This time around it was an 'eerie' nighttime photo essay of the 2008 Peach State Star Gaze that including wandering Rusty zombies, weird telescopes, sleeping Kats, eerie red illuminated attendees and wide-field images of the night sky.



Marc Sandberg introduced the evening's main speaker - Dr. Angela Sarrazine of Fernbank Science Center (top photo - right). Her presentation dealt with the use of open star clusters as a method to strengthen the cosmic distance ladder (photo above). She showed a number of images of both high tech equipment and a number of pretty open clusters. Her main focus was determining the spectra of stars of the clusters M35 and NGC 2420 (both in Gemini) and using that data to determine both the age and luminosity of those objects. At the end of the presentation, she made a special request for amateur images (color) of selected open star clusters. Attention Astro-imagers! If you would like to have your work displayed in a future program at Fernbank - stay tuned for updates in the FP and in several AAC-based Yahoo groups.

After the meeting, many members headed off to Athens Pizza for food, drink and more "meeting after the meeting" socializing.

Charlie Elliott Chapter Meeting Minutes

by Ken Poshedly, CE Recording Secretary

(Minutes have been edited for space constraints.)

In the absence of CE chapter Director Theo Ramakers, CE chapter Observing Supervisor Jonathan Wood called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. September 27 and thanked all for their contributions to the evening's pot luck dinner this evening. There were with 17 members and guests present at the start of the meeting, with a total of 23 members and guests present by the end of the meeting. CE chapter Director Theo Ramakers was out of town and not able to attend.

* A birthday celebration was held for Angus Owens and Mary Owens (birthdays Oct. 4 & 12), the parents of CEWMA member and former chapter director Larry Owens; the elder Mr. Owens has reached the milestone of 90 years old, while Mrs. Owens is now age 86. The elder Mr. Owens attends our CEWMA meetings with Larry. Birthday cake was served throughout the evening (Photo below).



* Discussion was held about shifting back the meeting start time for the October 25 meeting to 4 p.m.; all agreed.

* Jon Wood's "Observing 101" segment included upcoming rise/transit/set times for celestial objects in the coming month.

After a break for dinner, member Stephen Ramsden presented the first part of his solar lecture series, "The History Of Solar Observing". Part 1 described the religious beliefs and lore of early civilization's sometimes mythic relationship with our nearest star up to and including an overview of modern solar observatories and available options for amateurs interested in solar observing and photography. Part 2 - at a later date - deals with solar emissions and the different wavelengths produced by the Sun. Member Clevis Jones handled the "Current Events" segment. Among those in the spotlight were the following:

* The launch on September 25 of China's Shenzhou VII spacecraft carrying three astronauts, and its landing 3 days later.

* The fifth dwarf planet, Haumea, with its moonlets, Namaka and Hi'iaka, the names of which are based in Hawai'ian mythology.

* First image of an extra-solar planet to be imaged.

* Updates on the Mars rovers Spirit and Opportunity; Spirit was at Gusev Crater, while Opportunity had departed from Victoria Crater and was on journey to Endeavour Crater.

* Coverage of the "Jules Verne ATV-1", Europe's first Automated Transfer Vehicle and its departure from the international space station on September 26, after a five-month stay that delivered more than 10,000 pounds of cargo to the complex.

* Movies of past and planned Hubble Space Telescope servicing missions by the space shuttles (More at <http://www.nasa.gov/hubble>).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m. The next meeting of the CE chapter of the AAC will be at 4 p.m., Saturday, October 25.

Charlie Elliott Future Meetings

Future meetings are on: Nov. 29, Dec. 27. For meeting updates and other information please check the CEastronomy website: <http://www.CEastronomy.org>

The Meeting dates for the Charlie Elliott Chapter have now been set for 2009. All meetings are on Saturdays:

Jan 24, Feb 21, Mar 28, Apr 25, May 16 JAKES Day, June 20, July 18, Aug 22, Sept 19, Oct 17, Nov 14, Dec 19

Please note that the March, June, September and December Meetings are our Pot Luck Dinner Meetings. The Events Calendar on the ceastronomy.org website has been updated to reflect these meeting dates. I hope that these dates also can be incorporated in the AAC schedule.

Thanks and Clear Skies, Theo Ramakers

The Astronomical League

As a member of the **Atlanta Astronomy Club** you are automatically also a member of the **Astronomical League**, a nation wide affiliation of astronomy clubs. Membership in the AL provides a number of benefits for you. They include:

* You will receive *The Reflector*, the AL's quarterly newsletter.

* You can use the Book Service, through which you can buy astronomy-related books at a 10% discount.

* You can participate in the Astronomical League's Observing Clubs. The Observing Clubs offer encouragement and certificates of accomplishment for demonstrating observing skills with a variety of instruments and objects. These include the Messier Club, Binocular Messier Club, the Herschel 400 Club, the Deep Sky Binocular Club, and many others.

To learn more about the Astronomical League and its benefits for you, visit <http://www.astroleague.org>

Bradley Open House Series 2008-2009 "Astronomy Before Galileo"

Humans have been gazing at the stars since they could look up, and have kept written records about motions in the heavens for millennia. This year, we will explore the rich history of astronomy and astronomical thought that predates Galileo. Our speakers will come from a variety of ancient disciplines including astronomy, architecture, classical studies, history and theology. All talks at 8PM unless noted. See <http://bradley.agnesscott.edu/> for more information.

Fall 2008

November 14 - Amy Lovell (Agnes Scott College) - "Venus and Meso-American Astronomy"

December 12 - Chris De Pree (Agnes Scott College) - "Tycho Brahe and Uraniborg"

Spring 2009

February 13 - Megan Drinkwater (Agnes Scott College) - "Greeks, Romans, and the Stars"

March 20 - W. A. Calder Spring Equinox Concert & Open House

April 10 - "100 Hours of Astronomy" Celebration

May 8 - Bill Brown (Columbia Theological Seminary) - "The Heavens are Telling the Glory of God": The Cosmos According to Ancient Israel



The 2008 Peach State Star Gaze Photo Gallery - Part 1

Photos by Tom Faber unless noted

For the second year the Peach State Star Gaze was held at the Deerlick Astronomy Village near Sharon GA. This year's Peach State ran a whole week from September 28 to October 5th. The weather was great - providing us with nearly a carbon copy of last year's with clear skies every night except one. The temperatures were quite warm early in the week but it cooled off mid week and the weather the rest of the week was nearly ideal. A fascinating line-up of talks began on Wednesday. Speakers included Bill Keel, Don Parker, Charlie Warren, and Ron Buta. Several vendors set up shop on the field to display and sell their wares. On Friday evening we enjoyed cake and ice cream - celebrating the 15th anniversary of the PSSG, and then had a great musical show under the stars by Jonn Serrie. Saturday afternoon brought the door prize drawings with many of the people present winning a wide range of prizes. Congratulations to the PSSG Chairman Peter Macumber, Co-chair Joanne Cirincione, Sharon Carruthers, the PSSG staff, and volunteers for organizing another great Peach State Star Gaze! Many thanks to the PSSG staff that also included Keith Burns, Tom Faber, Kat Sarbell, John and Holly Ritger, Tom and Lynn Crowley, Frank Marchase, and Mark Banks.



Peach State Co-chair Joanne Cirincione (standing) and Holly Ritger prepare signs and handouts.



PSSG Chairman Peter Macumber, and Co-chair Joanne Cirincione.



Photos above and below - The observing field begins to fill up on Sunday, September 28.



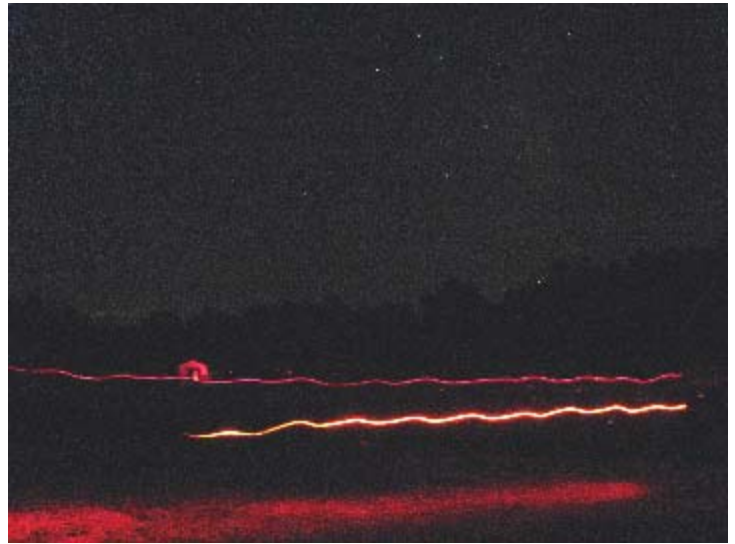
Sharon Carruthers hangs a welcome banner on "Set-Up Saturday."



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Kat Sarbell ready to check in attendees on "Opening Sunday."



Joanne Cirincione (yellow light) and Holly Ritger (red light) walk past Micki's as Sagittarius sets in the southwest.



Micki's Kitchen was a popular nighttime hang-out spot especially on "Brownie Nights" and "Chocolate Chip Cookie Nights!"

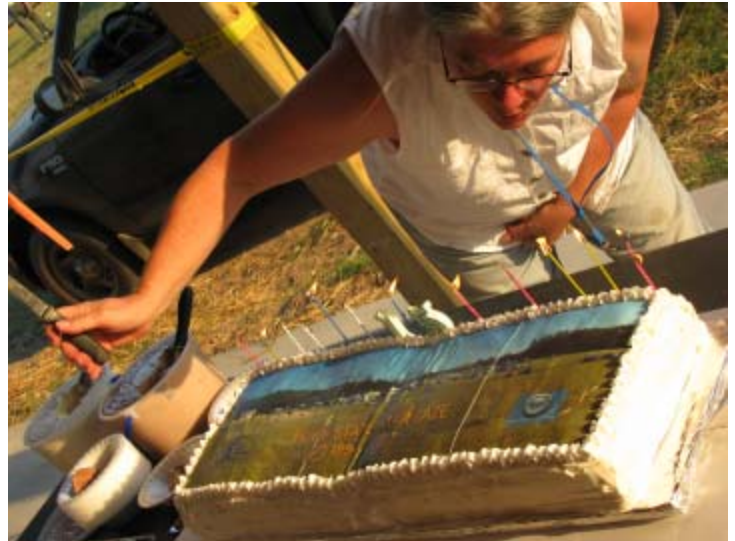


And in the daytime, shade and cold drinks made Micki's a great place to relax and socialize.



A panorama of part of the PSSG field on Friday, October 3rd. Note the club's 24-inch Dob near the left edge of the picture.

Continued on next page



Friday evening featured a celebration of the 15th anniversary of the Peach State with cake and ice cream! The PSSG birthday cake (and cupcakes too) was baked by club treasurer Sharon Carruthers (photo above). The cake displayed a panorama of the field from the 2007 PSSG.

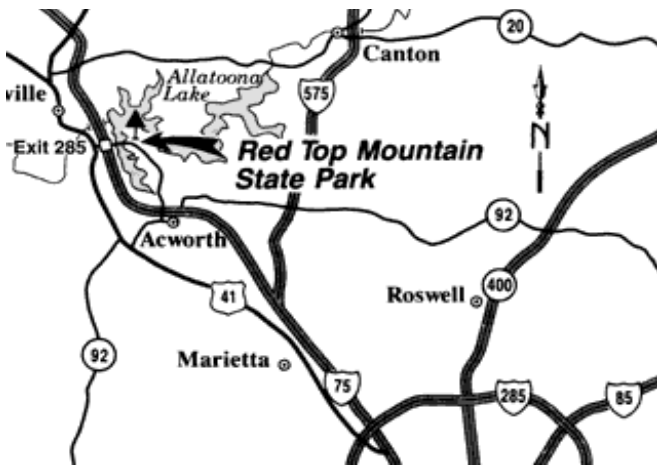


Many types of telescopes were present on the field including large Dobsonians and refractors. Top - Brad Isley (left) with Keith Burns and Brad's Dob. Center - An attendee sets up a Takahasi refractor. Bottom - Tom Crowley with his Dob.



The crescent moon sets on the evening of October 2.

See more photos from the Peach State Star Gaze in next month's *Focal Point* - including the speakers, vendors, and door prize winners!



Georgia Astronomy in State Parks

The following GASP event are currently scheduled:

November 8 - Red Top Mountain St Pk (See Map)

March 21 - Unicoi State Park.

For more information about these events, contact Keith Burns at 770-427-1475 or Keith_B@bellsouth.net.



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. Photo by Holly Ritger.

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 (\$35)** for a family or single person membership. College Students membership fee is **\$15 (\$20)**. These fees are for a one year membership (\$5 per year extra charge to receive the *Focal Point* mailed).

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.

AAC Web Page: <http://www.AtlantaAstronomy.Org>. Send suggestions, comments, or ideas about the website to webmaster@AtlantaAstronomy.org. Also send information on upcoming observing events, meetings, and other events to the webmaster.

AAC Officers and Contacts

President: Keith Burns 770-427-1475 Keith_B@bellsouth.net

Program Chair: Vacant programs@atlantaastronomy.org

Observing Chair: Dave Lumpkin observing@atlantaastronomy.org

Corresponding Secretary: Tom Faber 770-642-4865 focalpoint@atlantaastronomy.org

Treasurer: Sharon Carruthers Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Recording Secretary: Rich Jakiel secretary@atlantaastronomy.org

Board Chair: Don Hall - Contact Info TBA

Board: Mark Banks - Contact Info TBA

Board: William Brannet - Contact Info TBA

Board: Marc Sandberg 404-531-4227 sandberg235@earthlink.net

Board: Larry Wallace - 770-888-3259 Larry@Wallace-Eng.com
ALCOR: Art Zorka 404-633-8822 (H) 404-824-7106 (C) star.myth@juno.com

Elliott Ch. Director: Theo Ramakers 770-464-3777 ramakers@bellsouth.net

Elliott Observing Supervisor: Jonathan Wood 404-374-8750 observing@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Recording Secretary: Ken Poshedly 678-516-1366 poshedly@bellsouth.net

Elliott Coordinator: Alesia Rast Alesia_Rast@mail.dnr.state.ga.us

Elliott Webmaster: Larry Owens 678-234-5399 webmaster@CEastronomy.org

The Telescope Workshop: Dan Llewellyn 404-735-9661 or 404-633-7562 zoser@mindspring.com

Georgia Astronomy in State Parks: Keith Burns 770-427-1475 Keith_B@bellsouth.net

Light Trespass: Marc Sandberg 404-531-4227 sandberg235@earthlink.net

AL Observing Programs Assistance: Keith Burns 770-427-1475 Keith_B@bellsouth.net

PSSG Chairman: Peter Macumber pmacumber@nightsky.org

Co-Chair: Joanne Cirincione starrynights@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Sidewalk Astronomy: Brad Isley sidewalkastronomy@atlantaastronomy.com

Woodruff Observ. Coordinator: Sharon Carruthers Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Webmaster Atlanta Astronomy: Peter Macumber 770-941-4640 pmacumber@nightsky.org

Directions to White Hall at Emory

Our meetings are generally held in a classroom in White Hall. To get to White Hall, turn onto Dowman Drive from North Decatur Road at the five way intersection (across from Everybody's Pizza). White Hall is located across from the new Science & Math building. Parking is available along Dowman Drive on both sides of the road. **The parking lot on the left behind the Admissions Building may be closed.** Additional parking is available in two parking decks near White Hall. For maps to the decks see <http://map.emory.edu>. For more detailed directions to Emory University, visit www.atlantaastronomy.org or go to the Emory web site.

Calendar by Tom Faber (Times EST unless noted)

November 2th, Sunday: Daylight Savings Time Ends at 2AM.
November 3rd, Monday: Moon near Jupiter.
November 5th, Wednesday: Moon First Quarter. Southern Taurid Meteors.
November 12th, Wednesday: Northern Taurid Meteors.
November 13th, Thursday: Full Moon.
November 14th, Friday: **AAC Meeting at White Hall, 8PM, Emory University.**
November 15th, Saturday: **Telescope & Instr Workshop - Contact Sharon Carruthers, Beginner's Orientation at Villa Rica - contact Dave Lumpkin for details.**
November 17th, Monday: Leonids Meteors.
November 19th, Wednesday: Moon Last Quarter.
November 21st, Friday: **Focal Point Deadline.** Moon near Saturn.
November 27th, Thursday: New Moon.
November 29th, Saturday: **CEC Meeting - See pg 3 for details.**
November 30th, Sunday: Moon near Venus and Jupiter.
December 5th, Friday: Moon First Quarter. Mars Superior Conjunction.
December 7th, Sunday: Earliest Sunset (~5:27 PM at Atlanta).
December 12th, Friday: Full Moon. Bradley Observatory Open House, 8PM. See pg 3 for details.
December 13th, Saturday: **AAC Christmas Potluck Dinner and Program at Bradley Observatory, Agnes Scott College - Time TBA.**
December 14th, Sunday: Geminid Meteors.
December 19th, Friday: **Focal Point Deadline.** Moon Last Quarter.
December 21st, Sunday: Solstice at 7:04AM.
December 22nd, Monday: Ursid Meteors.
December 27th, Saturday: **CEC Meeting - See pg 3 for details.** New Moon.
December 28th, Sunday: Moon near Mercury.
December 29th, Monday: Moon near Mercury and Jupiter.
December 30th, Tuesday: Venus 2° south of Jupiter.

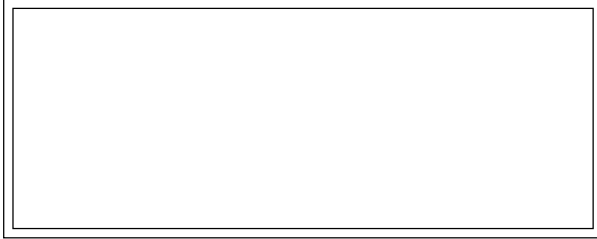
Atlanta Astronomy Club Listserv

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

Focal Point Deadline and Submission Information

Please send articles, pictures, and drawings in electronic format on anything astronomy related to Tom Faber at focalpoint@atlantaastronomy.org. Please send images separate from articles, not embedded in them. Articles are preferred as plain text files but Word documents are okay. You can submit articles anytime up to and including the deadline date. **The November deadline is Friday, November 21st at 4:00 PM. Submissions will not be accepted after the deadline.**

FIRST CLASS



Newsletter of The Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.



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

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