The Focal Point

The Atlanta Astronomy Club
Established 1947
December 2012

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Editor: Tom Faber

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December Meeting and Potluck Dinner

Once again, it is time to plan for our "Yummiest Meeting of the Year" - our Holiday Potluck! This year it will be on **Saturday,** December 8th in the Parlor Room, at the Hitson Center, in the Sandy Springs Methodist Church, 86 Mt Vernon Hwy, NE, Sandy Springs, GA 30328 (see map on right).

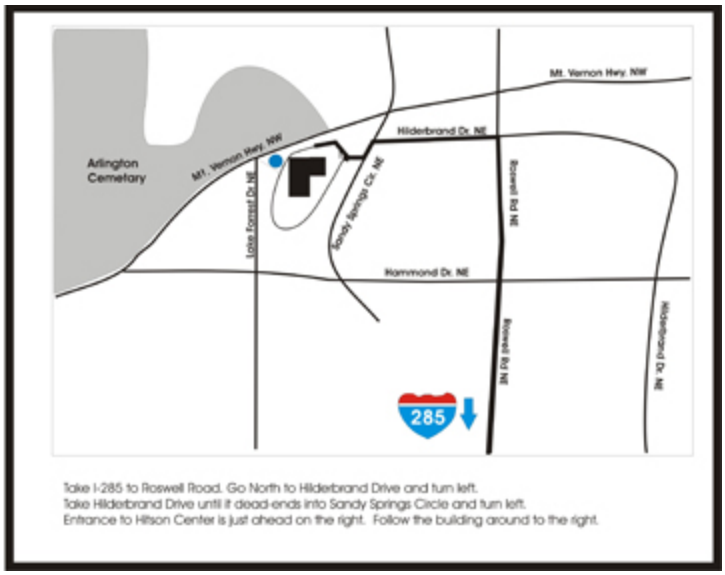
We will start serving dinner at 6:30PM and it will run until 8PM, followed by our guest speaker, Dr. Peter Ludovice of Georgia Tech.

The AAC will provide the main courses of turkey and ham, and also provide coffee, tea, and soft drinks. We ask for contributions of appetizers, side dishes, or desserts - items that will provide 6-8 servings. Family and ethnic favorite dishes are especially welcome!

PLEASE let me know the dish you are bringing by email at: Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org or phone at 770-941-4640 so I can keep track of what is being brought and what we still need. I will update the list on the AstroList regularly. (You non-cooks may consider bringing things that don't need cooking, such as cheese and crackers, chips and dip, dinner rolls, pickles or mixed salads.)

The Program:

Our December program will be about the humorous aspects of being a science nerd. Dr. Pete Ludovice will take us on a journey to "The Dork Side". This will be a very entertaining program, but you may have to explain some of the jokes to your "non scientist" family & friends. If you fall asleep during this program you will miss out on the fun, and may be the subject of a joke.



The AAC's meeting location at the Hitson Center in Sandy Springs.

Our Speaker:

Dr. Peter Ludovice earned a Ph. D. from M.I.T. and performed postdoctoral studies at NASA & IBM as well as other institutions. He is now an Associate Professor in the School of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering at Georgia Tech. Needless to say, he is well qualified to speak on the subject. For more information about Dr. Pete check his web site www.drpetecomedy.com

Future Programs:

In order to keep our programs interesting and relevant I need your help. Please let me know (Mark Banks at: programs@atlantaastronomy.org) of any subjects you may be interested in for a future program. Also, if you or someone you know would like to do a program for us please contact me.

Upcoming AAC Meetings:

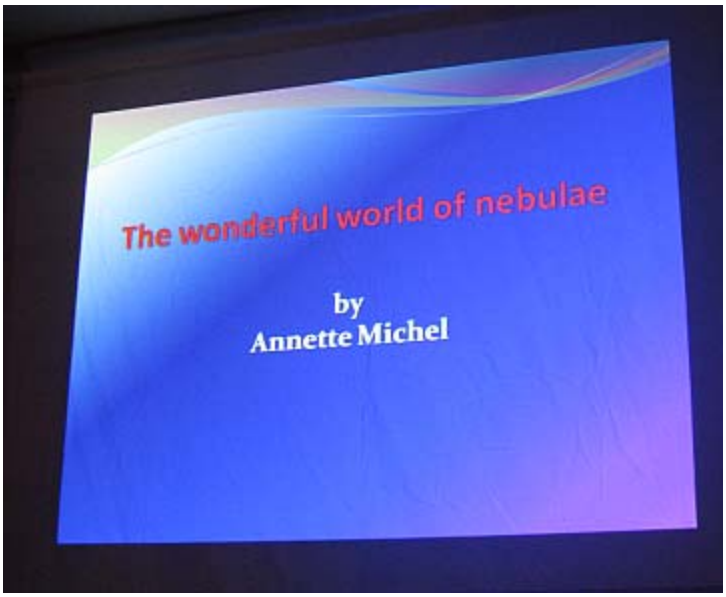
Our meetings will usually be held on the 3rd Friday of the month. Future meeting dates are Jan 18, Feb 15, Mar 15, and Apr 19 (3rd Friday of each month). Meetings will be held at the Parlor Room of the Hitson Center starting at 8PM unless noted otherwise.

November AAC Meeting

Photos by Tom Faber

The November meeting of the Atlanta Astronomy Club was held on the 16th starting at 8PM at the Hitson Center with about 30 members and guests present. Our guest speaker was Annette Michel (photo bottom) who is a student at Georgia State University. Annette gave a very informative talk about nebula - Emission nebula, planetary nebula, dark nebula (photo right). After Annette's talk club officers presented information on club activities and upcoming events.

The AAC annual holiday meeting and potluck dinner will be December 8th at the Hitson Center and is always the most social event of the year. Sharon Carruthers will be coordinating this event so we are not stuck with one turkey, one ham and five dozen green bean casseroles. The club will provide main courses of turkey and ham, and drinks. Attendees are asked to bring side dishes, breads, and desserts. Each side dish or dessert should provide 6-8 servings.



The crescent moon setting below a colorful tree outside the Hitson Center prior to the November meeting.

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

CE Chapter Outreach

By Theo Ramakers, Outreach Coordinator

http://ceastronomy.org/tramakers

Chapter Outreach November 2012:

We had one cancellation this month, but we did 5 events for scouts and schools. Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center had their first "Becoming an Outdoors Woman" event in which we taught the ladies about the night sky and let them observe what they were told. Grayson Elementary had us back for their Science Night and scouts troop 554 learned a lot about astronomy. The chapter also reached out to the students and parents of Gokuldham Haveli school and seeing what a comet is made up of was great for a lot of students. The outreach during the monthly observing session at the Jon Wood Field gave an opportunity to CE campers and Chamblee Charter school to see some more night sky objects. Over all, a great month for outreach. Thanks to all that did participate.

Bradley Observatory Open Houses

The following are the dates of the Bradley Observatory Open House Lecture Series for the 2012-2013 school year. All Open Houses are on Fridays and begin at 8PM. Lecture topics TBA. See http://legacy.agnesscott.edu/academics/bradleyobservatory for more information.

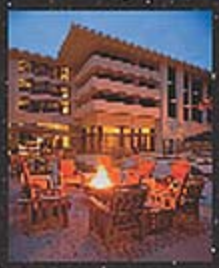
Dec. 14, 2012, Feb. 8, 2013, March 22, 2013 (Spring Equinox Concert), April 12, 2013, May 10, 2013.

ALCON 2013 ATLANTA

July 24-27, 2013 • Atlanta, Georgia
Summer Skies, Southern Hospitality

Location: Fernbank Science Center
Host Organizations: Atlanta Astronomy Club, Astronomical League
Partnering Organization: Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers (ALPO)

Accommodations...
Emory Conference Center Hotel
- Shuttle service between hotel and presentations at Fernbank Science Center, and Agnes Scott College Bradley Observatory for those without transportation
- Be sure to ask for the Astronomical League rate. 1-800-933-6679, emoryconferencecente-px.trvlclick.com
- Saturday night's Awards Banquet



Primary Venue: Fernbank Science Center
- Talks held in 70ft planetarium
- Evening shows with Zeiss Mark V projector coupled with various special effects projector
- 0.9 meter Cassegrain reflector in the Ralph Buice Memorial Observatory
- Vendor displays

Excursions around Atlanta
Agnes Scott College Bradley Observatory
- Friday night's Star BQ
- Delafield Planetarium
- 30 inch Lewis H. Beck telescope Atlanta Astronomy Club's Villa Rica Observatory
- Full size roll-off roof observatory
- 20 inch Newtonian reflector

Atlanta Attractions
World of Coca-Cola
Georgia Aquarium
Zoo Atlanta
Inside CNN
Atlanta Botanical Garden
Olympic Games venues

Check www.astroleague.org for more information as it becomes available.

The 2012 PSSG Photo Gallery - Part 2

Here are more photos from the 2012 Peach State Star Gaze. See you in 2013 for the 20th anniversary Peach State!! Photos by Tom Faber unless otherwise noted.

Relaxing and waiting for the night. Photo by Frank Marchese.

Right photo: Richard Jakiel doing the shot put with a 10kg meteorite!

Left photo: Theo Ramakers talk about solar imaging.

Middle Left: Richard Jakiel's talk about lunar geology.

Below: Lining up at Micki's Kitchen.

Theo explains a hydrogen alpha solar scope. Photo by Frank Marchese.

Continued on next page

Top row (l-r): Damiem Peach presents a talk about Jupiter, Brian Combs and Damien Peach, M45. Photos by Frank Marchese.

Second row (l-r): Dan Llewellyn introduces Brian Combs (photo by Frank Marchese), Dolores Hill speaks about the proposed OSIRIS-REx asteroid mission, Pixie Bruner presented a talk about women astronomers (photos by Tom Faber).

Left: Kat Sarbell and Richard Jackiel check out the metorites for sale. Photo by Tom Faber.

Below: The door prize drawing Saturday afternoon. Photos by Frank Marchese.

Bottom: Sharon Carruthers at Michael Boni's observatory at DAV. Photo by Kat Sarbell.

Continued on next page

The ladies' luncheon at the British American Sporting Club south of Washington was on Thursday. Photo by Kat Sarbell.

Sharon Carruthers, PSSG Chair Peter Macumber, and Co-Chair Joanne Cirincione at the end of another great Peach State!

The **Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc**., one of the South's largest and oldest astronomical society, meets at **8:00 P.M.** on the 3rd Friday of each month in the Parlor Room - Hitson Center in Sandy Springs, or occasionally at other locations or times. Membership fees are **$30 ($42)** for a family or single person membership. College Students membership fee is **$15 ($27)**. These fees are for a one year membership ($12 per year extra charge to receive a printed *Focal Point* by mail).

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.

Atlanta Astronomy Club Online

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 and other information. http://www.atlantaastronomy.org You can also follow the AAC on Facebook by joining the AAC group, and on Twitter at http://twitter.com/atlastro.

AAC Officers and Contacts

President: Richard Jakiel President@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Program Chair: Mark Banks Programs@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Observing Chair/BoD Chair: Daniel Herron Observing@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Corresponding Secretary: Tom Faber Focalpoint@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Treasurer: Sharon Carruthers Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Recording Secretary: Pixie Bruner Secretary@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Board Chair: Daniel Herron, Observing@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Board: Brigitte Fessele, Contact info TBA

Board: David Lumpkin, Contact info TBA

Board: Steve Phillips sandsphillips@att.net

ALCor: Open - President@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Elliott Chapter Director: Larry Owens director@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Observing Supervisor: John Towne observing@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Recording Secretary: Marie Lott mtlott@comcast.net

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

Elliott Webmaster: Theo Ramakers 770-788-0843 webmaster@CEastronomy.org

Elliott Outreach Coordinator: Theo Ramakers 770-788-0843 outreach@ceastronomy.org

Georgia Astronomy in State Parks: Sharon Carruthers Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org

PSSG Chairman: Peter Macumber pmacumber@nightsky.org

PSSG Co-Chair: Joanne Cirincione starrynights@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Sidewalk Astronomy: Brad Isley sidewalkastronomy@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Light Tresspass: Open - Contact Mark Banks if you would like to volunteer for this position

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

AAC Webmaster: Daniel Herron, Observing@AtlantaAstronomy.org

ATLANTA ASTRONOMY CLUB EST. 1947

The Focal Point

Newsletter of The Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.

FROM:
Tom Faber
2206 Treeridge Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30022

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

Atlanta Astronomy Club
P.O. Box 76155
Atlanta, GA 30358-1155
www.atlantaastronomy.org
On Twitter at http://twitter.com/atlastro

www.beetagg.com

FIRST CLASS

Calendar by Tom Faber (Times EDT/EST unless noted)

AAC Events are listed in BOLD

Dec 2nd, Sunday: Jupiter at Opposition.

Dec 6th, Thursday: Moon Last Quarter.

Dec 10 & 11th, Monday, Tuesday: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Saturn grouping in morning sky.

Dec 13th, Thursday: New Moon. Geminid Meteors.

Dec 8th, Saturday: **AAC Christmas Potluck/Meeting, 6PM.** Earliest Sunset in Atlanta: ~5:27PM.

Dec 15th, Saturday: **CE Chapter Meeting, 3 PM. DSO at Deerlick Astronomy Village.**

Dec 20th, Thursday: Moon First Quarter.

Dec 21st, Wednesday: Winter Solstice at 6:12 EST.

Dec 25th, Tuesday: Moon near Jupiter in evening sky.

Dec 28th, Friday: Full Moon.

Jan 2nd, Wednesday: Earth at Perihelion.

Jan 4th, Friday: Latest Sunrise in Atlanta: ~7:42 AM.

Jan 5th, Saturday: Moon Last Quarter.

Jan 11th, Friday: New Moon.

Jan 12th, Saturday: **CE Chapter Meeting, 3 PM.**

Jan 18th, Friday: **AAC Meeting, 8PM.** Moon First Quarter.

Jan 26th, Saturday: Full Moon.

Feb 3rd, Sunday: Moon Last Quarter.

Feb 10th, Sunday: New Moon.

Feb 15th, Friday: **AAC Meeting, 8PM.**

Feb 17th, Sunday: Moon First Quarter.

For more event listings see the calendar at www.atlantaastronomy.org

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, space, or sky 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 or PDF's are okay. You can submit articles anytime up to the deadline. **The deadline for January is Friday, December 28th. Submissions after the deadline will go in the following issue**.