

The Focal Point

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The Atlanta Astronomy Club
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Editor: Tom Faber

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December General Meeting & Potluck

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 14th starting at 6PM. We will start setting up around 5:30PM and have dinner from about 6-8PM. Our meeting with Rod Mollise’s talk will begin at 8PM. Our December meeting & potluck will take place at the Atlanta Freethought Society (AFS) building in Smyrna.



The Potluck Dinner

The AAC will provide turkey and ham, coffee & drinks and ask that you bring sides and desserts. Family & ethnic favorites are especially welcome. Contact me (Sharon) with your chosen dish at: Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org or 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 & crackers, chips & dips, dinner rolls, pickles or mixed salads.). Suggested dishes are, but don’t let my suggestions limit you:

APPETIZERS: Chips & Dip, Pretzels, Cheese & Crackers, Veggie Tray

SIDES: Pickles, Buns & Rolls, Relish Tray, DinnerRolls

VEGGIE SIDES: Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes, Green Bean Casserole, Corn, Peas, Carrots, Tossed Salad, Jelled Salad, Coleslaw.

DESSERTS: Cookies, Squares, Cake, Pies, Puddings

Thank You,

Sharon Carruthers,

Atlanta Astronomy Club

The Program

Rod will present a talk entitled “Expanding Your Final Frontier with Astro Video”. The talk will cover imaging with video cameras and especially the Mallincams.

Our Speaker

“Uncle” Rod Mollise, a Contributing Editor at *Sky and Telescope* magazine, is familiar to amateur astronomers as the author of numerous books and magazine articles on every aspect of astronomy, amateur and professional. He is most well known, however, for his books on Schmidt Cassegrain Telescopes, SCTs, and especially his last one, *Choosing and Using a New CAT* (Springer), which has become the standard reference for these instruments.

Rod’s previous book, *The Urban Astronomer’s Guide* has also been popular. That’s no surprise, since it is designed to help the majority of amateurs who must observe from light polluted urban and suburban sites see deep sky wonders.

In addition to *Sky and Telescope* and his books, Rod’s writing can be found in *Sky and Telescope’s SKYWATCH*, *Astronomy Technology Today*, and *Amateur Astronomy Magazine*. Look for him on numerous online forums, too; especially his popular blog, *Uncle Rod’s Astro Blog*.

Somehow, Rod also finds time to teach astronomy to undergraduates at the University of South Alabama in Mobile.

Rod Mollise has been observing the night sky since he received his first telescope, an humble 3-inch Tasco Newtonian, in 1965. When he’s not on the road speaking at star parties and astronomy club meetings, he shares a rambling old Victorian home in Mobile’s Garden District, “Chaos Manor South,” with his wonderful wife, Miss Dorothy, two cats and, at last count, twelve telescopes.

Future Meetings

Future AAC meetings will be held generally on the 3rd Saturday of each month starting January 18, February 15, and March 15th. Meeting location TBA.



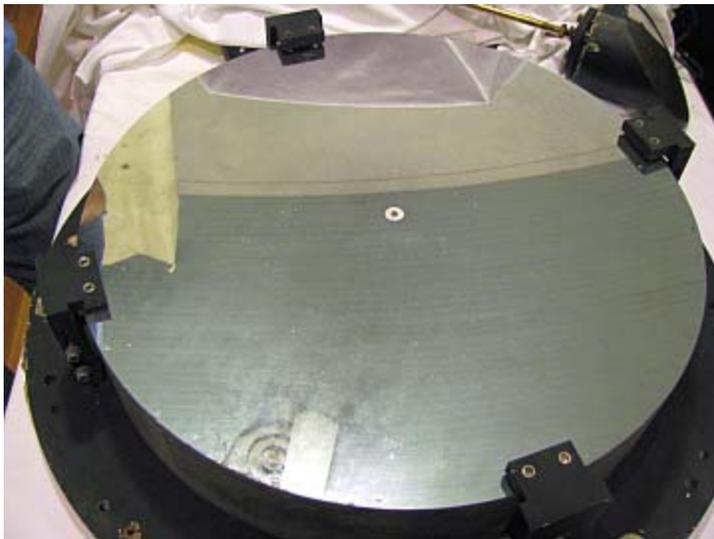
November AAC Meeting Report

By Alan Coffelt, AAC Recording Secretary

Meeting Photos by Tom Faber

The November AAC meeting (photo bottom) was held on Saturday, November 16 starting at 8PM at the Atlanta Freethought Society building. There were 21 members and guests present for the general meeting. Our speaker for the evening was AAC member, Alan Coffelt (photo right, on right). Alan's talk (photo right center) was on software programs and options that planetary imagers can use to improve or automate processing workflow and get something "extra" from their captured AVI files and also make amateur contributions to planetary science. The talk covered topics about using the use of DeTeCt, a Jovian impact detection program, Planetary Imaging PreProcessor (PIPP), batch processing in Registax 6, and creating 3D anaglyphs of planet images with StereoPhoto Maker. All were given 3D glasses and treated to a series of 3D Jupiter images and several from the Astronomy Picture of the Day (APOD) website.

After the talk, club officers presented updates about AAC status, activities, and upcoming events. Don't miss our next meeting and annual holiday potluck dinner at AFS on Saturday, December 14, starting at 6PM.



The primary mirror from the 20-inch reflector at the club's Barber observatory near Villa Rica has been removed for cleaning and possibly recoating by club members Philip Johnson and Mike Shaw. The mirror was brought to the November meeting by Philip.



Red/Blue 3D image of Jupiter by Allan Coffelt. The image is from October 10, 2013 from my backyard in Marietta and features Ganymede, Io, and Io's shadow. This image requires red/cyan 3D glasses to see the 3D effect.

Charlie Elliott Chapter Outreach

By Theo Ramakers, Outreach Coordinator

<http://ceastronomy.org/tramakers>

November was an active outreach month again for Charlie Elliott Astronomy. Starting with the observing session after the meeting on the 2nd, a nice number of local area residents showed up, as well as attendants of two programs at CEWC. 19 telescopes let everyone see what was up



there. On the 6th we went for the first time to the Lilburn library (photo below) where around 130 participants attended the inside session and outside, because of the high light pollution, had to settle mostly for the moon. Flint Hill (photo right top) was on the agenda for the 4th time this year!! Yes, they love us! This time for a night sky event, and the students and parents were able to observe the Moon, Venus, the Ring Nebula and some star clusters. We also participated in the Girl Scout event in Gwinnett County. Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center had long asked us to participate in their program "Becoming an Outdoors Woman". Frank and Theo put on a 3 1/2 hour afternoon program on astronomy, and in the evening, because it was pretty cloudy, the attendants were able to peek through 4 telescopes at the Moon through a few small gaps in the clouds, and through thin layers of clouds. The Duluth library (photo right center) was again on the agenda for this year and they outdid themselves compared to last year. A whopping 159 attendees took a trip through the Solar System, and listened to the Mars and Curiosity presentation inside the library. Outside they stood patiently in line to take a look through 4 telescopes to see the Moon, Alberio, the ring nebula and a star cluster. This month's outreach closed with Cub Scouts, Pack 705, in Monroe, who



asked us to come and help their scouts earn their belt loops. CEA went and we reviewed and explained all the requirements for the belt loop, in addition, we gave each of the scouts documentation for review the data they needed to know. We also explained how telescopes are set up and how you had to focus. Every scout then had the opportunity to set up a scope (photo above), line it up to Polaris, and point to and focus at the pine needles of a number of trees along the football field, because it was cloudy and the mist was coming in. However they loved it!!

Clear skies!

The Next Charlie Elliott Meeting

Join us for our next meeting at 3:30 p.m., Saturday, December 7th, at the Charlie Elliott Conference Center for our quarterly potluck!

Meeting Agenda - Dinner & a Movie!

We'll be enjoying a good movie, good food, and good company. If you can bring food or help out with the setup or clean up, please contact us on the CEA web page at : <http://ceastronomy.org/blog/home>

Book Review

Jack Fitzmier will present the third in a series of quick and concise book reviews to start our meeting. Check back soon for the December book!

What's Up!

Before we start stuffing our faces, Charlie Elliott Astronomy Observing Supervisor John Town will be talking about What's Up, a short presentation of what you can expect to see in the December Sky.

Sunset Time Alert

When the meeting is indoors, and if the meeting runs extra-long, a "Sunset Time Alert" will be announced. While we'd love for everyone to stay for the entire meeting, we also realize that some folks prefer to leave a bit earlier so as to set up their equipment at the observing field before dark.

"Observing after the Meeting"

All are invited to the observing field immediately after the meeting (weather-permitting) (or to stay on the observing field if the meeting was outdoors). Everyone is welcome.

Place: Jon Wood Astronomy Field at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center.

The first Charlie Elliott meeting of 2014 will take place on Saturday, January 4 at the Charlie Elliott Conference Center. Check <http://ceastronomy.org/blog/home> for updates on the meeting time and agenda.



IC 342 By Chuck Painter

Chuck captured this image of galaxy IC342 during the new moon following the PSSG at DAV. IC342 is a face on spiral galaxy in Camelopardalis that is heavily obscured by the Milky Way.

The image was made from 24 - 10 minute frames totalling 240 minutes. Taken with Chuck's Astrotek 8" RC scope on an Orion Atlas EQ mount and Orion Starshoot Pro one shot color camera. Guided with an Orion ST-80 and Orion Starshoot autoguider and PHD guiding software. The image was processed with Nebulosity and Pixinsight software.

The 2013 Peach State Star Gaze

Photos by Tom Faber

Here are more photos of the 2013 Peach State Star Gaze - the 20th anniversary Peach State! We had clear skies most nights and many hours of great observing. Even though we lost our keynote speaker, astronaut Dr. Donald Pettit, because of the partial government shutdown we still had a number of interesting talks on Friday and Saturday. Friday evening the AAC treated attendees to brownies and ice cream, and Saturday also saw many of attendees win door prizes at the drawing after the talks. We all had a great time and look forward to seeing everyone at the 2014 PSSG!

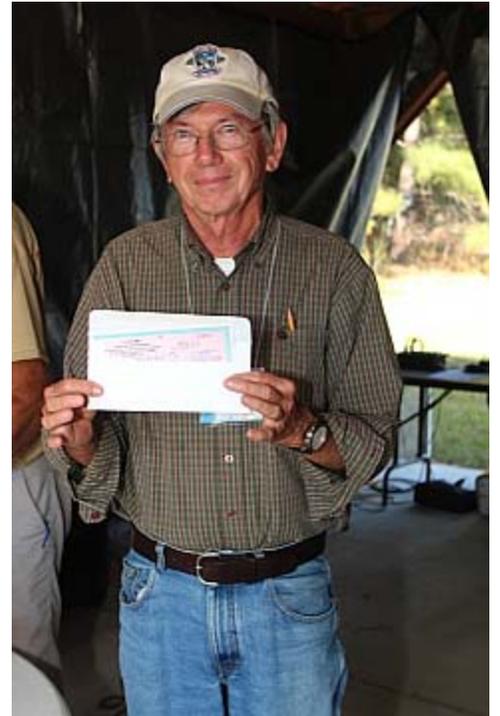


Photos on this page by Frank Marchese



Photos top left and middle left by Frank Marchese. Others by Tom Faber.

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A few of the Peach State Door Prize Winners

Photos this page by Frank Marchese

Photos next page by Tom Faber



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Upcoming DSO Dates and Locations

The dates and locations for upcoming AAC Dark Sky Observing: December 7 at the Charlie Elliott site, January 4 at DAV, and February 1 at the Woodruff Boy Scout Camp.

The **Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.**, one of the South's largest and oldest astronomical society, meets at **8:00 P.M.** on the **3rd Saturday of each month** at the Atlanta Freethought Society building in Smyrna, 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: Mark Banks President@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Program Chair: Richard Jakiel Programs@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Observing Chair/BoD Chair: Daniel Herron
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Board: Brigitte Fessele, Contact info TBA

Board: David Lumpkin, Contact info TBA

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

Elliott Webmaster: Theo Ramakers 770-788-0843
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Elliott Outreach Coordinator: Theo Ramakers 770-788-0843
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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 Trespass: 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

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

AAC Events are listed in BOLD

- Dec 1st, Sunday: Moon near Mercury and Saturn.
- Dec 2nd, Monday: New Moon.
- Dec 3rd, Tuesday: 40 years ago today Pioneer 10 becomes the first spacecraft to visit Jupiter.
- Dec 5th, Thursday: Moon near Venus.
- Dec 7th, Saturday: **CE Chapter Meeting & Potluck Dinner.**
- Dec 8th, Sunday: Earliest Sunset in Atlanta: ~5:27PM EST.
- Dec 9th, Monday: Moon First Quarter.
- Dec 14th, Saturday: **AAC Meeting & Holiday Potluck Dinner, 6PM at AFS.** Gemind Meteors.
- Dec 15th, Sunday: Moon in the Hyades.
- Dec 17th, Tuesday: Full Moon.
- Dec 21st, Saturday: Winter Solstice at 12:11 PM EST. Ursid Meteors.
- Dec 25th, Wednesday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Dec 29th, Sunday: Mercury at Superior Conjunction.
- Jan 1st, Wednesday: New Moon.
- Jan 3rd, Friday: Quadrantid Meteors.
- Jan 4th, Saturday: Earth at Perihelion 7:00AM. Latest Sunrise Atlanta: ~7:42 AM. **CE Chapter Mtg**
- Jan 5th, Sunday: Jupiter at Opposition.
- Jan 7th, Tuesday: Moon First Quarter.
- Jan 11th, Saturday: Venus at Inferior Conjunction.
- Jan 15th, Wednesday: Full Moon.
- Jan 18th, Saturday: **AAC Meeting.**
- Jan 24th, Friday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Jan 30th, Thursday: New Moon.
- Jan 31st, Friday: Mercury at Greatest Elongation East.

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 .

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 27th. Submissions after the deadline will go in the following issue.**



FIRST CLASS



www.beclage.com



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

Newsletter of The Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.



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