

The Focal Point

The Atlanta Astronomy Club
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Editor: Tom Faber

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The May AAC Meeting At the Fernbank Science Center

The May meeting will be held on **Friday, May 18th beginning at 8:00PM**, in one of the classrooms at Fernbank. Look for the AAC meeting signs. The meeting presentation is TBA at this time. Following the meeting the Fernbank Observatory will be open for observing if weather permits.



No Summer AAC Meetings

Due to a decision made by the AAC Board of Directors last year, the Atlanta Astronomy Club will not hold meetings during the summer months of June, July, and August. This decision was made due to low attendance at the summer meetings and the difficulty in finding speakers for the summer months. So the next meeting of the Atlanta Astronomy Club will be in September at a time and location to be announced. Check out the AAC web page and Facebook page for updates about the September meeting, and summer activities such as the dark sky observing dates.

The Charlie Elliott Astronomy chapter of the Atlanta Astronomy Club will hold meetings during the summer and have observing after their meetings, weather permitting. AAC members are encouraged to attend these meetings. The CEA summer meetings will be on Saturday June 16, July 14, and August 11.

Because of not having meetings during the summer, the *Focal Point* will not be published during the summer months either. The next issue of the *Focal Point* will be the September issue, which will be published in late August or early September. Have a great summer, and clear skies!

2018 Deerlick Astronomy Village Memorial Weekend Picnic

By Marie Lott

The annual Memorial Weekend picnic at Deerlick Astronomy Village will be held on Sunday, May 27th, 2018 at 5 PM. Please join us for a great potluck meal and enjoy free camping under the stars afterwards. Atlanta Astronomy Club members should be sure to check out the AAC clubhouse & observatory on the field. This event is open to anyone interested in stargazing under the dark skies* at DAV. No membership is required. *Note: since this year's picnic will be during a 98%-full moon, picnic campers will receive a voucher good for another free camping night of their choice through Labor Day 2018.

The picnic will be held in the Grier's Field pavilion in Deerlick Astronomy Village, located at the end of Aaron Grier Road near Sharon, GA. If you would like to bring a tent or RV, camping is free on Sunday night. There will be a \$5 camping fee per person per night for those who would like to arrive early and camp on Friday or Saturday night. A full bath house is located on site. For more details, driving directions, and potluck sign-up, go to <http://bit.ly/DAVpicnicRSVP>. No membership is required. Contact Marie at DAVpicnic@yahoo.com if you have any questions.

April AAC Meeting Report

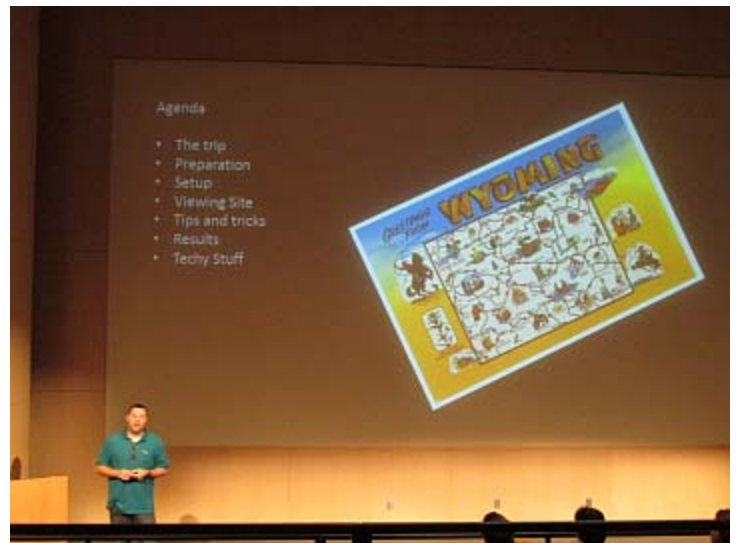
All photos by Tom Faber

In place of the AAC's normal meeting, club members assisted Tellus Science Museum in their activities for Astronomy Day on Saturday, April 21. Members set up scopes for solar observing in the daytime, and nighttime viewing in the evening. Although some clouds hampered the nighttime viewing some, visitors were still able to see the moon, Venus, and a few other objects. And for a change, during the day the sun actually had a few sunspots.

Club member Daniel Herron presented a talk at 2PM in the Tellus Theater about his trip to Wyoming last August to observe and photograph the total solar eclipse. Daniel talked about the trip, stops along the way, where they set up, the telescopes, cameras, other equipment he used for observing and photographing the event. And he showed many amazing images of the eclipse. In addition to Daniel, other AAC members at Tellus were Sharon Carruthers, Tom Faber, Mark Banks, Richard Jakiel, Sharon Ells, David Lumpkin, Ken Olsen, and several others. Here are some photos from the activities at Tellus.



Sharon Carruthers at the AAC table.

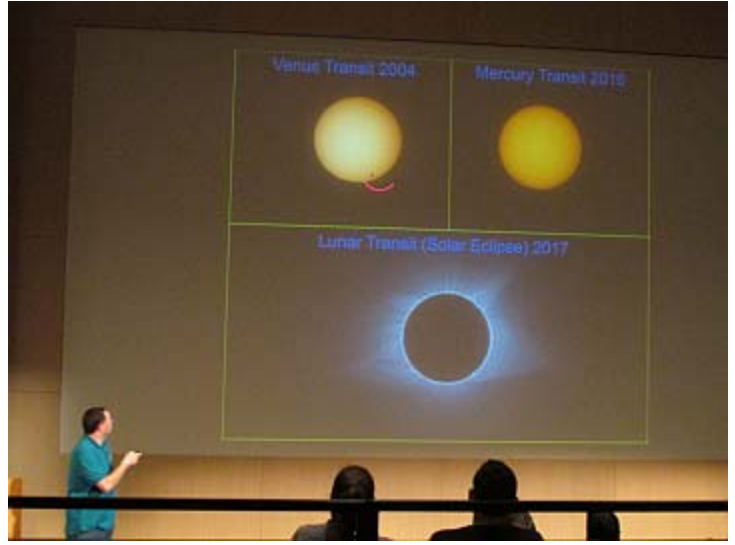
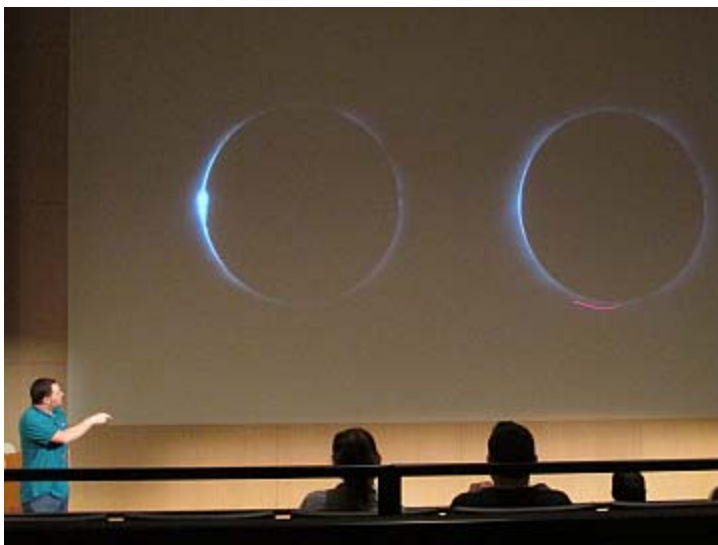
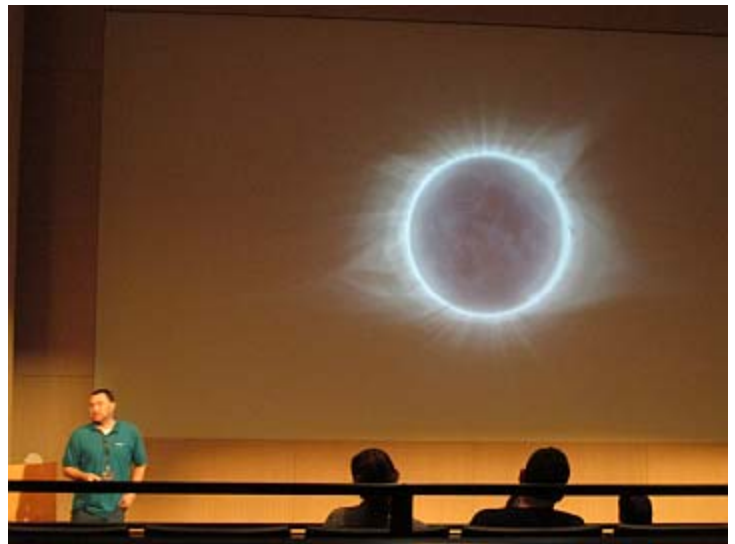
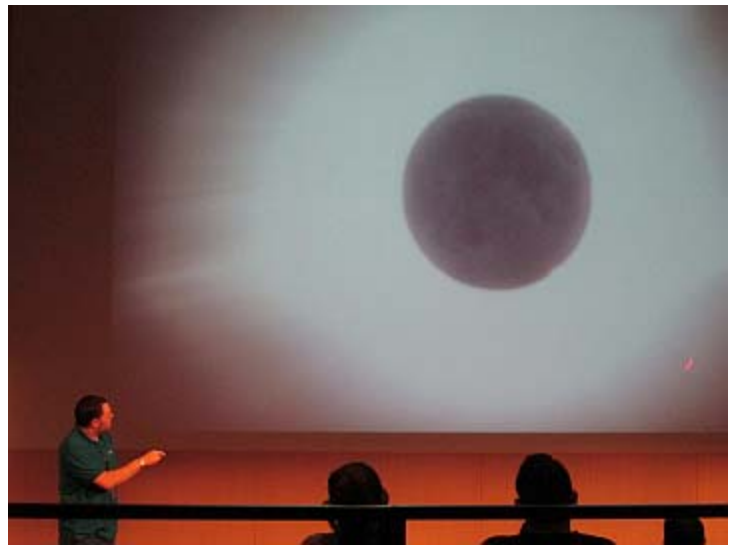
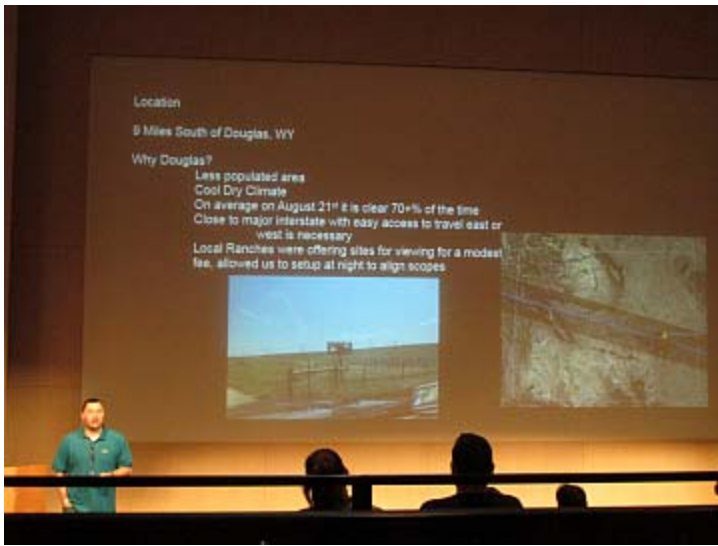


Daniel Herron presents his eclipse talk in the Tellus Theater.



Meteorite Association Of Georgia table.







Mark Banks (orange hat) at the AAC table while Sharon Carruthers talks with lifetime AAC member Eugenia Abbey.



Scopes were also set up around the Tellus Observatory.



Richard Jakiel at the Meteorite Association Of Georgia table.



Daniel Herron also set up solar viewing scopes in front of Tellus.



Observing the moon in the early evening.

The May Charlie Elliott Meeting

Join us for our next meeting on Saturday May 12th, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at the Charlie Elliott Conference Center, Conference Room B!

Cannonball Run and 2018 Elections!

In August of 2017, a large swath of United States had a front row seat to a total solar eclipse, something that hadn't happened in decades. Atlanta Astronomy Club member Dan Herron drove across the country to find the best possible place to observe and image the eclipse and landed in Wyoming. Dan will be on hand Saturday May 12th, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in the Charlie Elliott Conference Center, Conference Room B, to share his



Credit: Google Maps

experiences in getting across the country to the middle of nowhere that was suddenly somewhere for a few hours! If you've never experienced an eclipse, it's a sight to behold. You won't have to wait 76 years for another one though. The next solar eclipse is April 8th, 2024, which will be here before you know it, so start preparing now!

When Dan was 8 years old, his next door neighbor asked his mom if they would come over and look through a telescope. Their neighbor explained that the "fuzzy bright thing" in the telescope was called Halley's Comet. Dan learned that comets were balls of ice and dust that travel through the solar system and that this particular comet would return in 76 years. Dan was hooked! He didn't realize it at the time, but he had been the victim of a carefully orchestrated plan known to a select few insiders as "sidewalk astronomy!" Today, Dan takes every opportunity he can to get others "hooked!"

In addition to everything else happening at the May meeting, we'll also be holding elections for Charlie Elliott Astronomy officers. If you have questions, please contact a current officer. You can also inquire on our Facebook Page.

Friendly reminder: If you haven't paid your yearly dues, you still have time! Your dues go towards supporting our community outreach efforts and to maintain the facilities on Jon Wood Astronomy Field. It's quick and it's easy...click here: <http://atlantaastronomy.org/membership/>

All of the Above!

David Whalen, Charlie Elliott Astronomy Observing Supervisor will give a talk about what you can expect to see in the sky this month with binoculars and small telescopes, as well as the monthly observing challenge. If you've been to one of our meetings, you know that David is a dynamic and engaging speaker and always delivers a lot of great information with plenty of laughs! Be sure to ask for the monthly target list and a SkyMap! David will be joined by Astrophotography Coordinator Mark Woolridge who will cover the imaging challenges of the month and tips on how to image them.

Observing After the Meeting

All are invited to Jon Wood Astronomy Field immediately after the meeting for observing (weather-permitting).

Tech Talks

Theo Rammakers will be on hand at 5:30 p.m. to give a Tech Talk on imaging unusual targets, including ISS transits of solar system bodies and rocket launches. Theo is a regular at our meetings and many may not know that his image of the ISS transiting Venus is on display at the Smithsonian. Be sure to ask him how he managed to do that...it's quite a story! If you have an idea for a 15-30 minute discussion or presentation that you would like to see or would like to give, contact the Charlie Elliott Program Coordinator, Steve Siedentop - program@ceastronomy.org

Our Monthly Meetings and Public Observing Nights for 2018

Future Charlie Elliott meetings will be held on: June 16, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 6, November 10, December 8, 2018. Meetings start approximately 2 hours before sunset. Meeting rooms and start times vary, so please check back for updates or changes at: <http://ceastronomy.org/blog/home>

The April Charlie Elliott Meeting

Stephanie Dickson, Secretary, Charlie Elliott Chapter

Meeting Minutes: 4/14/18

Attendees: Meeting - 35, Field - Cloudy

Meeting time: 5:57pm

Meeting called to order by Mike Shaw

Outreach by Dan Thomas

21st - Sun over Anna Ruby 11-3pm (See Marie)

23rd - Bay Creek Middle School

27th - Starling STEM Day

28th - Boy scouts at Charlie Elliott start at 8:30pm

28th - Madison Spring Festival 10a-4pm

5/19 - Keeping GA Wild (Jakes Day with NWTF) 10am-2pm

Other news:

Mike Shaw - Passed out snack sign-up.

Ken Poshedly - ALPO: Gave new members ALPO membership application. Mike Shaw - Elections next month

David gave his presentation on "All of the Above" at: 6:04pm

Moon Update: New 4/15 and 5/15, Full 4/29

Played NASA Moon Movie

Continued on page 7

Mission Accomplished!

Article & Photos by Mike Shaw, CEA Director.

The power is back up and running at the Jon Wood astronomy field, at Charlie Elliott. The old solar panel system was damaged last year in a storm. The club does not have access to a standard power line on the field. Our club has several goto scopes stored on the field which require a power source. In addition our astrophotography folks requested a router be set up on the field to facilitate communications with their mounts. The new four panel system puts out 100 watts of power that charges a deep cycle battery that should supply enough power for an evening of observing on the field. Many thanks to the following club member that participated in this project: Barry Fitzgerald, Tim Geib, Ken Poshedly, Mike Shaw, Gil Shillcutt, Steve Siedntop, Brian Tucker, and Mark Woolridge.



Planetary Update - 3 planets in opposition

4/22 Lyrid Meteor Shower, 5/6 Eta Aquariid Meteor Shower

April/May Target List: Relaxing - Main target is Jupiter, Intriguing, Taxing/Light Buckets.

Celestial Events to Note: 4/17 Saturn is stationary, 4/22 Lyrid Meteor Shower, 4/29 Mercury Western elongation, 5/6 Eta Aquariid Meteor Shower, 5/8 Jupiter at opposition.

AP Targets by Mark Woolridge: April/May are Rosette and Stem, Beginner Target List - Zodiacal Lights, Intermediate Target - The Moon, Narrowband Target - N/A, Advanced Target - Needle Galaxy

Mike Shaw welcomes all new members/visitors. Went over what is in shed and improvements made including new solar panels.

Main Presentation started at: 6:44pm

Presenter: Sushant Mahajan introduced by Steve Sidentop. Subject: Know Thy Sun. Contents of presentation:

History: 800 BC - China 1st mentioned note of spots on Sun. 1128 AD John of Worcester England 1st recorded Sun spots (Dec 8th). Early Interpretation by William Herschel - Sun spots openings to see in. Hale's Polarity Law 1925 AD - The Law of Sun Spot Polarity. Eugene Parker 1955 AD - Theory of Sun Spot Formation. 1973 AD - Joy's Law of Tilts - Leading polarity is closer to the equator than following.

Scientific Discoveries: Sun Spot Propertites - Radius about 10K km, Magnetic Field >1000 Gauss, Teperature 4-5k Kelvin.

Current Understanding:

Sun = Core, radiative zone, convective zone (70% radius to surface), photosphere (surface), chromosphere (couple miles above surface), transition region (Sun meets solar atmosphere). SSN - Sun Spot Number. Sun Polarity field flips every 11 years. Meridian Flow Connects Sun spots to poles. Helioseismology - How we understand what is inside the Sun. CME - Cornal Magnetic Ejection.

My contributions: Gave diagram of current PhD work on further undtanding spot movement and relation to polarity

Meeting Ended: 7:50pm

Field conditions: Very Cloudy

The **Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.**, one of the South's largest and oldest astronomical society, meets at **3:00 P.M.** on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Fernbank Science Center in Decatur, or occasionally at other locations or times. 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. 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 posted. 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/atlaastro>.

AAC Officers and Contacts

President: Dave Lumpkin President@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Program Chair: Open Programs@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Observing Chair: Daniel Herron Observing@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Corresponding Secretary: Tom Faber
Focalpoint@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Treasurer: Sharon Carruthers Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Recording Secretary: Lilli Lindbeck,
Secretary@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Board Chair: Sharon Carruthers Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Board: Brigitte Fessele, bhfessele1@gmail.com

Board: Open

Board: Steve Phillips sandsphillips@att.net

ALCor: Ken Olson, keneolson@yahoo.com

Elliott Chapter Director: Mike Shaw director@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Observing Chair: David Whalen
observing@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Recording Secretary: Stephanie Dickson
secretary@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Astrophotography Coordinator: Mark Wolridge

Elliott Chapter ALCor: Jack Fitzmier

Elliott Coordinator: Lacy Mitchell, Lacy.Mitchell@dnr.ga.gov

Elliott Webmaster: Larry Owens webmaster@CEastronomy.org

Elliott Outreach Coordinator: Dan Thoman
outreach@ceastronomy.org

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

PSSG Chairman: Peter Macumber pmacumber@nightsky.org

PSSG Co-Chair: Open

Sidewalk Astronomy: Open
sidewalkastronomy@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Light Trespass: Ken Edwards, Contact info TBA

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

- May 7th, Monday: Moon Last Quarter.
- May 8th, Tuesday: Jupiter at Opposition.
- May 12th, Saturday: **CEA Chapter Meeting.**
- May 15th, Tuesday: New Moon.
- May 18th, Friday: **AAC Meeting** at the Fernbank Science Center.
- May 22nd, Tuesday: Moon First Quarter.
- May 29th, Tuesday: Full Moon.
- June 6th, Wednesday: Moon Last Quarter.
- June 13th, Wednesday: New Moon.
- June 14th, Thursday: Moon near Mercury. Earliest Sunrise at Atlanta ~6:25AM.
- June 15th, Friday: Moon near Venus.
- June 16th, Saturday: **CEA Chapter Meeting.**
- June 20th, Wednesday: Moon First Quarter.
- June 21st, Thursday: Summer Solstice at 6:07AM.
- June 27th, Wednesday: Saturn at Opposition. Latest Sunset at Atlanta ~8:52PM.
- June 28th, Thursday: Full Moon.
- July 6th, Friday: Moon Last Quarter.
- July 12th, Thursday: New Moon.
- July 14th, Saturday: **CEA Chapter Meeting.**
- July 19th, Thursday: Moon First Quarter.
- July 27th, Friday: Full Moon.
- Aug 4th, Saturday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Aug 11th, Saturday: **CEA Chapter Meeting.** New Moon.
- Aug 12th, Sunday: Perseid Meteor Shower peaks.

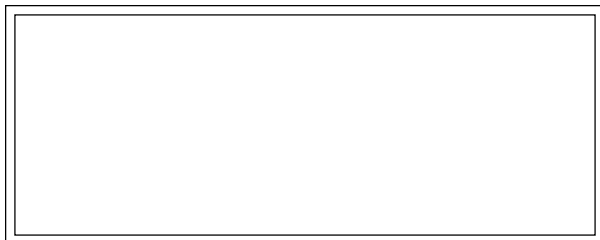
For more event listings and updates see the calendar at www.atlantaastronomy.org

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 with images separate but Word documents or PDFs are okay. **The deadline for September is Saturday, August 25. Submissions received after the deadline will go in the following issue.**



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The Focal Point

