

Astrofiles

Auburn Astronomical Society E-Newsletter August, 2010

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Click on "**Astrofiles**"

In this Issue

- Events Calendar
- AAS 30 Year Anniversary
- Mars Hoax Redux
- Member News
- Public Stargazes
- Web Links

Events Calendar

We'll hold our August meeting on **Friday, August 6**, at **7:45PM**, [in room 215 of Davis Hall, the Aerospace Engineering Building](#). The doors to the building automatically lock at 8:00PM, so if you're running late, rap on the door nearest our meeting room and we'll let you in. Our program will be a continuation of our [SLOOH](#) online observatory project. <http://www.slooh.com/> Thanks to **Brandon Clearman** for helping us with the WIFI issues.

Riders from the Montgomery area are welcome to meet at the [home](#) of Russell Whigham, [518 Seminole Dr.](#), and carpool over to Auburn. Plan to be ready to leave for Auburn at 6:45PM.

If you can stand the heat, our dark-sky **star party** this month will be on Saturday, August 7, at [Cliff Hill's farm](#).

August 6, August meeting

August 7, August star party; Venus, Mars and Saturn grouping in the west

August 11&12, [Perseid meteor shower](#)

[<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/community/skyblog/observingblog/99304684.html>](http://www.skyandtelescope.com/community/skyblog/observingblog/99304684.html)

August 20, Venus at greatest elongation; 46 degrees east of the Sun

August 24, Smallest full Moon of 2010

September 10, September meeting (moved back one week because of Labor Day)

September 11, Star Party at [Cliff Hill's farm](#)

September 12, First meeting of AAS in 1980

September 21, Jupiter at opposition

September 22, Fall Equinox

September 27, Moon two degrees south of Pleiades

September ?? Opelika Cub Scouts

September ?? American Heritage Girls

September ?? Forest Ecology Preserve

October 9, AAS 30-Year Anniversary/October meeting

AAS 30 Year Anniversary

The Auburn Astronomical Society's 30-Year Anniversary banquet will be on **October 9**, 2010, at 6:00PM at Good Ol' Boy's restaurant at [1843 Sandhill Road in Auburn](#) (Lee County Road 10), just under 2 miles from US 29 S; 3.5 miles from Society Hill Road. We'll order from the [menu](#) and an 18% gratuity will be added to your order. Thanks to Joyce and Rhon Jenkins for making the arrangements. Program TBA.

Mars Hoax Redux

I've received several messages from anyone who knows that I'm in the hobby, that indicate

... during August, Mars will be closer to our own orbit and will be comparable to the size of our moon. Wow! This is a once in a lifetime event!"

If you haven't receive this already, you probably will.

This was somewhat true -- in 2003. The closest approach part was true, but the big as the Moon part is very misleading. The e-mail "forwards" just won't die. Here's the real deal: <<http://www.astronomy.org.qg/hoax.htm>>

Member News

We've missed having our treasurer, **John Zachry**, at our meetings recently. John has having a bout with a back injury. We hope John's treatment brings him back with us soon.

Ray Kunert is moving his 10-inch Meade SCT out of his observatory to have it available for star parties and replacing it in the dome with his TEC 140 APO refractor and its beefy mount for his astro-imaging.

Public Stargazes

We've carried over three IOU stargazes from last spring:

- Opelika Cub Scouts
- American Heritage Girls (Prattville)
- Forest Ecology Preserve

For the two in the Auburn-Opelika area, we not only have to contend with Moon phases, and moderate temperatures, but the AU football schedule, and this year, our 30-year anniversary. Let's start with the football "not Saturday" or "away game" dates, since we all know it would be easier to change the Moon's phase than mess with football. ;-) If it works out with stargaze groups, we could combine two, or do this in lieu of a monthly meeting/star party. We're waiting to hear when the best time for them will be.

08/28: Moon just past full; still hot

09/11: Crescent Moon in a nice grouping with Mars, Venus, and Spica

10/09: 30-year AAS anniversary banquet

10/30: 3rd quarter Moon, and Halloween weekend

11/20: Full Moon

Web Links

The sky is NOT falling.

<<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/community/skyblog/newsblog/99648984.html>>

Here is what happened when professional astronomers pointed the Hubble Space Telescope at what appeared to be absolutely nothing and left it there, first for 10 days, and then for 11 days. Then they made the images into a 3-D presentation.

You have got to watch this one, it's "incredible".

<http://www.flixxy.com/hubble-ultra-deep-field-3d.htm>

The following are short versions of recent stories from Chronicle Online. Full texts, as well as photos and other graphics accompanying some stories, are available at the Web addresses following each summary. Instructions for obtaining the full texts by e-mail are at the end of this message.

* Burns chronicles 400 years of planetary science

Joe Burns was offered a challenge: review all of planetary science since 1610 ... in 4,000 words or fewer. He took it.

<<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/July10/BurnsHistory.html>>

* Cassini images rule out rings around Rhea

Using NASA's Cassini spacecraft, Cornell astronomer Matthew Tiscareno and colleagues searched for any material from dust to giant boulders that might be orbiting Saturn's second-largest moon.

<<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/July10/RheaRingless.html>>

* Spitzer researchers find buckyballs in space

Possibly catching a glimpse of a rare moment in time, researchers have detected fullerenes, or buckyballs - carbon structures long thought to be likely features of the interstellar medium, but never before observed.

<<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/July10/bernardSalas.html>>

Complete texts and these summaries, as well as photos and other graphics accompanying some stories, are available via the World Wide Web at

<<http://www.news.cornell.edu>>.

HOW TO OBTAIN THE FULL TEXTS BY E-MAIL

Send an e-mail message to cunews@cornell.edu in which the first line of text is

GET name

where "name" is the entire URL-- for example,

GET <http://www.news.cornell.edu/releases/May96/somestory.html>

Hope to see everyone at the meeting,

Russell