

# Astrofiles

## Auburn Astronomical Society E-Newsletter March, 2011

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### Events Calendar

We'll hold our February meeting on **Friday, March 4**, at **7:45PM**, [in room 215](#) of [Davis Hall](#), the Aerospace Engineering Building. 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.

Our new moon star party this month will be on **Saturday, March 26**, at [Cliff Hill's farm](#).

March 04, Monthly meeting **7:45PM**, [in room 215](#) of [Davis Hall](#).

March 04, New Moon

March 06, Waxing crescent moon passes 6 degrees north of Jupiter, low in SW

March 13, First quarter moon, spring forward Sunday to CDT

March 15, Mercury passes 2 degrees north of Jupiter in evening twilight

March 19, Full Moon, the Grass Moon

March 20, Vernal Equinox; spring begins at 6:21 PM CDT, moon 7 deg. S. of Saturn

March 23, Mercury at GEE, 19 degrees east of sun in evening sky

March 26, Last quarter moon

March 26, Star Party at [Cliff Hill's farm](#)

March 31, Waning crescent moon passes 6 degrees north of Venus in dawn

April 09, Monthly AAS meeting / Forest Preserve Stargaze 7:00-9:00

April 11, First quarter moon

May 07, Astronomy Day for 2011 is on W. A. Gayle Planetarium, Montgomery

### Wetumpka Impact Crater Lecture and Tours (This weekend)

From the Wetumpka Herald:

Two March events will offer the public a chance to learn more about the greatest natural disaster to ever hit Alabama -- a meteor impact more than 84 million years ago that struck in the area

where Wetumpka is now located. The 5-mile-wide crater left behind by the 1,100-foot meteor will be spotlighted during a public lecture March 3 and tours March 5.

See more at: [http://www.thewetumpkaherald.com/news/article\\_c31f93d8-25b8-11e0-8f5e-001cc4c03286.html](http://www.thewetumpkaherald.com/news/article_c31f93d8-25b8-11e0-8f5e-001cc4c03286.html)

Thanks to Tiffany Robinson for updating the [City of Wetumpka Web page](#) links to AAS. < <http://www.cityofwetumpka.com/Default.asp?ID=145>>

## Astronomy Day

[W. A. Gayle Planetarium](#) director, **Rick Evans**, has been busy in an effort to make up for last year's Astronomy Day that was "tornadoed out". Here are the programs he's working on this year:

- [Ham the space Chimp](#) Retired Col. Marvin Grunzke; Faulkner University professor
- [Space Camp](#) Melissa Snider, Camp Education Programs Manager,
- The [James Wylie Shepherd Observatory](#); Dr. Michael Patton & Dr. Michael Sterner, University of Montevallo
- Extraterrestrial Aliens: Friends, Foes, or Just Curious? By George Michael

Good work, Rick! We'll try to hold up our end of the deal.

## Web Links

From Rod Mollise's Guide to Telescope Accessories  
<http://uncle-rods.blogspot.com/2011/02/getting-set-i.html>

Portable Observatory For Sale:  
<http://www.patgarland.com/>

Hundreds of Astronomy Freeware programs  
<http://www.auburnastro.org/freeware.htm>

**Andy Camerio** sent us this link for NASA astronaut Douglas Wheelock who is currently aboard the International Space Station shares pictures of the Earth he snaps with the world through Twitter.

[http://twitpic.com/photos/Astro\\_Wheels](http://twitpic.com/photos/Astro_Wheels)

NASA TV Schedule.  
[http://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/nasatv/MM\\_NTV\\_Breaking.html](http://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/nasatv/MM_NTV_Breaking.html)

From **Dr. Michael Sterner**:

Please vote for our Intelligent Use of Water Award grant proposal at  
<http://www.iuowawards.com/Projects.aspx#project|b7a1c29f-9b49-4130-9493-776b04583c4d>

The James Wylie Shepherd Observatory is attempting to construct an outbuilding consisting of a control room, storage room, and restroom with self-composting toilets and recycled rainwater.

This grant proposal is one of the ways in which we are attempting to raise the necessary funds for the project.

Please consider putting a shortcut to the site on your computer desktop, and vote daily to help support the growth of the James Wylie Shepherd Observatory complex at the University of Montevallo. You may vote once per day. Voting ends on 22 March 2011.

The main website of the Meade Advanced Products Users Group is hosted in the UK and occasionally has some connectivity issues.

With the permission of MAPUG's webmaster, Ed Stewart, a mirror site in the USA is now available.

MAPUG's main site is <<http://www.mapug-astronomy.net/>> and the mirror site is <<http://thadlabs.com/MAPUG/>>.

Links to both sites are now in this group's Links section per:

MAPUG Main Website  
Main website of Meade Advanced Products Users Group  
<<http://www.mapug-astronomy.net/>>

and

MAPUG Mirror Website  
Mirror website of Meade Advanced Products Users Group  
<<http://thadlabs.com/MAPUG/>>

More **virtual telescope** sites:

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/41465830/ns/technology\\_and\\_science-discoverycom/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/41465830/ns/technology_and_science-discoverycom/) and  
<http://www.worldwidetelescope.org/Home.aspx>

From **Joe Albre**: Vanderbilt's role in largest digital sky image  
<[http://news.vanderbilt.edu/2011/01/vanderbilt-role-in-largest-digital-sky-image/?sms\\_ss=email&at\\_xt=4d4c8651418a5a8b%2C0](http://news.vanderbilt.edu/2011/01/vanderbilt-role-in-largest-digital-sky-image/?sms_ss=email&at_xt=4d4c8651418a5a8b%2C0)>

## Member News

**Frank Ward** reminds us of CCSSC's [Astronomy Nights](#), especially for those of you who live over that way. And for those who live closer to the Wiregrass, [Landmark Park](#) is just north of Dothan, has planetarium shows and astronomy nights. Check their Events page for the next scheduled sessions.

Frank has also recently given a stargaze for his son's Cub Scout troop and has promoted our Astronomy Day for the cubbies.

## Cub Scout Thanks

From: **Amy McKay**

Thank you all for letting us come out and look at the stars and planets with you. We had fun. Our favorite part was seeing the planets. We were amazed at how bright the stars were when we were far out of the city. Maybe we can come again sometime, when it is warmer!

Thank you,

Braden, Parker, Will, Austin and Grayson.

## 2011 Dues

We currently have seventeen members who are current on their 2011 membership dues, with a few conspicuous absences. If it's just slipped your mind, enclose a check payable to Auburn Astronomical Society -- \$20.00 for Regular Membership, Full-Time Student Membership is \$10.00, and send to:

Auburn Astronomical Society  
c/o John B. Zachry  
501 Summerfield Road  
West Point, GA 31833

If you thought you had paid for 2011, but don't see your name listed in blue on the AAS [Members](#) page, contact AAS treasurer, [John B. Zachry](#) to resolve the discrepancy.

Hope to see everyone at the meeting,

Russell