

# Astrofiles

## Auburn Astronomical Society E-Newsletter October, 2011

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### Events Calendar

We'll hold this month's meeting on **Friday, October 7**, at **7:45PM**, [in room 215](#) of [Davis Hall](#), the Aerospace Engineering Building on the AU campus. This will be an "away" game weekend, so parking should not be a problem.

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.

We'll try a dark-sky star party on Saturday, October 22 at [Cliff Hill's farm](#), if you don't mind the stadium lights from the NE. If you like it really dark, we can see if there is enough interest in making an over-nighter down to the [Conecuh National Forest](#). **David Hofland** has expressed an interest in driving down from Centre AL. See his message in the [Member News](#), below. Or, head down to the Troy SportsPlex. See [Chad Ellington's note](#) below.

October 07, Monthly meeting [in room 215](#) of [Davis Hall](#)

October 11, Full Moon

October 19, Third Quarter Moon

Oct. 21-23, StarFest 2011, Bays Mountain Astronomy Club in Kingsport, TN

October 22, star party at [Cliff Hill's farm](#), [Conecuh National Forest](#) or Troy SportsPlex

October 26, New Moon

Oct. 26-30, Deep South Regional Star Gaze, Feliciana Retreat Center, Norwood, LA

### Web Links

From **John Zachry**: Great [Vesta Video](#)

Things are looking a little brighter for the [James Webb Space Telescope](#).

**Comet Garradd** [Video](#).

Here is a [14 frame animation of Jupiter](#) taken by **Brian Combs**:

Earth from the [ISS video](#):

## Member News

From: **David Hofland** <hofland jsu.edu>

Thanks for keeping me on the list for the newsletter. As you may remember, I'm interested in joining your group some time for a night at Conecuh so I appreciate the newsletters as I can keep an eye out for the next time a safari out there might be planned. Hopefully my schedule will permit me to participate when the opportunity comes up. Anyway, I also wanted to share the attached [photo](#) of my newly [completed home-built 22" f/3.6](#). It has a primary mirror prepared by John Lightholder with a Spectrum Coatings Max-R-EAL surface. Spider/secondary from Astrosystems, and Moonlite CR2 focuser. It took a year to build, a process that put a big hurt on getting time to actually observe so I'm glad its over and unlikely to repeat the process any time soon. But I'm proud of her and I like to share baby [pictures](#) 😊

From **Chad Ellington**:

Do you think the club would be interested in heading down to the Troy SportsPlex for Friday Oct 22? I've been in touch with Dan Smith down there about using their facility when I need to travel south for asteroid occultations. I've got one very early that evening and mentioned doing a little impromptu star party afterward. He mentioned doing some promotion for which. I'd only suggest he do so if someone else from the club was able to help out. Figured this would be just us from the Montgomery area anyways. I could contact Troy University to see if some of their students wanted to come out too.

Chad

From: **Syd Spain**:

Christine and I have decided to truly retire at the end of this year, and we'll move from Oxford to Mt. Laurel in southeast Birmingham. Retirement should give me more time for astronomy, and I look forward to it. Hope to see you again since we'll be visiting our younger son and his wife who live near Auburn. Birmingham is a good location which is mid-way between the grandchildren and our boys. Our other son lives near Memphis.

Our University of Mississippi Research Park has been branded under a new name, Insight Park. We'll open the first building next month, and it's spectacular. We have a great team in place to develop the park and its new incubator.

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# AAS Visiting Lectureship

Chad Ellington

I'm working on bringing in a speaker for AUM...Johnathan P Gardner from the Goddard Space Flight Center has expressed interest in making such a visit. He's the Chief of the Observational Cosmology Laboratory and Deputy Senior Scientist for the James Webb Space Telescope there.

What he and I have been discussing is coordinating his visit with an Auburn Astronomical Society meeting and have him give a talk at which. This 'public talk' would be on the HST + JWST. He would also be giving a cosmology talk to my astronomy course. It looks like the best month for me to have him give such a talk would be November. Curious if you thought that would be OK? (Is that a home football game weekend?)

The first Friday in November is 11- 4 and is an open date on the football schedule.

Is there a chance we could get the AAS to hold the meeting over here at AUM? We would advertise the meeting/talk with the WA Gayle Planetarium and all the surrounding universities that have astronomical interests.

That's certainly do-able as well. And if it's in Montgomery, we're not married to that 1st Friday date.

If the meeting is at Auburn University, we may need a small-medium auditorium for his talk?

In the past when we've had special speakers, Rhon has secured larger rooms in the same building that we normally meet in.

I'll have to see if he would be available then of course, but wanted to bounce the idea off of you before I proceed. Ideally I would like for him to give the cosmology presentation to my class on Tuesday Nov 15 as that is the day I have this topic planned, but that would put his other talk on a Monday or Wednesday evening. Jonathan has also expressed interest in meeting informally with students on "How to get a job with NASA" though I doubt my students would want to attend which. Perhaps if we do meet at Auburn University proper, we could go over early and have some of their students meet in such a fashion before the meeting.

Lot's of good ideas. We'll work with what ever fits your schedule best. Again, an excellent topic for discussion at the October meeting.

From Rick Evans:

We do have 220 seats in the auditorium out here, and we certainly wouldn't mind hosting the event, if you want to propose that Idea to Chad.

## Club Magazine Subscriptions/Renewals

John B. Zachry

I will be taking club subscription orders for *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* magazines at October meeting and if need be at November meeting.

To qualify I need 5 members to order *Astronomy* magazine @ \$ 34.00/year.

*Sky & Telescope* subscriptions are \$ 32.95/year with no required number of subscriptions this year.

Remember, you can order club subscriptions to *Astronomy* magazine anytime after we qualify for 2012 but I and *Astronomy* magazine prefer October order month. Can order club subscription to *Sky & Telescope* magazine anytime.

Thanks – John  
Jbzachry knology.net

## The Future of the W. A. Gayle Planetarium

Recently, a [public charrette](#) was held to plan for the future of Oak Park and the surrounding neighborhoods. Planetarium director, Rick Evans, was not informed about the meeting. Conspicuously absent in the proposal was any mention of the planetarium. Not one to let an opportunity like this pass him by, Rick has written his own proposal for the planetarium.

The [W. A. Gayle Planetarium](#) is 42 years old. Replacement parts and qualified maintenance technicians are increasingly difficult if not impossible to find. Rick is making a case for upgrading the facility at either the current location in the park or perhaps a new facility, possibly on the grounds of the Shakespeare Festival where the City of Montgomery already owns the property. He has contacted a [planetarium marketing firm in Georgia](#), that has promised to assist him in selling the City of Montgomery, Troy University, and Montgomery's civic and corporate leaders, on a new facility's ability to draw tourist. Rick explained that he knew that planetariums, like libraries and parks are not intended to be profit driven, but that the local economy is better served if more visitors are attracted to these facilities.

Rick has asked that the AAS be an integral part of this promotion, including possibly hosting a star party for the city leaders, university administration and business leaders. Let's help Rick all we can as this is in the best interest of AAS as well.

Hope to see everyone at the meeting,

Russell