



ASTROFILES

Auburn Astronomical Society Newsletter

April 2018

John Wingard - Secretary/Treasurer - Auburn Astronomical Society - jwin1048@gmail.com

Next AAS Meeting

The AAS held our April club meeting at the W.A. Gayle Planetarium on Saturday, April 21, 2018 in conjunction with the annual Astronomy Day activities. Thanks to all the AAS members who came early for our business meeting. We discussed a potential plan to have our next meeting sometime in the month of July, possibly at Wind Creek State Park near Alex City, AL. More details will be announced later. Along that same line, AAS member Mike Lewis has once again offered to work with the staff at Wind Creek to have some star gazes there this summer. We are considering just having four events this year, one in June, July, August, and September. We will also provide additional details when the schedule is confirmed with the park personnel.

Here are the scheduled months for the remaining club meetings for 2018.

- July
- August
- October

Details on the specific dates and locations of these meetings will be posted well in advance in this newsletter, on the club Facebook page, and in e-mail reminders to the members. If you know of an interesting place in our area that would be of interest to the members, let us know about it as well. What topics would you like to learn more about at the meetings? We really need feedback from you to help us improve our meeting experience. You can send me your ideas, comments, etc. to the e-mail at the beginning of the newsletter. Of course, for those meetings that are held in our usual meeting location on the AU campus, we can always adhere to the first Friday schedule unless it conflicts with some activity in Auburn such as home football games.

For additional information about the club and our activities, check out the following links:

The Auburn Astronomical Society web page: <http://www.auburnastro.org>

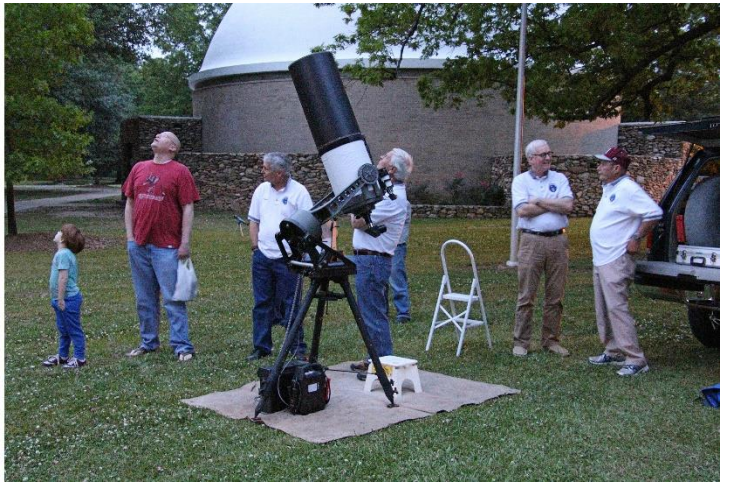
The AAS Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/79864233515/>

2018 Astronomy Day



AAS members met at the W.A. Gayle Planetarium in Montgomery on Saturday, April 21, 2018 to assist the planetarium staff with their activities for the event. After a brief club business meeting we began to set up our scopes and other equipment outside to be ready for the public visitors at the conclusion of the scheduled programs inside the dome. Unfortunately, as the evening began the weather did not look promising with cloud cover moving in from the west in advance of an approaching storm front. About the only thing that we could see during brief breaks in the cloud cover was the first quarter moon. Later in the evening the skies did clear for a short while to at least give some of the visitors a good look at the moon, but that was about the extent of the observing. Here are a few shots of the scopes that we did have set up for public viewing.





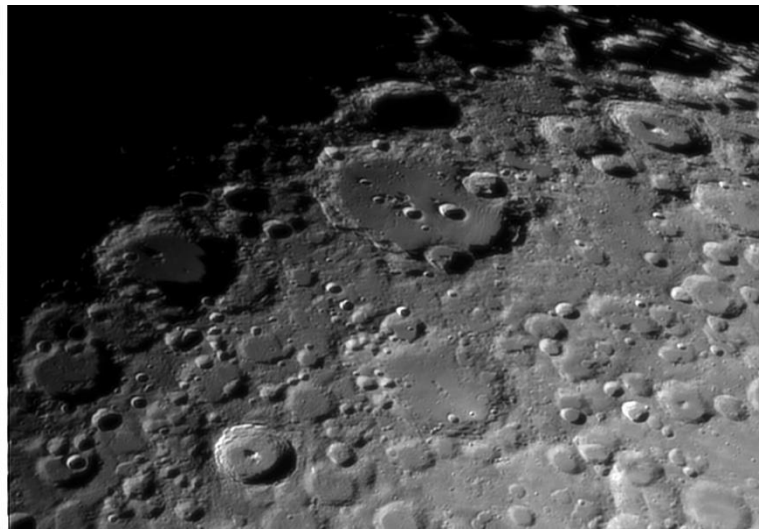
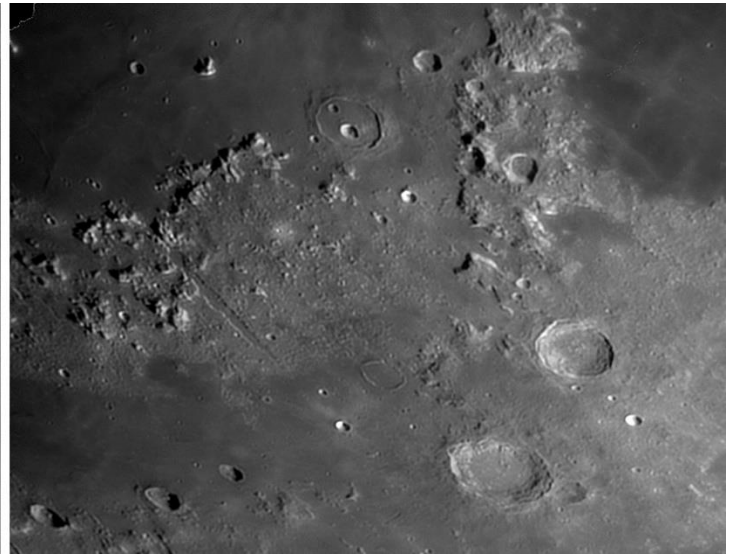
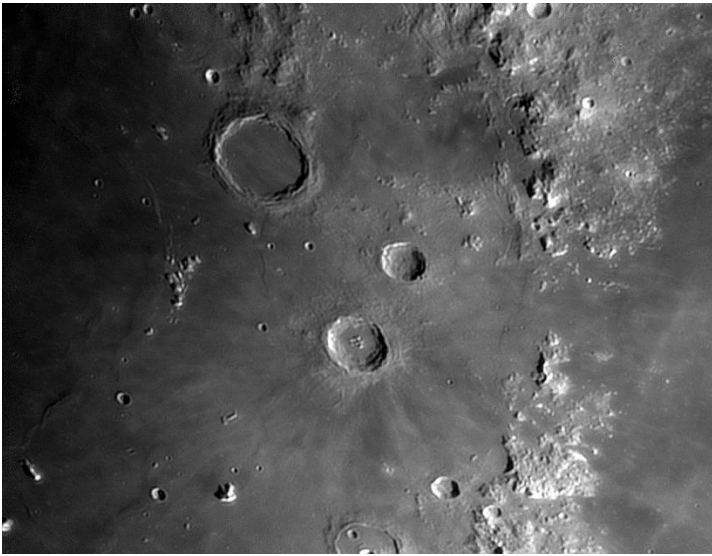




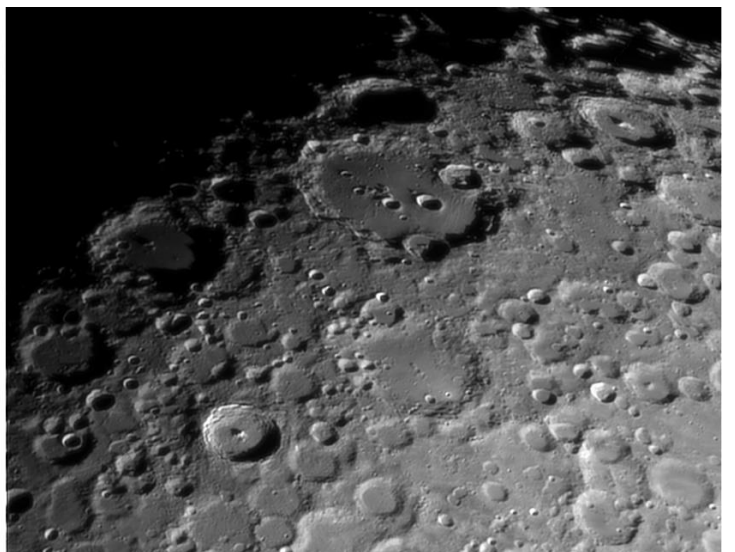
Some Recent Lunar Photography – J. Wingard

Unfortunately, I live in a heavily light-polluted area of the city of Columbus, GA, so any meaningful deep-sky photography from here is very limited even when using light-pollution filters. Therefore, I tend to concentrate on solar, lunar and planetary photography. My telescope of choice for this is my trusty 43-year old Questar 3.5" Maksutov coupled with a suitable camera. I recently spent a very enjoyable evening taking some images of the waxing gibbous moon. I used a ZWO ASI174MC camera and a 3X focal extender (like a barlow). The original captures were actually 1,000-frame videos that were later processed in a stacking software called Autostakkert 3.0.





One of the big advantages of having all these great image-processing programs is the amazing quality images that can be extracted from video clips that, at first glance, don't look very impressive. Below is an example of one of the shots above as it appeared in the raw video (left) and next to it on the right is the final stacked, processed and sharpened result. As you can see, the final result is well worth the extra time spent in processing the images.



AAS Dues Reminder

Many thanks to all who have renewed their AAS dues for 2018. However, it's still not too late to renew your dues. If you have not, please take a minute to do so. The dues are \$20.00 for the year and a portion of your dues goes to membership in the Astronomical League. The AL is the national organization that represents all member astronomy clubs and offers a wide variety of resources to support the clubs and their members. As a paid-up member of the AAS, you are entitled to receive their quarterly publication, The Reflector. Please fill out the renewal application at the end of this newsletter, especially if any of your contact information (mailing address, e-mail, etc.) has changed recently and return it to me along with your dues by mail at the address indicated on the form. Also check out the web site of the Astronomical League at: <http://www.astroleague.org>



Auburn Astronomical Society Membership Application Form

Name:

Address:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Date of Application* ____/____/____

E-mail:

Telescope(s):

Area(s) of special interest:

Enclose: \$20.00 for regular membership, payable in January. *Full-Time* student membership is half the Regular rate.

If you are a **NEW** member joining after the first of the year, refer to the prorated table below

Jan \$20.00	Feb \$18.33	Mar \$16.66	Apr \$14.99	May \$13.33	Jun \$11.66
Jul \$10.00	Aug \$8.33	Sep \$6.66	Oct \$4.99	Nov \$2.33	Dec \$1.66

Make checks payable to: Auburn Astronomical Society and return this application to:

Auburn Astronomical Society
c/o John Wingard, Secretary/Treasurer
#5 Wexton Court
Columbus, GA 31907

For questions about your dues or membership status, contact: jwin1048@gmail.com

Thank you for supporting the Auburn Astronomical Society!