

The Focal Point

The Atlanta Astronomy Club
Established 1947
October 2018

Vol. 31 No. 2

Editor: Tom Faber

Table of Contents

- Page 1... October AAC General Meeting
- Page 2... September meeting report & photos
- Page 3... September meeting photos
- Page 4... CE Meeting Minutes & Future Meetings, AL Info, PSSG
- Page 5... PSSG 2018 Photos
- Page 6... PSSG 2018 Photos
- Page 7... AAC Online, Memberships, Contact Info
- Page 8... Calendar, AAC List Serv Info, Focal Point Deadline

The October AAC Meeting

By Ken Poshedly

Friday, October 19 at 8PM.

“Roving” on Mars -- Or Are They?

With the most recent global sandstorm on Mars now subsiding, we wonder about the status of the various rovers on Mars. Did they weather things okay or are they now defunct? The answers to these and other related questions will be learned on Friday evening, October 19, when the Atlanta Astronomy Club will feature Jennifer Piatek (photo right), associate professor at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, CT, live via a teleconference hookup courtesy of Fernbank Science Center planetary geologist Scott Harris.

The meeting will be held in the Fernbank Science Center Resource Room (formerly the library room) beginning at 8 p.m. with a review of this year’s just-completed Peach State Star Gaze and announcements of upcoming events, to be followed by Scott who will formally introduce Professor Piatek. Finally, and weather-permitting, all will be invited upstairs to Ralph Buice Observatory to view through the 0.9 meter (36-inch) Cassegrain reflecting telescope inside the 10 meter (30 ft.) dome.

For those interested in her academic background, Professor Piatek teaches introductory courses in geology, astrobiology, and planetary astronomy as well as the occasional upper level course in planetary geology or remote sensing. Her research projects involve analysis of thermal infrared images of Mars with the goal of a better understanding the geologic processes that have affected the surface, as well as modeling of lab measurements of light scattering from analog materials. Scott Harris will have even more info on the professor at the meeting.

The Fernbank Science Center is located at 156 Heaton Park Dr. NE, Atlanta, GA 30303. (Phone: 678-874-7102).



Credit: Google Maps

September Meeting Report

Photos by Tom Faber

The September meeting of the Atlanta Astronomy Club was held Friday, September 21 in the planetarium at the Fernbank Science Center. Fernbank granted free admission to AAC members for this event. About 35 AAC members were present along with about an equal number of the general public. Our host for the evening was Fernbank planetary geologist Scott Harris. We viewed a video about black holes narrated by Star Trek's John de Lancie ("Q"). After the video Scott Harris demonstrated the capabilities of the Fernbank Planetarium's new AV equipment, including dual 4K resolution video projectors, for the AAC members. Here are a few photos of the evening's activities.



The Apollo 6 Command Module. This spacecraft flew on the second test flight (unmanned) of the Saturn V moon rocket in April 1968.





AAC president David Lumpkin (left) and Fernbank's Scott Harris.



A scene from the black hole video.



AAC program chair Ken Poshedly.



Scott Harris answers questions from attendees



The September Charlie Elliott Meeting

Submitted by Mike Mardis, Secretary, Charlie Elliott Chapter

Meeting Minutes: 9/8/2018 at the Charlie Elliott Aquatics Center Building

Pre-meeting start time: 5:30PM

Presenter Steve Seidentop

Topic Power Options for Astrophotography

Attendees: Meeting - 23, Field - 22

Meeting:

Date/Time 9/8/2018 at 1830-2200

Facilitator Mike Shaw

Agenda: Potluck dinner, Briefings, Announcements, Q&A/ discussion.

Outreach by - None reported by Dan Thoman, however Mike Shaw encouraged everyone to record outreaches in the Night Skies Network so the club gets credit.

Awards by - None reported by David Whalen

Briefing speaker/topic:

Steve Seidentop "Perspectives"

Mark Woolridge "Astrophotography Targets"

Steve Seidentop "Mars Update"

Ken Poshedly ALPO Journal overview

Mike Shaw Peach State Star Gaze Overview

Handouts:

Ken Poshedly "The Evening Sky Map"

Marie Lott Weather report from Weather Underground

Other news:

ALPO Ken Poshedly provided an update.

Atlanta Astronomy Club Sept Meeting Ken Poshedly briefed on the upcoming meeting of the AAC at Fernbank on 9/21/2018

Upcoming Charlie Elliott Meetings

Upcoming Charlie Elliott meetings will be held on: November 10 and December 8, 2018, and January 5, February 2, March 9, April 6, May 4, and June 1, 2019. 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> Public stargazing on Jon Wood Astronomy Field follows the meeting, weather permitting.

The Astronomical League

As a member of the **Atlanta Astronomy Club** you are automatically also a member of the **Astronomical League**, a nation wide affiliation of astronomy clubs. Membership in the AL provides a number of benefits for you. They include:

* You will receive *The Reflector*, the AL's quarterly newsletter.

* You can use the Book Service, through which you can buy astronomy-related books at a 10% discount.

* You can participate in the Astronomical League's Observing Clubs. The Observing Clubs offer encouragement and certificates of accomplishment for demonstrating observing skills with a variety of instruments and objects. These include the Messier Club, Binocular Messier Club, the Herschel 400 Club, the Deep Sky Binocular Club, and many others.

To learn more about the Astronomical League and its benefits for you, visit <http://www.astroleague.org>

The 2018 Peach State Star Gaze - Pt 1

Photos by Tom Faber unless noted otherwise

The 2018 Peach State Star Gaze was held from Sunday, September 30th to Sunday, October 7th.

The 2018 PSSG will be remembered for how hot it was in the day time. Temperatures were in the mid to upper 80's each day, but the air was dry which allowed for temperatures to cool off nicely in the evening. Night time lows were usually in the low to mid 60's, and got as low as 57F Tuesday morning. Skies were mostly clear each night, with only occasional passing clouds. Vendor *Pentax* was at the Peach State for the later part of the week.

Friday's featured speakers were Tim Geib who presented a talk titled "Remote Imaging at Deep Sky West", Frank Schorr, whose talk was about using imaging to do science, and the day's final speaker was Dan Llewellyn who presented a talk about how to get started doing astro-imaging.

Friday evening the AAC hosted a cake and ice cream social on the DAV pavilion.

Saturday featured more talks with Mark Banks, who presented a talk about the Drake, which is used to estimate the number of active, communicative extraterrestrial civilizations in the Milky Way. Next Ed Albin presented a talk about the Georgia Tektites - what they are, how they were formed, and how to find them.

Our final speaker Saturday, David Wenner, gave a talk about Saturn, its moons and rings, and some of the findings of the recently ended Cassini mission.

After David Wenner's talk the door prize drawing was held. A number of attendees won various prizes. The grand prize, a Meade Infinity 80 refractor, was donated by AAC members Ken and Rose Olson.

GC was back with Micki's Kitchen (Micki herself wasn't able to be there this year) serving breakfasts, sandwiches, snacks, and dinners during the day and plenty of coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and brownies at night to keep us observers awake! We all had a great time and look forward to seeing everyone at the 2019 PSSG, which will be held October 20-27.

On the next several pages are images from the 2018 Peach State Star Gaze. Check back next month for more photos from the PSSG 2018, including some of the door prize winners.



The Check-in Building at the PSSG

Continued on next page



Attendees arriving and setting up at the PSSG.

A colorful sunset Monday evening. The clouds soon dissipated and allowed for a good observing night.

Continued on next page



Jupiter and Arcturus appear in the fading twilight.



The AAC Swap Tent where attendees could sell no longer needed items.



Micki's Kitchen



Continued on next page



Check back next month for more photos from the 2018 Peach State Star Gaze, including photos of the speakers and some of the many door prize winners.

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: Ken Poshedly 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: Steve Sientop
observing@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Recording Secretary: Mike Mardis
secretary@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Program Coordinator: Kevin Snedden
program@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Astrophotography Coordinator: Mark Wolridge

Elliott Chapter ALCor: David Whalen

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 Tresspass: 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

- Oct 8th, Monday: New Moon.
- Oct 16th, Tuesday: Moon First Quarter.
- Oct 19th, Friday: **AAC Meeting at the Fernbank Science Center at 8PM.**
- Oct 24th, Wednesday: Full Moon.
- Oct 26th, Friday: Venus at Inferior Conjunction
- Oct 31st, Wednesday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Nov 6th, Tuesday: Mercury Greatest Elongation East.
- Nov 7th, Wednesday: New Moon.
- Nov 10th, Saturday: **CEA Chapter Meeting.**
- Nov 11th, Sunday: Moon near Saturn.
- Nov 15th, Thursday: Moon First Quarter. Moon near Mars.
- Nov 16th, Friday: **AAC Meeting at the Fernbank Science Center at 8PM.**
- Nov 17th, Saturday: Leonid Meteor Shower Peak.
- Nov 23rd, Friday: Full Moon.
- Nov 26th, Monday: Jupiter in Conjunction with the Sun.
- Nov 27th, Tuesday: Mercury at Inferior Conjunction
- Nov 29th, Thursday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Dec 7th, Friday: New Moon.
- Dec 8th, Saturday: **CEA Chapter Meeting.**
- Dec 15th, Saturday: Geminids Meteor Shower Peak.
- Dec 15th, Saturday: Moon First Quarter.
- Dec 22nd, Saturday: Full Moon.
- Dec 29th, Saturday: Moon Last Quarter.

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 November is Sunday, October 28. Submissions received after the deadline will go in the following issue.**



FIRST CLASS



www.betagg.com



Atlanta Astronomy Club
P.O. Box 76155
Atlanta, GA 30358-1155
www.atlantaastronomy.org
On Twitter at <http://twitter.com/atlastro>

We're here to help! Here's how to reach us:

Newsletter of The Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.

