

The Focal Point

Vol. 36 No. 8

The Atlanta Astronomy Club
Established 1947
April 2024

Editor: Tom Faber

Table of Contents

Page 1... CE Chapter April Meeting, Upcoming AAC Meetings
Page 2... AAC March Meeting Report
Page 3... AAC March Meeting Report photos
Page 4... Galaxy Quartet in Leo by Clay Turner
Page 5... Galaxy M81 by Dan Llewellyn
Page 6... The Crab Nebula M1 by Eugene Rush
Page 7... Zombie Party, Sharon Shenanigans, Memberships, Contacts
Page 8... Calendar, AAC List Serv Info, Focal Point Deadline

Charlie Elliott April Observing (No Mtg)

With the next scheduled meeting date for the Charlie Elliott Astronomy Club being Saturday, April 6, but the widely publicized total solar eclipse only two days later AND with many of our members planning to head out of town to the eclipse path, we invite all who choose to remain in town to a night of observing on the Jon Wood Astronomy Field — weather permitting. In other words, NO formal meeting at the usual location on Murder Creek Church Rd.



This could be a perfect chance for anyone planning to purchase a telescope to view through others already on the field to help with the decision-making. (Always make sure to obtain permission from the owner of the scope you wish to look at or through in case the equipment is already configured for imaging.)

With New Moon just two days away, the skies will be dark all night! It's galaxy season and there will be a lot of nice deep sky objects to seek out. Bright Jupiter will be visible in the west, setting a little after 10 p.m.

Sunset that evening will occur at 8:00 p.m. but the main gate on Elliott Trail (off Marben Farm Rd) closes to new entry by vehicle an hour earlier (at 7 p.m.); that gate will, however, automatically open for exiting traffic at all times. If you are not a member and plan to arrive after 7 p.m., please make arrangements with a club member for access.

A few items to note:

Plan to treat this outing like you would a camping trip and be prepared. Dress appropriately for the weather and the environment, bring snacks and drinks if needed, and plan to take your trash with you.

No April AAC Meeting

The next AAC meeting will be on Saturday May 18 at 7:00PM at our new location in Sandy Springs:

Lost Cottage at Lost Corner Preserve, 7300 Brandon Mill Road North-west, Sandy Springs, GA 30328

<https://www.sandyspringsga.gov/places/lost-corner-preserve>

Although the Lost Cottage at Lost Corner Preserve will be our meeting venue for the rest of the year, it was not available for Saturday in late April, so rather than having a meeting on a Friday night with its heavy traffic, the AAC decided not to hold a meeting in April.

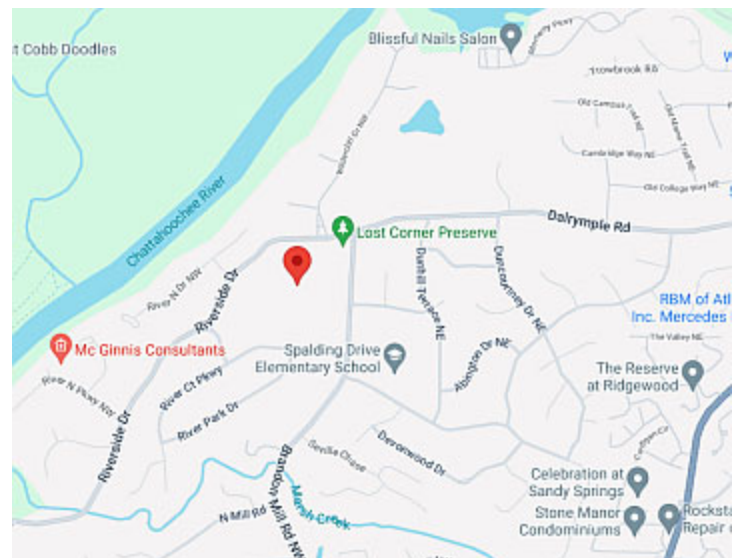
Here is the meeting schedule (Guest speakers and topics still need to be determined):

May 18th 7-9pm, June 15th 7-9pm, July 20th 7-9pm, August 17th 6-8pm, Sept 14th 6-8pm, Oct 19th 6-8pm, Nov 16th 6-8pm.

We need volunteers for speakers and topics so lets do it this way:

- * If you have a topic you want to hear about let us know we may find a speaker for it.
- * If you have a topic and would like to talk let us know.
- * If you know a student or anyone that may like an audience let us know.

After the talks we will handle club business, Q&A, and meet & greets. If you have any equipment questions or need help, bring your scopes and we will also try to help.



Credit: Google Maps

Continued on next page.

There is a regularly serviced Porta-Potty on the field.

The main gate on Elliott Trail closes to new entry by vehicle at 7 p.m., but will automatically open for exiting traffic at all times. If you are not a member and plan to arrive after 7 p.m., please make arrangements with a club member for access at least a day in advance.

Please refrain from using white light on the field. Red headlamps are cheap and easy to find at your favorite store. They're even cheaper to make with a spare flashlight and red nail-polish on the lens.

For more information about Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, please visit the Charlie Elliott website.

<https://georgiawildlife.com/charlie-elliott-wildlife-center>

Observing on the Jon Wood Astronomy Field

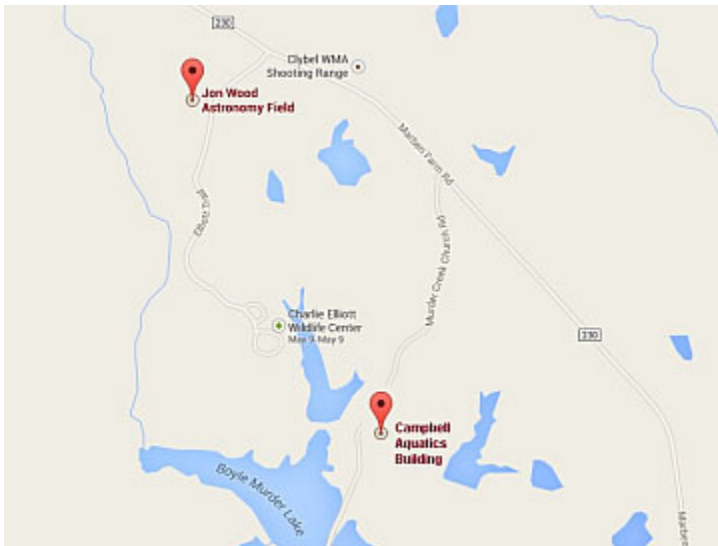
Please refrain from using white lights on the observing field to preserve night vision. Red lights are readily available at department and sporting goods stores in the Atlanta area. As stated above all are invited; however, to bring their own telescopes or binoculars or at least their interest in astronomy. For more information about Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, visit: <https://georgiawildlife.com/charlie-elliott-wildlife-center>

Our Monthly Meetings and Public Observing Nights

Our monthly meetings and public observing nights are free and open to the public. Visit the "Our Calendar" tab at the top of the page for our 2024 meeting, observing, and outreach schedule. Start times vary through the year so please check back for details. View our Full Calendar of all meetings & outreach events here:

<http://ceastronomy.org/blog/outreach/charlie-elliott-astronomy-calendar>

It's easy to become a member of Charlie Elliott Astronomy! Pay dues here: <http://atlantaastronomy.org/membership/>



Credit: Google Maps

AAC March Meeting Report

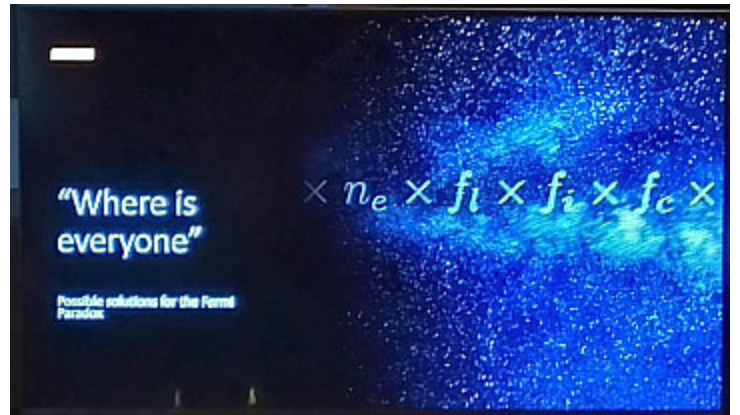
Photos by Tom Faber

The Atlanta Astronomy Club's March general meeting was held on Saturday, March 23, at our new location and time. Our meeting was held at the Lost Cottage at Lost Corner Preserve in Sandy Springs starting at 7:30PM. About 30 club members and guests were present. Before the talk AAC Observing Chair Daniel Herron and club President David Lumpkin presented information about upcoming club and astronomical events. Daniel then presented a very interesting talk entitled "Where is Everyone", about the Fermi Paradox, the search for extraterrestrial intelligence, and some of the possible reasons for us not detecting anyone yet.

Join us at the Lost Cottage at 7:00PM on Saturday, May 18 for the next AAC General Meeting.



Standing - Our speaker Daniel Herron (left) and AAC President David Lumpkin



Continued on next page



AAC Observing Chair Daniel Herron helped a guest by collimating her telescope and showing her how to use it.



After the meeting we set up a few telescopes in the parking lot for some observing and giving some of the guests pointers on using their telescopes.





© 2024 Clay S Turner / Event Horizon Observatory

Galaxy Quartet in Leo by Clay Turner

Here's a nice group of galaxies in Leo's tail. They are NGC: 3681, 3684, 3686, and 3691. See annotated version for galaxy IDs.

RASA 11 telescope with integration of 65 x 120 second images.

For more about this group see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NGC_3686 and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NGC_3607_Group





Galaxy M81 by Dan Llewellyn

Messier 81 (Bode's Galaxy) is a grand spiral and the largest member of the M81 group that has 34 galaxies in it. They reside in the constellation Ursa Major. Messier 81 itself is approximately 12 million light years away. I revisited it for more exposure and processed it for color saturation. Taken on March 14, 2024 using my c14 Edge HD at 3910 fl at f/11 and with my cooled and modified Sony A7s using an Orion LPR. Stack 60-62 sec, 45-77 sec, and 30-92 sec subs.

For more about M81 see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messier_81



The Crab Nebula M1 by Eugene Rush

Messier M1 (The Crab Nebula) in Taurus by Eugene Rush

This image shows The Crab Nebula which is the remnant of a super nova first observed by Chinese astronomers in 1054 AD and was visible in daytime in the constellation Taurus. The image was made using an 8 inch Ritchey-Chretien telescope with a ZWO ASI071MC pro camera. The image consists of 45, 120-minute subs and taken from Sharpsburg GA on January 29, 2024.

For more information see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crab_Nebula

2024 Zombie Party

Zombie Party 2024 (Observing Event)

Date: Thursday May 9 - Sunday May 12 (Come for 1 night or all 3 nights)

Time: Begins 4:00 PM Thursday - Ends Noon Sunday

Location: Deerlick Astronomy Village, Aaron Grier Rd SE, Crawfordville, GA 30631

A no frills, three night, mini star party. A nice introduction to star parties for beginners. Held At the Deer Lick Astronomy Village (DAV) near Crawfordville, GA, one of the darkest locations within a 2-hour drive from Atlanta (magnitude 6 - 6.5 skies).

A great time to do that Messier Marathon. Observe from dusk to dawn and you are officially a ZOMBIE!!!

DAV has plenty of camping, showers & flush toilets, electricity, Wi-Fi & a large picnic shelter. Camping fee is \$10 a night.

You are responsible for practicing any state mandated COVID safety protocols (i.e. masks & social distancing) while on the field.

(Editor's note: This event is called a "Zombie Party" because of the appearance many of the attendees have after being up all night observing and/or imaging).

Sharon Shenanigans on April 27

The Little town of Sharon (pop 150), which is the DAV's nearest civilized outpost (alas, the only businesses they have are the post office and Pittman Processing, which does a fine job on any game you bring down), holds a fair on the last Saturday of April (on April 27th this year). Usually there are small craft vendors, and some really good food and activities for the kiddies. It is fun outing for the family and a taste of what small town life was like many years ago.

The DAV & the AAC have set up a solar observing station for the last few years to promote that we are good neighbors and fine people who do not dance naked around they Maypole while worshipping the Moon.

We could use a 2 -3 volunteers to bring a solar scope & help out for all or part of the fair which runs from 10 - 4 pm if you are interested, contact me at: Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org.

And if you have any ideas for daytime astronomy related activities or crafts, please pass them on to me.

Sharon Carruthers

The **Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.**, one of the South's largest and oldest astronomical society, meets at **3:00 P.M.** on the 3rd 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: David Lumpkin President@AtlantaAstronomy.org

Program Chair: Open 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: Steve Siedentop

director@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Observing Supervisor: Dennis Ruseski

observing@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Recording Secretary: Daniel de la Reza

secretary@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Program Coordinator: Steve Siedentop

program@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Outreach Coordinator: Marie Lott

outreach@ceastronomy.org

Elliott Astrophotography Coordinator: Mike Mardis

Elliott Chapter AL Liaison: David Whalen

Elliott Facilities Coordinator: Matt Harvey

facilities@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

Calendar by Tom Faber (Times EDT/EST unless noted)

AAC Events are listed in BOLD

- Apr 1st, Monday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Apr 6th, Saturday: **CE Chapter Observing, 7:00PM.** Moon near Mars & Saturn morning.
- Apr 8th, Monday: New Moon. Partial Solar Eclipse Start 1:45PM, Max 3:04PM, 4:20PM.
- Apr 9th, Tuesday: Moon near Jupiter evening.
- Apr 10th, Wednesday: Moon near Jupiter.
- Apr 15th, Monday: Moon First Quarter.
- Apr 21st, Sunday: Lyrid Meteor Shower peaks.
- Apr 23rd, Tuesday: Full Moon.
- May 1st, Wednesday: Moon Last Quarter.
- May 4th, Saturday: **CE Chapter Meeting, 6:30PM.** Eta Aquariids Meteor Shower peaks.
- May 7th, Tuesday: New Moon.
- May 9th, Thursday: **AAC Zombie party at DAV begins - see p 6.**
- May 12th, Sunday: **AAC Zombie party at DAV ends.** Mercury conjunction with Sun.
- May 15th, Wednesday: Moon First Quarter.
- May 18th, Saturday: **AAC Meeting, 7:00PM.** Jupiter conjunction with Sun.
- May 23rd, Thursday: Full Moon.
- May 30th, Thursday: Moon Last Quarter.
- June 4th, Tuesday: Venus at superior conjunction.
- June 6th, Thursday: New Moon.
- June 8th, Saturday: **CE Chapter Meeting and Potluck, 6:30PM.**
- June 14th, Friday: Moon First Quarter.
- June 15th, Saturday: **AAC Meeting, 7:00PM.**
- June 20th, Thursday: Summer Solstice at 4:51PM
- June 21st, Friday: Full Moon.

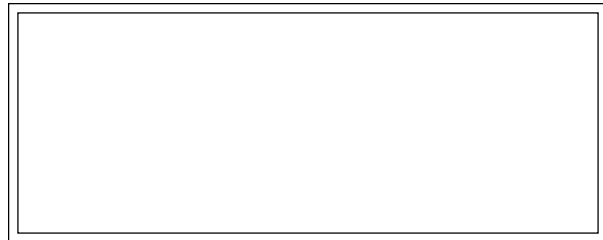
For more event listings and updates see the calendar at www.atlantaastronomy.org

Atlanta Astronomy Club Listserv

Because of the shutdown of Yahoo Groups, the Atlanta Astronomy Club Mailing List has been moved to IO Groups. You can visit the group, start reading messages and posting them here: <https://groups.io/g/AtlantaAstronomyClub>.

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 May is Saturday, April 20. Submissions received after the deadline will go in the following issue.**



FIRST CLASS



www.betagg.com



The Focal Point
ATLANTA ASTRONOMY CLUB EST. 1947
Newsletter of The Atlanta Astronomy Club, Inc.
We're here to help! Here's how to reach us:

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

