

The Focal Point

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The Atlanta Astronomy Club
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Editor: Tom Faber

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Charlie Elliott Nov Mtg & Observing

November... is a little different

Greetings! — We're doing things a bit differently in November. For the folks that like to observe and image deep sky objects under a dark, new moon sky, we'll be meeting on Jon Wood Astronomy Field on November 2nd, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. for observing and imaging, weather permitting.

On November 16th, 2024, Dr. Loris Magnani will be joining us for an engaging and informative discussion on high latitude molecular clouds. We commonly see these in our images and refer to them as IFN, a relatively new "discovery" of sorts among imagers. Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and the Moon will be up, so join us for observing after the meeting on Jon Wood Astronomy Field, weather permitting.

High Latitude Molecular Clouds

Join us, at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 16th, 2024 at the Campbell Aquatic Center at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center when Loris Magnani joins us to discuss his research on high latitude molecular clouds!

Loris Magnani is an author and Professor of Astronomy from the University of Georgia, with a distinguished career specializing in the dynamics of molecular gas in the galaxy. Co-author of the book, A Dirty Window, Dr. Magnani's research has centered on understanding the structure, distribution, and motion of molecular clouds, particularly those found at high galactic latitudes. His comprehensive surveys in this area have helped astronomers gain valuable insights into the behavior of these clouds and their role in the broader context of galactic structure and star formation.

Dr. Magnani earned both his MS and PhD in astronomy from the University of Maryland, where he developed his expertise in the study of interstellar molecular gas. Over the years, his work has been instrumental

Continued on next page.

The October AAC Meeting

The next AAC meeting will be on Saturday, October 19 starting at 6:00PM at our new location in Sandy Springs. Our speaker and topic is TBA.

Lost Cottage at Lost Corner Preserve, 7300 Brandon Mill Road Northwest, Sandy Springs, GA 30328. See map below.

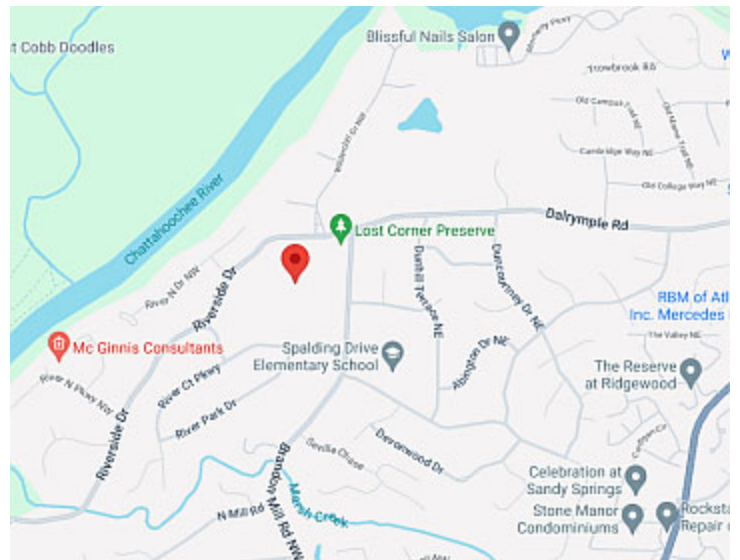
<https://www.sandyspringsga.gov/places/lost-corner-preserve>

Here is the meeting schedule (Guest speakers and topics still need to be determined) thru November: Oct 19th 6-8pm, Nov 16th 6-8pm, December meeting is TBA.

We need volunteers for speakers and topics so let's 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.



Lost Cottage at Lost Corner Preserve. Credit: Google Maps

in uncovering the complexities of high latitude molecular clouds, a relatively less explored area that has provided key information about the galactic environment beyond the main plane of the Milky Way.

As a dedicated educator and researcher, Dr. Magnani has guided numerous students and collaborated with colleagues on various projects, leaving a lasting impact on the field. He continues to share his knowledge and passion for astronomy as a guest speaker at events like our upcoming astronomy club meeting, where he will offer insights drawn from his extensive career.

Sunset on November 16th will be at 5:31 p.m. and the Elliott Trail main gate for incoming traffic closes to new entry at 7 p.m. If you are not a member and plan to arrive after 7 p.m., please make arrangements with a club member for access and exercise etiquette when driving on the field by using parking lights. If you need help driving on the field, please let someone know when you arrive.

Observing on the Jon Wood Astronomy Field

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.

After pulling up the dirt driveway from Elliot Trail and onto the astronomy field, please orient your vehicle to face the field exit gate so as not to cause problems with headlights when leaving. After pulling up the dirt driveway from Elliot Trail and onto the astronomy field, please orient your vehicle to face the field exit gate so as not to cause problems with headlights when leaving.

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.

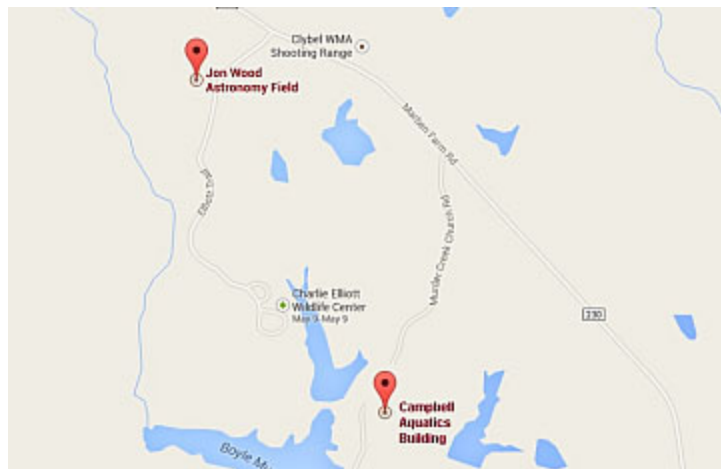
Please refrain from using white light on the field. Red headlamps are cheap and easy to find at your favorite store. They're even cheaper to make with a spare flashlight and red nail-polish on the lens.

For more information about Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, 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>



Credit: Google Maps

AAC September Meeting Report

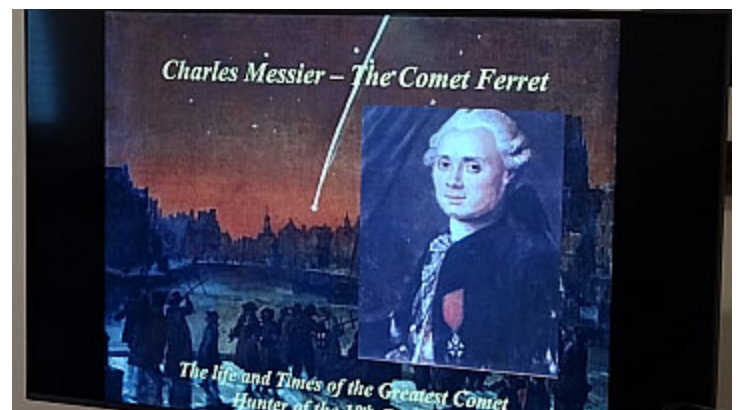
Photos by Tom Faber

The Atlanta Astronomy Club's September general meeting was held on Saturday, September 14, at our new location, the Lost Cottage at Lost Corner Preserve in Sandy Springs starting at 7:00PM. About 16 club members and guests were present.

AAC President David Lumpkin (photo below - standing in middle) presented some opening remarks. AAC Observing Chair Daniel Herron (at podium) talked about upcoming club events.

David then introduced our speaker AAC member Richard Jakiel (seated). Richard presented an interesting talk about the French astronomer Charles Messier and his career of hunting comets. During that career Messier discovered 13 comets, but now he is much more famous for his list of objects to avoid because they are not comets, than he is for his comet discoveries.

Join us at the Lost Cottage at 6:00PM on Saturday, October 19 for the next AAC General Meeting. The talk for this meeting is TBA.



The 2024 Peach State Star Gaze - Part 1

Photos by Tom Faber

The 2024 Peach State Star Gaze was like no other. On the Thursday night before the event, Hurricane Helene went through eastern Georgia, dumping large amounts of rain and strong winds downed many trees, taking power lines with them, throughout Georgia. The power went out at the Deerlick Astronomy Village and surrounding areas. Peach State Chair Peter Macumber managed to borrow a 220V generator to power the well pump and the bathrooms so we had water, bathrooms, and hot showers for the week. Two other borrowed generators powered the Internet access equipment in the check in building, and the refrigerator in the Atlanta Astronomy Club club house.

Monday night was mostly clear, with just a passing cloud or two. Tuesday and Wednesday nights were great with clear but the dew was heavy. Thursday night was again partly cloudy. Unfortunately Friday night and Saturday night were mostly cloudy.

The power finally came back on around 9 PM Friday evening, and none too soon. About an hour earlier the bathroom generator was shut down to be refueled, and it refused to start again!

Earlier Friday evening we had the brownie and ice cream social on the pavilion, thanks to Sharon Carruthers!

Saturday brought the talks and the door prize drawing. Our first speaker on Saturday was Steve Siedentop, who gave a talk at 11:30 AM about using 3-D printing to make telescope parts and other items useful to the astronomer.

Then Tellus Science Museum astronomer David Dundee presented a talk titled "Adventures in Astronomy". David first talked about the facilities at the Tellus Science Museum and the programs they do there. He then went on to talk about some of the things and phone calls he had to deal with during his career in New York, at the Fernbank Science Center, and Tellus.

Our keynote speaker was Pranvera Hyseni, the founder of Astronomy Outreach of Kosovo. Pran talked about what it was like growing up in Kosovo amid war and unrest, how she became interested in astronomy (seeing a solar eclipse), and her efforts to bring astronomy and other sciences to the people of Kosovo.

About an hour after Pran's talk the door prize drawing was held, with a number of people winning great door prizes.

And more good news: The Peach State Star Gaze will be held in 2025, so mark your calendars for the week of October 19 to October 26 for the 2025 PSSG!

On the following pages are some photos from the event. Be sure to check back next month for more photos from the 2024 PSSG, including the speakers, some of the door prize winners, and more. See you at the 2025 PSSG!





The Sagittarius Milky Way over the observing field on Tuesday evening, October 1. This was a 30 second exposure at ISO-3200 with an 135mm-18mm lens set at 18 mm on a Canon T5i DSLR.



Despite the lack of power, we still had an ice cream and brownie social Friday evening thanks to Sharon Carruthers!!



The International Space Station (lower trail going toward the south) and an airplane (going toward the northwest) cross paths in the western sky over the observing field on Wednesday evening, October 2. This was a 30 second exposure at ISO-3200 with an 135mm-18mm lens set at 18 mm on a Canon T5i DSLR.



Although clouds prevented much observing Friday evening, they did provide a consolation prize of a colorful sunset.



A colorful sunset with stars Saturday evening, October 5. The bright star above the trees on the right is Arcturus. This was a 30 second exposure at ISO-1600 with an 135mm-18mm lens set at 18 mm on a Canon T5i DSLR.



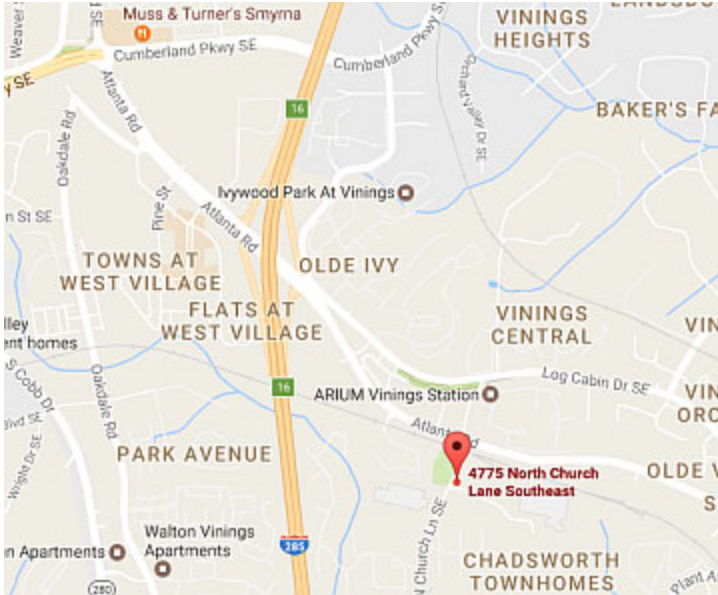
M27 (The Dumbbell Nebula) in Vulpecula by Eugene Rush

This image shows The Dumbbell Nebula which is a planetary nebula in the constellation Vulpecula. The image was made using an 8-inch Ritchey-Chretien telescope with a ZWO ASI071MC pro camera. The image consists of 24, 180-second subs and 10, 300-second subs taken from Sharpsburg GA on August 26, 2024.

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

The AAC Holiday Potluck 2024

Mark your calendars! The Atlanta Astronomy Club's annual Holiday Potluck will be held on Saturday, December 14, from 5PM-10PM at the Atlanta Freethought Society, Smyrna, GA. (See map below). More details will be presented as they become available.



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
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Elliott Chapter AL Liaison: David Whalen
Elliott Facilities Coordinator: Matt Harvey
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Treasurer@AtlantaAstronomy.org
PSSG Chairman: Peter Macumber pmacumber@nightsky.org
PSSG Co-Chair: Open
Sidewalk Astronomy: Open
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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

- Oct 17th, Thursday: Full Moon.
- Oct 19th, Saturday: **AAC Meeting, 6:00PM.**
- Oct 20th, Sunday: Orionids Meteor Shower Peaks.
- Oct 24th, Thursday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Nov 1st, Friday: New Moon.
- Nov 2, Saturday: **CE Chapter Observing at Jon Wood Astronomy Field 6:00PM.**
- Nov 3rd, Sunday: Daylight Saving Time ends at 2:00AM. Moon near Antares evening.
- Nov 4th, Monday: Southern Taurids Meteor Shower Peaks. Moon near Venus evening.
- Nov 9th, Saturday: Moon First Quarter.
- Nov 11th, Monday: Northern Taurids Meteor Shower Peaks.
- Nov 15th, Friday: Full Moon.
- Nov 16, Saturday: **AAC Meeting, 6:00PM. CE Chapter Meeting, 3:30PM.** Uranus at Opposition.
- Nov 17th, Sunday: Leonids Meteor Shower Peaks.
- Nov 22th, Friday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Nov 27th, Wednesday: Moon occults Spica morning.
- Dec 1st, Sunday: New Moon.
- Dec 8th, Sunday: Moon First Quarter.
- Dec 13th, Friday: Geminids Meteor Shower Peaks.
- Dec 14th, Saturday: **AAC Meeting & Holiday Potuck 5:00PM.**
- Dec 15th, Sunday: Full Moon.
- Dec 21st, Saturday: Ursids Meteor Shower Peaks.
- Dec 22th, Sunday: Moon Last Quarter.
- Dec 31st, Monday: New Moon.

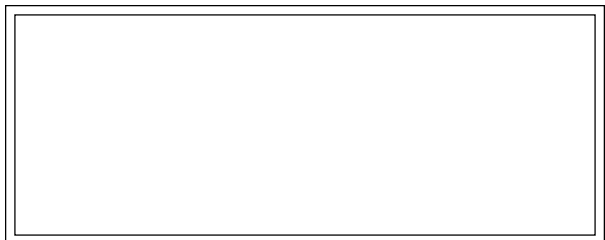
For more event listings and updates see the calendar at www.atlantaastronomy.org

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 November is Sunday, October 27. Submissions received after the deadline will go in the following issue.**



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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.

The Focal Point

