

Astrofiles

Auburn Astronomical Society E-Newsletter

July, 2009

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Events Calendar

To avoid possible holiday conflicts, we've slipped this month's meeting back one week to **Friday, July 10, at 7:45PM, in room 215** of [Davis Hall](#), the [Aerospace Engineering Building](#). The doors to the building automatically lock at 8:00PM, so if you're running late, rap on the door nearest our meeting room and we'll let you in.

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.

Our new moon star party this month will be on **Saturday, July 18** at [Cliff Hill's farm](#), clouds permitting of course.

[July 6](#) ISS Pass 09:43CDT, Magnitude -2.2, SW to NE

[July 7](#) ISS Pass 08:32 Magnitude -2.8, SW to NE

[July 8](#) ISS Pass 08:57 Magnitude -1.9, SW to NE

July 10, July meeting **7:45PM, in room 215** of [Davis Hall](#),

July 11 - Launch of Space Shuttle Endeavour at 6:39 p.m. CDT

“The goals of Endeavour's mission are to attach an experiment platform to a Japanese research module, to replace aging solar array batteries, to deliver critical spare parts and to ferry Kopra to the station to replace Japanese astronaut Koichi Wakata.”

<http://www.spaceflightnow.com/shuttle/sts127/090617scrub/>

July 18, Dark sky star party at [Cliff Hill's farm](#)

July 20, Forty-year anniversary of Armstrong and Aldrin landing on the Moon.

Late July - Second science data download from Kepler

October 11th - 18th [Peach State Star Gaze 2009](#) will be held at the Deerlick Astronomy Village

October 14th - 18 [DSRSG](#) Wednesday, at [The Feliciana Retreat Center](#), in Norwood, LA

October 17, Anyone up for a trip to Conecuh National Forest?

Public Stargazes

Kumon Math and Reading Center Stargaze Canceled

Carrie Ingram, an intern at the Kumon Math and Reading Center in Auburn, writes:

I appreciate all of your work to help us find a way to stargaze! I think that the children would love this opportunity; however, the instructor here does not think that we should continue with this plan. We are not having a good turn-out at our events this summer, and so we don't think that we would be able to get enough students together to do this. I will keep all the information that you have sent me, and if in the future we would be able to get a group together, I will encourage them to find a place, and then contact you.

Thanks,

Carrie Ingram

CPODD Stargaze Report

The Center is called "CPODD" - Center for Pediatric Onset Demyelinating Disease. They are funded by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and provide comprehensive care to kids at Children's Hospital in Birmingham. MS is very rare in kids and often these families have never met another going through the same thing. MS is a chronic often disabling illness and there is no cure.

Back in March, Sarah M. Dowdy, the coordinator for a center at UAB that cares for kids diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, asked if we could share the night sky with her group at their weekend long "Reaching for the Stars Together" retreat at Children's Harbor on Lake Martin. We had a group of 80-100 guests at the Saturday, June 20 event. Because summer solstice would be the next day, sunset on Saturday was late -- 7:55 PM, resulting in the sky not being dark enough for telescopic viewing until about 45 minutes later, so we put off the start observing until 9:00PM. By then, the clear day that had reached an obscenely hot 106 degree heat index at mid-day had cooled to a tolerable 83 degrees. The haze dissipated with the lower temperatures showing black skies and brilliant stars. Even with fairly limited horizons and some local artificial light interference, we were able to share many of the summer showpieces with the guests. Visitors observed Saturn, binary stars Gamma Leonis (Algieba) and Epsilon Lyrae (double-double), globular clusters: M-3, M-13, and the Ring Nebulae: (M-57) among others.

Thanks to the following for their time and telescopes:

Allen Screws, 10-inch home made Dobsonian
Russell Whigham, Celestron C-11 SCT
Scott Thompson and Brent Holman, 7-inch AstroPhysics refractor
Elliot Errera, AAS 8-inch loaner
Jim Garner, 8-inch Meade SCT
Frank Ward, 12-inch Lightbridge Dobsonian
Everett Leonard, 10-inch Orion Reflector
David McConnell, 8-inch Celestron SCT
Ray Kunert, Sky 90 Takahashi refractor
Michael Pastorett, 114mm Goto reflector
Stephanie & Quinton Doss, ETX-70 and 60mm refractor
Aniket Shirgaokar
John Howard

See images at our [CPODD stargaze](#) Web page. If you try to access it from the main page, it's under "Field Trips"/"Educational Outreach"/"CPODD".

Web Links

[U.S. Physicians Join Light-Pollution Fight](http://www.skyandtelescope.com/news/48814012.html) <<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/news/48814012.html>>

[Animation of Europa is transiting Jupiter.](http://jupiter.cstoneind.com) <<http://jupiter.cstoneind.com>>

Member News

At our June meeting, recent new member -- 14-year-old, **Michael Pastorett**, demonstrated his precocious knowledge the universe. He shared some findings on the discovery of a mysterious object known as Hanny's Voorwerp, with an obvious mastery of the subject.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanny%27s_Voorwerp
<http://www.galaxyzooblog.org/2008/01/31/the-mystery-of-the-voorwerp-deepens/>
<http://www.galaxyzooblog.org/2008/01/18/more-on-the-voorwerp/>
<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/community/skyblog/newsblog/45517657.html>

Also visiting for the first time were **Augustus and Debra Johnson**. Augustus' father was an astronomer at Lowell Observatory, where they lived when he lived in Flagstaff as a child. His personal telescope collection includes a Coulter 13-inch Odyssey-I, and a hybrid LX3/LX200 Meade SCT. They previously lived in Tucson AZ. We hope to be seeing more of our new guests.

John Tatarchuk has completed his undergraduate work at Auburn and will be going to the University of Texas, Austin to pursue his PhD. The good news is that John will be a little closer to his favorite observing spot near Fort Davis TX. The bad news (for us) is that we'll be losing our most skilled observer – not to mention eyepiece time with his 25-inch telescope.

Please join me in welcoming our newest member, **Tim Hornsby**, from Wetumpka.

Space News

John B. Zachry

Below is a table of when we can see the International Space Station pass over our area. I used predictions for Auburn. I.S.S. passes over Montgomery and West Point should be at most a few minutes off. If the skies are clear, we will have an excellent opportunity to see the International Space Station with its crew of 6 astronauts pass over our area a number of times between July 6 and July 12. Currently Auburn begins to get dark after 8 p.m. at night but because the International Space Station is so bright people there may be able to see the I.S.S. pass over area even during daylight hours. The International Space Station is approximately 210 miles above the Earth traveling at a speed of approximately 17,240 mph. The I.S.S. will have the appearance of a very bright fast moving star easily seen without binoculars or a telescope.

See the ISS in daylight!

Some observers have reported that as the ISS approaches completion, it can now be seen in daylight. It is unlikely to be visible when the Sun is high, but when the Sun is low in the sky, you may well be able to see a high pass of the ISS. Please click [here](#) to get a list of all passes for the next 10 days.

<http://www.heavens-above.com/?Session=kebgfgfcfglcejhjpdkcipi>

International Space Station (Auburn Times)		
Date	Time	Direction in Sky
Monday, July 6	9:41 p.m. - 9:46 p.m.	SW - NE
Tuesday, July 7	8:30 p.m. - 8:36 p.m.	SW - NE
Wednesday, July 8	4:31 a.m. - 4:37 a.m.	NW - SE
Wednesday, July 8	8:55 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	SW - NE
Thursday, July 9	7:44 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.	SW - NE
Friday, July 10	3:45 a.m. - 3:51 a.m.	NW - SE
Friday, July 10	8:09 p.m. - 8:14 p.m.	SW - NE
Saturday, July 11	6:58 p.m. - 7:03 p.m.	SW - NE
Sunday, July 12	2:59 a.m. - 3:05 a.m.	NW - SE
Sunday, July 12	7:22 p.m. - 7:28 p.m.	SW - NE

On the Tube

Tuesday, [July 07](#), 2009 at 8:00PM, PBS, [Nova Sciencenow](#)

This week on Nova science Now, meet astronomers on the brink of finding another Earth in our galaxy, using a new planet-hunting machine: the Kepler telescope.

*Wed, [July 8](#), 2009 at 8:00PM, PBS **Discovering Alabama: Alabama in Space***

Travel to space has given us new a perspective on our planet and new knowledge about it. Forty years after Marshall Space Flight Center helped put a man on the moon, join Doug Phillips to see what the journey has helped us discover right here on Earth. And learn about Alabama's role in space exploration today. (Sunday's airing was followed by a repeat of a previous episode of Discovering Alabama night hiking that features a lot of astronomy tips.

Hope to see everyone at the meeting,

Russell