

Astrofiles

Auburn Astronomical Society E-Newsletter

February, 2010

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- ### Events Calendar

We'll hold our February meeting on **Friday, February 5**, 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, February 13**, at [Cliff Hill's farm](#)

February 05, February meeting, 7:45 PM, [in room 215](#) of [Davis Hall](#)
February 12, Winter Constellation Class at the Thomas Demonstration Forest (see below)
February 13, Star party at [Cliff Hill's farm](#)
February 18, Free lecture by Dr. King at 7:00 p.m. at the Wetumpka Civic Center
February 20, Wetumpka Crater Tours (see below)
April 17, [Forest Ecology Preserve](#) stargaze at the Mary Olive Thomas Demonstration Forest
April 24, [National Astronomy Day](#)

Winter Constellation Class

Friday, February 12th, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Enjoy an evening under the beautiful winter skies of Auburn at the Mary Olive Thomas Demonstration Forest on Moore's Mill Road. Explore the winter constellations with Jennifer Lolley of the Louise Kreher Forest Ecology Preserve. Learn some of the myths and legends surrounding these constellations, including Orion the Hunter, The Pleiades (Seven Sisters), Canis Major (Big Dog), Canis Minor (Little Dog), Taurus the Bull, Perseus and Andromeda and more. Rain date is Saturday, February 13th, at 7:00 p.m. Dress warmly and bring a flashlight.

Admission is \$2 for members, \$3 for non-members. All proceeds will be donated to help Haiti. For more information, call Jennifer at 334-707-6512. [\[Editors note: Ron Sanders, instructor at Southern Union State Community College in Opelika, is teaching an Astronomy](#)

class online, had written Rhon to ask if AAS could help his students to become familiar with constellations, learn the difference between seeing a star and a planet, and so forth. We referred his request to Jennifer. She has graciously agreed to step up and do this. Thanks Jennifer! RDW]

Please Welcome...

Please join me in welcoming **Abhijeet Deshpande**, Assistant Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, to AAS. Abhijeet writes:

Thank you for welcoming me into the group. I am a proud member of the AAS now. I really enjoyed spending time with like minded people in the meeting. My father in law loaned me his old 60mm refractor telescope. The name of the manufacturer is JASON. The telescope has an equatorial mount. I set it up on the deck in my backyard, but was unable to see anything meaningful. The sky was clear and there were so many stars in the sky.

We've also heard from **Shaun Bice** of Montgomery, who has expressed an interest in attending our meetings and star parties to get advice on entering the hobby of amateur astronomy.

Wetumpka Crater Tours

Amanda M. Brasington

The Crater Tours are Feb. 20 at 8:30, 9:30, 10:30, 11:30 and 1:00.(The 1:00 is almost full so please indicate an alternate time in case there are no more availabilities.) The tours last about two hours. The first hour is a lecture about the Crater and the second hour the group will be loaded onto vans and taken to several locations within the Crater. The cost is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. In order to reserve your spots I must receive your payment first. You can mail a check or cash to P.O. Box 117, Wetumpka, AL 36092. Checks can be made payable to WICC (Wetumpka Impact Crater Commission). The sooner I receive payment the better chance you have of being able to select your desired tour time. When you send your payment please indicate which time you would like to attend the tour. I will send you a confirmation card in the mail once I have received your payment. Reservations must be made no later than Feb. 12. On the day of the tour please arrive at the Wetumpka Civic Center, 410 S. Main St., about 15 minutes before your scheduled time. I hope you can join us and if you have any additional questions please let me know.

There is also a free lecture given by Dr. King on Feb. 18 at 7:00 p.m. at the Wetumpka Civic Center. He will discuss the Crater and his new research findings. Reservations are not necessary for this.

Thank you,

Amanda M. Brasington
Tourism & Recreation Coordinator
Elmore County Economic Development Authority
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abrasington@elmoreco.org
www.visitelmoreco.com

[Wetumpka Impact Crater Tours](http://www.visitelmoreco.com/pages/calendar/cal_1002.asp#2/20/2010)

<http://www.visitelmoreco.com/pages/calendar/cal_1002.asp#2/20/2010>

Telescopes for Sale

18-inch Obsession Telescope

Hope all is well for you! I'm enjoying Ole Miss, yet am very busy reviewing final drawings for our first research park building which will be completed in the summer of 2011.

I don't know whether this might be of interest to an AAS member or whether it's a fair price, but our Rainwater Observatory newsletter had this announcement in it: 18" OBSESSION TELESCOPE FOR SALE

Two north Mississippi telescope enthusiasts are upgrading to a larger scope and selling their 18" Obsession Classic Dob. It is 4 years old and has had the primary recoated just a year ago. They are asking \$5,500. It comes with several accessories as well. Contact Ronnie Harris at rbhsue@bellsouth.net for more information and photos.

Syd Spain, Ph.D., AIA, AICP
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The University of Mississippi Research Park
100 Barr Hall, P.O. Box 907, University, MS 38677
662-259-0002 Office
662-915-7577 Fax
sydspain@olemiss.edu
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Celestron CM-1100 SCT w/ CI700 mount \$2500.00

With Dual Drives. Includes all original equipment and packaging.

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- Meade illuminated reticle 12mm
- Meade series 4000 focal reducer
- Meade nebular broad band filter
- Meade polarizing filter
- Orion Solar filter
- Dew Cap
- Telrad
- Eyepiece and accessory case

Call 256-431-8552 or email sarah_ala@yahoo.com

See a photograph of this telescope, and all of the others for sale, on the [AAS Astronomical Exchange](#) page.

Web Links

Check out the Astronomical League's YouTube videos at <http://www.astroleague.org/>
Disregard the dates for the ISS passages. I think you'll enjoy the others.

Scroll down to the January 31, 2010 entry of Chris Go's <http://mars.cstoneind.com>. Syrtis Major is rising on the left. Note the 1 hour animation.

Celestron's 50 Year Celebration <http://www.celestron.com/50/documentary.php>
It's just a trailer yet but should be deeply interesting to all SCT-heads, whether orange or blue.

Hubble Sees Suspected Asteroid Collision http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2010/02feb_asteroidcollision.htm?list125104

Bahtinov Focusing Mask Generator <http://astrojargon.net/MaskGenerator.aspx>

Dark Sky Legislation Study Group Jim McLaughlin

A bill will be introduced soon to form a legislative study group for the purpose of making recommendations to the legislature on regulating light pollution. This should give the subject a little more standing among rank and file legislators who have never considered it. We tried to get this done last session but were too late getting started and the bill was caught in the end-of-session snarl. I am writing you all to ask for suggestions, nominations, or volunteers to serve on the study group. This won't likely be much of a time commitment as meetings may be via electronic media if they occur at all. There are many model ordinances to use as resources available on the International Dark Sky Association website, and we have the basics of a model bill already started. If you have approached your legislator or senator about this topic and think they might be sympathetic, let us know. Some clubs have a light pollution committee or liaison person and we'd like very much to give knowledgeable amateur astronomers a platform to put their expertise to work.

Please send me all the names and contact information you can.

Jim McLaughlin
Auburn Astronomical Society

P.S. My brother, Rep. Jeff McLaughlin, D-Guntersville, will be facing re-election this fall. If he is defeated we will need new sponsorship for our cause. If you have any contacts in Marshall County, please encourage them to support him. Thanks.

[Editor's note: Jim has contacted all of Alabama's astronomical societies to solicit support for this legislation. Thanks to Jim for his continued efforts on this. RDW]

2010 Dues Reminder

AAS memberships (\$20.00/\$10.00 for full-time students) were due in January. Make checks payable to "Auburn Astronomical Society". If you're unable to attend this month's meeting, mail your dues to:

Auburn Astronomical Society
c/o John B. Zachry
501 Summerfield Road
West Point, GA 31833

Your dues allow us to purchase DVDs for programs, continue our affiliation with the Astronomical League, and to buy, upgrade, and maintain our loaner scope program and tape/DVD library.

We've never made a big deal about membership and encourage "AAS friends" to attend and participate in meetings, star parties, and public events. But, there are a few benefits restricted to members:

- Discounts on purchases from Oceanside Photo & Telescope
 - Discounts on subscriptions for Astronomy and Sky & Telescope magazines
 - Access to the society's extensive video tape, book, and DVD library.
 - Access to the society's Loaner Scopes
 - Because the Auburn Astronomical Society is affiliated with the Astronomical League members are entitled to enjoy all of the benefits afforded to League members, including observing programs and quarterly issues of ***The Reflector***.
- If this will be your first time to join, please print out the Membership Application form, and include it with your check. We need your address to ensure that you'll receive your ***Reflector***.

Special thanks to those members who do not attend on a regular basis but still want to help us out by paying AAS. membership dues.

Hope to see everyone at the meeting,

Russell

