



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

November 2020

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History



Outreach at the Camino Real Marketplace. Photo credit: Tom Totton.

OUTREACH SUMMARY

Because of the ongoing pandemic, there was no public telescope outreach in October. Please stay safe and healthy by wearing masks, washing your hands frequently, and practicing physical distancing.

OUTREACH EVENTS

The SBAU radio hour on KZSB 1290AM at 9 AM on the second and fourth Monday of each month will continue as a phone-in show, thanks to the dedication of Baron Ron Herron. Otherwise, there will be no SBAU meetings, public telescope outreach, or school events.

Although the Museum has opened for a limited set of outdoor activities, star parties and club meetings are as yet too contact-intensive for this stage of the pandemic.

THE SKY FOR NOVEMBER

Start November by falling back and enjoying an extra hour of observing. Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 AM on Sunday, November 1. This is a quiet month for watching our favorite winter objects

climb into view, and hoping we have a very thankful Thanksgiving. Be sure to vote, it's important!

On November 10, Mercury reaches its greatest western elongation, so you'll be able to catch it low in the dawn sky for much of the month, and on the 13th the waning crescent Moon will be above it.

Keep your eye on Saturn and Jupiter all month as they converge toward a spectacular conjunction low in the sunset near Winter Solstice in December.

The Leonid meteor shower peaks at 4 AM on November 17 with no interference from the Moon, though now it is a relatively sparse shower compared to its extravagant performances near the turn of the millennium.

End the month on November 30 with a partial penumbral lunar eclipse. All 4 hours or so are visible to us, but the Earth's penumbra will most likely only be detectable for about an hour centered on the peak of the eclipse at 01:43 PST.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jerry Wilson

As cabin fever slowly creeps up on us due to COVID restrictions, we are collectively finding different outlets for our social needs. There are several live discussion groups on astronomy streaming on the internet and Facebook. The SBAU has, with SBMNH encouragement, restarted a Zoom version of our Tuesday evening Telescope Workshop. Joe Doyle hosted the first two sessions. I took care of the third session. Now they are permanently under the expert guidance of our Webmaster, Tom Totton. About six people have attended the meetings each time. Good discussions, and it's good to connect with fellow amateurs.

One of our regulars, Mike Chibnik, who moved to Rio Vista near the Bay Area, gives regular reports

on his progress toward completing his 14-inch mirror. Satisfied with the mirror's final figure, Mike sent the mirror off to the coating lab. Mike continues to create automated aids to help record and reduce Foucault test data. He has built a small observatory in his community and started an interest group, though it's now going virtual just as we have.



Mike Chibnik imaged Mars recently from his backyard observatory in Rio Vista, California.

On the personal front I trundled my 6-inch f/9 refractor out to the patio in late June to image comet NEOWISE hanging low on my northwest horizon, using a Canon DSLR. I also have two telescopes I have been working on that have moved to the front burner in this pandemic. One is an 18-inch astrograph, and the other a 14.5-inch corrected Dall Kirkham (CDK). The carbon fiber tube for the 18-inch arrived this week. I'm sending the drawings to get the last two parts made. Then it's assembly time. The 14.5 CDK is running into problems as I develop arthritis in one wrist.

I'm looking forward to a COVID vaccine, probably next year, so we can resume our outreach, and meetings and also to the spring CalStar campout at Lake San Antonio. In the meantime, please stay safe and healthy.

ARTS CORNER



"Last Night." Photo credit: Barbara Rose Sherman.

The Constellation Orion

I'm delighted to see you,
old friend,
lying there in your hammock
over the next town.
You were the first person
my son was to meet in the heavens.
He's sleeping now,
his head like a small sun in my lap.
Our car whizzes along in the night.
If he were to awake, he'd say,
"Look, Daddy, there's Old Ryan!"
but I won't wake him.
He's mine for the weekend,
Old Ryan, not yours.

Ted Kooser

Selecting a Reader

First, I would have her be beautiful,
and walking carefully up on my poetry
at the loneliest moment of an afternoon,
her hair still damp at the neck
from washing it. She should be wearing
a raincoat, an old one, dirty
from not having money enough for the cleaners.
She will take out her glasses, and there
in the bookstore, she will thumb
over my poems, then put the book back
up on its shelf. She will say to herself,
“For that kind of money, I can get
my raincoat cleaned.” And she will.

Ted Kooser

IN MEMORIAM

On a sad note we announce the passing of Richard DuPrey. Early in his life Richard studied piano at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Later he became interested in jazz and played non-professionally in the Cleveland area. More recently he joined several of us as a regular member of the “Radio Lunch Bunch” at the “Judge for Yourself” restaurant every Friday. Riding his bicycle to the restaurant from his boat in the Santa Barbara Harbor, he graced us all with his gentle humor and laughter. Richard will be sorely missed.



“Don’t drop this on your foot or you’ll walk like a duck.”
Photo credit: Tom Totton.

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The Astronomical Unit

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November 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 DST ENDS!	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 TECH TALK KZSB (AM1290) 9-10 AM	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 LEONIDS	18	19	20	21
22	23 TECH TALK KZSB (AM1290) 9-10 AM	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 PENUMBRAL LUNAR ECLIPSE					