



AU AstroNews

The Newsletter of the Astronomical Unit

March 2023

Sponsored by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History



Setting up for a "Third Friday" outreach on the deck of the Westmont Observatory. Photo credit: Tom Totton.

OUTREACH SUMMARY

Since the last newsletter, certified AU and SBMNH volunteers Brandy Ackerman, Krissie Cook, Raf Cottom, Tim Crawford, Tessa Flanagan, Sean Kelly, Pat & Chuck McPartlin, Janet & Martin Meza, Charles Schueler, Tom Totton, Tom Whittemore, and Andre Yew showed cool stuff in the sky to 1422 people, helped by Dr. Kihlstrom and Dr. Ito at Westmont.

SBAU volunteers must be fully vaccinated and boosted, and have undergone the SBMNH background check to participate in outreach activities. To get vetted, contact SBMNH Volunteer Manager Rebecca Coulter <rcoulter@sbnature2.org>. It's quick and painless.

OUTREACH EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, SETUP 5:30 PM

Telescopes for St. Andrews Preschool, 4575 Auhay Drive, with entry off Arroyo. We set up at the end of the parking lot.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 7PM

Quick planetarium show, then our monthly meeting in Farrand Auditorium at SBMNH. Our speaker will be Rafael Cottom of SBMNH who will talk

about his research at UCSC concerning metal-poor stars.

MONDAY, MARCH 6, SETUP 6 PM

Telescopes for SB Community Academy, 850 Portesuello Ave in Santa Barbara. We set up between the parking lot and the playing fields on the south side of campus, next to the picnic tables.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, SETUP 4 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at Hollister Elementary School, 4950 Anita Lane. We set up on the blacktop, with access through a gate at the end of Ashton Street.

FRIDAY, MARCH 10, SETUP 6 PM

Slide show and telescopes for an astronomy night at Goleta Valley Junior High, 6100 Stow Canyon Road.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 5 PM

SBAU Monthly Planning Meeting on Zoom.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, SETUP 6:30 PM

Monthly Public Star Party at SBMNH, next to Palmer Observatory.

SUNDAY, MARCH 12 - DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, SETUP 5 PM

Telescopes for Science Night at La Patera Elementary School, 555 N. La Patera Lane.

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, SETUP 6 PM

Monthly Public Telescope Night at Westmont's Keck Observatory, next to the athletic fields. Wear green!

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2:24 PM - SPRING BEGINS

FRIDAY, MARCH 24, SETUP 6 PM

Star Party at Los Flores Ranch Park, 6245 Dominion Road in Santa Maria. We enter via a dirt road to the north past the main entrance - look for the sign.

TUESDAY, MARCH 28, SETUP 7 PM

Telescope Tuesday in the plaza by the theater at Camino Real Marketplace.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jerry Wilson

Surprises in Jezero Crater

Perseverance landed on Mars in February 2021. As of early February of this year, the rover had gathered 18 samples, and deposited half for a future potential return to Earth. Since landing, Percy has probed three different types of terrain and helped put together the story of what has happened in Jezero, and it's pretty complex.

Volcanic rock is just one of the surprises the rover has uncovered. Hundreds of researchers scouring the data Perseverance has sent back so far now have some clues to how the crater has evolved over time. This basin has witnessed flowing lava, at least one lake that lasted perhaps tens of thousands of years, running rivers that created a mud-and-sand delta and heavy flooding that brought rocks from faraway locales.

Jezero has a more dynamic past than scientists had anticipated. That volatility has slowed the search for sedimentary rocks, but it has also pointed to new alcoves where ancient life could have taken hold. Perseverance has turned up carbon-bearing materials, the basis of life on Earth, in every sample it has abraded.

[Comments were excerpted from February 25, 2023 issue of Science News article by Liz Kreusi. Tune in Monday February 27, to SBAU Astro Hour live on YouTube at 11:00 AM for an in depth discussion with illustrations.]

NEW MEMBERSHIP DUES LEVEL

The SBAU has a new membership dues level! Starting in 2023, members only pay annual dues of \$20 per household - no more Individual or Family levels. If you have any questions, please let 2023 SBAU Secretary Chuck and Pat McPartlin know at either secretary@sbau.org or 805-964-8201 and leave a message.



Andre Yew framed this image of his telescope with the constellation, Orion, at a recent SBMNH outreach.

(As I stare at this wonderful image captured by Andre, I think about our hobby and how unique it is. In the image you can see stars that are hundreds of light-years distant. This faraway light is captured in the present by our time machines. Our telescopes. And we share this light with the public at each outreach. How many hobbies can make this claim?)

ARTS CORNER

After a Heavy Snow

Ted Kooser

I watched, from my window, a thin man of indeterminate age – for only part of his face, in dark glasses, was revealed by the hood of his jacket – watched him kick past my house in shoes so encrusted with snow that all I could see of them was that they weren't suited for winter, with low tops, and what appeared to be bare ankles or soaked white stockings, yet he kicked at the snow as if with great pleasure, big rooster tails flying ahead, while behind him he pulled the short sled of his shadow, and he kicked his way past and was gone. And then, a little later,

I watched him come back, though this time with his shadow in front, as he nudged it along with the toe of one foot, as I'd once done myself, pushing a sled out ahead, both of those legs probably numb now and raw as a rash at the ankles, and he came and he went, and I leaned out to watch him kick past, all the way to the corner.

A Floating Bottle

Ted Kooser

River within it, river without,
it bobs downstream, its long neck
catching the sun. It carries a cup
of muddy water from somewhere
upriver, and shoulders its way
through the light like a woman
with an apron-load of dirty onions,
or like a drunk, pitching forward,
about to be sick. Before the mind
can take it in (in every way it is
or might be), it is gone, one glint
among the many, far away.



I don't know, Joe. They do seem kind of big for a game of ring toss. Photo credit: Tom Totton.

AU Information Box

President: Jerry Wilson 968-4056
jerryawilsonphd@gmail.com

Vice President: Ron Herron
vicepresident@sbau.org

Secretary: Pat&Chuck McPartlin 964-8201
secretary@sbau.org

Treasurer: Colin Taylor 967-8140
dancingmagpie@cox.net

Equipment: Art Harris 968-4017
n6is@cox.net

Outreach: Chuck McPartlin 964-8201
outreach@sbau.org

Newsletter: Tom Whittemore 687-2025
kometes@aol.com

Webmaster: Tom Totton 562-8795
webmaster@sbau.org

Merch Manager: Pat McPartlin 964-8201
parsnip7@yahoo.com

SBMNH Astronomy Programs Specialist

Krissie Cook 682-4711 ext. 164
kcook@sbnature2.org

AU AstroNews, the monthly publication of the **Astronomical Unit (AU)**, is mailed to the AU membership. For publishing consideration for the next month, submit astronomical items by the 20th of the current month!

AU annual membership rate: \$20

AU mailing address:

Astronomical Unit
c/o Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
2559 Puesta Del Sol Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2998

On the Web: <http://www.sbau.org>

The Astronomical Unit

c/o Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
 2559 Puesta Del Sol Road
 Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2998

March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 ST. ANDREWS PRESCHOOL 5:30PM	2	3 "HYBRID" AU MONTHLY MEETING 7PM	4
5	6 SB COMMUNITY ACADEMY 6PM	7 FULL MOON	8 HOLLISTER ELEMENTARY 4PM	9	10 GOLETA VALLEY JUNIOR HIGH 6PM	11 ZOOM PLANNING MEETING 5PM STAR PARTY 6:30PM
12 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS TODAY	13	14 LQ MOON	15	16 LA PATERA ELEMENTARY 5PM	17 WESTMONT PUBLIC STAR PARTY 6PM	18
19	20 SPRING BEGINS THIS AFTERNOON	21 NEW MOON	22	23	24 LOS FLORES RANCH 6PM	25
26	27	28 FQ MOON CAMINO REAL MARKETPLACE 7PM	29	30	31	