



ASTROFILES

Auburn Astronomical Society Newsletter

January 2017

John Wingard - Secretary/Treasurer - Auburn Astronomical Society - jwin1048@gmail.com

A belated Happy New Year to all. I hope that everyone had a good holiday season to spend with family and friends. Now lets get started with some information on 2017 meeting schedules.

AAS Meeting Notice

Well, we started off the new year with our first meeting cancellation on Friday, January 6. There was a threat of possible snow/ice conditions that evening so we decided to cancel the meeting since a number of our members have to drive a considerable distance to the meeting location in Auburn. Hopefully we will be able to get back on track for the February meeting which will be **Friday, February 3, 2017**. As usual, the meeting will start at 7:45 PM CT and we will meet in Room 215 of Davis Hall (Aerospace Engineering) on the AU campus. More details about the specific location of the meeting space can be found on our web page:

<http://www.auburnastro.org>

2017 AAS Meeting Schedule

The planned schedule of AAS meetings for 2017 has been put together and is presented below. This schedule is in a different format than previous versions in that it is more visual in nature with the complete 2017 calendar shown. As in the past, we always try to meet on the first Friday of each month, but that is not always possible, primarily due to the fact that our meeting room is on the AU campus. When the AU football season gets underway each fall, there are often several first Fridays that we try to avoid due to the large numbers of football fans in town for the home games. Available parking during those times is a major problem. Also note two other special events during the year. First is National Astronomy Day on Saturday, April 29 and the other is the "Great American Total Solar Eclipse" on Monday, August 21.

2017

January

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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30						

May

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28	29	30	31			

June

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July

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October





Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

-  **AU Home Football Games (includes "A Day" on April 8)**
-  **Proposed AAS Meeting Nights**
-  **Astronomy Day (April 29, 2017)**
-  **Total Solar Eclipse (August 21, 2017)**

2017 AAS Dues Reminder

Our annual membership dues cycle begins on January 1 of each year. Now is the time for renewing your AAS dues for 2017. A number of members have already renewed, but there are quite a few that have not. Annual dues are \$20.00 and help us to cover various club expenses throughout the year. Paid-up members are automatically enrolled as members of the Astronomical League, the national organization representing astronomy clubs. They will receive the quarterly AL "Reflector." An AAS membership form is included at the end of this newsletter for your convenience. You can pay your dues at a club meeting or simply mail them to me at the address listed on the form. Also, if you are not an AAS member, please accept our invitation to join us!

Recent Activities

The AAS was recently asked to help with an event at the Gayle Planetarium in Montgomery, AL on Friday, January 20, 2017. A youth group was scheduled to spend the night at the planetarium and it was hoped that some telescopes could be set up outside to give the kids some views of the sky. AAS members Russell Whigham, Frank Ward and Ray Kunert graciously volunteered to come and bring their scopes for the event. According to a report by Russell, they were able to see some objects in spite of some pesky clouds. Although Mars and Venus had already moved behind the trees by viewing time, they were able to view the Orion nebula, the Pleiades, and M-35. Frank also explained the differences in the types of scopes that were represented. Afterwards, everyone was treated to s'mores from a fire pit and as usual, Rick and the planetarium staff were great hosts. This is a wonderful example of astronomy outreach to the public and hopefully it may inspire some of these kids to pursue additional interests in science and astronomy.

Wetumpka Meteor Crater

How many of you are aware that we have a meteor crater practically in our own backyard? The historic Wetumpka Meteor Crater is the result of an event that happened approximately 85 million years ago where the city of Wetumpka now sits. The event which occurred in what was then a shallow sea, created a 5-mile wide crater. Dr. David King, professor of Geology at Auburn University periodically conducts lectures about the event and the City of Wetumpka offers tours of the impact site. On the following page is a complete schedule of the next lecture and site tours on March 2-3, 2017. Some events are open only to students and teachers, but others are open to the public. Contact and registration information is included in the news release to follow.

Wetumpka Crater School Tours Set for March 3, 2017

An eighty five million year old crater is something to see. It is educational and historic. All Alabama students need to know and understand how this phenomenon was formed and how important it is scientifically. In March, local students will be able to study and tour the Wetumpka Impact Crater.

Near the end of the "Age of Dinosaurs", a very large meteor struck the area, where the city of Wetumpka now sits. This occurred when it was covered with a shallow sea. The impact created a five-mile wide crater that was confirmed as an impact crater in 1998 by Dr. David King Jr., Professor of Geology, Auburn University.

Annually the Wetumpka Impact Crater Commission and the City of Wetumpka sponsor several Crater events, a public lecture by Dr David King Jr. and tours for students and the public. Our tours on Friday are for school students only and Saturday includes public tours of the Crater.

School groups can tour the Crater exhibit any weekday by appointment. It is located in the City Administrative Building and will hold about 40 students at a time. Guides are available for tours, also by appointment.

Dr. King will conduct a free public lecture on the science of the Crater on Thursday, March 2nd at 7:00 pm in the City Administrative Building upstairs, Main Street. This is an excellent opportunity to hear how scientists have proven the size and scope of the impact and get an update on Dr King's research. The lecture is open to all as a review of research and more detail about the science. Students are welcome.

On Friday, March 3rd, the Student Crater Tours will be about 1 ½ hours long, starting at 9:00am. School buses cannot go in some of the tour areas. The tour will be divided into two parts, (1) orientation and (2) the tour. Total cost for participants is \$10 each.

All teachers will receive one free guidebook. Additional guidebooks can be purchased for \$5. The tours are not recommended for pre-school or young children. Our Saturday tour price is \$20 for adults, \$10 for children up to 12, accompanied by an adult.

School tour lectures begin at 9:00am, 10:30am, and 12:30pm. The van tours load immediately following the lecture. We require one adult chaperone for every 12 students. Our van drivers and guides cannot handle discipline of students. Our tour space is limited to only 60 students and 5 adults per tour time and must be reserved by February 24th.

Reservations are required. Do not bring more people than you pay and reserve space for. All participants need to meet at the Wetumpka City Administrative Building, 406 Main Street, 15 minutes prior to their tour time. There is a park for lunch nearby.

For information and reservations, contact: Marilee Tankersley, Tour Chair

Wetumpka Impact Crater Commission
625 Jasmine Hill Road
Wetumpka, AL 36093
(334)567-4637



Auburn Astronomical Society
Membership Application Form

Name:

Address:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Date of Application* ____/____/____

E-mail:

Telescope(s):

Area(s) of special interest:

Enclose: \$20.00 for regular membership, effective January 1*. *Full-Time* student membership is half the Regular rate.

* If you are a *new* member joining after January, refer to the prorated dues table below:

Jan \$20.00	Feb \$18.33	Mar \$16.66	Apr \$14.99	May \$13.33	Jun \$11.66
Jul \$10.00	Aug \$8.33	Sep \$6.66	Oct \$4.99	Nov \$2.33	Dec \$1.66

Make checks payable to: Auburn Astronomical Society and return this application to:

Auburn Astronomical Society
c/o John Wingard, Secretary/Treasurer
#5 Wexton Court
Columbus, GA 31907

For questions about your dues or membership status contact: jwin1048@gmail.com