

President's Message

by Jon Stewart-Taylor

The February general meeting went very well. Karl gave us an excellent presentation on observing Mars for the 2020 opposition: very informative, and should help us plan for the close approach. Thanks Karl. I was also glad to see several visitors, some of whom became new members. You know who you are, so welcome to Cape Fear Astro! We're happy you could come, and hope you'll enjoy your time with us.

Later in the month we held an executive board meeting. We discussed the fate of the Google Calendar, the Schedule for Public Observing at CBSP, the inventory of club assets, and especially changes to the club Constitution (bylaws, in legalese) required to ensure our "new" corporation complies with NC state laws. There will probably be a draft of the changes ready for the April meeting, and everyone will have a chance to comment. After the draft is reviewed, the updated Constitution will be officially presented, and a vote to amend will be held a month or two later after a second review. You can see all the details of the amendment process in the current Constitution which is available on the web site.

The weather hasn't been as cooperative as we'd have liked. Clouds ruined several scheduled club observing dates, and fog obscured the lunar occultation of Mars: very frustrating. Hopefully in March we'll get better skies for our club-only sessions and our first CBSP public session of the year. Please come join us if you can, especially for the public session on March 21st.

It's also time for us to start thinking about the annual State Wide Star Party. The SWSP will be on the weekend of April 24th and 25th. We'll be partnering with the Cape Fear Museum on Friday the 24th at Carolina Beach State Park, and with the Onslow Environmental Education Center at Sneads Ferry on Saturday the 25th. Of course most people can't attend both, but if you can help out at one or the other it would be much appreciated. It's also generally a lot of fun.

Hoping for clear skies. -Jon

★★★★★

Cape Fear Astro Calendar

Events marked with **★ and bold** are Cape Fear Astro events for the current Month.

March 2020

- 02 Moon 3° from Aldebaran, PM
- 02 Moon at First Quarter
- 04 Moon 1.3° from open cluster M35, PM
- 06 Moon 1.4° from M44 (the Beehive), PM

★ 06 Club Observing – Location TBD

★ 07 Club Observing – Location TBD

★ 08 Cape Fear Astro Monthly Meeting

GAStronomy Meeting

Sunday, March 8, 5:00pm – 6:45pm

(Dinner, prior to the Monthly Meeting)

Elizabeth's Pizza, 4304 1/2 Market St, Wilmington, NC 28403

Next CFAS Monthly Meeting

Sunday, March 8, 7:00pm – 9:30pm

212 DeLoach Hall, UNCW Campus

Program: **"Martian Volcanoes"**

- 08 Daylight Savings (set clocks ahead): will get dark later!
- 08 Venus 2.2° from Uranus, PM. Mags -4.3 + 6
- 09 Full Moon

★ 13 Club Observing – Location TBD

★ 14 Club Observing – Location TBD

- 16 Moon at Last Quarter
- 18 Moon, Mars, Jupiter within a circle < 2°, AM
- 19 Moon 2° from Saturn, AM
- 20 March equinox

★ 21 Public Observing – Carolina Beach S. P.

- 21 Moon 4° from Mercury, AM

- 24 Mercury at Westernmost Elongation: 28° from sun, AM
- 24 New Moon
- 24 Venus at Easternmost Elongation: 46° from sun, PM

- 27 Moon 4° from Uranus, PM
- 29 Moon 4° from Aldebaran, PM
- 31 Mars 1° from Saturn, AM. Mags 0.8 + 0.7
(New Moon is April 1st)

Astro phenomena from

<https://www.universalworkshop.com/astronomical-calendar-any-year/>

March Meeting Program “Martian Volcanoes”

by Skip Hagers

Continuing with our 2020 Mars focus, Skip will present “Martian Volcanoes”.

As I understand it, Skip obtained some slides of Martian volcanoes with some short notes on each and that is what he will present. He digitized those slides, so don't expect to see an old time film slide projector!

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Sometimes, one month of calendar isn't enough, so we'll try to list major, planned club event in this separate calendar.

Far Out Calendar

Date	Event
3/21	Public Observing – Carolina Beach State Park
4/5	Gastronomy & Monthly Meeting
4/24	State Wide Star Party – Carolina Beach State Park
4/28	Public Observing – Carolina Beach State Park
5/10	Gastronomy & Monthly Meeting
5/10	Gastronomy & Monthly Meeting
5/15	Public Observing – Carolina Beach State Park
6/14	Gastronomy & Monthly Meeting
6/20	Public Observing – Carolina Beach State Park ✨ tentative date ✨
7/12	Gastronomy & Monthly Meeting
7/18	Public Observing – Carolina Beach State Park ✨ tentative date ✨
8/9	Gastronomy & Monthly Meeting
8/15	Public Observing – Carolina Beach State Park ✨ tentative date ✨

March Public Star Party

Our first Carolina Beach State Park public observing session will be Saturday, March 21.

Apparently, this date was picked by CBSP based on previous events being the 3rd Saturday of the month and it has been published by the park so we will support it.

Using Stellarium:

- ★ sunset is about 7:30 PM
- ★ Venus is about 40 degrees elevation in the west
- ★ A little after 8 PM, the International Space Station make a pass from west to north, reaching a maximum altitude of 27 degrees before setting in the Northeast.
- ★ Possible targets for the evening are:
 - The Orion Nebula
 - The Pleiades
 - NGC 2264 – the Christmas Tree Cluster
 - Castor – how many stars can you see?
 - The Double Cluster
 - The Open Clusters of Auriga: M38, M36 & M37
 - M44, Beehive, with low power

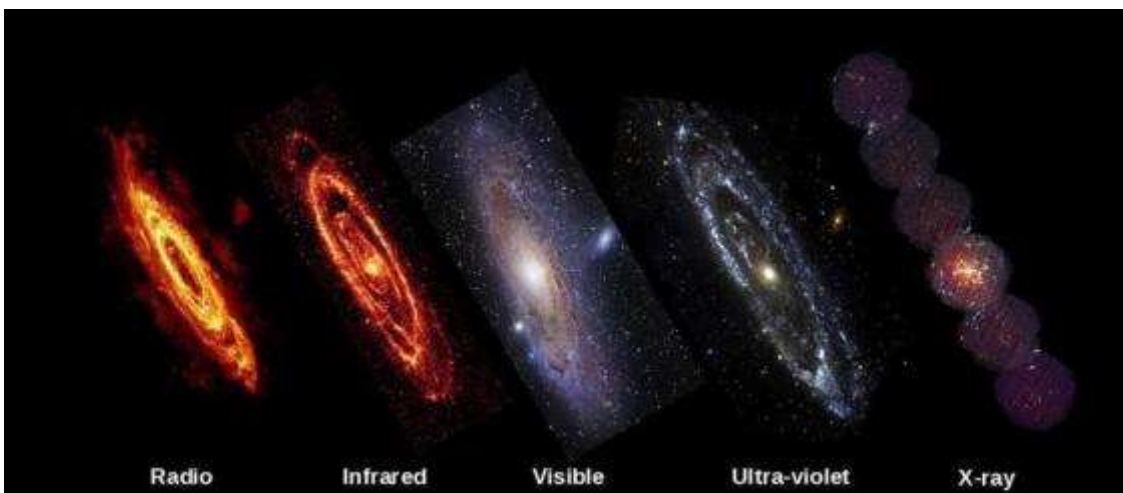
These are just a few ideas. You probably have others.

Will skies be clear? Who knows.

Will lots of public be there? Probably not, but who knows.

But if it isn't cancelled due to rain or worse, come on out and enjoy the outdoors and the company of other amateur astronomers.

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Multiwavelength M31

Image credits:

Radio: WSRT/R. Braun;

Infrared: NASA/Spitzer/
K. Gordon;

Visible: Robert

Gendler;

Ultraviolet:

NASA/GALEX;

X-ray: ESA/XMMW.

Pietsch

Mars Moment

by Karl Adlon



Each issue in 2020, this space is reserved for something about Mars in our skies.

Perhaps you have something to include? If so, sent it to me please. Thanks!

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Right now, even though Mars is very distant, talented amateurs with good equipment can obtain nice images.

Here is an example. Note that his seeing was only 4/10.

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THIS MONTH, in the early morning skies, Mars will encounter Jupiter and then Saturn, as Mars, with its closer orbital track, overtakes the two gas giants.

The image above is from a Cloudy Nights post by Edwin Chow. His Technical Card:

- ★ Imaging telescopes or lenses: Televue Powermate 2.5x, Celestron C11
- ★ Imaging camera: QHY CCD QHY5III290M
- ★ Mount :iOptron CEM60
- ★ Software: SharpCap PRO
- ★ Filter: 7 Brand RGB 1.25"
- ★ Focal length: 7000
- ★ Seeing: 4/10
- ★ Transparency: 7/10
- ★ Locations: Home, Zhuhai, Guangdong, China
- ★ Data source: Backyard

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Editor's Note: Used in this Newsletter, "Cape Fear Astronomical Society" may be abbreviated "CFAS" or "CFAstro".

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Members are welcome and encouraged to submit articles or other input for "CAPE FEAR SKIES". Submit any and all interesting items for publication to Karl Adlon, Editor (email kmja79@yahoo.com).

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