

President's Report

by Jon Stewart-Taylor

The weather has changed pretty recently in a dramatic warming. As I type this the temperature is in the mid 70s well after sunset. Although the moon is making it hard to see them, Arcturus and Leo are well up. This year is part of a "La Niña" cycle. Although it's currently not known exactly how that will affect our weather, here in the South-East La Niñas tend to bring warmer, drier weather, but more hurricanes, as describe on Wiki:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Ni%C3%B1a#North_America

As March turns to April, i hope we'll be seeing both better skies, and nights warm enough to take advantage of them.

Another hopeful indicator is that COVID immunization is proceeding, at a much faster rate than expected. If you've not already started the process, check with your county's health department to see when you're eligible. Ponder County had me in on the 20th, with the second dose in April. If we can get everyone immunized, we can have much more satisfying observing sessions. Unfortunately, there have not been any studies showing immunized people can't transmit the virus, and we'll have to keep masking and distancing when we're with non-immunized people (especially the public) to protect them.

Now that a number of personal issues have been resolved, my major goal for the near future is the completion (or at least first draft) of the New Astronomer's Packet. This is the packet which we'll give to every new member of Cape Fear Astro who believes themselves to be a New Astronomer, to help them grow and succeed in the hobby. The Packet will contain a physical book, a planisphere, and a flash drive with lots of info to help New Astronomer's out. Please read my article on the Packet later in this newsletter, and contact me with questions, suggestions, and whatever type of help you can give us to make this a useful thing for new members.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and NC Executive Orders:

- ** Meetings will be via Zoom.
- ** Member observing as noted, with masks or "social distancing".
- ** No CFAstro public events are planned.

April 2021

Date – Event – Time

02 Club Observing – Location TBD; 07:30 PM

03 Club Observing – Location TBD; 07:30 PM

04 Last Quarter Moon

05 Jupiter-Saturn-Moon; The Moon swings by Jupiter and Saturn in the Morning Sky

09 Club Observing at Starfields; Shiloh Road Ivanhoe NC; 07:30 PM

10 Club Observing at Starfields; Shiloh Road Ivanhoe NC; 07:30 PM

11 New Moon

11 Cape Fear Astro Monthly Meeting; 07:00 PM; via Zoom

17 Mars – Moon; Mars 0.2 degrees from Moon; 60 deg from the Sun in evening sky

20 First Quarter Moon

20-21 Lyrid meteor shower; ZHR 18; peak Apr 21/22; 5 days before full Noon

26 Full Moon

30 Club Observing 08:00 PM Evening Observing TBD

30 Club Observing – Location TBD; 08:00 PM

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

New Member Packet: Starting the Real Work

by Jon Stewart-Taylor

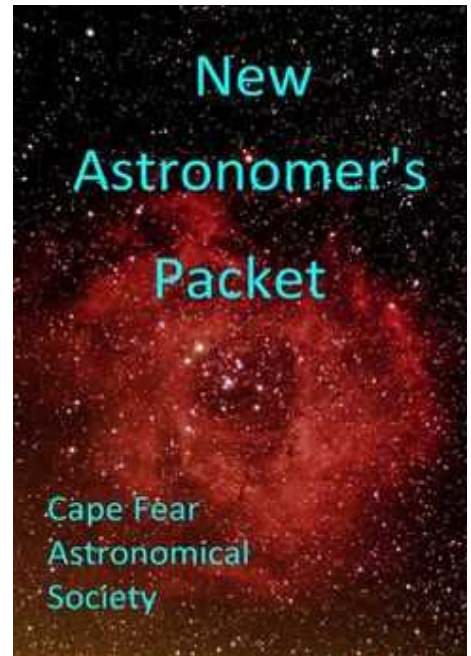
For several years now, it has been a Cape Fear Astro club goal to create a New Astronomer Packet. This is the packet for every member of Cape Fear Astro who is new to the hobby. The packet will contain a physical book, a planisphere, and a flash drive containing links, documents, images, and other Good Stuff to help New Astronomers succeed and grow.

As discussed at the March monthly meeting, I'd like to have several people join in the work on the new astronomer packet. Please, if this sounds like something you'd like to be a part of, send me an e-mail (stewarttaylorj@gmail.com).

Even if you don't want to work directly on creating the packet, please send me your recommendations. If you have documents you think would belong, please send me a copy or a link. If the document is (public domain) hard-copy, snail-mail me a copy and we'll scan it and send it back to you. Book recommendations? Absolutely. Observing lists? You betcha. Cool web sites describing the planets, or deep sky objects, or with observing techniques? Bring them on. All this kind of stuff which helped you when you were new, or which has helped you improve, we'd like to make available.

If you are yourself New to Astronomy, please feel free to send us your wish list. We can't supply telescopes or other hardware as part of the packet (though you may be able to borrow some from the club), but we can help get you the information you need. If you don't have the equipment to use a flash drive, fear not: we plan to include a paper document with a URL and a QR code to send you to a web page containing all of the items on the flash drive.

I'm really looking forward to seeing this project develop. I believe it can become a good tool too help new astronomers develop their interests, and get more out of the hobby. Really, that's what Cape Fear Astro is all about. It says so first thing in our Constitution: "[...] to secure the benefits and pleasures of an association of individuals sincerely interested in amateur astronomy [...]". The Packet can be one more thing we can do to carry that out.



Cloudy Nights Fun

by Karl Adlon



Looking for something? There is a good chance you will find it on cloudy nights.com

When astromart.com (AM) started charging to use their website, I learned about CN and their Classified section. After a while, I noticed that AM classifieds decreased in number while CN numbers increased.

The website is FREE, though you can make a donation if you wish. Be sure to create an ID and password. This will allow you to post, search or reply to the Forums or Classifieds. If you don't you can still look around.

Forums is **fantastic**, being divided into categories and subcategories. If you have a question, there is a good chance it's been answered. If you can't find an answer, ask. Someone will answer or point you in the right direction. I once had a "bright idea" and asked if it would work. A bit of thinking on my part would have told me it wouldn't work, but the replies I got were very courteous.

If you do delve into the Classifieds and if you find something you want: 1 -Check the seller's Reviews, 2 - Carefully read the ad; all of the ad, 3 -If you have questions, don't be afraid to ask the Seller and 4 -If it is too good to be true, be cautious.

Here are some things I have used it for:

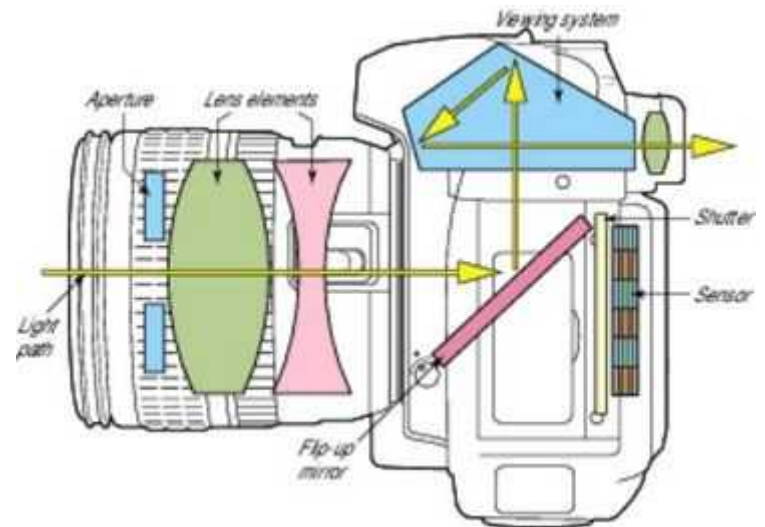
- Equipment reviews
- How to do something
- How others have built something, which I have copies or modified for my purposes.
- To see other's images of an object I am considering imaging.

Next Cloudy Night, try poking around!

Flippin' Mirror

DSLR Astrophotography Tip

by Karl Adlon



Above is a diagram of the DSLR light path when using the viewfinder. When you take an exposure, the mirror flips up out of the light path, the shutter opens, light hits the sensor and the camera take the picture.

HOWEVER, when the mirror is in the flipped up position, a small bit of light can enter the viewfinder, get past the mirror edge and illuminate the sensor. In daylight, this is not a problem. During long exposures at night, any light (red flashlight, phone or computer screen, etc.) can degrade the exposure.



I have the cover shown below that came with an older camera.

I suppose you could use tape – I suggest painters' tape so adhesive does not remain on the camera. You can darken the tape with a black marker or add a piece of electrical tape, as examples.

This is a better solution than hoping you or someone else doesn't aim a light in your camera's direction.

Eagle Nebula (M16)
Pillars of Creation
by George Pappayliou

This is a narrow band image using the “Hubble Palette” color rendition.

The capture details are: 45 subs of 240” each using SII, Ha and OIII filters all taken on 10/14/20.

Scope: TV NP127is

Mount: SB Paramount MyT

Focuser: Starlight EFS HM20

Imaging Camera: ASI1600MM-Cool

Filters: Astrodon 3nm SII, Ha & OIII

Guiding: ASI OAG w/ASI120MM-mini

Software: SGPro (PHD, TheSkyX), Pixinsight

Accessory: Pegasus Astro UPB v2



George, THANKS for sharing this image!



Astronomical League Update

by Hank Lyon

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Happy vernal equinox! If you've had a chance to take a look at the AL website recently, you most likely noticed the periodic posting "What's Up With the Astronomical League." The 75th anniversary of the AL theme continues with this edition. Featured is an article about a former AL president (1951-52, 1972-74) named Gilbert "Bob" Wright. An Iowa Weather Bureau equipment maintenance repairman by vocation, Bob became active in his post-retirement years with his local club and with the AL. As a result of Bob's many AL contributions, several of which have carried to the present, the G.R. "Bob" Wright League Service Award is posthumously named in his honor. This award recognizes volunteers that go above and beyond the call of duty to support the League's local and national goals. Bob exemplified the qualities of individuals which are so critical to the success of astronomical organizations, both large and small, across our nation.

Also featured is a posting regarding the American Association of Variable Star Observers (AAVSO) 2021 year-long Webinars and How-to Hours. These Zoom sessions are free and you can attend any or all as each session is separate from the previous one. Coming up for the April – June 2021 quarter are a variety of interesting topics including but not limited to spectrography, CCD photometry, cataclysmic variables, "A Romp With Betelgeuse" and many others as the AAVSO has scheduled two webinars and one How-to Hour for each month. For the year's full webinar schedule and details about the featured astronomers and their talks, visit <https://www.aavso.org/2021-webinars>.

Next month we'll dive back into some additional detail regarding the AL's observing programs. Until then, clear skies (we definitely could use some of that!).

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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).

Cape Fear Astronomical Society is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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Dues for 2021 are \$25 for Individual and \$32 for Family Membership. Students dues are \$5 per year.

Contact Us:

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