

President's Message

by Ben Steelman

One thing bothers me about our club meetings -- we look like the serving line for the Early Bird Special, or maybe a shuffleboard league.

Face it: Most of us (your president included) are getting long in the tooth and short of hair. For the good of the Society, and of the hobby, we need to reach out to more young people.

This should be an ideal time to get more kids and teens into amateur astronomy. Most of us, I'll guess, became enthusiasts back during the heady days of Mercury, Gemini and Apollo. Once Artemis heads off to the moon -- and more missions fly to Mars -- I'll guess interest will perk up.

The best thing to do is to get a kid to peek through a telescope. And we have an ideal opportunity -- the State Wide Star Party, coming up Friday, April 21 at 7 P.M. at Carolina Beach State Park. We'll be co-sponsoring with the Cape Fear Museum.

This is a big deal. Last year, 1,000 people turned out -- but we had only seven scopes on hand. If you are at all able, please turn out and bring a telescope so you can share the universe with a whole pack of newbies.

Calendar

April 2023

Date – Event – Time

02 ★ Cape Fear Astro Monthly Meeting ★

CFAS Monthly Meeting - 7:00pm – 9:00pm

212 DeLoach Hall; UNCW

Also simulcast via Zoom

06 Full Moon

11 Mercury at greatest eastern elongation 19 deg.

12 Last Quarter Moon

**14 Club Observing @ Starfields (the Club Observatory);
7:00 PM; 3rd Quarter Moon**

**15 Club Observing @ Starfields (the Club Observatory);
7:00 PM; 3rd Quarter Moon**

17 Neptune 2 deg from moon

20 New Moon

**21 Club Observing @ Starfields (the Club Observatory);
7:00 PM; New Moon**

**21 State Wide Star Party; 07:00 PM - 10:00:00 PM; State
Wide Star Party with #Cape Fear Museum Carolina
Beach State Park**

22 Lyrid Meteor Shower; ZHR 18; Waxing Crescent

**22 Club Observing @ Starfields (the Club Observatory);
7:00 PM; New Moon**

27 First Quarter Moon

**29 Public Observing; 07:30 PM; Public Observing
Session; starts at sunset; Carolina Beach State Park**

Astro phenomena from:

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

2023 Public Events

Watch this space for 2023 Public Events. If you haven't done one before, perhaps make a New Year resolution to try on – you might like it!

May 27 – CBSP

June 24 – CBSP

July 22 – CBSP

August 26 – CBSP

September 23 – CBSP

October 21 - International Observe the Moon
Night – Location TBD

October 21 – CBSP

CBSP = Carolina Beach State Park

2023 Monthly Meeting Dates

May 7, 2023 (Next week is Mothers' Day)

June 11, 2023

July 9, 2023

August 13, 2023

September 10, 2023

October 8, 2023

November 12, 2023

**December 10, 2023 (Date and time may
change for Holiday Celebration)**

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Usual meeting dates – watch emails for exceptions

Phenomena: First Wednesday

Both Eyes: Second Tuesday

Telescope Usage: Third Tuesday

New Astronomer: Third Wednesday

Outreach: Fourth Tuesday

April 2 Meeting Presentation

A “don’t miss!”

Kat (Kathy Stewart) has a 2-part presentation. 1st – her experiences with the Astronomical League’s “Observing Programs and Awards” and, 2nd – her experiences at the 2023 Winter Star Party

<https://www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/AlphabeticObservingClubs.html> is the page to see for the complete list of available programs.

March 25 Public Observing Report

by Jon Stewart-Taylor

Saturday was our first public observing session. The weather was (sort of) improving by the start of the session, at least to the extent that it wasn't solidly socked in.

I'd arrived at a bit after 6, which allowed me to set up the solar system before visitors arrived. When there were about 6 people present, I offered to start the solar system tour. By the time we reached Mercury about another 10 or so people had arrived. At the end of the tour, it looked like about 20 people were waiting for us to show them the, um. Is that glow in the haze the moon?

The transparency was almost non-existent, with the top layer of clouds at 100%. Through the scopes we could just make out the crescent shape, but only rarely were we able to see any hint of maria.

In spite of the poor skies, the visitors stuck around. We got questions about the scopes, and about future public sessions. Several people told us they'd been looking forward to the first session of the year. Others asked whether the State-Wide Star Party would replace the public session for April (turns out the answer is no, we have a public session the week after the SWSP).

Thanks to Steve for showing up in spite of the crummy forecast, and staying to help with the large number of people. One highlight of the evening was a visit from Rayleigh, who is a member of the Raleigh Astronomy Club, but is currently attending UNCW. I'm hoping they'll participate in our public activities while they're in residence down here.

Here's hoping for better weather at the SWSP (State Wide Star Party) and the April public session.

Celebrating the Night Sky

April 21, 7 PM – 10 PM

Join Cape Fear Museum, Carolina Beach State Park, Cape Fear Astronomical Society and many other community partners for a fun-filled evening of stargazing and astronomy-themed activities! Celebrating the Night Sky is this year's Star Party theme. Be part of an event that is happening statewide and bring a flashlight!

Here's the Cape Fear Museum calendar announcement:

<https://www.nhcgov.com/Calendar.aspx?EID=1271&month=4&year=2023&day=21&calType=0>

Please help with this event if you can!



Get to Know YOUR Astronomical League



The Astronomical League (AstroLeague or AL) is one of the largest amateur astronomical organizations in the world. The organization serves to encourage an interest in astronomy (especially amateur astronomy) and promote the science of astronomy by:

- ✓ fostering astronomical education;
- ✓ providing incentives for astronomical observation and research;
- ✓ assisting communication among amateur astronomical societies.



CFAS is one of over 300 member societies affiliated with the AstroLeague. Your membership in CFAS allows you take full advantage of this relationship so periodically review the information below to see how the AstroLeague can support your astronomical interests and endeavors.

AstroLeague Home Page	www.astroleague.org
AL Observing Programs List	https://www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/AlphabeticObservingClubs.html
AstroLeague 2023 Convention Information	http://alcon2023.org/
Astro Notes (Info and Tools for Amateurs)	https://www.astroleague.org/al/astnote/astnotes.html
Seeing and Transparency (Simple AL Guidance)	https://www.astroleague.org/content/seeing-and-transparency-guide
Current and Past Issues of <i>Reflector Magazine</i>	https://www.astroleague.org/reflector/april-2022-reflector-magazine
CFAS ALCor	Hank Lyon, hlyon8448@gmail.com
Additional AL News, Information and Reminders	Interested in an “ <i>Astro Road Trip</i> this summer?” See the link above for information regarding the Astronomical League Convention (ALCon 2023) which will be held in Baton Rouge, LA from July 26 th to 29 th . Happy with your <i>Reflector</i> magazine delivery preferences (digital or snail mail)? If not, please let your ALCor know your preference.

The AstroLeague Correspondent (or ALCor) is your link between CFAS and the AstroLeague. Don't hesitate to contact your ALCor if you need assistance with anything AstroLeague related whether its general information or detailed coordination of observing program completions for certification. **Check back each month to see any new links, postings or reminders.**

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CFAS Correspondence: Please contact the society at: CFAS, P.O. Box 7685, Wilmington, NC 28406 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.		
CFAS Officers:		Dues: Dues for 2023 are \$25 for Individual and \$32 for Family Membership. Students dues are \$5 per year. Mail to :CFAS, P.O. Box 7685, Wilmington, NC 28406
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