



Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club www.charlotteastromers.org

Next Meeting: Friday, September 21, 2012
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: Myers Park Baptist Church
Address: 1900 Queens Road

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

From Charlotte to Mauna Kea and Back: An Insider's Guide to Professional Astronomy

Presented by:
Chris Mullis, Ph.D.

Astronomy news stories are common features in the popular media. Very often, years of research and incredible effort are condensed into a crisp sound bite. Dr. Chris Mullis, seasoned veteran of professional astronomy, will take us behind the curtain to understand the process by which simple insights evolve into major breakthroughs. We'll also enjoy VIP access to the best observatories in the world. Ranging from spirited academic debate, to thunderous rocket launches, to soulful nights atop snow-swept mountains, it is a beautiful and fascinating journey.



Dr. Mullis is a native of Charlotte and grew up in the CAAC. He has over 20 years of professional management and research experience working at academic institutions and Fortune 500 corporations across five continents. An astrophysicist by training, Dr. Mullis has a distinguished record of scientific discovery with a long resume in academia. He has co-authored over 30 publications in refereed journals. Dr. Mullis holds a Ph.D. and a M.S. in Astronomy from the University of Hawaii. He holds a B.A. with Highest Distinction in Physics and Astronomy from the University of Virginia.

Dr. Mullis transitioned to the private sector to leverage his analytical expertise in financial services. He and two of his astronomy colleagues founded the investment advisory firm, NorthStar Capital Advisors (www.nstarcapital.com).

FROM THE PRESIDENT

For amateur astronomers, it's always good news to realize it is getting darker earlier. Though daylight savings time this year doesn't end until November 4, earlier darkness is definitely noticeable. On Saturday, September 8, a stalwart group of members braved the uncertain weather for 2012 Cosmic Camporee! Though the skies were cloudy – and a few raindrops – everyone enjoyed a great time with soda bottle rockets, solid fuel rockets (achieving some surprising heights) and of course a delicious pitch-in banquet centered around a pig roast by pit-master Ken Steiner. Truly tasty!! We also had one RV trying out the new electrical connections for camping, just completed the day before. Finishing touches for the RV camping spots are still to come. Attendees were also greeted by our new signs for the observatory. Our thanks to Surface Products, Inc. for the donation, and to David Mohler who was instrumental in obtaining this contribution and the coordination of their manufacture. The signs are really beautiful and appropriately recognize the folks who have helped make our club and observatory what they are today.

See you at the meeting. Clear, dark skies.

....Mark



September 2012



UPCOMING EVENTS

CAAC Upcoming Monthly Star Parties:

Saturday, September 15
Saturday, October 13
Saturday, November 10

Monthly star parties are held at the club's **Gayle H. Riggsbee Observatory** in Taxahaw, SC, weather permitting. Contact the Observatory Director, Ken Steiner, for directions to the observatory. All members and their guests are welcome.

Star Party at Olympic High School in Charlotte on Thursday September 20th, 2012. The event begins at 8pm and goes for an hour. Setup can start at 7:00. Olympic High School, 4301 Sandy Porter Rd, Charlotte, NC 28273

Fisher Farms Star Party - Davidson, NC

Please join us on Friday, October 5th at 7pm for a night under the stars. The Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club is pairing with the Davidson Lands Conservancy and the Town of Davidson to host the second annual get together.

Email Rob Carl (rcarl@carolina.rr.com) to volunteer.

FROM THE TREASURER

CAAC membership year begins October 1st, and ends on September 30th. Dues for members joining after January 1st are prorated:

- **\$35.00** - Individual and Family
- **\$6.00** - Students, up to 18 years of age
- **\$10.00** - Observatory Access: Allows members unlimited access to and use of the club's observatory facilities and equipment following observatory training/familiarization by the Observatory Director
- **\$25.00** - Private Observatory Pad: Assessed to members that have a private observing pad on CAAC property

Discounted magazine subscriptions can be obtained through the CAAC:

- Sky & Telescope - \$32.95 per year (**savings of \$5**)
- Astronomy - \$34.00 per year (**savings of \$8.95**), or \$60.00 for two years (**savings of \$19.95**)

Make checks payable to CAAC. Jim Gaiser, CAAC Treasurer, will accept them at monthly meetings, or they can be mailed to:

CAAC
c/o Jim Gaiser
8624 Lenten Rose Court #203
Charlotte, NC 28277

FROM THE OBSERVATORY DIRECTOR

Strategic Plan Update:

We now have WiFi at the GHRO, thanks to the efforts of Jim Gaiser.

The RV power hook ups are in at the GHRO. We have a total of 5 hook ups: (2) are 30 amp and (3) are 30 and 50 amp. We also have two hydrants for water, and will plan on a sewage dump station later this year.

The next items in the project to be completed/installed are the picnic pavilion, followed by picnic tables, crushed stone for the circular drive way and RV sites, and equipment upgrades to the club's telescopes.

We are constantly checking on the acknowledgement sheets in the hallway of the Ken Steiner Astronomy Outreach Center for errors. Please report an errors in spelling or if we have missed your acknowledge for labor or monetary support. The acknowledgement sheets will remain open until the end of the year if you would like to make additional contributions to the strategic fund for this year's tax deduction. After the end of this year we will be making permanent acknowledgement plaques to recognize your valuable contributions.

Cosmic Camporee:

Rain dampened the campers, but the hog roast was enjoyed by 35 plus persons; Our thanks to the Hog Sponsors Neal Easden and Roger Tooker. David Friday was the sponsors of this year's models rockets which were enjoyed by young and old.

Loaner Telescopes:

The club has loner telescopes for members; contact the Observatory Director to borrow these items.

Advisory:

We share the GHRO with local critters. A rattlesnake has been seen in the area. We have cleared some of the brush area and old equipment next to our mowed area to encourage him to reside deeper in the woods. Just be aware and diligent in at the event you hear his rattles; it is his way to warn you to keep your distance!



Fire ants are a constant nuisance; we have ant poison in the storage cabinet in the workshop. They seem to really like making their mounds next to the concrete pads just where you step off. Be on the lookout.

FROM THE SECRETARY

New/Returning Members: Abigail Peltier, Robert & Deborah Hall, John Austin

August Guests: Kenneth Ansah, Andrew Page, Jessi Teeter, Valerie Venerro, Jacob Pollack, and Ashley Rollins

CAAC is now on Facebook

Find the Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club on Facebook. Navigate to www.facebook.com/CharlotteAstronomers, or use the search feature for "charlotteastronomers". Be sure to **'Like'** the page, and you'll receive updates on your wall when new content is shared.

Register with the Night Sky Network

The Night Sky Network (NSN) is a nationwide coalition of amateur astronomy clubs bringing the science, technology, and inspiration of NASA's missions to the general public. As a member club of the NSN, the Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club has access to a number of resources designed to support our public outreach programs. This includes an interactive calendar, which manages calls for volunteers, RSVP's, and can track volunteer hours. The volunteer hours earn 'Outreach Toolkits', which can be used for future programs, either at our club observatory (GHRO), schools, and other public events that the CAAC hosts. Use the link below to register:

http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-apply.cfm?Club_ID=1468&ApplicantType=Member

Pre-Monthly Meeting Gathering

Several CAAC members gather at Panera Bread (601 Providence Road, just a few blocks from our meeting place) at 5:30 prior to the monthly meeting. Anyone interested in sharing a meal with them is welcome. If you're new to the club, and would like an introduction to some of the folks that attend, contact Steve Rogish by email (s_rogish@yahoo.com), or see me at the monthly meeting.

Newsletter questions, announcements, change of address - contact Steve Rogish (s_rogish@yahoo.com).

FOR SALE ITEMS

- Orion Q70 2" Eyepiece 26mm (Like New) - \$45
- TeleVue Nagler 1.25" Eyepiece 4.8 mm (Like New) - \$175

Jeff Powley
japowley@carolina.rr.com
704-351-9953

Bring your items for sale to regular club meetings and display them if you wish. To include sale items in the newsletter, please contact Steve Rogish (s_rogish@yahoo.com) Ads will run for up to three months.

CAAC CONTACTS

President	Mark Hoecker	mhoecker@bellsouth.net
Vice President	Robert Carl	rcarl@carolina.rr.com
Secretary	Steve Rogish	s_rogish@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Jim Gaiser	jegaiser@carolina.rr.com
Observatory Director	Ken Steiner	ken@steiner4.com
Public Outreach Coordinator	Robert Carl	rcarl@carolina.rr.com