



Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club
www.charlotteastronomers.org

Next Meeting: Friday, June 21, 2013
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: Myers Park Baptist Church
Address: 1900 Queens Road

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

You Can Almost Touch the Stars

Presented by: Tom Fields via Webinar
(Seattle, WA)

Even if you wanted to touch a star, they're impossibly distant. Despite these great distances, researchers have learned a great deal about quite a few stars. How? The most common method to study the stars is called spectroscopy, which is the art and science of analyzing the colorful rainbow spectrum produced by a prism-like device.



Until recently, spectroscopy was too expensive and too complicated for all but a handful of amateurs. Today, though, new tools make spectroscopy accessible to almost all of us. You no longer need a PhD, dark skies, long exposures, enormous aperture ... or a big budget! With your current telescope and FITS camera (or a simple web cam or even a DSLR without a telescope) you can now easily study the stars yourself. Wouldn't you like to detect the atmosphere on Neptune or the red shift of a quasar right from your own backyard?!

Tom Fields, of Field Tested Systems is a Contributing Editor at Sky & Telescope. Tom's first article in the magazine appeared in August 2011 on the topic of spectroscopy. He's the author of the RSpec software (www.rspect-astro.com), which received their "Hot Product 2012" award last year.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

My thanks to everyone in CAAC that you had the confidence to allow me to serve as your new president...I hope I'm up to the challenge. Now that our facility at GHRO is complete, I'd like to move our focus away from nuts and bolts and on to using the incredible facility WE own. The Observatory committee will be developing a lot of new programs to provide outreach opportunities for the community, with additional efforts to use the facility by all members that are interested.

A new emphasis on Star Parties is in the works, allowing new members to learn everything from bright stars to the constellations and beyond. Our recent survey indicated that a vast majority of the members are interested in observing and imaging, we will be offering classes and workshops in these areas in the near future.

I know we all look forward to clear dark skies and many bright meteors, among other things. I look forward to a great year as we enjoy the night sky.

Jim

FROM THE OBSERVATORY DIRECTOR

Star Party at the GHRO, July 6

Newbies and Veterans, Star Party, weather permitting.

6:00 to 8:00 pm - Feel free to bring your picnic dinner. The club has a gas grill for your hot dogs, hamburgers, steaks or whatever pleases your fancy. Drinks are available for 50 cents.

8:00pm - Presentation in the Outreach Center: What's in the sky tonight? This is especially for our members new to astronomy. We will have seasoned members mentoring for the evening.

Dusk into the night - Observing with the club telescopes and/or member owned scopes with mentoring for the newbies.

Remember we have camper hook ups if you want to bring your camper and spend the night.

Please call the observatory director if you have any doubt concerning weather; I'd hate for you to drive the distance if it is canceled due to weather. Run of thumb, if the weather report does not show "clear", call before proceeding to the GHRO.

If you need directions, please contact Observatory Director, Ken Steiner
704.953.3902
ksteiner30@gmail.com

Loaner Telescopes

The CAAC has several loaner telescopes for use by members; borrow at one meeting and return the following meeting. We have had two Dobsonian scopes donated and they are now available. One is a 6 inch and the other is an 8 inch to which I have added a Telrad finder and a zoom eyepiece. Both scopes are very basic but very easy to use.

Clear skies,
Ken Steiner

UPCOMING EVENTS

CAAC Upcoming Monthly Star Parties

Saturday, July 6

Saturday, August 3

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.

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. Phil Foust, CAAC Treasurer, will accept them at monthly meetings, or they can be mailed to:

CAAC
c/o Phil Foust
449 Roselawn Place
Charlotte, NC 28211

FROM THE SECRETARY



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. Membership allows you to contact other members via email, and receive last minute updates for outreach events via text message:

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

CAAC 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.



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

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	Jim Gaiser	jegaiser@carolina.rr.com
Vice President	Robert Carl	rcarl@carolina.rr.com
Secretary	Steve Rogish	s_rogish@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Phil Foust	phillfoust@gmail.com
Observatory Director	Ken Steiner	ksteiner30@gmail.com
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