



Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club

www.charlotteastronomers.org

Next Meeting: Friday, March 18, 2016

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Myers Park Baptist Church

Address: 1900 Queens Road

Ken Brandt

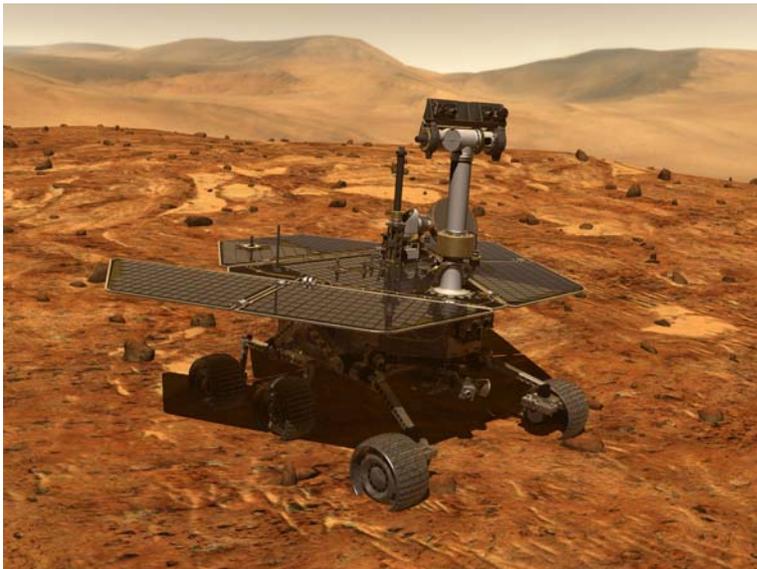
Roving Mars for a Dozen Years: the Story of *Opportunity*

The Opportunity Rover has now been exploring Mars for an astonishing 12 years. Ken's talk will feature an introduction to Mars exploration: Where does *Opportunity* fit in? A look at the periodical launch dates and Mars observing: Why every 26 months? Along with Opportunity Rover mission updates, and a review of its current status.

Finally, we will hopefully be treated to a Q&A session (via Skype) with a JPL Opportunity Rover driver! (TBC)

Ken is the director of the Robeson Planetarium and Science Center in Lumberton, NC. He is a US Navy veteran, a former high school teacher, and is Nationally Board Certified. In addition to his duties at the planetarium, he is also an astronomy lecturer at UNC-embroke.

When he's not teaching about JPL and NASA's excellent exploration programs, he is a devoted husband and father of three wonderful daughters.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

The Southern Star Planning Team is happy to announce the

30th gathering of Southern Star!

We're really excited to invite you to yet another terrific weekend of astronomy related activities that many of you have experienced for 30 years!

The registration form is [now on-line, on our CAAC web site at the following link:](http://www.charlotteastronomers.org/southernstar)

www.charlotteastronomers.org/southernstar

- We're going to resurrect our "Astro Imaging" sharing this year:
- We've designed a SPECIAL "30th Anniversary Southern Star T-Shirt" for this year's celebration!
- We have four GREAT speakers headlining our event this year!
 - Dr. Richard Greenberg: Professor of Planetary Sciences at the University of Arizona
 - Dr. David DeVorkin: Senior Curator of the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution
 - Jordan Evans: JPL Aerospace Engineer and space telescope designer
 - Dr. Chris Richardson: Professor of Physics at Elon University
- We've got you covered on a wide variety of astronomy topics:
 - Solar System science and exploration -- from asteroids to Europa
 - Space telescope design and performance -- from the HST to Far Ultraviolet Telescopes
 - Planetary companions of stars...searching for and finding them in our Universe
 - For you engineers -- Tales from the Rocket Science Cleanroom
 - Star forming galaxies and Exoplanets
 - A Buzz Session that will undoubtedly focus on your favorite night sky objects and the "love of observing"
 - An opportunity to share some of your favorite astrophotos
- Camaraderie with your favorite astronomy friends!
- The fabulous Wildacres Retreat awaits your visit!

Don't delay...sign up TODAY!

FROM THE TREASURER :

Our new CAAC club year began October 1st. If you have not already done so, please pay dues for the new year:

---Club Dues + Observatory = \$60.

Bring cash or a check payable to "**CAAC**" to the upcoming November meeting or mail your check to:

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

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)

FROM THE SECRETARY:

Register with the [Night Sky Network](#)

It is imperative that all members of the CAAC join the Night Sky Network (NSN). Many of the clubs outreach activities are managed by the NSN, as well as club communications (newsletters, event notifications, general email). The NSN is a wonderful tool specifically designed for amateur astronomy clubs like ours. 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

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.

CAAC Apparel & Gear

Visit our Lands' End Store – Follow the navigation bar link on our club website:

<http://www.charlotteastronomers.org>

Happenings at GHRO -- Chris Skor, [704-996-4215](tel:704-996-4215), ChrisSkor@hotmail.com

Updates from Gayle H. Riggsbee Observatory (GHRO)

- New Keurig coffee maker donated from one of David Friday's students. Decaf and Regular for \$.50.
- We'll be restocking finger red-lights \$1 ea.
- Found wood rot in door frames to some of the buildings. Working on details for spring "work day", details to follow via CAAC Yahoo group email.

Troup 405 3-day visit to GRHO.

Despite rest of the country under 1-2 feet of rain, Taxahaw, SC was blessed with mostly clear skies and 2 nights of viewing. Targets included Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, moon, M42, M65, M101, M102, and yes, Tom tracked down the Eskimo Nebula on the 16". The Scouts participated in a special project to relocate our bat houses to the edge of the property, found rockets launched, cooked all meals and cleaned grounds and buildings. Special thanks to Phil Foust, Gayle Riggsbee, and Tom Blevins for showing off our telescopes and to Mark Hoecker for leading Scouts in their Astronomy Merit badges despite being needed at home.





Loaner telescopes at GHRO

For those new to astronomy, we have 3 small backyard telescopes to loan, low tech, good for viewing the moon, Jupiter, Saturn, and double stars.

See me if you'd like to checkout one of these scopes during our April Star Party.

ChrisSkor@hotmail.com



Upcoming 2016 CAAC Star Parties at GHRO (held Saturdays)

- April 2nd
- April 9th –rain date/Southern Star Weekend
- April 30th (guests and special interest groups)
- May 7th
- May 28th (guests and special interest groups)
- June 4th
- July 2nd
- July 30th (best Saturday in August)
- August 6th (guests and special interest groups)
- September 3rd (Annual Cosmic Camporee)
- September 10th (guests and special interest groups)
- October 1st
- October 29th
- November 26th

Chris Skorsinski, GHRO, [704-996-4215](tel:704-996-4215)

CAAC CONTACTS

President
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