



# Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club

[www.charlotteastromers.org](http://www.charlotteastromers.org)

Next Meeting: Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Place: Myers Park Baptist Church  
Address: 1900 Queens Road

Our February meeting will be a **presentation on lighting and lighting encroachment on our environment** – something all amateur astronomers should have an interest in. We'll hear about different methods of lighting and control along with what the rules are regarding lighting in our communities.

Our speaker will be Tom Grantham, Business Development Sales Manager for Duke Energy.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

As a follow up to the recent survey the officers held an all-day strategic planning meeting last month. We will be implementing some of the ideas and committees that were surfaced in the survey and planning session. I will be giving a brief overview of our planning results. We are striving for continuous improvement and greatly appreciated your participation and ideas."

The Stallings Park Department has asked the CAAC to be a part of their event:

Name of event: "Starlight, Firelight, Family Night"

Date: Feb 25, 2017 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

Location: Blair Mill Park, 1025 Fair Oaks Drive, Stallings, NC 28104

Number of visitors expected: 70

This event is to educate folks on the constellations and sky object we can show them in our telescopes. I look forward to having several members onsite with their telescopes and basic knowledge of the night sky. Sunset is 6:16 so you may want to be setting up around 5:30 pm.

I also want to call your attention to the availability to an Observing Pad and/or pier at the GHRO. Information regarding that process is further back in the Newsletter.

Ken Steiner  
Club President

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FROM THE SECRETARY:

Available to CAAC Members via Bidding Process

Personal GHRO Observing Pad and/or Custom Pier

CAAC member Steve Harris has generously donated both his personal observing pad and a custom pier to the CAAC.

1. Observing Pad: Available to any eligible club member via bidding process as required in Section 7 of the Club's Bylaws, 'Personal Observing Facilities'.
2. Custom Pier: Removable from the pad and available to any club member via separate bid.

Bidding Process:

- Minimum fair market value has been determined by Club Officers as:
  1. Observing Pad: \$500
  2. Customer Pier: \$500
- Bid announcement to be published in two consecutive Newsletter issues: January & February 2017, and in one email notification to all club members during same period.
- Bid separately by item, at or above minimum fair market value, via email to Ruth Rupert, CAAC Secretary, at [info@charlotteastronomers.org](mailto:info@charlotteastronomers.org).
- If more than one member bids for each item, an open auction for that item will be conducted at a regular club meeting beginning at fair market value with winner determined by highest bid.

Eligibility:

- Observing Pad: Any current club member with GHRO fee paid, who is not already a Registered User of a GHRO Personal Observing Facility.
  - Winning bidder becomes the new Registered User of the Personal Observing Facility upon:
    - signing a CAAC Personal Observing Facility Use Agreement, and
    - paying within 30 days, the winning bid amount + Personal Observing Facility private use fee of \$25 for this year.
- Pier: Any current club member is eligible to bid.
  - Payment of winning bid due within 30 days.
  - Winning bidder must coordinate with the Observatory Director to arrange safe removal of the pier from the pad at bidder's expense.

Description:

- Observing Pad: Concrete, approximately 13' long x 13' wide = ~169 square feet in area. Centrally located near the 24" telescope building.
- Observing Pier:
  - Heavy-duty, galvanized steel, approximately 8" wide x 8 "deep x 52" long.
  - Vibration damping via sand filling.
  - Power routing though center of pier with receptacle on pier for easy access.
  - Removable, custom pier-to-mount adapter machined to fit some Astro-Physics mounts.

Photos of the Pad and Pier available for Auction:



Questions: Please send via email to Ruth Rupert, CAAC Secretary, at [info@charlotteastronomers.org](mailto:info@charlotteastronomers.org)

### 31<sup>st</sup> Southern Star Astronomical Convention:

Registration is now open for the 31st Southern Star Astronomical Convention to be held April 27-30 at beautiful Wild Acres Retreat. Speakers this year include Nobel Prize winner Dr. John Mather from NASA's Goddard Spaceflight Center, noted solar eclipse expert Dr. Jay Pasachoff of Williams College, amateur astronomer extraordinaire Glenn Chaple and star evolution expert Dr. Brad Barlow from High Point University. In addition, we have a special talk this year by Tom English from Guilford Technical Community College on the 1878 Great American Solar Eclipse. These talks, together with the wonderful atmosphere of Wild Acres, the potential for a 6th magnitude star party every night, an Ice Cream Social one evening with a Wine and Cheese social the next should make for a wonderful experience. Currently, online Registration is not available so we have attached to the newsletter email is a copy of the Registration form. Please email [jegaiser@carolina.rr.com](mailto:jegaiser@carolina.rr.com) with any specific questions.

#### Register with the **Night Sky Network**

It is imperative that all members of the CAAC join the Night Sky Network (NSN). Many of the club 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](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>

The **25th annual Regional Gather of Amateur Astronomers, aka BoBfest** is less than a month away! This year's event will be held at the Catawba Science Center in Hickory, NC on **Saturday, February 18**. Details available here <http://www.catawbasky.org/bobfest/> and here <http://www.catawbascience.org/events/bobfest-regional-gathering-of-amateur-astronomers/>

There will be a great line-up of morning speakers and a new afternoon format with eight 30 minute presentations to choose from over a two hour period. Also, since the event has partnered with the Catawba Science Center, a free Science Center pass, including Aquaria and Millholland Planetarium admission, will be included. As always, BoBfest is a FREE event and we will have an exciting selection of door prizes for you to choose from with your \$1 tickets, available for purchase all day. In addition to presentations, Science Center admission, and door prizes we will have refreshments available all day, a Family Activities Space, solar observing over our 90 minute lunch break, an exhibit by the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute (PARI) and special order catered lunch available from Groucho's Deli (place and purchase your order at when you register at the door). Camera Concepts plans to be on hand with their traveling astronomy gear store! As usual, BoBfest will provide swap tables, space for art exhibits, and the opportunity to display your astro-photos between speakers and all afternoon. Please bring slide-show astro-photos on a thumb drive. We also encourage area astronomy clubs to bring your club banner to display in the venue.

Doors open at 8:30 am, welcome and presentations begin at 9:45am with door prize drawings at approximately 4pm. The Lucile Miller Observatory at Maiden Middle School in nearby Maiden, NC will be open for observing at 7pm. Many, many "thanks" are due the Catawba Science Center for their partnership and support, and the Cleveland County Astronomical Society for inviting the Catawba Valley Astronomy Club to assist with the relocation, planning and presentation of this very special day.

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## Updates from GHRO

Saturday, Feb 18th (rain date 25th), GHRO Telescope Training

CAAC members and their guests are invited to CAAC's owned and operated Gayle H. Riggsbee Observatory (GHRO) near Taxahaw, SC on February 18th (rain date 25th). Bring your own telescope or one of the permanently housed telescopes. Come down 2 hours before sunset to view sun through our H-alpha Solar scope, then stay and observe the night sky. For dinner, pack a picnic or stop at JoJo Backyard BBQ on way to GHRO.

**GHRO Information** (see <http://1drv.ms/1m2wPUn>)

GHRO is located at 1427 Bloomwood Drive, Lancaster, SC. (some GPS show city as Pageland). Gravel road leading to the observatory is located 5.22 miles east of the "522 Grill" on Taxahaw, Rd.

**Visitor Information:** On same link above you'll find "Visitor Information" sheet with directions to the observatory. If binging guests, share rules such as back into parking with lights facing away from the observatory.

**Alarm System:** For instruction on GHRO alarm system watch "How UNLOCK" and "How LOCK" training videos.

GHRO Telescope Training:

Starting at 4pm, Saturday, February 18th we'll have training on the club's telescopes. Class is designed for those with general familiarity of telescope operation and would like to use club scopes. Using link above print and read GHRO\_8, GHRO\_16, and GHRO\_24 documents before class. These booklets cover startup, scope alignment, and shutdown procedures. Download electronic PDF for the ArgoNavisManual astro-computer which drives the GRHO\_24 scope. Don't print, the complete manual is 100s of pages. We have copies at the scope. Read section under "MODE CATALOG" starting at page 45 for instructions on finding targets. Email me at [ChrisSkor@hotmail.com](mailto:ChrisSkor@hotmail.com) to reserve your spot in class.

Feb 25th - New Moon at GHRO

Having attended training on the 18th, come down Saturday, Feb 25th and put your new skills to work searching your favorite night sky target. I'll be around to offer reminders on GHRO telescope setup, alignment, and shutdown.

If weather looks cloudy in Charlotte, it may still be clear the observatory. You can also call the observatory at [707-909-0604](tel:707-909-0604) for a recording of current event information.

Chris Skorlinski, Director Gayle H. Riggsbee Observatory (GHRO) 704-996-4215  
[ChrisSkor@Hotmail.com](mailto:ChrisSkor@Hotmail.com)



**FOR SALE:**

Meade 12" Classic LX200 GOTO Telescope  
 (12" Aperture Scopes are considered to be "LARGE")  
 In First Class working condition

Standard Equipment Furnished

- 50MM Finder Scope
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- 1 1/4" x 90° Star Diagonal
- 2" to 1 1/4" Eyepiece Adaptor
- Operator's Manual with Additions
- Improved Heavy Duty Tripod



ADDITIONAL Equipment Furnished

- 2" Crayford Focuser (No Image Shift)
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- Recent Electronic Upgrade (Better than New)
- Front End Counter Weight
- Rear Lifting Handle/Keypad Holder
- Heavy Duty Vinyl Rain Cover
- 2" x 90° Star Diagonal
- Sky Atlas 2000
- Eye Piece Storage Box
- 5 Quality Eyepieces (40, 32, 26, 15 and 12MM)
- Power Range 76x to 254x
- Rolling Telescope Transporter

**Price for ALL \$3000**  
 Call Gayle Riggsbee  
 (704) 846-3136

(See next page for more pictures)



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## CAAC CONTACTS

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President	Ken Steiner	<a href="mailto:Ksteiner30@gmail.com">Ksteiner30@gmail.com</a>
Vice President	Mark Hoecker	<a href="mailto:mhoecker@bellsouth.net">mhoecker@bellsouth.net</a>
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Public Outreach Coordinator	To Be Filled	