

# The Flint River Observer

Newsletter of the Flint River Astronomy Club

May 2005

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Please notify **Dawn Knight** if you  
have a change of address,  
telephone no. or e-mail address.

NOTE: Felix Luciano is our "new"  
Newsletter editor. Feel free to  
email or contact Steve and Felix  
with your suggestions and ideas. If  
there is something you would like  
to see let us know for future  
consideration. Also, let us know if  
you prefer the two columns or  
single column format.

**President's Message:** Astronomy  
Day was a hit. We had over 160  
attendees and even though there  
were some tense moments to  
begin with everything ran smoothly  
after. We have already been  
receiving requests to do more Boy  
Scout events and hopefully we will  
get some Girl Scout requests also  
(they also have an astronomy  
badge). We gave out a lot of good  
handouts from Astronomy  
magazine, Hardin Optical and Night  
Sky Network. We even gave out a  
good number of applications for  
the club and had several people  
discuss the possibility of joining  
FRAC. I think that we more than  
met the goal of Astronomy Day by  
"bringing astronomy to the  
people." Thank you to everyone  
who represented the club. I think  
you all did an excellent job. You

are the reasons that FRAC is such a wonderful club. I always look forward to public events because it really brings out the best in the club. Now we look ahead to GSV. It looks like we will have a small turnout this year mainly because Mother's Day weekend and short notice of the event being back on. We are in the works for reserving the park for next year so that we don't have this problem again. This year will be like last year with a need for everyone to pitch in and help out whenever they see something that needs doing. Just like last year, if you see something that needs attention feel free to handle it. We feel that everyone in the club is more than capable of making the proper decisions involving the club and GSV. With that said we look forward to seeing you guys at GSV and thank you again for making Astronomy Day great.

**Club Calendar: April 29 – April 30:** Cox Field Observing, **Monday, May 2:** GSV Planning Dinner 7:00 p.m. Fire Mountain/Griffin, **May 6 – 8:** Georgia Sky View 2005 (Cox Field Observing for anyone not attending GSV), **Thursday, May 12 7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.:** Club Meeting Griffin Public Library, **May 27 – 28:** Cox Field Observing, ( We will also have a small scout group out to help with their badge requirements) **Thursday, June 9:** 4-H Club Reward Camp out 34 Caldwell Rd. Griffin, GA. There will be a maximum of 31 students and about 5 adults present.

**Membership/Renewals:** All renewals are now due in February.

## **Upcoming Events and**

### **Activities:**

May 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> FRAC's Star Party, Georgia Sky View 2005, thank you Steve & Dawn for making it happen again this year.

### **Last Month's**

**Meeting/Observings :** The club's meeting was held Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00 PM at the Griffin Library. Present for that meeting were Steve and Dawn Knight, David and Brendan O'Keeffe, Bill Snyder, Chuck Sims, David Ward, Larry Fallin and Felix Luciano.

Steve Knight asked Felix Luciano, to take over the editing of the club's newsletter. Felix Luciano also volunteered to be the club's Observing Chairperson. Needless to say I have absolutely no experience with being a newsletter editor of any kind. So to let you all know the club's newsletter is going to be a bit of an evolving process and as you are already noticed will also have a new "look."

Steve discussed issues concerning the upcoming GSV 2005 at Camp McIntosh, in Indian Springs. Also discussed were the tee shirts that the club is having made by David Ward. The design is posted on the website.

Friday, April 8 saw Matt McEwen as the lone astronomer at Cox Field. Saturday, April 9 Matt returned and was joined by Steve and Dawn Knight and Smitty. There were some pretty good skies and the view of the Red Spot on Jupiter turned out to be pretty good.

### **April activities and or events:**

2005 Chiefland Star Party - Two members of our club attended the 2005 Chiefland Spring Star Party; Doug Maxwell and your editor. We arrived at the field on Friday, April 8 on or about 3:00 PM under what we would call sort of cloudy skies with patches of blue skies. We parked across from the pavilion and set up our equipment right away. We started observing the sun and were able to watch the solar eclipse using Doug's scope with white light and your editor's PST scope. The skies cleared out nicely and we were able to observe the eclipse in its entirety and at a maximum of 40%. Using the PST scope we were able to observe two rather large prominences close to the very edges of the eclipse line. Those that came by to take a look were happy to be able to observe the eclipse using white and h-alpha side by side. Doug snapped a couple of pictures using his digital Nikon camera. Look for those in the FRAC-a group. That evening we were treated to some clear skies and cool temperatures. Doug worked on his list of Herschel objects and your editor as always without an observing plan just star-hopped until about 3:30 – 4:00 am Saturday morning.

Saturday turned out to be a very nice day. Not too hot with a little breeze. We spent most of the day talking to folks as they came by to take a look at Doug's telescope (Rod Mollise and Tom Clark among the "celebrities" that came by). Clouds rolled over most of the skies by late afternoon but thankfully they all parted ways

later that evening. That evening Doug and I looked for Comet Tempel 1. Using Doug's scope we were able to find the comet close to Virgo. That hunt turned out to be a nice challenge that we were able to complete (took us some 20 minutes or so and we also checked with a fellow in the field using The Sky computer software to verify location).

Deep Impact: From NASA web site: [http://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/deepimpact/mission/index.html](http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/deepimpact/mission/index.html)

"On July 4, 2005, the Deep Impact spacecraft arrives at Comet Tempel 1 to impact it with a 370-kg (~820-lbs) mass. On impact, the crater produced is expected to range in size from that of a house to that of a football stadium, and two to fourteen stories deep. Ice and dust debris is ejected from the crater revealing fresh material beneath. Sunlight reflecting off the ejected material provides a dramatic brightening that fades slowly as the debris dissipates into space or falls back onto the comet. Images from cameras and a spectrometer are sent to Earth covering the approach, the impact and its aftermath. The effects of the collision with the comet will also be observable from certain locations on Earth and in some cases with smaller telescopes. The data is analyzed and combined with that of other NASA and international comet missions. Results from these missions will lead to a better understanding of both the solar system's formation and implications of comets colliding with Earth".

## MAY 2005

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1	2 GSV Planning Dinner	3	4	5	6 <b>Georgia Sky View 2005</b>	7 <b>Georgia Sky View 2005</b>
8 <b>Georgia Sky View 2005</b>	9	10	11	12 Club Meeting 7:00 – 8:45 Griffin Library	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 Cox Field Observing	28 Cox Field Observing  Scout Group at Cox Field
29	30	31				