

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 26, No. 1 January 2022

Officers: President, **Sean Neckel**; Vice President, **Aaron Calhoun**; Secretary / ALCOR **Mark Grizzaffi**; Treasurer, **Steve Hollander**; Board of Directors: **Dwight Harness, Felix Luciano, and George Ruff**; Program/Observing Coordinator: **Sean Neckel**; Facebook Coordinator: **Aaron Calhoun**; Webmaster: **Tom Moore**; Newsletter Editor: **Dawn Chappell**; NASA Contact: **Felix Luciano**

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Club Calendar:

FRAC Observing:

Club observing weekend, Friday, December 31, Saturday and Sunday January 1-2, 2022, at Joe Kurz WMA, sunset until whenever.

Club observing weekend, Friday and Saturday January 28-29, 2022, at Joe Kurz WMA, sunset until whenever.

FRAC Meeting: Thursday, January 13 at the UGA Experimental Gardens in Griffin, GA and online via zoom. Look for the invite in your email during the first week in January.

Public Observing Events:

None scheduled for January.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

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President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,

Just a couple notes this month.

Club observing dates:

We have a few extended weekends during 2022, as the new moon falls close to some holidays. This coming weekend (New Year's), Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas weekends have extra days for observing. Check the club calendar for the full schedule of dates.

Officer elections in February:

Club officer elections will take place during the February meeting. If you would like to participate in the club as an officer or board member, or would like to nominate someone, please let me know before February 10.

Thanks,

Sean

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Astronomy Trivia:

1. How old is the universe?
2. What is the size of the observable universe?
3. Comet 67p is now visible. It was visited by the Rosetta probe in 2014. What is the orbital period of the comet?
4. How large is the Orion Nebula?
5. How far from Earth is the Orion Nebula?

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Previous Meetings/Activities:

FRAC Meeting - December 9, 2021 - 7:30pm at the UGA Experimental Gardens in Griffin, GA.

- 7 club members came to the FRAC holiday meeting. Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Wade and Carmen Simmons, Mark Grizzaffi, Aaron Calhoun, and Dr. Richard Schmude.

FRAC Observings:

No information about attendance at the December club observing event on 12/3 and 12/4.

Public Observing Events:

No scheduled events for December

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Solar System Observing – January 2022

Mercury is visible as an evening object very low on the western horizon. It's highest altitude of 15° will be on 1/15/22.

Venus is visible low in the evening sky starting around 6pm until around 7pm.

Earth can be a real pain. Especially if you fall on it.

Mars is close to the sun and not observable.

Jupiter becomes visible before sunset and will be visible until about 9:30pm.

Saturn is visible after sunset, low on the western horizon, and will be visible until about 8pm.

Uranus is visible with a telescope from after sunset until about 1:30am

Neptune is visible with a telescope from after sunset until around 11pm.

Moon: New: 1/2 FQ: 1/9 Full: 1/17 LQ: 1/25

<https://in-the-sky.org/>

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Classifieds:

If you have something you would like to buy, sell, or trade, email the specifics, including your contact information to stneckel@gmail.com

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camera can catch it. The open cluster is 440 lightyears away, and it shines at a 1.6 magnitude. The Pleiades are in much folklore, and they found their way on to a car too. Subaru is Japanese for the Pleiades, and that car emblem contains 6 of the stars.

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Trivia Answers:

1. 13.7 billion years old
2. 93 billion light years
3. 6.42 years
4. 24 light years
5. 1400 light years

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M45, The Pleiades, Courtesy of Alan Pryor.

The Pleiades or Seven Sisters is an open cluster in the constellation of Taurus. If you look at it with the naked eye you will see 6 or 7 bright blue stars, but the area will seem a little out of focus. That is because the open cluster of stars is moving through a dust cloud, and their light is giving some blue illumination to that dust. You probably won't see the dust through a telescope, but a