

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 26, No. 5 May 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 Meeting: Thursday, May 12 in person at the UGA Garden and online on Zoom.

Look for the invite in your email during the second week in May.

Public Observing Events:

Sunday, May 1, 1-4pm. Springfest at the Gardens. Solar observing event at the UGA Gardens in Griffin, GA. We will also be presenting our scale solar system model.

Friday, May 5, 8:30pm. Fayette County Rec Department public observing at Lake Horton in Fayetteville. Weather date is Saturday, May 6.

Friday, May 20, 9pm. Indian Springs State Park public observing. We will observe from the dam near the pavilion. Weather date is Saturday, May 21.

FRAC Observing Events:

Sunday, May 16, time TBD. Lunar eclipse viewing at Truman Boyle's house, location is [here](#). Truman will set up flags in his driveway to guide people to parking. We

might possibly have a late afternoon potluck, so keep an eye on your email.

Friday and Saturday, April 29-30
Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, May 27-29 (LONG WEEKEND!!)
From sunset until whenever at Joe Kurz Wildlife Management Area.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

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Solar System Scale Model Project:

We will be constructing a temporary solar system scale model for the Springfest at the Garden on Sunday May 1st, 2022, at the UGA Gardens in Griffin. This will be part of our public solar observing event that day. Please come and see the work that we have done and give us your ideas about the next steps for a more permanent model!

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FRAC Shirts:

If you are interested in buying a FRAC T-shirt, please fill out the [FRAC T-Shirt Form](#) online. More info on pricing and timing to come. Here is the concept for the shirts:



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Dues Reminder: Club dues collection has started. If you've already paid, thank you! I will be sending out a final reminder at the beginning of May. In early June, our club dues to the Astronomical League will be due, and any members still unpaid will be dropped from the club roster.

Make your \$15 checks out to FRAC or Flint River Astronomy Club. Please send your dues to:
Steven Hollander
202 Wysteria Ct.
Peachtree City, GA 30269

Or contact Sean at stneckel@gmail.com to send by PayPal

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President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,

We have a lot of events scheduled for the month of May, both public and club only. I hope that you'll find the time to participate - the weather is starting to change for the better, and we have some really great events set up.

In particular, I hope that you will come out and see the scale solar system model at the UGA Garden during the Springfest on May 1st from 1pm-4pm. This is a really great project that has been led by George Ruff, and we are really happy with how it is turning out. We will also be there with scopes and filters to do some solar observing.

I recently sent out a Google Forms survey regarding email privacy among club members. Thank you to everyone who has filled it out so far. If you have not yet had a chance to fill it out, please do so. The form is here: [Email Survey](#)

Finally, I am *still* looking for someone to volunteer to take up the position of observing coordinator before the end of May. Please, if you have any interest in the position, let me know as soon as possible. This is a great way to participate and contribute to FRAC.

Thanks,
Sean

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Astronomy Trivia:

1. What is the strongest magnet in the universe?
2. Which planets in our solar system have rings?
3. Which planet in our solar system is *not* named after a Roman deity?
4. What is the equation that describes the likelihood of extraterrestrial life?

5. What is the largest moon in the solar system?

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Previous Meetings/Activities:

FRAC Meeting - April 14, 2021 - 7:30pm at the UGA Garden and on Zoom.

- 9 club members joined in person, and 12 on Zoom: In person at the UGA Gardens were Sean Neckel, Alfred McClure, Bill Evans, Tom Moore, George Ruff, Chip Reahard, Ben Veatch, Scott Hasson, Dave and Rosanne Stone. Mark Grizzaffi, Chelsea Neckel, Dave Mandell, Wade Simmons, Steve Benton, John Cruickshank, Kelly Witte, Carlos Flores, Mark Sutton, Aaron Calhoun, and Alan Pryor participated on Zoom.
- George Ruff received the Astronomical League Outreach Award.
- Mark Grizzaffi will purchase club T-shirts and members will pay on delivery.
- Dr. Margaret Lazzarini from CalTech gave a great presentation on Massive Binary Star Systems. You can see her presentation here: https://youtu.be/5exBR_CePHo

New Members:

I would like to say welcome to our 4 new members, Chip Reahard, Kelly Witte, Toukhina Davenport-Copeland, and Scott Hasson. I hope to see you all at a meeting or observing event in the near future!

FRAC Observings:

April 1, 2022: Sean Neckel, Bill Evans, George Ruff, Carlos Flores, and Mark Grizzaffi attended a clear sky night on Friday.

April 2, 2022: Mark and Terry Sutton observed at Joe Kurz.

Public Observing Events:

The public observing event at Indian Springs State Park was clouded out. Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Mark Grizzaffi, and Dave and Rosanne Stone showed up, but observing was not possible.

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Solar System Observing – May 2021

Mercury is visible low on the horizon in the western sky starting around 8:45pm.

Venus is clearly visible in the morning sky at 5am until sunrise at around 6:30am.

Earth has all the best stuff!

Mars is visible in the morning sky, rising around 4:15am, and staying visible until sunrise.

Jupiter is visible low on the eastern horizon starting around 5am, visible until sunrise.

Saturn is visible in the morning sky, rising at 3:30am, and fading from view as dawn breaks.

Uranus is close to the sun and not observable.

Neptune is close to the sun and not observable.

Moon: New: 4/30 FQ: 5/8 Full: 5/16 LQ: 5/22 New: 5/30

<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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NGC 2841, Courtesy of Alan Pryor

NGC 2841 is a spiral galaxy in the constellation of Ursa Major. At a distance of 46 million light years, it still shines at a magnitude of 10.1. This galaxy appears to have a mass that is many times that of our own Milky Way. It displays tight spiral arms with a lot of dust clouds in them. It also has a number of HII regions.

NGC 2841 should be observable in 8" scopes, although 12" scopes will reveal more details. To find it look at the front knee star of Ursa Major (Al Haud) and go 25% of the way to the front paw star (Talitha) and you should be close. The photo consists of 3.75 hours of exposure with an FLI 16803 camera using a 14" telescope.

A full-size image can be seen at: [NGC 2841](#)

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Trivia Answers:

1. A neutron star.
2. Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.
3. Earth.
4. [The Drake Equation](#)
5. Jupiter's moon Ganymede, which is larger than Mercury and Pluto.

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