

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 7, No. 3 **March 2023**

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

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Club Calendar:

FRAC Meeting: Thursday, March 9, 2023, 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom. Dr. Richard Schmude will join us to present some of his recent lunar observations.

Public Observing Events:

None currently scheduled for March. There may be a homeschool group observing event on March 24th. Details TBD.

FRAC Observing Events:

Friday and Saturday nights, March 17-18, 2023, from sunset until whenever at Joe Kurz Wildlife Management Area.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

Club Dues:

A reminder to everyone that club dues are now being collected for 2023. You can pay by cash or check (made out to Flint River Astronomy Club). Please send dues to our new treasurer:

Mark Sutton
107 Pintail Way
Locust Grove, GA 30248

The final date for dues collection will be April 15th.

Important Reminder: Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00am on Sunday, March 12, 2023. The government's attempts to legislate when the sun rises will continue until November 5.

President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,

Firstly, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Steve Hollander, who has been the FRAC treasurer for the past 3 years. Steve did a great job keeping our account balanced and our bills paid, and managing all those dues checks.

In a related note, thank you to Mark Sutton who has agreed to take over for Steve for 2023.

Finally, a big thanks to Dave and Rosanne Stone, our new Observing Coordinators. They have hit the ground running and are already doing a great job. I really appreciate them taking over for me, and I'm sure they will do great expanding our reach in the area.

Thanks,
Sean

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Club Projects:

Starry Skies South

The Starry Skies South meeting is on Thursday, March 22, at 8pm EST on Zoom. This meeting will be with the IDA, and registration is required. IDA will discuss dark sky advocacy and outreach. Zoom registration link is below:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcscemhrzgiGdNHoSE5mo6wHjjpsk_Xbj36?e

Globe at Night

At the February meeting, I introduced the Globe At Night project, an opportunity to participate in doing some citizen science. The idea is to assess the darkness of the sky wherever you might be by using constellations to determine the limiting magnitude.

Details of the process are

here: <https://globeatnight.org/6-steps.php>

FRAC T-Shirts

T-shirts are still available. They are \$20 at all future FRAC gatherings.

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Astronomy Trivia:

1. What is the coldest known place in the universe?
2. When the moon is full, what would the Earth look like from the moon?
3. How many planets can be seen without a telescope?
4. What distance in miles or kilometers does a light year span?
5. Which dwarf planet was originally named after a fictional TV character?

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Previous Meetings/Activities:

February Events:

FRAC Meeting - February 9, 2023 - 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens and on Zoom.

- 18 Members attended the meeting at the UGA Gardens in Griffin. Sean Neckel, Tom Moore, Carmen and Wade Simmons, Larry Dove, Alfred McClure, Brent Summers, Ashley Taylor, Kennadie Mosley, Richard Thomas, Dave and Rosanne Stone, Terri and Mark Sutton, Bill Evans, and Ben, Mercy, and Steve Barker.
- 10 members and one guest attended the Zoom meeting. Chelsea Neckel, Mark Grizzaffi, Elaine Stachowiak, Clem and Debbie Smetana, Nelson Stephenson, George Ruff, Steven Hollander, Felix Luciano, King Davis, and our guest Shaun Sanders.
- We held officer elections at the meeting. Mark Sutton is the new FRAC treasurer; all other officers remain the same as 2022.
- Dave and Rosanne Stone volunteered themselves as the new Observing Co-coordinators. Thank you so much!
- FRAC voted unanimously to purchase a sky quality meter for the club. Mark Sutton will purchase the SQM. If you are interested in using it, please contact Mark at suttonmark56@gmail.com
- Mark Grizzaffi will schedule a field trip for the club to the Fernbank Planetarium for some time in April.

Welcome New Member!

FRAC would like to welcome our newest member, Ray Goodfellow!

FRAC Observings:

Friday, February 17 was cloudy.

Saturday, February 18 at Joe Kurz was a decent night for observing until clouds and haze moved in about

10pm. 11 Members attended: Nelson and Kathy Stephenson, Wade Simmons, Ray Goodfellow, King Davis, Mark and Terri Sutton, Larry and Twila Dove, and Sean and Chelsea Neckel.

Public Observing Events:

Stargazing at Lake Horton for the weekend of February 24-25 was canceled due to weather.

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Solar System Observing – March 2023

Mercury is close to the sun and not observable.

Venus is visible in the evening, starting around 6:45pm.

Earth Don't forget about it.

Mars is visible starting around 7pm until 1:30am.

Jupiter is visible around 6:45pm until just after sunset.

Saturn is not visible, as just passed solar conjunction.

Uranus is visible with a telescope at around 7:30pm until just before midnight.

Neptune is close to the sun and not observable.

Moon: Full: 3/7 LQ:3/14 New: 3/21 FQ: 3/28

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

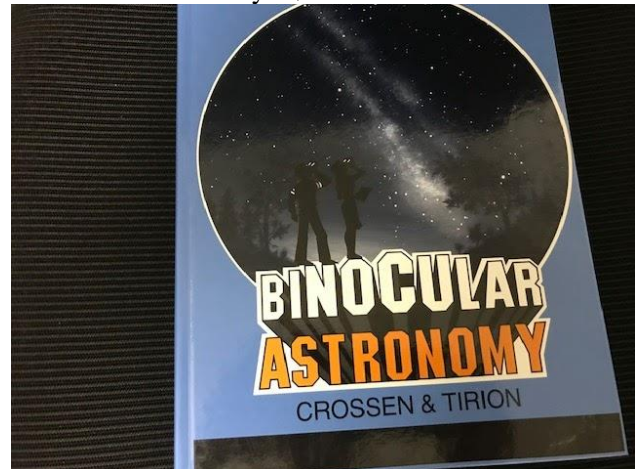
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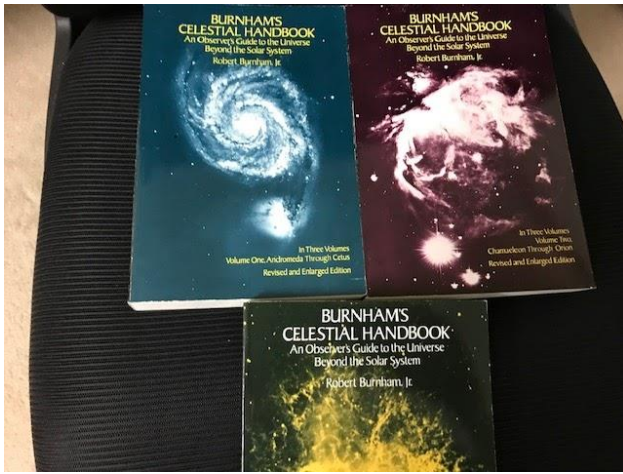
Books for sale: Contact Felix Luciano at

montb02@yahoo.com for details.

Binocular Astronomy - \$20.00



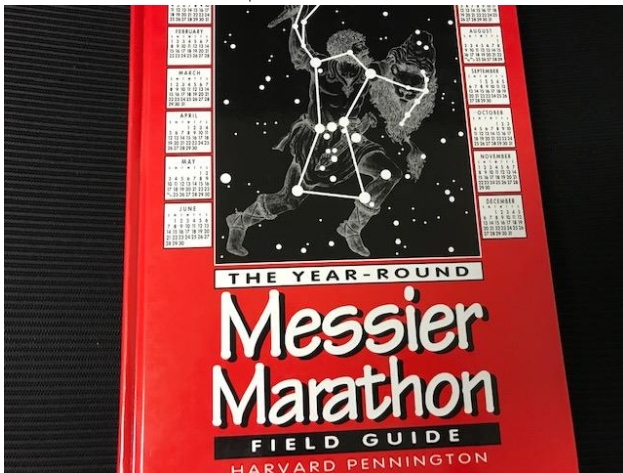
Burnham's Celestial Handbook (set of three, soft cover) - \$25.00.



NGC 2775 is a galaxy in the constellation of Cancer. It is about 67 million light-years from Earth. It is considered a flocculent spiral galaxy. It is also part of the Virgo Supercluster. In March it is almost directly overhead. You can find it by looking at the star Ashlesha (a 3rd magnitude star on the northern edge of the Hydra constellation). Then move about 6 degrees east. The galaxy is small, and it has a magnitude of 10.4. It should be visible using a telescope with a size of 8 or 10 inches.

A full size image can be seen at [NGC 2776 Uncropped](https://www.nasa.gov/images/content/101117main_ngc2775_500.jpg). You can zoom in on it some. This photo took 4 hours and 10 minutes of exposure using my 14-inch Planewave telescope.

Messier Marathon - \$20.00



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Trivia Answers:

1. The Boomerang Nebula has been measured to be 1K (-457.87°F).
2. 'New Earth'. [Earth's phases](#) as viewed from the moon are opposite the moon's viewed from Earth.
3. Six. Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn... and EARTH. Don't forget about it.
4. 5.88 trillion miles or 9.46 trillion km.
5. Eris, discovered in 2005 by Mike Brown, was initially nicknamed 'Xena'.

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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NGC2775 Courtesy of Alan Pryor.