

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 27, No. 11 November 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, November 9, 2023, 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom. Dr. John Chadwick from the College of Charleston Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences will present his work on Martian Volcanoes.

Public Observing Events:

In November we have two public events. We have Indian Springs on November 3rd with a weather make-up date set for November 4th.

On November 17th (weather date November 18) we have our first public event in Sharpsburg Ga. It is going to be held at Sharpsburg Baptist church. I went and checked out where we will be setting up and if all the lights can be turned out, which was conveyed to be that they can, then this might be the perfect place. Behind the church is a wide-open field with no obstructions in all directions. As we get closer to the event then I will send directions.

FRAC Observing Events:

On the weekend of November 10th and 11th we have our club observation at Joe Kurz in Gay, Ga.

Remember if you are the last to leave and the gate was locked when you arrived, lock our combination lock to the other lock on the chain when you go.

The lock code is 9321.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

Important Reminder!

This coming Sunday, November 5, be sure to turn your clocks back an hour for the end of Daylight Savings Time. Or as I like to call it, "The Government's attempt to legislate when the sun rises and sets."

President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,
This month I wanted to take a bit of the newsletter to thank our members at the last meeting for having such a productive discussion. Even though we did not have any scheduled program or activity, I think it was one of the better meetings that we have had. Many ideas were proposed regarding how we can help our fellow members to get a little more knowledgeable about astronomy, techniques, equipment, etc.

Going forward, I hope that we keep those ideas coming.

To get us started in 2024, at our January meeting I will be revisiting a presentation I gave several years ago about the AL observing programs, with a little more in-depth information and demonstration of some observing techniques and equipment. We will have this on Zoom as well, but I would encourage you to participate in person if at all possible.

If you have some ideas about what you would like to learn at our meetings, send me a message at stneckel@gmail.com

Thanks,
Sean

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Club Projects:

Globe at Night

This month's campaign is November 3-12, and will use the constellations [Pegasus](#) and [Perseus](#). 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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Previous Meetings/Activities:

October Events:

FRAC Meeting - October 12, 2023 - 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens and on Zoom.

12 members attended in person: Sean Neckel, Wade and Carmen Simmons, Dave and Rosanne Stone, Ben and Mercy Barker, George Ruff, Mark and Terri Sutton, Alfred McClure, and Jim Heidman.

11 Members attended the meeting on Zoom: Mark Grizzaffi, Carlos Flores, Tom Moore, Elaine Stachowiak, King Davis, Chelsea Neckel, Dan Ross, Bill Evans, Scott Hasson, John Cruickshank, and Brian Kennedy.

- Need to order more club T-shirts. Mark will get the original order for Sean to determine how many and what sizes to order.
- Still have 10" DOB available for anyone who wishes to repair. Contact Sean at stneckel@gmail.com
- Joe Domaleski wrote a column in the Fayette County Citizen highlighting the FRAC club.
- Mark Sutton gave the Treasurer's report and will work with Chelsea to set up a means of paying club dues through the FRAC website.
- The club's solar system model will possibly be installed at the Gardens. Any ideas from members are welcome.
- Sean made comments on the AL Observing Awards and some of their programs.
- Suggestion was made to give newcomers some kind of Astronomy introduction.

FRAC Observings:

Friday October 13 was a cloudy rainy mess. Saturday October 14 was a beautiful night for astronomy. Mark and Terri Sutton, David and Rosanne Stone, and Carlos Flores enjoyed a crisp, clear night under the stars.

Public Observing Events:

In October we had really good skies at all our events. On October 7th we met at Lake Horton. Bill Evans, Sean Neckel, Scott Hasson, Wade Simmons, David and Rosanne Stone participated, sharing the skies with a handful of guests.

On October 20th we had a public event at Indian Springs. Members participating were George Ruff, Wade Simmons, Carmen Simmons, Ray Goodfellow, David Stone, and Rosanne Stone. We had about 25 guests.

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Solar System Observing - November 2023

Mercury is behind the sun and not observable.

Venus is visible from around 4am until dawn.

Earth is very pretty this time of year.

Mars is close to the sun and not easily observable.

Jupiter is visible about 7pm until 7am.

Saturn is visible around 7pm until 1:30am.

Uranus is visible in a telescope from 9pm until dawn.

Neptune is visible in a telescope starting at 7:45pm until 1:30am.

Moon: LQ: 11/5 New: 11/13 FQ: 11/20 Full: 11/27

<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

For sale:

iOptron SkyGuider Pro

William Optics High Latitude Vixen style all metal base

iOptron Tall Tripod with 1.5" legs

Hard case

\$475.00

Brian Kennedy

770-490-1339

briankennedymail@gmail.com



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NGC 6888, The Crescent Nebula. Courtesy of Alan Pryor.

The Crescent Nebula is an emission nebula in the constellation of Cygnus. It is also known as NGC 6888, Caldwell 27 and Sharpless 105. It is a good November target, but it is pretty faint. It will appear as a crescent, and an Ultra High Contrast filter will help immensely. A 4" scope may reveal it with the filter, but usually an 8" or larger is needed. It is about 2.75 degrees SW of Sadir in Cygnus.

The photo I took was a combination of the standard LRGB filters plus an Ha filter to reveal much more structure of the nebula. There is much more to this nebula than the crescent that is seen visually. A full size photo can be seen at [Crescent Nebula](#). The bright star in the middle of the nebula is a Wolf-Rayet star, Wolf-Rayet 136. It is about 5,000 light-years away. It has a surface temperature of about 125,000 degrees F. It has a mass 21 times that of our sun. It blew off its outer atmosphere since it was previously a red giant. Fast stellar winds from the intense radiation of the star have created the nebula's unique structure. The star will eventually end its life as a supernova.



October 2024 Annular Solar Eclipse as seen from San Antonio, TX, Courtesy of Clayton Wilson

From Clayton:

"My brother Craig and I took a road trip to San Antonio to witness the annular eclipse. We took several photos with the thought of making a time-lapse video. The clouds were quite heavy so partial video may be all that can be cobbled together. We were about 15 miles east of the center path, as that was as close as we could find a hotel. That 15-mile distance from the center can be seen in the photo with the ring not being perfectly symmetrical. I sent 6 photos: 5 of the eclipse (C2 with Baily's Beads, C3 with Baily's Beads, and the Ring of Fire) and one of my brother and me with the setup. The Baily's Beads were generated by the contours in the moon's surface as it crosses the edge of the sun. The peaks and valleys of the moon's surface are discernable around the entire edge of the moon's shadow against the bright sun.

"These photos were taken with the 80mm APO refractor at a focal length of 448mm with a white light solar filter. The camera is an ASI585MC and the photos were taken with a 15ms exposure and gain of 250. Hopefully, you can use some of these."

Clayton's time lapse video of the eclipse can be seen at this link:

<https://clipchamp.com/watch/uRR2erBQqsQ>



October 2024 [partial annular solar eclipse](#), as seen from Brooks, GA. Courtesy of Sean Neckel.

*"Here's my photo of the partial solar eclipse, using the original solar filter - clouds." ******

*** - not recommended.

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