

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 28, No. 2 February 2024

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: **Chelsea Neckel**; Newsletter Editor: **Dawn Chappell**; NASA Contact: **Felix Luciano**

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Club Calendar:

FRAC Meeting:

Thursday, February 8, 2023, 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom. Mark Sutton will give a presentation on astronomy education programs. Sean Neckel will give a short demonstration about how to select, test, and properly mount a solar filter for your telescope.

Public Observing Events:

We have a public event at Lake Horton on Friday, February 16th from 6:15 till 9:00 with a weather makeup date on Saturday, February 17th.

FRAC Observing Events:

We have our monthly club event at Joe Kurz on Friday, February 9th and Saturday, February 10th from sunset to whenever.

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.

President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,

Just a reminder that at our February meeting we will hold our annual officer elections. If you would like to nominate someone or yourself, you can email me at stneckel@gmail.com or you can do so during the meeting on February 8th. All positions are up for re-election, and any paying member of the club is eligible for offices. If you have a question about the responsibilities of any office, you can email those as well.

We will begin collecting dues in February. Our treasurer Mark Sutton has set up electronic dues payments and will provide details at the next meeting. You can still pay by cash or check as well.

Sean

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Club Projects:

Globe at Night

This month's campaign is January 31 to February 9, and will use the constellations [Perseus](#) and [Orion](#). Details of the process are here: <https://globeatnight.org/6-steps.php>

This will be the second year we are participating in the Globe at Night project. Keep those observations coming, and help us show the effects of increasing light pollution year to year.

FRAC T-Shirts

More T-shirts are in!! They are \$20 at all FRAC gatherings.

Amateur Astronomy Series by the Kalamazoo Astronomy Society

The next amateur astronomy lecture will be "Binocular Basics" on February 10 from 1-3pm.

Full details on the series and how to register can be found on the Introduction to Amateur Astronomy web page:

<https://www.kasonline.org/amastro.html>

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January Events:

FRAC meeting - January 11, 2023 - 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens and on Zoom.

17 FRAC members attended our monthly meeting in person: Sean Neckel, Carlos Flores, Alfred McClure, George Ruff, Erika Martinez Uribe, Alfredo Martinez, Nelson Stephenson, Tom Moore, Larry and Twila Dove, Dave and Rosanne Stone, Clayton Wilson, Brian Kennedy, Ben Barker, and Terri and Mark Sutton.

7 Members joined us on Zoom: Mark Grizzaffi, King Davis, Dave Mandell, Wade Simmons, Ronda Dyer, Mike Basmijian, and Chelsea Neckel.

- George Ruff has obtained verbal permission to install the club Solar System model in the Gardens in the next few months. Volunteers were requested.
- Topics for Astronomy education presentations were solicited and discussed.
- Sean Neckel gave a presentation on the Astronomical League observing programs.

FRAC Observings:

Friday, January 12 was rainy. Dave and Rosanne Stone went to Joe Kurz on Saturday, January 13.

Public Observing Events:

January events at Lake Horton in Fayetteville on January 19 and 26 were canceled because of the cold and wind.

Welcome New Members!

Alfredo Martinez and Erika Martinez Uribe joined FRAC at our January meeting. Kevin Yang and his family also joined FRAC in January. Welcome to FRAC!!

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Astronomy Trivia – Solar Eclipse Edition

In recognition of the upcoming solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, here is some eclipse trivia.

1. What is the route a solar eclipse traces across the face of the Earth called?
2. What phase is the moon in during a solar eclipse?
3. What are the points of light around the moon observed during an eclipse called?
4. What causes these points of light?
5. After April 8, 2024, when will the next solar eclipse pass over the lower 48 states?

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Solar System Observing – February 2024

Mercury is behind the sun and not observable.

Venus is visible from around 5:45am until dawn.

Earth is pretty ok sometimes, I guess.

Mars just passed behind the sun and is not observable.

Jupiter is visible from about 6:30pm until midnight.

Saturn is visible around 6:45pm until 7:45pm.

Uranus is visible in a telescope from 7pm until 1:30am.

Neptune is visible in a telescope starting at 7pm until 9:45pm.

Moon: LQ: 2/2 New: 2/9 FQ: 2/16 Full: 2/24

<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

Williams Optics High Latitude Vixen all metal base

iOptron Tall Tripod with 1.5" legs

Pelican style hard case

Asking \$400.00

Brian Kennedy

770-490-1339



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The Flaming Star Nebula (Caldwell 31, IC405). Courtesy of Alan Pryor. Taken 1/10/2011

The Flaming Star Nebula is an emission and reflection nebula in the constellation of Auriga. The bright star in the nebula is a variable star with a magnitude of around 6. In the photo the bluish area near that star is the reflection portion of the nebula while the red is the emission portion. The nebula is faint and spans roughly one half of a degree. A 12" scope with an ultra-high contrast filter should reveal the faint glow of the nebula. If you imagine a line from Capella to Aldebaran, then go 40% of the way toward Aldebaran and drop south for 2 degrees you should find the nebula. The nebula is about 1500 light-years away. It is also called Caldwell 31 and IC405.

This photo was taken 1/10/2011 with a Takahashi 130mm telescope. The full size image can be found at [Flaming Star Nebula](#).

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Answers:

1. Path of totality.
2. New moon.
3. Bailey's Beads
4. Sunlight passing around the topography (craters, mountains, etc.) of the moon.
5. August 12, 2045.

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