

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 28, No. 11 November 2024

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

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Club Calendar:

FRAC Meeting:

Thursday, November 14, 2024, 7:30pm at the UGA
Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom.

Public Observing Events:

We have a public event at Indian Springs for
November 8th at 6pm with a weather make-up date
for the 9th just in case the 8th gets clouded out.

On November 15th at 6pm, we have a public event
at Lake Horton with a weather make-up date
scheduled for the 16th.

FRAC Observing Events:

Our club events for November are scheduled for
November 1st and 2nd, and again on November
29th and 30th, from sunset to whenever.

The gate is now open, so please be sure to leave the
gate as you find it when the last person leaves for
the night.

The lock code is 9321.

Please keep checking your email for updates
regarding club events.

President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,

In February of 2019, I took the office of club
president, taking over for one of our longest tenured
members, Dwight Harness. Dwight had been
president for 6 years, and had asked me to take the
reins, even though I really had no idea what to
do. Along with our then Vice President Bill
Warren, Dwight helped me get my feet under me
and keep the club going strong.

Fast forward to 5 years later. Our club has more
members than at any time during my time as a club
member (since 2016), we have a strong leadership
team, public outreach is at an all-time high, and
participation in our club and public events has never
been better. Our club survived through COVID,
while learning ways to keep members engaged
using ZOOM. The quality of content at our
meetings could not be better!

I want to thank all the members who have taken
ownership of this club, and are helping to make it
better every year. Our current officers, board
members, and committee chairs are truly driving
our club forward.

With that said, I will use this space to remind our
club members of a statement that I made last
February during our officer elections. This year
will be my last as president of FRAC. I have
enjoyed my time as president, and will continue to
serve our club in whatever capacity is needed. For
2025 and beyond, it is time for someone new to take
up the reins as I did in 2019.

I will be discussing our path forward in the coming
weeks with our officers and board members, and
will be asking for nominations for president. If you
are interested in becoming the next president of
FRAC (or any officer position), please reach out to
me or any officer or board member.

My advice for anyone who is interested: do not be
intimidated. I will be around to help support the
transition, and you will have the help of the great

team of people who have supported me over the past 5 years.

Sean

Club Projects: Globe at Night

This month's campaign is November 22 through December 2, and will use the constellation [Pegasus](#).

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

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

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October Events:

FRAC meeting October 10, 2024 at 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom.

18 FRAC members joined us in person at the Gardens: Alfred McClure, Carlos Flores, Clayton Wilson, Don Clemons, Mark and Terri Sutton, Rosanne Stone, Cheryl Baumgartner, Wade and Carmen Simmons, Mark Austin, John Cruickshank, Ronda Dyer, Bill Evans, and Ben Barker.

4 FRAC members attended our monthly meeting on Zoom: Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Mark Grizzaffi, and Lee Stevens.

- Alfred filling in for Sean
- For the Christmas meeting, Sean will be sending out a list for food
- New members introduced
- Mark Grizzaffi will send roster as of 3rd quarter to AL
- Mark Sutton gave Treasurer's report
- Carlos Flores and Larry Dove presented information about their SeeStar and EV astrophotography telescopes.

FRAC Observings:

Our club event was on the weekend of October 4th and 5th. If anybody was there on October 4th, please let me or Sean know so you can get credit. On October 5th, we had six club

members. They were Wade Simmons, Brendon Czock, Brandy Czock, George Ruff, Rosanne Stone and David Stone. It was a partly cloudy night.

Public Observing Events:

On October 19th we had a public event at Indian Springs. It was an absolutely beautiful night with the mostly full moon not rising until later in the night and not a cloud in sight. We had a great view of the comet. We had around fifty guests and club members who showed up were: Wade Simmons, Carmen Simmons, David Stone and Rosanne Stone.

On Thursday October 10th, we had an educational event at the Henry County Public Library in McDonough, Ga. We had around forty guests. Club members who showed up were George Ruff and David Stone. George led the kids on a Solar System walk. Afterwards, George set up his binoculars and David set up his scope to view the moon.

Welcome New Members!

Jeff Doyle joined FRAC in October.. Welcome to FRAC!!

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Solar System Observing – November 2024

Mercury is close to the sun and not observable.

Venus is visible around 6pm until it sets around 7:45pm.

Earth is very colorful right now!

Mars rises just before midnight and will be visible until sunrise.

Jupiter is visible starting at 9:40pm until sunrise.

Saturn rises around 6:15pm and will be visible until 1:30am.

Uranus rises at 9:15 pm, and is visible with a telescope until dawn.

Neptune rises around 6:45pm and is visible with a telescope until 1:40am.

Moon: New: 11/1 FQ: 11/9 Full: 11/15 LQ 11/22

<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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NGC253 The Silver Coin Galaxy, courtesy of Alan Pryor

I, Alan Pryor, took this photo of NGC 253 in 2014 with my 11-inch Celestron EdgeHD. This is the brightest galaxy in the constellation of Sculptor. It is quite bright for a galaxy at a magnitude of 7.3 so it should be visible in smaller scopes. It has a tremendous amount of dust clouds in it. It is known by several other names such as the Silver Coin Galaxy, the Sculptor Galaxy or Caldwell 65. The galaxy is thought to be about 11 million light-years away, and it is estimated to have a diameter of about 70,000 light-years. It is also believed that there is a supermassive black hole at the center of the galaxy with a mass that is 5 million times that of our sun.

November is a great time to observe NGC 253, but you need a good southern horizon to see it. If you locate the 2nd magnitude star, Diphda, in the constellation of Cetus then you are close to the galaxy. Look about 7 degrees south and slightly east of Diphda to find NGC 253. The full size image can be seen at [NGC_253](#).



NGC7635, the Bubble Nebula, courtesy of Clayton Wilson

The Bubble Nebula is a breathtaking sight located 7,100 light-years away in the constellation Cassiopeia. This delicate cosmic bubble was blown into space by the intense stellar wind of a massive, hot star located at the top of the bubble. This star, 45 times more massive than our Sun, is nestled off-center, giving the nebula a slightly lopsided appearance. The Bubble Nebula spans 7 light-years across.

This cropped image was captured using a Celestron C8, and a ASI294MC Pro color camera. The image is composed of 330, 90 second exposures taken over two evenings. The images were stacked and processed in Pixinsight.



Comet C/2024 S1 (ATLAS), Courtesy of Brennan Czoch

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