THE

FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 28, No. 12 December 2024

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Club Calendar:
FRAC Meeting:
We will have our Holiday Party on Thursday, December 12, 2024, 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin. Please use the link below to Signup Genius to sign up for the FRAC Holiday party dinner. Everyone is welcome to participate, family, friends, etc. If anyone would like to arrive early to help set up the room or put up decorations, I'll likely be at the UGA Garden building around 6:45 or so.

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4BAEAC2FA1FDC70-53596006-2024

We will have a gift exchange again this year. If you wish to participate, please bring a wrapped gift (suggested price range is $10-$20).

There will be no Zoom for the holiday party.

Public Observing Events:
In December we do not have any events scheduled. We may have a Friday night observation in Peachtree City if we can decide on a date.

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:
We do not have any more club events at Joe Kurz scheduled.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

President's Message:
Hello FRAC Members,

Just a quick reminder about club officer positions for next year. Nominations will be discussed at a board meeting during the first week of December. All members are eligible to seek election to officer positions. So if you would like to contribute to our club as an officer, or if you think someone else would, please send me your nominations.

The one confirmed open position at this point is President, but all officer positions are up for election each year.

Observing Coordinator:
The club is looking for someone to take over as observing coordinator. David and Rosanne have done a fabulous job over the past few years of setting up our club observing and public outreach events. I really cannot say enough about how much work they have put into expanding our presence in the community. That they attend nearly every event themselves says so much about their dedication to astronomy and our club.

However, they are planning a move away from the area, and we need to transition their work to someone new. If you are interested in taking over this very rewarding position within the club, please let me know. I'm sure that Dave and Rosanne can help with the transition, and as a former OC I can assist as well.

Happy Holidays!

Sean

Club Projects:
Globe at Night
This month's campaign is December 22 through December 31, and will use the constellations Pegasus and Perseus.

Details of the process are here: https://globeatnight.org/6-steps.php

We are going on 3 years 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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November Events:
FRAC meeting November 14, 2024, at 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom.

13 Members were present at the Garden: Alfred McClure, Ronda Dyer, George Ruff, Larry and Twyla Dove, Carmen and Wade Simmons, Rosanne and Dave Stone, AJ Cullen, King Davis, Clayton Wilson, and David Pendergrast.

5 Members joined us on Zoom: Bill Evans, John Cruickshank, Mark Sutton, Scott Hasson, and Ben Barker.

- Alfred filled in for Sean as meeting facilitator.
- George Huff discussed the solar system project.
- Larry Dove received the Astronomical League Solar Eclipse Program award.
- For the Christmas meeting, Sean will be sending out a list for food.
- Group discussion of places for group trip. Charlie Elliott Group Mtg.; Brasstown Bald; Mark Smith Planetarium; Coca Cola @ Columbus Planetarium; Deer Lick.
- Group Discussion on Community Outreach on Digital Telescopes. Church interested.
- Someone to come to the club to contact the International Space Station.
- Open Discussion on Eclipse / Moon possible presentation.

FRAC Observings:
We had Joe Kurz scheduled for the first weekend of November. It was cloudy and I'm not sure if anybody showed up. On November 29th and 30th, the skies were perfect. Carlos Flores was there on Saturday. If anybody else showed up, please let either me, Rosanne or Sean know so we can make sure and give you credit.

Public Observing Events:
In November we had two club events and two public events.

Indian Springs on November 8th and 9th was cancelled due to clouds.

Lake Horton finally had great skies. We had about seventy-five guests show up on November 15. Club members who showed up were George Ruff, Brennen Czock, Jeff Doyle, Larry Dove, Twila Dove, Susan Crawford, Wade Simmons, Scott Hasson, Rosanne Stone, and David Stone.

Welcome New Members!
Eugene Rush joined FRAC in November. Welcome to FRAC!!

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Solar System Observing – December 2024

Mercury is close to the sun and not observable.
Venus is visible around 5:45pm until it sets around 8:30pm.
Earth seems all riled up about stuff right now.
Mars rises just after 11pm and will be visible until sunrise
Jupiter is visible starting at 6:30pm until sunrise.
Saturn rises around 6pm and will be visible until 11pm.
Uranus rises at 6:30pm and is visible with a telescope until just after 4am.
Neptune rises around 6:30pm and is visible with a telescope until around 11:30pm.
Moon: New: 12/1 FQ: 12/8 Full: 12/15 LQ 12/22 New: 12/30

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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NGC6934/Caldwell 47, courtesy of Alan Pryor

NGC 6934 (or Caldwell 47) is a globular cluster in the constellation of Delphinus. Globular clusters are exceptionally beautiful in small telescopes. NGC 6934 is almost overhead in October, but it is visible in the evening skies from July until December. To find it you can look at the bright star, Altair, and then scan about 11 degrees to the east. At a magnitude of 8.9 a small telescope should reveal it.

NGC 6934 is thought to be 52,000 light-years away. It is at the outer edge of the Milky Way. The total mass of the stars in the cluster is estimated to be 300,000 solar masses. A larger image of NGC 6934 can be seen at NGC_6934.

This photo was taken on 10/7/24 with a Planewave 14-inch CDK telescope. The exposure was a total of 2 hours and 40 minutes with 32 frames of 5 minutes each. 8 with a luminance filter, 8 with a red filter, 8 with a green filter and 8 with a blue filter. The camera was a Finger Lakes Instruments PL16803 cooled to -25 degrees C.

NGC7023, courtesy of Clayton Wilson

NGC 7023, better known as the Iris Nebula, is a beautiful reflection nebula located about 1,300 light-years away in the constellation Cepheus. A hot, young star illuminates the surrounding dust clouds, creating the characteristic blue glow. Capturing the outer, faint dust can be a difficult challenge. A large number of stacked images are required for processing this to increase the signal-to-noise ratio to reveal the faint cloud structures from a light polluted location.

This cropped image was captured using a Celestron C8, and an ASI294MC Pro color camera. The image is composed of about 900, 120 second exposures taken over 4 nights. The images were stacked and processed in Pixinsight. I want to extend a special thanks to Alan Pryor who provided direction in the use of Pixinsight to bring out the faint cloud structures in this image.

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