

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 29, No. 1 **January 2025**

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:

We will have our club meeting on Thursday,
January 9, 2025, 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in
Griffin and on Zoom.

For the January meeting, we plan to discuss what
activities we would like to plan for 2025. If you
have ideas for group outings, meeting topics or
activities, things you would like to present or have
presented by others, please join the meeting so that
we can get them on the schedule.

Public Observing Events:

In January we have one public event planned. It is
on January 17th at Lake Horton from 6:15 to 8:30
with a weather make up date for Saturday the 18th.

FRAC Observing Events:

Our club observing weekend at Joe Kurz will be on
January 25th and 26th from sunset until 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 and Happy New Year,

With the new year comes new club business, so I
have just a couple items to remind you about.

Officer elections will be held at the February
meeting. The officer positions are President, Vice
President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Any current
member may be nominated, and all positions are up
for election or re-election. If you wish to nominate
yourself or someone else, you can do so during the
January meeting or email me directly.

The club will start collecting our yearly dues in
February. You can pay dues at any meeting,
electronically through the Venmo app (search for
the business account @fracmoney24), or by
mailing cash or check to:

Mark Sutton
107 Pintail Way
Locust Grove, GA 30248

Checks should be made out to Flint River
Astronomy Club

Thanks,

Sean

Club Projects:

Globe at Night

This month's campaign is January 21 through
January 31, and will use the constellation [Orion](#).

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

We are going on 4 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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December Events:

FRAC Holiday Party December 12, 2024, at 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens.

20 Members were present at the Garden for our Holiday Party: Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Alfred McClure, Brent Summers, George Ruff, Carlos Flores, Kathy and Nelson Stephenson, Chris and Brennan Czock, David Pendergrast, Terri and Mark Sutton, Khan Howard, Ben Barker, Dave and Rosanne Stone, John Cruickshank, Dr. Richard Schmude, and Ronda Dyer.

We all had a great time sharing our favorite holiday foods, exchanging gifts, and playing Astronomy Pictionary.

FRAC Observings:

We had Joe Kurz scheduled for the last weekend of December. It was wet and cloudy pretty much all weekend.

Public Observing Events:

In December we did not have any scheduled public events.

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Astronomy Trivia - Know Your Constellations Edition

1. How many stars make up Ursa Minor (The Little Dipper)?
2. Which constellation is a winged horse?
3. How many constellations are named after birds?
4. What is the only constellation named after a musical instrument?
5. What is the smallest constellation by area?

Solar System Observing – January 2025

Mercury is visible on the eastern horizon starting around 6:10am.

Venus is visible around 6pm until it sets around 9:15pm.

Earth is your only source for local news.

Mars rises just after 7:30pm and will be visible until sunrise.

Jupiter is visible starting at 6pm until 5am.

Saturn rises around 6:15pm and will be visible until 10:30pm.

Uranus rises at 5:45pm and is visible with a telescope until just after 2am.

Neptune rises around 5:45pm and is visible with a telescope until around 11:30pm.

Moon: FQ: 1/6 Full: 1/13 LQ 1/21 New: 1/29

<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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NGC246, The Skull Nebula, courtesy of Alan Pryor

NGC 246, sometimes called the Skull Nebula, is a large planetary nebula in the constellation of Cetus. It is best observed in November through January, and an 8-inch scope or bigger is needed. When photographed it looks like a smiling skull. It is about 6 degrees north of the star Diphda in Cetus. It is about 1600 light-years away with an apparent magnitude of 10.9. It is believed that it blew its atmosphere off within the last few thousand years. Its color of teal blue is typical of oxygen being

excited by UV from the central star. There are hints of a red tint which is typical of hydrogen being excited by UV radiation as well. A larger image can be seen at [NGC_246](#).



The Orion Nebula, courtesy of Brennan Czock

Answers:

1. Seven
2. Pegasus
3. Nine. Apus (bird-of paradise), Aquila eagle), Columba (dove), Corvus (crow), Cygnus (swan), Grus (crane), Pavo (peacock), Phoenix (firebird), and Tucana (Toucan).
4. Lyra
5. Crux, the Southern Cross.

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