

# CHARLIE ELLIOTT CHAPTER OF THE ATLANTA ASTRONOMY CLUB

## MEETING MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 10, 2015

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The October monthly meeting for the Charlie Elliott Chapter of the Atlanta Astronomy Club was held in the Campbell Aquatic Center Building at the Charlie Elliott Wildlife Management property in Mansfield, Georgia. There were twenty members and guests in attendance.

Jack Fitzmier, Chapter Director, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He began the meeting with a recap of names of members who were awarded various Astronomical League program pins for completion of programs during the "Summer Under the Stars". During the months of June, July, and August of 2015, these members were awarded pins and certificates for the following programs:

Messier: Marie Lott and David Whalen

Binocular Messier: Valorie Whalen

Hydrogen Alpha Solar Observing: Marie Lott and Valorie Whalen

Jack also presented six new awards for October as follows:

Sunspotter: Dan Thoman

Messier: Valorie Whalen

Double Stars: Marie Lott, Valorie Whalen, David Whalen and Jack Fitzmier

Lastly, he discussed changes that are coming to the Master Observer Award Program. Currently there is only one award at the Master level, but the Astronomical League is planning to introduce several new levels to that program. There are plans to have an "Observer" level award, "Master" level, "Master Silver" level, "Master Gold" level, and a "Master Platinum" level. The details of these advanced programs are still being worked on and will be announced by the League at a later date.



Marie Lott, Program Chair, introduced our featured speaker, David Yenerall, Lecturer of Astronomy for Georgia Perimeter College. Mr. Yenerall presented a slide show of images of the construction of the Gemini Observatory in Chile. The 8.1 meter diameter telescope is situated atop Cerro Pachon in the Chilean Andes mountains. Along with its sister observatory located atop Mauna Kea in Hawaii, the twin telescopes can cover all but 2 degrees of the observable sky. Funded by a consortium from the United States, Canada, Chile, Brazil, Argentina and Australia, the telescope features state of the art adaptive optics that allow it to clearly see through the Earth's atmospheric distortions. He also gave a discussion of the different instrumentation packages that are available to the scope. There are also several outreach events at the Observatory as well.



Jack also noted the following upcoming events:

**Peach State Star Gaze: October 11<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>**

**CE Meeting: November 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m.** in the Shepherd Conference Room. The Speaker will be Daniel Herron regarding The International Space Station.

**CE Meeting: December 12<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m.** in the Campbell Aquatic Building. This will be our quarterly potluck dinner and holiday gathering.

Our Observing Supervisor, David Whalen, gave a presentation on what we can expect to see in the sky over the coming weeks. His talk, titled "All of the Above" included current weather conditions for the Jon Wood Astronomy Field, relative location of each of the planets, along with the sun and moon, and each of their respective rise and set times. He included H-alpha photos of the Sun as of 10/10/15. David gave a presentation showing the relationship of each of the planets we can currently see in the morning skies (Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Mercury), along with what those "conjunctions" really mean in the grand scheme of our solar system. Also discussed were several deep-sky targets in the categories of "Relaxing", "Intriguing", "Taxing" and a Challenge Object. The full list of targets for the month of October is available on the website.

The weather was too poor to host an observing session on the field after the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Valorie Whalen

Recording Secretary, Charlie Elliott Chapter of the Atlanta Astronomy Club

(Photos courtesy of Valorie Whalen)