



## Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club

[www.charlotteastromers.org](http://www.charlotteastromers.org)

Next Meeting: Friday, March 15, 2013  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Place: Myers Park Baptist Church  
Address: 1900 Queens Road

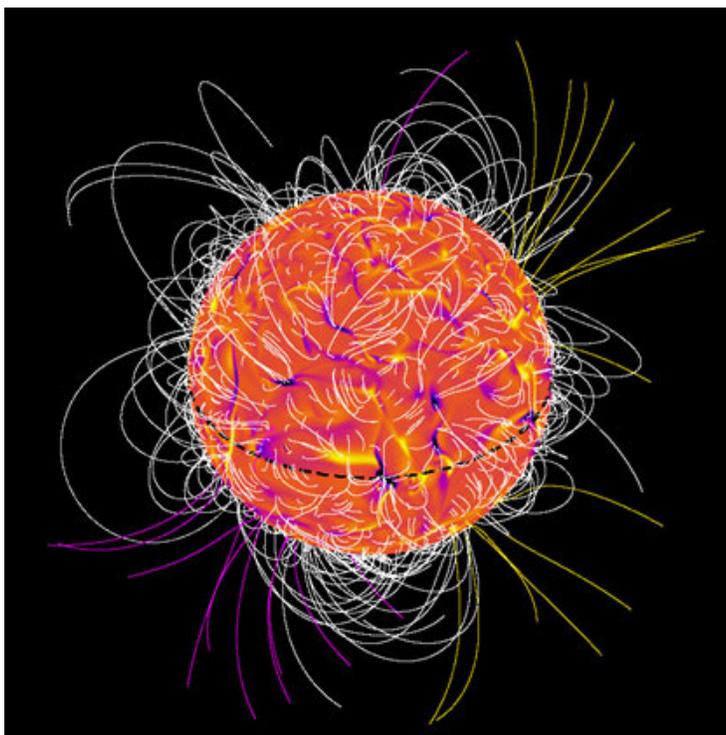
### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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#### The Learning Critical Thinking Through Astronomy Project

Presented by: Professor Joe Heafner

The Learning Critical Thinking Through Astronomy Project (LCTTA for short) is a complete repackaging of introductory astronomy from the ground up, built upon the critical thinking framework of Richard Paul and Linda Elder, both of the Foundation for Critical Thinking. LCTTA consists of numerous inquiry based activities rather than lectures, and each activity builds upon the previous ones to construct an internally consistent theme and story line leading from human thought to our Solar System and, eventually, to the Universe as a whole.



Joe Heafner began teaching astronomy and physics at Catawba Valley Community College in 1992. He has authored a book entitled *Fundamental Ephemeris Computations*, which was published in 2000. He is also a contributing editor to *Sky & Telescope*, writing software and book reviews. In early 2006, Joe began a three year term on the American Association of Physics Teachers Committee on Space Science and Astronomy and will assume chairmanship of this committee in January 2013. Joe is an active member of the Catawba Valley Astronomy Club and is on the staff of Lucile Miller Observatory at Maiden Middle School in Maiden, NC.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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In January I had the wonderful opportunity of visiting Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. It was a pleasure to see on the cover of their current visitor guide an article by Valerie Glowinski entitled Save the Night Sky. With NPS permission, here are a couple excerpts: "Our ability to view the night sky is vanishing. The wonders of the stars above may soon become extinct except in our national parks. Currently, two-thirds of the United States population can no longer see the Milky Way at night because of excessive artificial light, also known as 'light pollution'. .... City lights can bleed over a hundred miles making it difficult to view the celestial bodies. Will our children's children be able to wish upon a star? Or will they miss out on a ritual that has been passed down for generations?"

When you stop and think about it, saving the night sky shouldn't just be a campaign in our National Park System, but across the country --- and certainly with the help of local astronomy clubs. While CAAC is a member of the International Dark-Sky Association, perhaps the time has come that we could do more. The greater Charlotte night skies are continuing to brighten and I don't think any of us want to drive much further for "relatively dark sky" observing. If you get a chance, visit the IDA at [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org) and look at the tab Night Sky Conservation. Perhaps you will be "de-lighted".

## FROM THE OBSERVATORY DIRECTOR

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### **Loaner Telescopes**

The CAAC has several loaner telescopes for use by members; borrow at one meeting and return the following meeting. We have had two Dobsonian scopes donated and they are now available. One is a 6 inch and the other is an 8 inch to which I have added a Telrad finder and a zoom eyepiece. Both scopes are very basic but very easy to use.

Clear skies,  
Ken Steiner

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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### **CAAC Upcoming Monthly Star Parties**

Saturday, March 9

Saturday, April 13

Monthly star parties are held at the club's **Gayle H. Riggsbee Observatory** in Taxahaw, SC, weather permitting. Contact the Observatory Director, Ken Steiner, for directions to the observatory. All members and their guests are welcome.

### **Southern Star Astronomy Convention, April 4-7, 2013**

<http://charlotteastronomers.org/southernstar>

### **Discovery Place Partnership/Astronomy Day:**

CAAC is partnering with Discovery Place on Wednesday, **April 17** for a fun family evening including night sky observing atop their parking deck. These events always draw a crowd and are a lot of fun for folks to take a peek through our telescopes.

Astronomy Day is Saturday, April 20 at Discovery Place and CAAC will be there, too. We'll be needing volunteers for helping:

- staffing a table with information about the club and amateur astronomy
- sidewalk solar observing
- have a couple telescopes setup inside Discovery Place to explain the basics

Please consider volunteering for these family friendly, public outreach events. More details will follow.

### **CAAC Outreach**

#### **Fisher Farms Park:**

On Friday **April 12th** at 8pm, please join our club, the citizens of Davidson and the wonderful folks at Davidson College for our Bi-Annual Star Party Event at Fisher Farms Park in Davidson, NC. The address is 21215 Shearers Rd., Davidson, NC 28036. Many Volunteers are needed for this gathering. Setup can begin any time after 6:30pm. If you would like to help, please email Rob Carl at [rCarl@carolina.rr.com](mailto:rCarl@carolina.rr.com) or call him at 704-650-9633. Thanks and hope to see you there!

#### **Mt. Pleasant Middle School:**

Club member Gary Hahn and the Town of Mt. Pleasant, NC are sponsoring a Star Party at Mt. Pleasant Middle School on Thursday, **April 18th**, 2013. The evening will begin at 8pm. You may begin setup at 6:30. Many volunteers are needed as this event as more than 150 visitors are expected. The address is 8325 NC Hwy 49N, Mt. Pleasant, NC 28124. If you can help out, please email Rob C at [rCarl@carolina.rr.com](mailto:rCarl@carolina.rr.com). Thanks and we are looking forward to seeing you at this Family Friendly event!

**CAAC Outreach continued...**

**Sharon Elementary School:**

Dr. Susan Trammell of UNCC and The Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club is sponsoring a Star Party at Sharon Elementary School on Friday, **April 26th** beginning at 8pm. Guest should start arriving around 7:30. Setup can begin at 6:30pm and power will be available. Volunteers may unload at the site and park close by. The event is in need of several Volunteers. The address is 4330 Foxcroft Road, Charlotte, NC 28211. 200+ visitors are expected. Please email Rob C at rcarl@carolina.rr.com or Dr. Trammell at srtramme@uncc.edu if you can help out.

**FROM THE TREASURER**

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CAAC membership year begins October 1<sup>st</sup>, and ends on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Dues for members joining after January 1<sup>st</sup> are prorated:

- **\$35.00** - Individual and Family
- **\$6.00** - Students, up to 18 years of age
- **\$10.00** - Observatory Access: Allows members unlimited access to and use of the club's observatory facilities and equipment following observatory training/familiarization by the Observatory Director
- **\$25.00** - Private Observatory Pad: Assessed to members that have a private observing pad on CAAC property

Discounted magazine subscriptions can be obtained through the CAAC:

- Sky & Telescope - \$32.95 per year (**savings of \$5**)
- Astronomy - \$34.00 per year (**savings of \$8.95**), or \$60.00 for two years (**savings of \$19.95**)

**Make checks payable to CAAC.** Jim Gaiser, CAAC Treasurer, will accept them at monthly meetings, or they can be mailed to:

CAAC  
c/o Jim Gaiser  
8624 Lenten Rose Court #203  
Charlotte, NC 28277

FROM THE SECRETARY

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**New/Returning Members**

John & Cora Chapman, Michael Fairchild, and Mark Stanford



**Register with the Night Sky Network**

The Night Sky Network (NSN) is a nationwide coalition of amateur astronomy clubs bringing the science, technology, and inspiration of NASA's missions to the general public. As a member club of the NSN, the Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club has access to a number of resources designed to support our public outreach programs. Click the banner above, or use the link below to register:

[http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-apply.cfm?Club\\_ID=1468&ApplicantType=Member](http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-apply.cfm?Club_ID=1468&ApplicantType=Member)

**CAAC on Facebook**

Find the Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club on Facebook. Navigate to [www.facebook.com/CharlotteAstronomers](http://www.facebook.com/CharlotteAstronomers), or use the search feature for "charlotteastronomers". Be sure to 'Like' the page, and you'll receive updates on your wall when new content is shared.



**Pre-Monthly Meeting Gathering**

Several CAAC members gather at Panera Bread (601 Providence Road, just a few blocks from our meeting place) at 5:30 prior to the monthly meeting. Anyone interested in sharing a meal with them is welcome. If you're new to the club, and would like an introduction to some of the folks that attend, contact Steve Rogish by email ([s\\_rogish@yahoo.com](mailto:s_rogish@yahoo.com)), or see me at the monthly meeting.

Newsletter questions, announcements, change of address - contact Steve Rogish ([s\\_rogish@yahoo.com](mailto:s_rogish@yahoo.com)).

FOR SALE ITEMS

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Bring your items for sale to regular club meetings and display them if you wish. To include sale items in the newsletter, please contact Steve Rogish (s\_rogish@yahoo.com) Ads will run for up to three months.

**Accessories for Sale:**

-Milburn Polished Aluminum Rings for 120mm diameter scope with rails for LX200-10	\$125
-Milburn Deluxe Equatorial Wedge for all LX200 scopes	\$450
-Milburn Counter Weight System with rail for LX200-10	\$150
-Crayford Microtouch Focuser	\$295
-Meade Deep Space Color Imager Pro II	\$525

Contact: Stan Smith  
 Phone: 864-882-9194  
 Cell: 864-710-9533

CAAC CONTACTS

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President	Mark Hoecker	mhoecker@bellsouth.net
Vice President	Robert Carl	rcarl@carolina.rr.com
Secretary	Steve Rogish	s_rogish@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Jim Gaiser	jegaiser@carolina.rr.com
Observatory Director	Ken Steiner	ken@steiner4.com
Public Outreach Coordinator	Robert Carl	rcarl@carolina.rr.com