



Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club  
[www.charlotteastromers.org](http://www.charlotteastromers.org)

Next Meeting: Friday, April 15, 2016

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Myers Park Baptist Church

Address: 1900 Queens Road

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### Bill Nigg: Mercury and Mars – A Double Feature in May

A Mercury transit is like a “tiny” eclipse. It looks unique compared to the usual sunspots. We are lucky to have 2 on this side of the planet within the next 3 years – then way off into the future. It all takes several hours and if cloudy weather ensues, then a chase may be needed. Then there’s Mars, even with a favorable opposition Mars has some challenges too. Bill still adds to his Mars notebook each opposition. But everybody can improve his or her results with effort. There is a lot going on, on that little “orange BB”!!

As an experienced observer of Mars and having photographed 4 transits of Mercury, Bill will review the numbers involved, the filters needed and the magnifications required for improved observing of both Mars and upcoming the Mercury transit. As well as sharing observing techniques he has learned from national star parties through persistence, patience, and practice.

Bill Nigg is a CAAC member and an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Kalamazoo Astronomical Society. He now lives out in the country, south of Monroe where he is building a small observatory. Bill has degrees in Physics and Engineering from Western Michigan University. For 32 years he had a career as a service engineer for analytical instruments, in the physics lab at Upjohn Pharmaceuticals, while also teaching Astronomy in the evenings at Kalamazoo Valley Community College for 13 years. Since retiring 6 years ago, Bill volunteers at national and state parks doing telescope observing and astronomy presentations for the campers. He only picks parks with dark skies and good weather. It’s a fun job, but somebody has to do it.

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FROM THE TREASURER :

Our new CAAC club year began October 1st. If you have not already done so, please pay dues for the new year:

---Club Dues + Observatory = \$60.

Bring cash or a check payable to "CAAC" to the upcoming November meeting or mail your check to:

CAAC  
c/o Phil Foust  
449 Roselawn Place  
Charlotte, NC 28211

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)

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FROM THE SECRETARY:

Register with the [Night Sky Network](#)

It is imperative that all members of the CAAC join the Night Sky Network (NSN). Many of the clubs outreach activities are managed by the NSN, as well as club communications (newsletters, event notifications, general email). The NSN is a wonderful tool specifically designed for amateur astronomy clubs like ours. Membership allows you to contact other members via email, and receive last minute updates for outreach events via text message:

[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)

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.

CAAC Apparel & Gear

Visit our Lands' End Store – Follow the navigation bar link on our club website:

<http://www.charlotteastronomers.org>

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**Happenings at GHRO** -- Chris Skor, [704-996-4215](tel:704-996-4215), [ChrisSkor@hotmail.com](mailto:ChrisSkor@hotmail.com)

## May Star Party at GHRO

April 30th, while not official CAAC Star Party at GHRO, should be a great night of dark sky viewing. Moon's not rising until 2:24am, setting 1:29pm.

On May 7th, come down early on before CAAC Star Party, we'll open H-Alpha Solar telescope while we catch up on light maintenance and cleaning. Then fire up the grill for a cook out as we watch dark sky come out for wonderful evening of viewing. Bring a tent, camp out and see Mars in early morning.

Upcoming 2016 CAAC Star Parties at GHRO (held Saturdays)

- May 7th
- June 4th
- July 2nd
- July 30th (best Saturday in August)
- September 3rd (Annual Cosmic Camporee)
- October 1st
- October 29th
- November 26th

**Loaner telescopes at GHRO**

For those new to astronomy, we have 3 small backyard telescopes to loan, low tech, good for viewing the moon, Jupiter, Saturn, and double stars.

See me if you'd like to checkout one of these scopes during our next Star Party.

Already familiar with telescopes, we can check you out during next Star Party on our club's 8", 16", or 24" telescopes, just give me a shout.

**Chris Skorlinski, GHRO, [704-996-4215](tel:704-996-4215)**

CAAC CONTACTS

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President	Jim Gaiser	<a href="mailto:jegaiser@carolina.rr.com">jegaiser@carolina.rr.com</a>
Vice President	Neil Easden	<a href="mailto:neileasden@me.com">neileasden@me.com</a>
Treasurer	Phil Foust	<a href="mailto:philfoust@gmail.com">philfoust@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Ruth Rupert	<a href="mailto:luvspaper@gmail.com">luvspaper@gmail.com</a>
Observatory Director	Chris Skor	<a href="mailto:chrisskor@hotmail.com">chrisskor@hotmail.com</a>
Public Outreach Coordinator	Neil Easden	<a href="mailto:neileasden@me.com">neileasden@me.com</a>