



# Northern Lights

Newsletter of the Coconino Astronomical Society

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

December/January 2007- 2008

**January Meeting – Saturday, Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>, 5:45pm**

## Using Your New Telescope - Clinic

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At the January meeting the program will focus on using your telescope. Anyone who has a telescope and would like to learn more about using it is invited to bring it to this hands-on clinic. Start the new year with your new scope off on the right foot. Club members Dave Frisk and Ernie Webb will present a short introductory program, and then club members will be available to work with you on setting and using your telescope.

After the meeting, there will be a brief time to meet others and for refreshments. Members are also encouraged to bring their new astronomy related goodies for a show and share. Weather permitting there will be observing of the Moon, as well as Messier objects such as star clusters, nebulae, galaxies, and other celestial treats – all through members' telescopes. Those attending are welcome to bring and set up their own telescopes, particularly if they'd like assistance in how to use them. This observing is free to those attending the meeting, but there is a fee for additional participation in other Lowell Observatory activities and observing. Observing will begin at 7:30 PM and may continue as late as 10 PM. Remember to dress warmly.

**Directions:** From Rt. 66 at the center of Flagstaff, take West Santa Fe up Mars Hill to Lowell Observatory. Meet at the Visitor Center auditorium.

## Upcoming Events

December 15<sup>th</sup> - CAS Holiday Party 5pm Brent & Joanne Archinal's

January 5<sup>th</sup> – CAS Club Observing Night – Dave Frisk's Site

Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> - General Meeting – 6pm at Lowell

Clinic– Using Your New Telescope – Dave Frisk & Ernie Webb

January 16<sup>th</sup> - CAS Board of Directors Meeting – 7pm Lowell

All club members welcome

Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> – Newsletter Deadline

## CAS Officers & Trustees 2008

The following slate of Officers and Trustees will be presented for election at the November 25<sup>th</sup> meeting..

President – Ernie Webb

Vice President- Klaus Brasch

Secretary- JoAnne Archinal

Treasurer- Dave Sanders

Trustees- Brent Archinal

Andy Barnett

Dave Frisk

Todd Thatcher (Webmaster)

## December 15<sup>th</sup> – CAS Holiday Party

The Annual CAS Holiday Party will take place on December 15<sup>th</sup> at the home of Brent and Joanne Archinal starting at 5pm. Bring a holiday goodie to share and BYOB (if desired).

Everyone should have received a postcard with directions.

## February Program Advanced Notice

The February general meeting program will feature an update on the Discovery Channel telescope by Lowell director Bob Millis

"Progress in Building the Discovery Channel Telescope and Plans for Its Scientific Use."

The talk will review the construction status of each major element of the telescope, the schedule for completion of the total facility, and the initial scientific investigations to be undertaken with the telescope.

## The December /January Night Sky

### December

13<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> – Peak of the Geminid Meteor Shower

18<sup>th</sup> - Mars closest approach to the Earth, 15.9" across

24<sup>th</sup> Mars is at opposition

### January

3<sup>rd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> – The Quadrantid Meteor shower peaks

8<sup>th</sup> - New moon

9<sup>th</sup> - Thin crescent Moon close to Mercury after sunset

19<sup>th</sup> - Moon passes close to Mars at dusk

31<sup>st</sup> - Venus & Jupiter are 1.2 degrees apart in the morning sky

Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> Venus & Jupiter are .6 degrees apart

## CAS Website & Logo – A New Look

Check out the new CAS website at [www.coconinoastro.org](http://www.coconinoastro.org)  
Having our own domain should help us keep current by giving us the opportunity to access and update information whenever we want. Please thank Todd Thatcher, our webmaster for his efforts, and if you have any ideas for content or suggestions that will make our site more useful be sure to share them.

Hopefully, you noticed our **logo** on the masthead of the newsletter and on the website. Thanks again, Todd, for putting the concepts together to create the finished design.

## Lunar Eclipse Viewing

Mark your calendar for the total lunar eclipse on Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>. The event is due to begin at 8pm, and there will be a CAS observing evening at the new Klaus Brasch observatory. All club members and guests are invited to bring their equipment and enjoy the viewing. Details to follow.

## November Meeting Highlights

The November Meeting featured a presentation on the search for extraterrestrial life forms by club member Klaus Brasch. The meeting was well attended and members set up their scopes for public viewing afterwards. Comet Holmes was the evening highlight.

## Pointers on Selecting a Telescope (from the October Presentation)

Size of the objective lens or mirror (bigger is generally better)

Sturdiness of the mount (critical)

Ease of use

- Fast set-up
- Single person set-up
- Portability (fits in your car)

Cost effectiveness

- Overall quality
- Long term utility
- Durability

**Avoid buying telescopes from toy or department stores.**

## General Information

- CAS Members receive a \$10. discount on *Sky & Telescope* subscriptions if ordered through CAS. Contact Treasurer Dave Sanders for details.
- To join CAS or renew membership contact Treasurer Dave Sanders.
- Trustee Dave Frisk offers a free observing session at his home for new members . Contact Dave by phone at 928- 607-9189.
- CAS maintains an email list to send out announcements about club events. Emails are not sent frequently, and the list is not sold or distributed. Register at the general meeting, or send an email through the CAS website.
- The Northern Lights is the bi-monthly newsletter of CAS and is posted online. The newsletter deadline is the Friday following the Board Meetings. All members are encouraged to share information/articles of interest. Please submit articles by email to : Linda Webb at [lewebb@hughes.net](mailto:lewebb@hughes.net)
- Deadline for the February/ March newsletter will be January 25<sup>th</sup>

## Bulletin Board Available for CAS Use

A new Bulletin Board has been set up with a variety of topic areas including astronomy. CAS has been given its own area for posting and sharing information and activities, as well as dialog between members.

<http://www.novitiuemearth.com/phpBB2>

You can register for free and then go to the Astronomy Discussion Groups and select CAS, Hopefully this will be a useful tool for communications. There are also postings of articles of interest to the astronomy community.