

Rappahannock Astronomy Club 2010 Annual Report

Membership: 30 members as of December 2010

Officers: President: Michael Masters Vice-President: Joseph Francis
Treasurer: Tim Plunkett Secretary: Bart Billard

Significant activities:

- Formalized position of club Equipment Coordinator, filled by VP Joseph Francis
- Developed written equipment loaner policy codifying long-standing one month rule
- Appointed equipment custodians for each item of loaner gear
- Began long term evaluation and upgrade of loaner equipment & observer aids
- Assembled packets of star charts and observing aids for each loaner telescope
- Increased participation by club members in monthly meeting program presentations
- Dropped Skyline Drive as destination for regularly scheduled club star parties
- Ceased operation on Raclub@m31.us email list server, fully effective January 2011
- Began process of assuming full ownership of **raclub.org** domain and Yahoo **rac_group**
- Began application process to join JPL's Night Sky Network
- Made individual Astronomical League membership optional
- Surveyed member interest in discount Sky & Telescope subscriptions
- Established RAC presence on FaceBook
- Planned star party schedule for 2011, with dates at Caledon and Westmoreland
- Planned 2011 public outreach star party at historic Stratford Hall
- Planned meeting programs for 2011, with speakers each month except Aug. & Nov.
- Elected 2011 officers; President: Michael Masters, Vice-President: Joseph Francis, Treasurer: Tim Plunkett, Secretary: Bart Billard

Club operations:

- Affiliate of Astronomical League
- Web site www.raclub.org
- Rac_group Yahoo group (register at http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rac_group/)
- Raclub@m31.us email list server (final phased out end of January 2011)

Club Meetings, Programs & Speakers:

January 13	CRRL Headquarters	"Grab-and-Go Scopes" show and tell
February 10	CRRL Headquarters	Meeting cancelled due to snow
March 10	CRRL Headquarters	"Radio Astronomy and SETI", Robert Taylor
April 14	CRRL Salem Church	"Outfitting the Compleat Astronomer!", Michael Masters
May 12	CRRL Salem Church	"Webcam Astrophotography", Scott Busby
June 9	CRRL Headquarters	"Mercury", Brenda Conway
July 14	CRRL Headquarters	"Measuring the Universe", Part I Michael Masters
August 7	Caledon Natural Area	Club picnic, no program
September 8	CRRL Headquarters	"Measuring the Universe" Part II, Michael Masters
October 25	CRRL Headquarters	"Black Holes" (date rescheduled), Joseph Francis
November 10	CRRL Headquarters	Club election meeting, no program
December 8	CRRL Headquarters	"Astronomy Camp at Univ. of Arizona", Glenn Holliday

Star parties:

9 Jan Caledon (cancelled, weather)	10 July Caledon (cancelled, weather)
16 Jan backup Caledon (cancelled, weather)	17 July Westmoreland (cancelled, weather)
6 Feb Caledon (cancelled, weather)	7 Aug Caledon held (Club Picnic)
13 Feb backup Caledon (cancelled, weather)	14 Aug backup Caledon (cancelled †)
13 Mar Caledon (cancelled, weather)	4 Sept Caledon held
20 Mar backup Caledon (cancelled, weather)	11 Sept Skyline Drive (cancelled, weather)
10 April Caledon held (Messier Marathon)	2 Oct Caledon held
17 Apr backup Caledon (cancelled †)	9 Oct backup Caledon (cancelled †)
8 May Caledon held	5 Nov Caledon (weather shortened)
15 May backup Caledon (cancelled †)	13 Nov backup Caledon (cancelled †)
5 June Caledon (cancelled, weather)	3 Dec primary Caledon (cancelled, weather)
12 June Skyline Drive (cancelled, weather)	11 Dec backup Caledon (cancelled, weather)
19 June Westmoreland held	† cancelled because primary party was held

Outreach events:

- 24 April King George Parks & Rec Earth Day (cancelled due to weather)
- 22 May Curtis Memorial Park (cancelled due to weather)
- 14 June Conway Elementary Space Day (cancelled due to weather)
- 19 June Westmoreland State Park outreach held
- 17 July Westmoreland State Park (cancelled due to weather)
- 4 September Stafford Boy Scout Troop 1717 attended Caledon star party
- 18 September Curtis Memorial Park outreach held
- 22 October Park Ridge Elementary School lecture by David Abbou
- 9 & 23 Sept Brock Road Elementary – Club PST used in solar program by Brenda Conway
- 28 October Courtland High School – Club PST used for solar program by Ann Aleo

Purchases:

- Replaced broken IR blocking filter in club Meade DSI digital astro-camera
- Purchased Celestron tripod and equatorial wedge for Celestron NexStar 5
- Purchased 5 copies *Discover the Stars* for loaner telescope star chart packets
- Purchased Celestron Alt-Az tripod for Celestron 5.5" Comet Catcher
- Purchased Celestron Alt-Az tripod for Coronado Personal Solar Telescope
- Purchased 5 copies *Bright Star Atlas* for loaner telescope star chart packets

Donations:

- Celestron NexStar 5" SCT GOTO telescope and accessories donated by private party
- 6" Orion Dobsonian reflector and accessories donated by private party
- 400 Years of the Telescope DVD donated by Michael Masters
- Rigol QuikFinder for Celestron Comet Catcher donated by Don Clark
- Laser collimator for club loaner Orion 6" Dobsonian reflector donated by Ranny Heflin
- 2 copies *Illustrated Atlas of the Universe* donated by Joseph Francis
- 6 copies *Backyard Astronomer's Guide* donated by Joseph Francis and Michael Masters
- 5 each planispheres, Moon maps, red flashlights, pocket folders donated by M. Masters
- Many years of Sky & Telescope and Astronomy magazine donated by Joseph Francis
- Multiple books donated to club members and the club library by Glenn Faini
- 12 red LED lights to mark telescope locations at star parties donated by Sarah Holloway

Donations and volunteers:

We wish to thank the many RAC members who donated time, resources, services, materials and funds to club projects in 2010 as well as those who supported club outreach events during the year. The list below acknowledges all whose contributions we are aware of, with the exception of contributors to the August club picnic and the November club pizza dinner. For those events, many who attended donated food, drinks or other supplies, contributions that helped make each event a success. Names are listed in alphabetical order.

David Abbou
Ann Aleo
Bart & Linda Billard
Scott Busby
Don Clark
Brenda Conway

Mark DeVito *
Glenn Faini
Joseph & Sherry Francis
Leigh Gettier
Ranny Heflin
Glenn Holliday

Sara Holloway
Michael Masters
Tom Pendergrass *
Debbie Sandler
Myron Wasiuta *
* Former RAC member

RAC acknowledges with special gratitude the contributions of former member Tom Pendergrass, who has long hosted the raclub@m31.us email list server used for club email communication. After many years as a very active RAC member who provided much participation, hard work and technical expertise in the early days when RAC was getting started, Tom moved away a few years back. Tom graciously offered to continue hosting the list server for us, despite the fact that he was no longer a club member and resided many hundreds of miles away. This year RAC has begun the process of moving away from the raclub@m31.us email list server, but we are most grateful to Tom for his long service to the club and wish him well in his future endeavors.

Submitted by Michael Masters
President, RAC, December 2010