



# **East Valley Astronomy Club**

## **EVAC New Members Guide**

Welcome! We are glad you are a new member, and hope you will find this information useful. The best resource for current events and information is our website at [www.evaconline.org](http://www.evaconline.org).

### **EVAC Mail Lists**

You are encouraged to join one or more of the mailing lists that EVAC offers. Direct links are found on the website. Here is a brief description of them and their intended use.

- EVAC-Announce – members receive periodic emails on EVAC meetings and events. All members are encouraged to subscribe to this list at [www.freelists.org/list/evac-announce](http://www.freelists.org/list/evac-announce). There is a quick link at the bottom of the EVAC homepage. Simply enter your email address and click GO. You can also use the same link and select “Unsubscribe” if you wish to be removed from the list.
- EVAC-Outreach – this list is reserved for members who participate in EVAC public outreach. It enables our Events Coordinator to give site information and last minute updates to members who volunteer their time and telescopes at our public star parties. There is more information about our outreach activities later in this document. Use this address to subscribe, [www.freelists.org/list/evac-outreach](http://www.freelists.org/list/evac-outreach), or click on the link found on the EVAC Public Star Party page of the website. You will receive an acknowledgement email from the Event Coordinator when you have been added to this list.
- AZ-Observing – this list is NOT maintained by EVAC. It is a list that is shared by several clubs, and enables subscribers to get information about personal observing at various sites. EVAC usually uses the Picket Post Trailhead site, but other sites are available. Please see the section on Star Party Etiquette later in this document. Use this address to subscribe, [www.freelists.org/list/az-observing](http://www.freelists.org/list/az-observing), or click on the link found on the EVAC Member Star Parties page of the website. You MUST reply to the email from the list manager to actually join the list.

### **EVAC Website**

Members are encouraged to use the EVAC website for the latest information on club events and meetings. Here is a brief description of the content. Please explore the site; there is a lot of useful information.

- Home page – click links to area of content, and a link to sign up for the EVAC Announce mail list
- About EVAC – information about EVAC status as a registered 501 (C3) non-profit corporation, membership list, access to specific member’s websites, and classified ads for astronomy equipment. EVAC classified ads are submitted by members. EVAC accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or serviceability of equipment for these private transactions.
- Meetings & Events – meeting dates and scheduled speakers, information on EVAC Public and Private Star Parties with links to join mailing lists, EVAC calendar, and Clear Sky Clocks. The Calendar is updated frequently, and members are encouraged to visit regularly. The Clear Sky Clocks give information on darkness and seeing for a number of observing locations in Arizona.
- Newsletters – check for new editions of the Observer, and access past editions
- Educational Resources – find links to a variety of astronomical resources, get information about basic astronomy terms, lists of objects for EVAC Observing Programs, and a form to request EVAC Outreach. Members are especially encouraged to use the EVAC Observing Programs to foster personal observing, and to receive recognition at our monthly meeting when lists are completed.

- Observatory – this page is devoted to the Gilbert Rotary Centennial Observatory, which is managed by EVAC. Members are encouraged to volunteer in this unique opportunity for public observing.
- Contact Us – links can be found for EVAC officers and managers. We appreciate comments.

### **Public Star Parties**

EVAC has a strong focus on public education and outreach. Members are encouraged to participate in these events either by sharing their telescopes, or just providing someone to discuss astronomy and space science. It is a great way to encourage young and old to value dark skies and our place in the universe.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday Star Party – members provide telescopes in the parking lot of the Gilbert Riparian Preserve for public viewing from dark until about 9pm. There is also an astronomy based lecture in the adjoining public library at 7:30pm. Public viewing is dependent upon the weather, but the lecture is always given.
- School and Community Star Parties – members provide telescopes at various locations for public viewing. Many of these events are at area schools in conjunction with Science Fairs or Reading Under the Stars events. Please check the EVAC Calendar for dates and times. Simply sharing your knowledge is a great way to encourage students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

### **Member Star Parties**

EVAC members usually gather two weekends each month based upon the time the moon rises. The site is the Picket Post Trailhead on US60 near Superior. The turnoff is marked by a sign just before the Boyce Thompson Arboretum. It is a dirt road, so drive slowly. Turn left at the sign about 1/2 mile from the highway. The road will dead end into the trailhead. Park in the lot on the east side (farthest lot on the one-way circle). Please read the section on Star Party Etiquette. More information can be found on the Member Star Party page of the website.

- Local Star Party – held on the Saturday following the full moon
- Deep Sky Party – held on the Saturday closest to the new moon

### **Major Star Parties**

- Messier Marathon – sponsored by the Saguaro Astronomy Club, this event takes place in the spring and is a chance to view the 110 objects on Charles Messier's list in a friendly competition to view them all. Information can be found on the SAC website at [www.saguaroastro.org](http://www.saguaroastro.org).
- All Arizona Star Party – sponsored by EVAC, this event takes place in October. It is a chance for astronomers to come together for dark skies and good conversation. Both the Messier Marathon and All AZ Star Party are held at the Hovatter Airfield site. More information can be found on the Member Star Parties page of the website.
- Grand Canyon Star Party – the south rim is sponsored by the Tucson Amateur Astronomy Club, and the north rim is sponsored by Saguaro Astronomy Club. The event is held in June, and is a great chance to show the heavens to people from around the world. Further information can be found at [www.tucsonastronomy.org](http://www.tucsonastronomy.org)

### **Star Party Etiquette**

There aren't a lot of rules, but please follow them for a safe and fun outing.

- Consumption of alcohol is not permitted at EVAC events.
- Please pack out all trash – do not litter
- No white lights – use dim red flashlight. Please be aware of light when opening automobile doors, or using computers.
- There is usually no water – bring plenty because it is often hot, even at night
- Please arrive before dark, with sufficient time to set up

- If you are planning to leave early, park close to the exit to avoid unnecessary light
- If you arrive late, please turn off your headlights
- Please keep noise to a minimum – often people are working on observing lists or photography. Members are willing to share their equipment, but please respect each other's property and privacy.
- Do not be the last person to leave – car problems can occur, and sites are often remote
- Members are responsible for the behavior of children and guests – these rules apply to them as well

### **Gilbert Rotary Centennial Observatory**

The Observatory opened on October 21, 2006, and was a project by the Gilbert Rotary Club to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rotary International. The observatory was built with private funds, and deeded to the Town of Gilbert. It is managed by EVAC under an agreement with the Town of Gilbert Parks and Recreation Department. GRCO is open each Friday and Saturday evening (weather permitting) from dark until 9:30pm. Volunteers are always appreciated.

- Primary telescope is a 16 inch Meade RC LX 200
- Solar viewing is provided through a 60mm Lunt Hydrogen Alpha telescope
- Telescope is controlled via Sky X software through a Paramount ME mount
- Pier height is adjustable from 30 inches to 50 inches to accommodate mobility challenged viewers
- Dome is 16 feet in diameter

### **Monthly Meetings**

Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month and start at 7:30pm. Members are encouraged to provide brief presentations on their astronomical activities. Meetings are usually over by 9:30pm. Visitors are always welcome.

- Join us for dinner at 5:30pm prior to the meeting at the Golden Corral located at 1318 N Cooper Rd in Gilbert.
- Several members gather for coffee following the meeting. The location sometimes varies, but will be announced at the meeting.

### **Annual Dues**

Membership expires at the end of the calendar year. Thank you for helping to promote the hobby of astronomy, and to provide public outreach for astronomy and space science to the general public through your membership.