

# Spring Equinox Star Party



*Carolina Skies  
Astronomy Club*

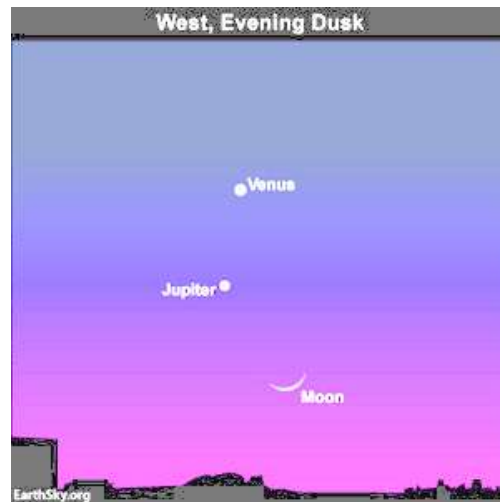
**Saturday March 24**

**Sunset till .....**  
*Weather and cloud cover  
permitting*

**A Time for Science** Nature and Science Learning Center is located off of Highway 11 between Ayden and Grifton in Contentnea Creek Estates. The physical address is 5345 Contentnea Lane, Grifton NC 28530. There is no charge but pre-registration is requested at the website ([www.atimeforscience.org](http://www.atimeforscience.org)), through email at ([atfs@atimeforscience.org](mailto:atfs@atimeforscience.org)) or by phone at 252-746-4470.

**March 2012 is about as good as it gets for planet watching**

- As purple twilight drapes the sky this evening, watch for the waxing crescent moon and the planets Jupiter and Venus, 10 degrees apart in the western twilight sky.
- These rank as the brightest, second- and third-brightest heavenly bodies of nighttime, so this evening tableau is one that you won't want to miss!
- This day is the beginning of a string of days in which the young moon – with its darkened portion illuminated by earthshine -- will be visible near these two bright planets in the western twilight sky



Jupiter and its moons from left to right are:  
Europa, Ganymede, Io and Calisto.

- Mercury, the innermost planet, makes its best evening appearance for the year in the Northern Hemisphere but is visible only with a clear western horizon
- Mars will be seen low in the east at nightfall, beaming as the sky's fourth-brightest "star," after Sirius.
- Sirius, the brightest star in the nighttime sky, is only a touch brighter than Mars, and will be sparkling in the southern sky.
- Saturn rises at about the same time that Venus sets in the west. By the end of the month, Saturn is rising at nightfall – or approximately 8:30 to 9:30 local daylight saving time.

To be part of the 21st century we must make **A TIME FOR SCIENCE** now.  
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