COMET OCCULTATION EXPEDITIONS PLANNED

Dr. David Dunham is organizing observers for the following occultations.
For further information call Dave at 385-0098.

Date Time Place Pnt Cusp Min

Grazing Lunar: 12-08-85 08:49 Trum, MA 1.8 (Mars) 18 11N 25cm
9-11
12-08-85 08:49 Allentown, NJ 1.8 (Mars) 18 11N 25cm
9-11
Astromidal: Star Mag Delta Mag Name
12-09-85 08:51 N. South America 9.4 1.4 (9) Thuya 5 cm
9-11
12-09-85 08:07 North Pennsylvania 9.1 1.4 (69) Julia 5 cm
9-11
12-09-85 08:07 Northern California 8.6 1.7 (88) Julia 8 cm
9-11
12-30-85 02:05 Quebec 9.0 0.6 (18) Melpomene 10 cm

NCA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

David Y. Simons
5600 Elmhurst Street
Rockville, MA 20852

Scott Graham and Barbara Berk
825 Loxford Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20910

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Silver Spring, MD 20910

ALHAMBRA Space and Science Museum Symposium, Open House, SAGAN
An international symposium, "The Quest," will feature speakers from many parts of the world on Friday, December 6 from 1:00 to 5:00 pm and Saturday, December 7 from 9:00 to 1:00 pm.

The Friday talks will be followed from 5:00 to 10:00 pm by Halley Night, when the public will see Halley and the comet's tail, and then consider comet names.

The SAGAN, the Sheepfoot-Lakeside Group, and the Arizona State University, in cooperation with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, will provide a window on the solar system and the Earth's atmosphere.

COMETS
Comets are the solar system's most ancient objects, dating back billions of years. They are composed of frozen gases, dust, and ice, and take on a variety of shapes and sizes. Some comets are small and have a short life span, while others are large and can survive for millions of years. Comets are important because they help us understand the early history of the solar system and the conditions that existed when the planets formed.

The Oort Cloud
The Oort Cloud is a vast reservoir of comets located at the edge of the solar system, beyond the orbit of Neptune. This cloud contains billions of comets, and is thought to be the source of most long-period comets. Some comets can take millions of years to travel from the Oort Cloud to the inner solar system.

Comet Halley
Comet Halley is one of the best-studied comets, and is known for its spectacular displays. It has been observed by astronomers for thousands of years, and has been the subject of many scientific studies. Halley was last seen in 1986, and is expected to return in 2061. During its previous appearances, Halley has been observed by spacecraft, telescopes, and even the naked eye.

The Solar Wind
The solar wind is a stream of charged particles that travels outward from the Sun. It is composed of ions and electrons, and can have speeds of up to 1 million km/h. The solar wind interacts with comets, causing them to emit tails of gas and dust.

The Role of Comets in the Solar System
Comets play a vital role in the solar system, as they provide a glimpse into the conditions that existed during the formation of the planets. They are also important for studying the composition of the early solar system, as some comets are thought to be remnants of the material that formed the planets.

The Prospects for Future Comet Missions
As technology advances, we can expect more missions to study comets. In the future, we may see more spacecraft flyby comets, or even land on their surfaces. These missions will give us a better understanding of the composition and evolution of comets, and how they interact with the solar wind.
EXCERPTS FROM THE IAU CIRCULARS

1. October 9 -- U. Thiele, Max Planck Institute for Astronomy, discovered a comet of 13th magnitude in Orion with the Hamburg Schmidt telescope at Calar Alto.
2. October 10 -- R.O. Evans, Hazelbrook, New South Wales, discovered a supernova of magnitude 13.5 in NGC 1433.
3. November -- Sheeley, Howard, Koomen, and Michels, N.R.L., announced that the P78-1 Solwind spacecraft had discovered two more Sun-grazing comets in November and 1984 July.
4. November 2 -- W. Liller, Vina del Mar, Chile, discovered another possible nova of 10th magnitude in sagittarius.

SPECIAL PUBLIC HALLEY PROGRAM AT BURKE LAKE PARK

On December 14 at 7:00 pm, Geoffrey Chester will offer public telescopic comet viewing at Burke Lake Park in Northern Virginia. Volunteers with telescopes and binoculars will be needed to assist. Call Geoff for details at: (703) 379-8218, or G: (202) 357-1529.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

2. To assist regularly in the NCA telescope-making class. Call Jerry Schnall, 362-8872.

FIRST CLASS