

Celebrating 80 Years of Astronomy 1937-2017

Next Meeting

| When: | Sat. May 13th, 2017 |
|-----------|---------------------|
| Time: | 7:30 pm |
| Where: | UMD Observatory |
| Speakers: | Alycia Weinberger |

Table of Contents

| Preview of May 2017 Talk | 1 |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Sky Watchers | <u>3</u> |
| (599) Luisa | <u>3</u> |
| Hopewell Obs. Open House | 4 |
| Occultations | 5 |
| Election Information | 6 |
| Calendar | 7 |

Directions to Dinner/Meeting

Our time and location for dinner with the speaker before this meeting is 5:30 pm at "The Common," the restaurant in the UMD University College building located at 3501 University Blvd.

The meeting is held at the UMD Astronomy Observatory on Metzerott Rd about halfway between Adelphi Rd and University Blvd.

Need a Ride?

Please contact Jay Miller, 240-401-8693, if you need a ride from the metro to dinner or to the meeting @ observatory. Please try to let him know in advance by e-mail at rigel1@starpower.net.

Star Dust

Newsletter of National Capital Astronomers, Inc. capitalastronomers.org

May 2017

Volume 75, Issue 9

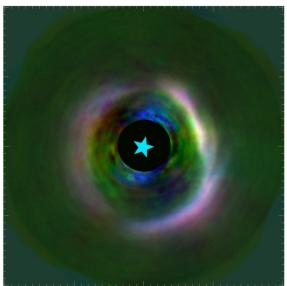
Snapshots of Planet Formation

Alycia J. Weinberger Department of Terrestrial Magnetism Carnegie Institution for Science

Abstract: In the first days of our Solar System, dust and gas that surrounded our young Sun in a disk slowly accumulated into planetesimals that grew into protoplanets and eventually planets. Much is still not known about how volatile molecules, such as water and organics, survived the heat and collisions of the planetary formation process. Obviously, they somehow found a way to Earth, which supports life. This talk will focus on how the initially ubiquitous disks of gas and dust around young stars form the diversity of observed mature planetary systems.

This talk will also reveal how advanced instrumentation and data processing techniques on the ground and in space enable ultrahigh spatial-resolution images of disks. This allows probing of disk dynamics and compositions, including where and how ices and organics exist throughout disk evolution.

In addition, the talk will also address how the Large Binocular Telescope Interferometer can search for faint remnant disks that reveal the presence of planetary systems like our



Courtesy A. Weinberger Infrared image of a disk around HD 142527.

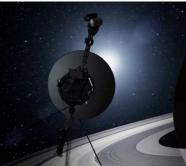
own and highlight stars that will be fertile hunting grounds for habitable planets. Finally, the talk will demonstrate how Atacama Large Millimeter Array data, in conjunction with optical/infrared data, show where comets and asteroids populate disks and how they may reveal the locations of planets that sculpt their orbits.

continued on page 2

Observing after the Meeting

Following the meeting, members and guests are welcome to tour through the Observatory. Weather-permitting, several of the telescopes will also be set up for viewing.

Beethoven, Chuck Berry & billions of miles ...



Courtesy NASA/JPL One of the Voyager spacecraft

"In all likelihood, Voyager will outlive humanity."

The quote is from "*The Farthest*," a new documentary about Voyager's interstellar flight, the visions of the builders and the golden record (which, of course, contains information on who humans are, including Chuck Berry & Beethoven).

Voyagers 1 & 2 were launched in 1977 on top of a Titan-Centaur rocket. Voyager 1 will be within 4 lightyears of Sirius in about 290,000 years.

See the movie trailer below:

https://youtu.be/znTdk_de_K8

The Great North American Eclipse



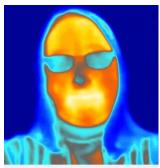
http://www.greatamericaneclipse.com/

Planet Formation – continued from page 1

Biographical Sketch:

Alycia Weinberger is a staff member at the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism of the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington, DC, where she observes young Milky Way stars and their disks. She also looks for and studies extrasolar planetary systems.

Weinberger received her B.A. in physics from the University of Pennsylvania and her Ph.D. in physics from Caltech. Before joining the Carnegie scientific staff in 2001, she was a NICMOS postdoctoral



Courtesy A. Weinberger Alycia in infrared

researcher and astrobiology postdoctoral fellow at UCLA. She is an active user of ground and space telescopes, including being the principal investigator of current programs with the Hubble Space Telescope, Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy, the Atacama Large Millimeter Array, and Carnegie's telescopes at Las Campanas Observatory. Her awards include the Annie Jump Cannon Prize of the American Astronomical Society, the Vainu Bappu Gold Medal of the Astronomical Society of India as well as lectureships as the Beatrice Tinsley Visiting Fellow at University of Texas at Austin and a Distinguished Visitor at Haverford College.

March for Science Guest Appearance



(Image capture) Courtesy CA Brooks The crowd applauds NCA Member Nancy Grace Roman at the March for Science Main Stage, Washington DC, April 22, 2017

Exploring the Sky



"Exploring the Sky" is an informal program that, for over 60 years, has offered monthly opportunities for anyone in the Washington area to see the stars and planets through telescopes from a location within the District of Columbia.

Presented by the National Park Service and National Capital Astronomers, sessions are held in Rock Creek Park once each month on a Saturday night from April through November, Beginners (including children) and experienced stargazers are all welcome—and it's free!

2017 Observation Dates

2 April (8:30 pm) – Winter Constellations & Jupiter
7 May (9:00 pm) – Mars, Saturn, Antares & the Big Dipper
4 June (9:00 pm) – Vega & 3 planets
9 July (9:00 pm) – Summer Triangle, Moon & Jupiter
6 August (8:30 pm) – Andromeda & Mercury
3 September (8:00 pm) – Mars, Saturn, Antares & Vega
1 October (7:30 pm) – Summer Triangle
5 November (7:00 pm) – Pleiades & Winter Constellations

Hosted by: <u>National Capital Astronomers, Inc</u> and <u>Rock Creek Park</u>

Sky Watchers

Spring Schedule

| | Мау |
|----------|---|
| 10 | 5:42 pm – Full Moon , Global. Other Moon Names: Full Flower Moon (abundance of flowers), Full Corn-planting Moon, Full Milk Moon. |
| 14 | 3:51 pm – Moon, Global. (apogee at 252,407 miles). |
| 17 | 7 pm – Planets , N. Hemisphere. <i>Mercury</i> (at greatest western elongation, 26°). |
| 17 -26 | Evening – Globe at Night, Global. Features: <i>Constellations</i> <i>Leo</i> (N. Hemisphere) & <i>Crux</i> (S. Hemisphere). |
| 20 | 2 am – Planets , N. Hemisphere. <i>Neptune</i> 0.5° north of Moon. |
| 23 | 1 am – Planets , N. Hemisphere. <i>Uranus</i> 4º north of Moon. 9 pm – Planets , N. Hemisphere. <i>Mercury</i> 1.6º north of Moon. |
| 25 | 9:21 pm – Moon, Global. (perigee at 221,958 miles). |
| 26 | 10 pm – Planets , N. Hemisphere. <i>Mars</i> 5º north of Moon. |
| imes EDT | |

Times EDT

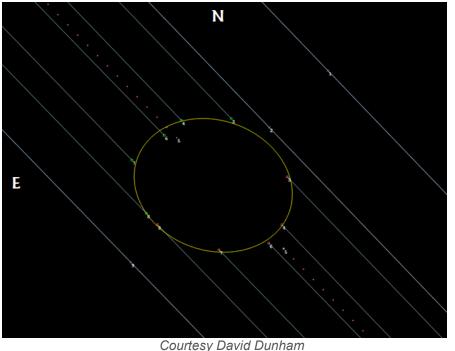


The star SAO 184216 (Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory catalog), also designated as HIP 79392, was occulted by asteroid (599) Luisa. At magnitude 8.5, SAO 184216 was the brightest star occulted by a sizable asteroid in the east coast area during the last 9 months. It occurred on Sunday night/Monday morning, the night after the April NCA meeting. Our original plan was to try it in North Carolina, to reach the whole path, but Roger Venable (from southern Georgia) covered the southern half of the path in Florida. That allowed us to make a shorter drive to cover just the north half of the path on the Delmarva Peninsula. Our southernmost station was at Chincoteague, VA, the closest we could get, within 5 km, of the predicted central line. As can be seen from the plot, the strategy

continued on page 4

(599) Luisa – continued from page 3

worked well, with all of the observations being fit well by an ellipse with the dimensions 63 x 78 kilometers.



Sky-plane Plot of the Observations of the Occultation of SAO 184216 by (599) Luisa on April 10, 2017

Hopewell Observatory Open House

Come to the Annual Spring Open House at Hopewell Observatory on Saturday, May 27, 2017 (Cloudy or not)!

All astronomy members, friends, and relatives, are invited to come see the skies at a small, private, member-built and member-owned observatory in the foothills



OBSERVATORY

of Northern Virginia. If the skies are overcast or rainy, then the Open House will consist instead of a tour of our facilities. The Hopewell Observatory is located on a small mountainous ridge called the "Bull Run Mountain," about 5 miles northwest of the intersection of I-66 and US-15 at the small town of Haymarket, VA. It is about 36 miles due west of the US Capitol building, and probably located on the highest (1,178 feet) and darkest area anywhere close to the Capital Beltway. It is surrounded by woods, thanks to ownership of much of that land by the Jackson Hollow Recreation Area, the Bull Run Mountain Conservancy, and the Federal government.

continued on page 6

Star Dust is published ten times yearly

- September through June, by the National
- Capital Astronomers, Inc. (NCA).

ISSN: 0898-7548

Editor: CA Brooks

Editorial Advisors:

- Michael Chesnes
- John D. Gaffey, Jr.
- Jeffrey Norman
- Todd Supple
- Elizabeth Warner
- Wayne Warren
- Marjorie Weissberg
- Harold Williams

Electronic Distributor: Jay Miller



Please Get Star Dust Electronically

NCA members able to receive Star Dust, the newsletter of the NCA, via e-mail as a PDF file attachment, instead of hardcopy via U.S. Mail, can save NCA a considerable amount of money on the printing and postage in the production of Star Dust (the NCA's single largest expense), save some trees and have one-click access to all the embedded links in the document. If you can switch from paper to digital, please contact Henry Bofinger, the NCA Secretary-Treasurer, at hbofinger@earthlink.net

Thank you!

The "Grand Finale"



Courtesy NASA/JPL-Caltech

From April & September, Cassini will make 22 weekly dives between Saturn & its rings. The spacecraft's final entry into Saturn's atmosphere will be on September 15th, 2017, at 10:44 am UT. Earth will also receive Cassini's last signal that day at 12:08 pm UT.

Learn more: http://tinyurl.com/llwr5x5

- D following the time denotes a disappearance, while R indicates that the event is a reappearance.
- When a power (x; actually, zoom factor) is given in the notes, the event can probably be recorded directly with a camcorder of that power with no telescope needed.
- The times are for Greenbelt, MD, and will be good to within +/-1 min. for other locations in the Washington-Baltimore metropolitan areas unless the cusp angle (CA) is less than 30 deg., in which case, it might be as much as 5 minutes different for other locations across the region.
- Some stars in Flamsteed's catalog are in the wrong constellation, according to the official IAU constellation boundaries that were established well after Flamsteed's catalog was published. In these cases, Flamsteed's constellation is in parentheses and the actual constellation is given in the notes following a /.
- Mag is the star's magnitude.
- % is the percent of the Moon's visible disk that is sunlit, followed by a + indicating that the Moon is waxing and - showing that it is waning. So 0 is new moon, 50+ is first quarter, 100+ or - is full moon, and 50- is last quarter. The Moon is crescent if % is less than 50 and is gibbous if it is more than 50.
- Cusp Angle is described more fully at the main IOTA Web site.
- Sp. is the star's spectral type (color), O,B,blue; A,F,white; G,yellow; K,orange; M,N,S,C red.
- Also in the notes, information about double stars is often given. "Close double" with no other information usually means nearly equal components with a separation less than 0.2". "mg2" or "m2" means the magnitude of the secondary component, followed by its separation in arc seconds ("), and sometimes its PA from the primary. If there is a 3rd component (for a triple star), it might be indicated with "mg3" or "m3". Double is sometime abbreviated "dbl".

Sometimes the Watts angle (WA) is given; it is aligned with the Moon's rotation axis and can be used to estimate where a star will reappear relative to lunar features. The selenographic latitude is WA -270. For example, WA 305 - 310 is near Mare Crisium.

Mid-Atlantic Occultations

David Dunham

Asteroidal and Planetary Occultations

| Date | Day | EDT | Star | Мад | Asteroid | | lur. Ap. s "Location, Notes |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---|----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|---|
| May 23 Jun 2 Jun 3 | Tue Fri Sat | 3:31 23:20 22:28 | 4UC34479116 4U348170229 4UC39169045 | 12.1 15.6 12.3 | 2004 HE79 2014 MU69 Isko | $11.4\\12\\2.7$ | 2 se-ncNC, cVA, cWV 9 TNO; VA; any eUSA 4 16 Chile, Argentina 3 10 sMD, nVA, nWV; DC? 9 8 sDE, MD, DC, swPA |

Lunar Grazing Occultations

Date Day EDT Star Mag % alt CA Location & Remarks Jun 2 Fri 20:50 SAO 119212 7.5 65+ 58 6N *Raeford,TarHeel,Wilmingtn,NC

* No expedition planned from the Washington, DC region

*** Interactive detailed maps at http://www.iota.timerson.net/ ***

Total Lunar Occultations

| Da | te | Day | EDT | P | ı Star | Мад | % | alt | CA | Sp | . Notes |
|------|--------------|-----|-------|---|------------------------|-----|---------|-----|------------|----|--|
| | y 14 | | | | ZC 2611 | | 89- | | | | Sun altitude -2 deg. |
| | y 15 y 15 | | | | X 44912* SAO 161947 | | 83- | | 78n 26n | | |
| | y 13 | | | | ZC 2611 | | 89- | | | | Sun altitude -2 deg. |
| | y 15 | | | | x 44912* | | 83- | | 78N | | Sun archeude z deg. |
| | y 15 | | | | SAO 161947 | | | | 26N | | |
| | ý 18 | | | | ZC 3136 | | | | 44S | К1 | |
| | y 19 | | | | ZC 3267 | | 47- | | | | Az. 116, close double?? |
| | | | | | SA0164999* | | | | 25S | | |
| | | | | | SA0164994* | | | | | | Sun-12,2nd mg14? 1.9" |
| | | | | | ZC 3404 | | 36- | | | | Sun altitude -10 deg. |
| | | | | | SAO 97072 74 Gem | | 15+ 15+ | | | | Sun altitude -11 deg. |
| | | | | | SAO 97956* | | 24+ | | | | Az. 289, ZC1158, dbl?? Sun alt11 deg. |
| | | | | | SAO 98007* | | | | | | Az. 280, close double? |
| | | | | | ZC 1422 | | 35+ | | 66S | G8 | Azimuth 279 deg. |
| | | | | | CX Leonis | | 45+ | | | | zc1531, close double |
| • Ma | ý 31 | Wed | 22:42 | D | SAO 118325 | 8.4 | 45+ | 32 | 84N | | |
| | | | | | rho Leonis | | | | | | Az275,ZC1547,close dbl |
| | n 4 | | | | ZC 1864 | | 76+ | | 48N | | |
| | n_{11}^{n} | | | | | 6.2 | | | | | Az260,ZC1869,close dbl |
| | n 11 | | | | ZC 2710 ZC 2959 | | | | | | Axis Angle 302 deg. |
| | n 13 n 13 | | | | SAO 163426 | | | | 55N | | Azimuth 129 degrees |
| | n 13 | | | | SAO 103420 | | | | | | maybe close double? |
| • • | 15 | | 5110 | | 200 200 110 | | | | 200 | | |

* The star is in the Kepler 2 exoplanet search program so lightcurves of the occultation are desired to check for close stellar duplicity.

Further explanations & more information is at http://iota.jhuapl.edu

David Dunham, <u>dunham@starpower.net</u>

How does Kepler find Planets?

https://kepler.nasa.gov/



2016-2017 Officers

President:

Joseph Morris j.c.morris@verizon.net 703-620-0996 (h)

Vice-President: John Hornstein jshgwave@yahoo.com 301-593-1095 (h)

Secretary-Treasurer: Henry Bofinger hbofinger@earthlink.net 202-675-1075

Asst. Secretary-Treasurer: Jeffrey B. Norman jeffreynorman@comcast.net

Trustees:

- Benson Simon (2017)
- Andrew Seacord (2018)
- Wayne Warren (2019)
- Harold Williams (2020)

Appointed Officers and Committee Heads:

Exploring the Sky Jay Miller jhmiller@me.com

Telescope Making Guy Brandenburg <u>gfbrandenburg@yahoo.com</u> 202-635-1860

NCA Webmaster Elizabeth Warner <u>warnerem@astro.umd.edu</u> 301-405-6555

Star Dust Editor CA Brooks <u>NCAStardust@gmail.com</u> 301-860-3266

Social Media Liz Dervy Twitter: <u>@NatCapAstro</u>

June Election Information

John Hornstein, Reporting for the Nominating Committee, May 2017

Following is the slate of 2017-2018 officers and other board positions for consideration before the June meeting.

Executive Officers

| Position | Current | Candidate(s) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| President | Joseph Morris | Harold Williams |
| Vice President | John Hornstein | John Hornstein |
| Secretary-Treasurer | Henry Bofinger | Henry Bofinger |
| Assistant Secretary- Treasurer | Jeff Norman | Jeff Norman |

Trustees

| Current | Candidate(s)* |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Andrew Seacord (to June 2018) | N/A |
| Wayne Warren (to June 2019) | N/A |
| Harold Williams (to June 2020) | Joseph Morris |
| Benson Simon (to June 2021) | N/A |

* Note: Only one Trusteeship opening occurs each year.

Appointed Officers and Committee Heads

| Committee | Officer/Head | Contact Information |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Exploring the Sky | Jay Miller | jhmiller@me.com |
| Telescope Making | Guy Brandenburg | gbrandenburg@yahoo.com |
| | | 202-635-1860 |
| NCA Webmaster | Elizabeth Warner | warnerem@astro.umd.edu |
| Star Dust Editor | Todd Supple | NCAstardust@gmail.com |

Open House – continued from page 4

We currently have two telescope piers in separate observing rooms under a roll-off roof (you will need to climb some stairs inside the observatory to look through the eyepieces). One pier houses a massive, research-grade mount manufactured by Ealing, which guides a Celestron 14-inch Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope, a 6-inch f/15 refractor made by Jaegers, and a variety of guide scopes. The other pier houses an unusual 12-inch diameter Wright-Newtonian catadioptric telescope entirely made by one of our senior members, Bob Bolster – and that includes the optics. Other member-owned telescopes will be located on the grassy area outside the observatory.

We have hot chocolate, a simple composting toilet (with directions) in a red-lit outhouse behind the operations building, but we have no running water. We have some bottled drinking non-potable water as well as towels, toilet paper, sanitary gel, etc.

L

| 7 | |
|---|--|
| / | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

I

| Open House – continued from page 6 The observatory is located at: (38.8698, -77.6988). | Calendar of Events NCA Mirror- or Telescope-making Classes: Tuesdays and Fridays, from 6:30 to 9:45 pm at the Chevy Chase Community Center (intersection of McKinley Street and Connecticut Avenue, N.W.) Contact instructor Guy Brandenburg at 202- |
|--|--|
| For directions, see <i>Guy's Math &</i> <i>Astro Blog:</i> <u>http://tinyurl.com/kou9wjp</u> If you get lost in transit, you can call the observatory directly at 703-754- 2317. Also, if you would like a detailed astronomical weather forecast for the location, do a Google search for "Hopewell Observatory Clear Sky Chart" or go directly to: | And Connecticut Avenue, N.W.) contact instructor Guy Brandenburg at 202-635-1860 or email him at <u>gfbrandenburg@yahoo.com</u>. Open house talks and observing at the University of Maryland Observatory in College Park on the 5th and 20th of every month at 8:00 pm (NovApr.) or 9:00 pm (May-Oct.). Details: <u>www.astro.umd.edu/openhouse</u> Owens Science Center Planetarium: "Time & Space Warp," Fri. May 12, 7:30 pm; \$5/adult; \$3/students/senior/teachers/military; children under 3 free. www1.pgcps.org/howardbowens Mid-Atlantic Senior Physicists Group: "The Wide-Field InfraRed Survey Telescope (WFIRST)" with Jeffrey W. Kruk (NASA/GSFC), Thur. May 18*, at 1 pm at the American Center for Physics (1st floor conference room). *This is the 3rd Thursday of the Month. www.aps.org/units/maspg/ Towel Day, annual tribute to author Douglas Adams ("Hitchhiker's Guide to |
| <u>http://tinyurl.com/HAS2009</u> The <mark>submission deadline</mark> for June's Star Dust, the last issue of this series, is May 28 th . <i>Clear Skies!</i> | the Galaxy") by all of the "hoopy froods," Thur. May 25, on Earth & in space. www.towelday.org/ Astronomy Festival on the National Mall: Fri. June 2, 6 - 11 pm, north of the Washington Monument. Hosted by Hofstra University. NCA will also be participating with an info table & guided telescope use for the public. Upcoming NCA Meetings at the University of Maryland Observatory: |
| | |
| National Ca | pital Astronomers Membership Form Date:// |
| | |
| Name: Address: Home Phone: E- | Date:// ZIP Code: mail:Print / E-mail Star Dust (circle one) |
| Name: Address: Home Phone: E-t Membership (circle one): Student. | Date:// ZIP Code: |
| Name:Address: Home Phone: E-I Membership (circle one): Student. Please • Attending monthly scientific lectures • Making scientific astronomical observed | Date:// ZIP Code: mail:Print / E-mail Star Dust (circle one) \$ 5; Individual / Family\$10; Optional Contribution\$ indicate which activities interest you: on some aspect of astronomy vations bersonal pleasure at relatively dark sites e public, such as Exploring the Sky |

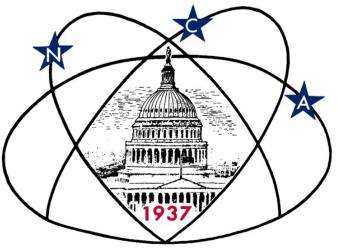
Henry Bofinger, NCA Treasurer; 727 Massachusetts Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002-6007

Please mail this form with check payable to National Capital Astronomers to:

National Capital Astronomers, Inc.

If undeliverable, return to NCA c/o Elizabeth Warner 400 Madison St #2208 Alexandria, VA 22314

First Class Dated Material



Celebrating 80 Years of Astronomy 1937-2017

Next NCA Meeting: 2017 May 13th 7:30 pm @ UMD Observatory

> Dr. Alycia J. Weinberger

Inside This Issue

| Preview of May 2017 Talk | 1 |
|--------------------------|---|
| Sky Watchers | 3 |
| (599) Luisa | 3 |
| Hopewell Obs. Open House | 4 |
| Occultations | 5 |
| Election Information | 6 |
| Calendar | 7 |