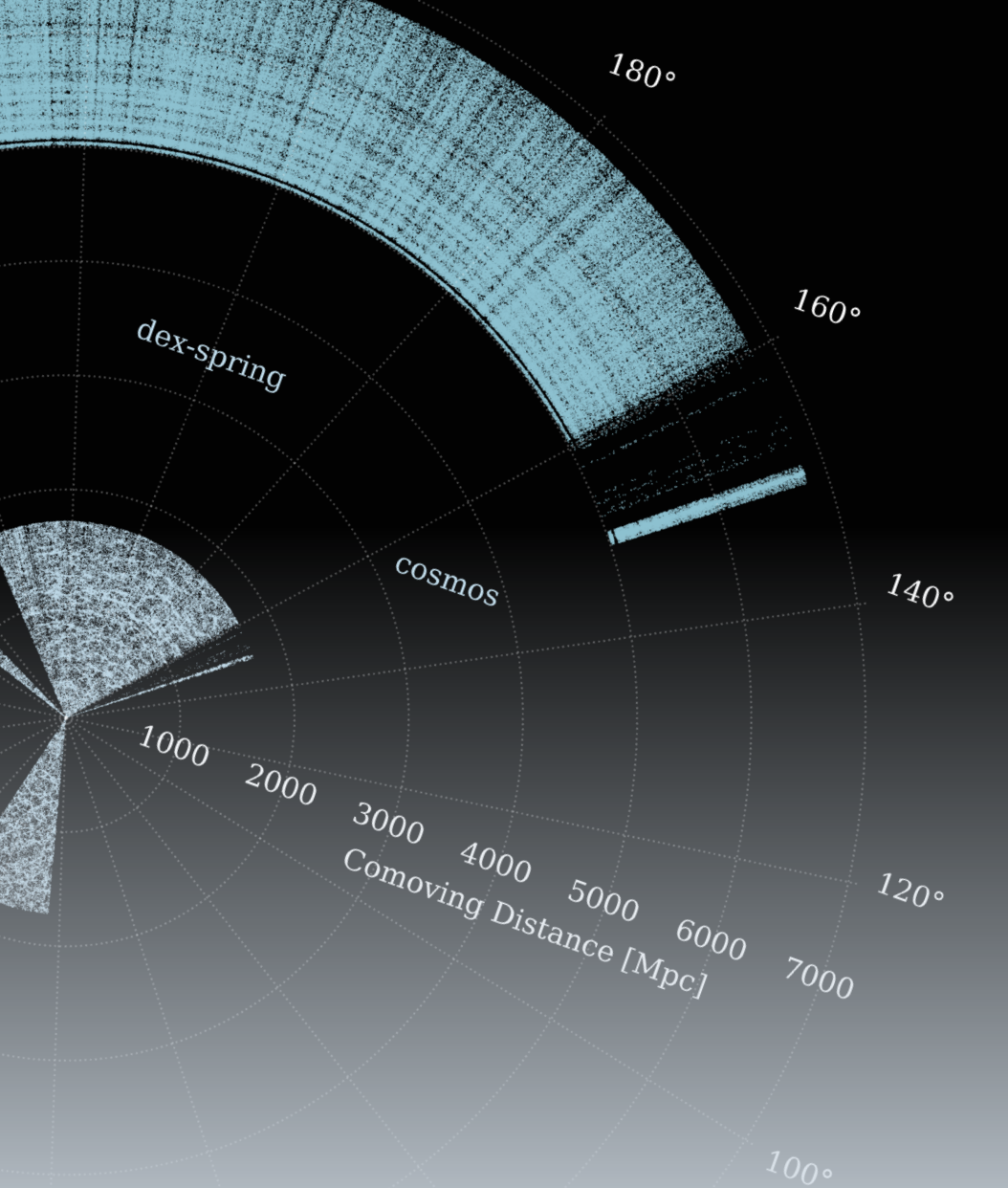




JULY
2025

MCDONALD OBSERVATORY
BOARD OF VISITORS
— SUMMER MEETING —

WELCOME

Dedicated in 1939, McDonald Observatory was built thanks to the charitable estate gift of William J. McDonald, a banker from Paris, Texas. Our origin and the science it has enabled is a testament to the lasting power of one man's generosity and vision.



ABOUT THE BOARD OF VISITORS

Our BOV members have been with us since 1970, when McDonald Observatory convened the first iteration of what eventually came to be known as the Board of Visitors. Over 50 years later, the benefit to Texas Astronomy is striking. UT Austin is home to one of the largest astronomy programs in the nation and the Observatory continues to sustain research activities that serve both Texan, national, and global scientific aspirations. It is our privilege to share this journey with you.

PARKING

Park at the Visitors Center and check in with staff to pick up your name badge and program book. If you requested a close-in parking pass for mobility reasons, staff will give it to you when you pick up your name badge.

GETTING AROUND THE MEETING

Your name badge is your "ticket" to use the shuttle service. If you lose your name badge, pick up a replacement from the registration desk so you can continue to enjoy your meeting.

The shuttle service will transport meeting attendees to all activities, including meals at the Fire House, talks at the 107-inch Harlan J. Smith Telescope dome or the Visitors Center, and telescope viewing on Mt. Locke.

A staff member is stationed at or near each shuttle stop. If a shuttle is not already present at the stop, let the staff member know where you need to go and they will radio for a driver to come get you. Refer to the map at the back of this program book to view the various activity locations around the Observatory.

ABOUT THE COVER IMAGE

This figure contains the entire source catalog from the full eight years of observations from the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX). In this diagram, we are at the center, and the radial distance from the center corresponds with the distance objects are from Earth. The two radial regions represent our nearby galaxy sample and distant galaxy sample. Credit: Mukae, S. and the HETDEX team.

RESOURCES

Flip to the back of this program book for Wi-Fi information, maps, and more!

AGENDA

FRIDAY, JULY 25, 2025

MCDONALD OBSERVATORY

3-6 p.m.

New Member Orientation
Visitors Center

5:30 p.m.

Registration Opens
Visitors Center

6:30-7:30 p.m.

Reception
Fire House

7:30-9 p.m.

Buffet Dinner
Fire House

9:30-11:30 p.m.

Telescope Viewing on Mt. Locke
Shuttle service from the Fire House to Mt. Locke begins at 9 p.m.

Final shuttles depart Mt. Locke at 11:30 p.m.

9:45-11:45 p.m.

Friday Night Star Party
This activity has limited capacity; pre-registration is required.
Check in at the Visitors Center by 9:30 p.m.

Shuttle service from Fire House to Visitors Center begins at 9 p.m.

10 p.m.

Registration Closes
Visitors Center

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2025

MCDONALD OBSERVATORY

7:30 a.m.

Registration Opens
Visitors Center

7:30-8:30 a.m.

Breakfast
Fire House

Shuttle service from Visitors Center to Fire House begins at 7:30 a.m.

9-9:30 a.m.

BOV Membership Meeting
107-inch Telescope Dome Floor; simulcast to Visitors Center Theater

Shuttle service from Fire House to 107-inch Telescope Dome and Visitors Center begins at 8:15 a.m.

BOV Chair

Marty Heaner

9:30-10:30 a.m.

Remarks and Reports
107-inch Telescope Dome Floor; simulcast to Visitors Center Theater

McDonald Observatory Director

Taft Armandroff

Astronomy Department Chair

Karl Gebhardt

College of Natural Sciences Interim Dean

Andreas Matouschek

10:30-11 a.m.

Coffee Break
107-inch Telescope Lobby and Visitors Center

11-12:30 p.m.

Science Talks

*107-inch Telescope Dome Floor;
simulcast to Visitors Center Theater*

The HETDEX Survey, Science, and Results

Karl Gebhardt

Galaxy Clustering: a Large-Scale Ruler for Cosmology

Kuan Wang

Serendipity in Science: Finding Lyman Alpha Absorption in HETDEX

Laurel Weiss

12:30-1:30 p.m.

Lunch

Fire House

2-3 p.m.

Science Discussion Groups

Round One

Shuttle service from Fire House to 107-inch Telescope Dome and Visitors Center begins at 1:30 p.m.

A Bright Future for an Old Telescope: Refurbishing the HJST

Niv Drory

107-inch Telescope Dome Floor

HETDEX in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Decoding the Nature of the Cosmos

Mahdi Qezlou

Visitors Center Theater

3-3:30 p.m.

Coffee Break

107-inch Telescope Lobby and Visitors Center

3:30-4:30 p.m.

Science Discussion Groups

Round Two

Do All Interstellar Clouds Form Stars? If Not, Why Not?

B-G Andersson

107-inch Telescope Dome Floor

New Horizons: McDonald Observatory Exhibit Development and Collaborations

Katie Kizziar

Visitors Center Theater

4:45-6:15 p.m.

Break

(Freshen up, take a nap at your hotel, check your email, etc.)

4:45-6:15 p.m.

Optional Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET) Tour

This activity has limited capacity; pre-registration is required.

Check in at the Visitors Center at 4:30 p.m.

6:30-7:30 p.m.

Reception

Fire House

7:30-9 p.m.

Buffet Dinner

Fire House

9:30-11:30 p.m.

Telescope Viewing at the Visitors Center and on Mt. Locke

Shuttle service from Fire House to Visitors Center begins at 9 p.m.

Saturday's telescope viewing will be based at the Visitors Center with shuttles to the 82-inch telescope every 15-20 minutes.

Midnight

Visitors Center Closes

See you next year!

**A LETTER FROM
TAFT ARMANDROFF
MCDONALD OBSERVATORY DIRECTOR**



On behalf of the entire McDonald Observatory team, we extend our heartfelt thanks for your membership on the Board of Visitors (BOV) and for joining us at this summer's BOV meeting.

I'm thrilled to share that three of the scientific talks and one of the science discussion groups at this meeting will highlight results from the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX). These findings are incredibly encouraging for the McDonald Observatory team.

As many of our long-serving BOV members will recall, the Observatory undertook a major upgrade of the Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET) to meet the ambitious scientific requirements of HETDEX. This included the development and installation of a new wide-field corrector, a new tracker, approximately 35,000 optical fibers, 156 identical VIRUS spectrographs, a new telescope control system, and related ancillary systems—all designed to enable observations of high-redshift galaxies critical to answering the cosmological questions at the heart of HETDEX. From 2017 through 2024, our dedicated HET night operations team carried out these observations, using much of the telescope's dark time. This was all a prelude to the scientific results you will hear about at this summer meeting.

As you may know, UT Austin is a founding partner in the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT), currently under development in northern Chile. In my talk, I'll share some exciting news: the National Science Foundation has advanced GMT into its Final Design Phase. This is a significant and necessary milestone for GMT to qualify for federal construction funding—support that is vital to the project's success. I'll also outline the next steps for GMT's progress.

I hope you'll take time to enjoy the stunning summer skies at the Observatory, protected by the Greater Big Bend International Dark Sky Reserve. The meeting offers plenty of opportunities for our BOV guests to observe celestial objects through our telescopes.

Thank you again for your generous support and for being part of our journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Taft Armandroff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**A LETTER FROM
KARL GEBHARDT
ASTRONOMY DEPARTMENT CHAIR**



Over the past few months, I've accompanied 19 undergraduate astronomy majors to McDonald Observatory. These trips are part of a new initiative to help students learn to operate telescopes and become active team members in high-level research programs as observing support.

The initiative's primary goal is to obtain excellent data, and the students are well on their way to achieving this! This undergraduate group is now involved in three research programs: measuring black holes in globular clusters, using Lithium abundances to age-date stars, and searching for phosphorous (a fundamental building block for life) in stars.

As someone who has spent much of his professional life travelling to and from McDonald Observatory, it is inspiring to see their excitement when I introduce them to this incredible place. It reminds me of my first trip to the Chilean Andes in 1992 where I don't think I slept for four days. Being on top of a mountain, observing the skies, delving into the crazy, beautiful mysteries of our universe—I wish I could bottle this feeling and share it with the world.

Our undergraduates will remember their pilgrimages to McDonald Observatory for the rest of their lives—whether they are destined to become research scientists, astronomy professors, or even if they leave the field altogether. The opportunity to engage directly with humanity's place in the universe is what makes astronomy unique within all sciences. The BOV has played and continues to play a direct and important role in enabling and encouraging this engagement.

We are so very grateful for your belief in funding and supporting our scientists and our students. Thank you for believing in the potential of people you may never meet, who will be here at McDonald Observatory, probing into the secrets of our universe long after you and I have left this Earth.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. Gebhardt', written in a cursive style.

**A LETTER FROM
MARTY HEANER
BOARD OF VISITORS CHAIR**



Welcome to the Davis Mountains and to what promises to be an extraordinary meeting, showcasing the remarkable achievements and ambitious future of Texas Astronomy and McDonald Observatory.

Throughout this summer's meeting, we will explore the groundbreaking results from the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX). After eight years of operations, HETDEX has created the largest three-dimensional map of the cosmos ever produced, cataloging over 2.5 million galaxies. The experiment's innovative approach—using 156 spectrographs to capture 35,000 spectra in each observation—represents a quantum leap in astronomical capability.

HETDEX's impact extends far beyond dark energy research. This remarkable dataset has yielded over 18,000 active galactic nuclei and enabled discoveries of ancient stellar systems. The innovative technologies developed for HETDEX are now being applied to enhance the capabilities of our entire telescope fleet at McDonald Observatory.

We can also look forward to hearing more about the recent milestone achieved in funding the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT). McDonald Observatory represents UT Austin as a founding partner in GMT and our scientists are leading development of the GMT Near-Infrared Spectrograph, one of the telescope's first four primary scientific instruments.

In an era of intense competition for scientific talent and funding, Texas Astronomy has assembled an unmatched portfolio of resources. The combination of the HETDEX's successes, McDonald Observatory's world-class suite of telescopes, and our leadership role in GMT provides our researchers with tools that no other institution can match. This competitive advantage translates directly into recruitment success and research leadership, positioning Texas Astronomy to lead American astronomy for decades to come.

As we gather here under the remarkable dark skies of West Texas, we celebrate not just past achievements but the extraordinary scientific future we're building together. Enjoy your time on the mountain and the privilege of being part of this remarkable enterprise.

FACULTY TALK

The HETDEX Survey, Science, and Results

**KARL GEBHARDT, PROFESSOR & ASTRONOMY
DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

The Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX) is designed to unravel one of the greatest mysteries in science: what is the nature of dark energy? The phrase “dark energy” refers to our lack of understanding of why the universe is expanding so quickly. Do we need a new understanding of energy, of how gravity works? Perhaps we have misunderstood a key component in the observable universe. Maybe the reason is something no one has thought of yet? By generating the largest map of galaxies in the early universe, HETDEX will measure the universe expansion rate as it was 11 billion years ago. We started organizing the experiment in the mid 2000s, completed a major upgrade to the telescope in 2016, and observed from 2017-2024. With observations complete and full galaxy catalog ready, we have the initial results. I will present our current measure of the expansion rate of the universe, including results from ongoing surveys. HETDEX has been a huge effort from a large number of people, including significant support from the Board of Visitors. We are excited to share the first results with you and invite you to join us in pride for everything we have accomplished together.



Karl Gebhardt grew up in Rochester, NY. His career has taken him through Michigan State University, Rutgers University, University of Michigan, University of California at Santa Cruz, and eventually to The University of Texas at Austin in 2000, where he is now the Herman and Joan Suit Professor of Astrophysics and the current chair of the Department of Astronomy. He works on a variety of galaxy studies, ranging from black holes to dark matter to dark energy. He has won numerous awards, including Northeastern Graduate

Schools Dissertation Award (1995), a Hubble Fellowship from NASA (1997), Teaching Excellence Awards from UT Austin (2003) and the Board of Visitors (2004), and a National Science Foundation Career Award. In 2012, he received the Edith and Peter O'Donnell Award in Science from the Academy of Medicine, Engineering and Science of Texas. He works with numerous undergraduate and graduate students, and involves them in all levels of his research. Much of his career has focused on understanding the role that black holes play in the formation of a galaxy. His current work is focused on understanding dark energy with the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX), where he is the project lead. This unique approach to studying dark energy is designed to measure any evolution of the expansion of the universe, and to illuminate one of the greatest scientific mysteries of our time.

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2025

11:30 a.m.-Noon, 107-inch Telescope Dome Floor; simulcast to VC Theater

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW TALK

Galaxy Clustering: a Large-Scale Ruler for Cosmology

KUAN WANG, HETDEX COSMOLOGY FELLOW

The Lambda-CDM model is the most commonly adopted cosmological theory describing the evolution of our universe from the Big Bang to the present day. While Lambda-CDM successfully explains much of the observed universe, it contains unexplained mysteries and faces challenges from recent data. This calls for more evidence from new observations.

The term Baryon Acoustic Oscillations (BAO) refers to a pattern of under- and over-densities in galaxy distribution caused by sound waves that propagated through matter in the very early universe. The pattern then “froze” in place as the universe cooled. The imprint of these ripples stretches with cosmic expansion as the universe ages. As such, BAO provides a standard scale that can be predicted theoretically. This scale can also be measured in the spatial distribution of observed galaxies through galaxy clustering. The comparison between theory and observation enables us to constrain cosmological models.

The Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX) observes two large samples of galaxies present at different eras in cosmic time, or “redshifts.” This provides unique measurements of the BAO scale and contributes evidence to the cosmological debate. In this talk, I will introduce the background physics and present some of the latest results from HETDEX.



Kuan Wang is a HETDEX Cosmology Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Astronomy at The University of Texas at Austin. Originally from China, she earned her B.S. in physics and astronomy from the University of Science and Technology of China and went on to complete her Ph.D. in physics at the University of Pittsburgh in 2021. She was a Leinweber Center for Theoretical Physics Fellow at the University of Michigan from 2021 to 2024. As a data-oriented numerical cosmologist, Kuan’s research

focuses on the large-scale structure of the universe. Throughout her training, Kuan developed expertise in both simulation-based modeling and the analysis of galaxy surveys.

At UT Austin, Kuan is leading projects to extract cosmological information from HETDEX galaxy clustering measurements. She also explores the clustering of high-redshift halos in simulations and develops methods to constrain cosmology with cosmic web properties.

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2025

Noon -12:30 p.m., 107-inch Telescope Dome Floor; simulcast to VC Theater

GRADUATE STUDENT TALK

Serendipity in Science: Finding Lyman Alpha Absorption in HETDEX

LAUREL WEISS, PH.D. STUDENT

While HETDEX aims to detect Lyman alpha emission in the early universe, we have also detected Lyman alpha absorption, which has opened the door for a variety of new science. We can use this absorption to detect faint cosmic background radiation, trace gas on large scales, and more...



Laurel Weiss is a fourth-year graduate student in the Department of Astronomy at UT Austin. She joined the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX) collaboration in 2018 while pursuing her undergraduate degree at Penn State and also spent time at the DAWN center in Copenhagen. Since then, she has continued her work in HETDEX at UT under supervision from Karl Gebhardt. Her thesis focuses on understanding the physical nature of the galaxies and their environment that are being used in the

HETDEX analysis. This work is addressing both the emission and absorption properties, and can potentially increase the signal seen in HETDEX. In 2024, Laurel was the recipient of both the Beatrice M. Tinsley Graduate Fellowship and the BOV Second-Year Defense Excellence awards. This year, Laurel has the unique pleasure of being the very first recipient of the Sheryl O'Briant Endowed Graduate Fellowship in Astronomy. Outside of research, she is a TA/assistant instructor for the Department of Astronomy and is passionate about teaching. She is particularly interested in teaching undergraduate and introductory astronomy courses for non-majors.

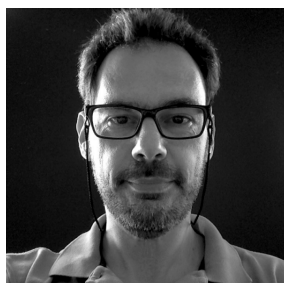
SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

A Bright Future for an Old Telescope: Refurbishing the HJST

NIV DRORY, SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTIST

The 107-inch Harlan J. Smith Telescope was built in the 1960s, originally for lunar laser ranging (reflecting a laser off mirrors left on the Moon) during and after the Apollo missions. It has since become a general-purpose telescope used by UT and other astronomers for a wide variety of science projects. The fleet of astronomical instruments used in conjunction with the telescope continues to evolve, consisting of world-class imagers and spectrographs with additional instruments in development. While the telescope's motion control system and the associated electromechanics have been partially upgraded, they also include a range of aging and wearing components—some dating back to its initial construction. These systems no longer deliver the performance required by contemporary ground-breaking science projects.

Join us on an adventure to design and build a new control system for this wonderful telescope! Missing, incomplete, or inaccurate documentation; unmarked wiring; classified electrical component data sheets; lost knowledge; old quarrels—nothing can stop our small but determined team. We embark on a journey to revitalize this telescope so it can continue to function at the forefront of modern research far into the future!



Niv Drory was born in Israel, obtained a Ph.D. in physics at the University of Munich, Germany, writing his thesis on the first wide-field near-infrared survey of distant galaxies. He came to Texas for the first time as a Humboldt Fellow in 2002, where he joined the early work on Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX). Niv has been a research staff member of the Max-Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics (MPE), and spent two years as a professor of astronomy at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). He is interested in galaxies, cosmology, and instrumentation.

Niv returned to Texas in 2013 to work on the Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET) Wide-Field Upgrade and HETDEX, leading the development of the HET's new telescope control system and the recommissioning effort of the upgraded HET. Niv is now a senior research scientist at McDonald Observatory, contributing to instrument development and telescope upgrades across the Observatory. He is also deeply involved in the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS) as instrument scientist for MaNGA in SDSS-IV and principal investigator of the Local Volume Mapper in SDSS-V.

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

HETDEX in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Decoding the Nature of the Cosmos

MAHDI QEZLOU, HETDEX COSMOLOGY FELLOW

The Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX) is one of the most ambitious galaxy surveys ever attempted, aiming to map the large-scale structure of the universe with percent-level precision to better understand dark energy and dark matter. But collecting this extraordinary dataset is only half the battle—making sense of it is a far greater challenge.

Modeling the complex physical processes shaping galaxies and their clustering would take millions of hours on the world's fastest supercomputers—well beyond what's achievable in our lifetimes.

How can we fully unlock the power of HETDEX without being limited by traditional computational methods?

In this session, we'll explore how machine learning is transforming our ability to analyze HETDEX data. These tools allow us to build fast, yet accurate, models that capture essential physics without overwhelming computational cost. I'll share how our team is using AI to decode the patterns in HETDEX's galaxy maps, accelerating our ability to test cosmological theories.

I invite you to join this conversation about how HETDEX, powered by machine learning, is pushing the boundaries of what we can know about the universe—and to reflect on the role of these new tools in shaping the future of scientific discovery.



Mahdi Qezlou is a HETDEX Cosmology Postdoctoral Fellow at The University of Texas at Austin, where he develops machine learning tools to extract the most from telescope data, including observations from the McDonald Observatory. His interest in astrophysics began in high school when he discovered how simple models can reveal deep truths about the universe. Today, Mahdi focuses on combining machine learning, statistics, and physical modeling to better understand complex cosmic systems. Feel

free to start a conversation with him about artificial intelligence and its role in astrophysics!

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2025

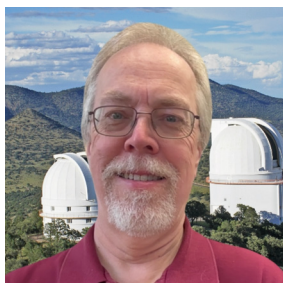
3:30-4:30 p.m., 107-inch Telescope Dome Floor

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

Do All Interstellar Clouds Form Stars? If Not, Why Not?

B-G ANDERSSON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR RESEARCH SUPPORT AT MCDONALD OBSERVATORY

It is often assumed that the cycle of interstellar cloud gravitational collapse followed by star formation, followed by cloud dispersion by the newly formed stars is the way the interstellar medium (ISM) works. But are there clouds that never form stars? We recently discovered a nearby cloud using ultraviolet observations, which does not show any sign of forming stars, but may be undergoing disruption from the outside by radiation and hot gas. I'll discuss how the observations were made—including some from 107-inch Harlan J. Smith Telescope's Tull Spectrograph 2 instrument—and what they tell us about this cloud and its place in the star formation process.



B-G Andersson earned his Ph.D. from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, and has mainly worked at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Johns Hopkins University, and the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) Science Center, before joining the McDonald Observatory as the Assistant Director for Research Support last July. He is an observational astronomer who uses multi-wavelength data to study the interstellar medium. Recently he has focused on the mechanisms behind the alignment of dust grains in the interstellar medium, which give rise to polarization by light from background stars—an effect discovered by Albert Hiltner, using the Otto Struve Telescope in 1949. In addition to research, he supports the McDonald Observatory director with science related issues, including organizing and running the proposal solicitation and review process for McDonald Observatory and schedules the Mt. Locke telescopes.

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2025

3:30-4:30 p.m., Visitors Center Theater

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

New Horizons: McDonald Observatory exhibit development and collaborations

KATIE KIZZIAR, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

This discussion will provide an opportunity to explore how McDonald Observatory connects with the public through engaging and educational exhibits. Take a sneak peek into the development process for new science exhibits at the Frank N. Bash Visitors Center, including highlights from our research process and goals for visitor learning objectives. We will also explore collaborations that bring McDonald Observatory to other corners of the state. Hear what we learned and plan to leverage from the success of the 'Big Eye on Dark Skies' exhibit on the Hobby-Eberly Telescope at the Texas Science & Natural History Museum in Austin. Plus, we'll share an update on our collaboration with the Spark Science Center in Abilene to integrate McDonald and astronomy into their exhibits.



Katie Kizziar joined McDonald Observatory in 2018 as the assistant director for education and outreach. She is responsible for a variety of initiatives that promote the Observatory and encourage astronomy exploration. Her strong foundation in nonprofit management, STEM education, and community engagement was built through years of experience in museums, university outreach, program design, and workforce development. Katie has a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering and a Master of Public

Affairs from The University of Texas at Austin.

2024-2025 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Thank you to the following Board of Visitors members for
your service!

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Cynthia Coulson

Chris Morisette

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Clay Samford

Chair

Dan Cruz

Brad Hunt

Sandy Gorka Timte

Ian Yanagisawa

NEW MEMBERS

Please extend a warm welcome to our Board of Visitors member nominees for summer 2025.

Fr. Joseph “Joe” Barbieri
San Angelo, TX

Michael Griffin and Gerard Flores
Los Angeles, CA

The following new members were elected into membership at the winter 2025 meeting in Austin, TX.

Marie and Cameron Chandler
Heath, TX & Fort Davis, TX

Karen and Phillip Kelton
Austin, TX

Peggie Mueller
Houston, TX

Sylvia and Jim Phillips
Austin, TX

Wayne Rosing
Santa Barbara, CA

Tyson Tuttle
Austin, TX

THANK YOU

We are grateful to the following Board of Visitors members for their generous contributions in the 2024-2025 term.

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Dr. Sally Goudreau and Dr. Jeff Goudreau

Stanley Graff

Gwen and Tony Grigsby

Jeffery and Patricia Hart

Sarah Adler Hartman and Matthew Hartman

Albert "Boo" Hausser

John M. Heaner

John M. Heasley

Linda K. Hedges

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Randolph and Janis Henry

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Paul Vanden Bout

Vaughan Foundation

Robie and Fallon Vaughn

Sean Wang

Carolyn H. Wildenthal

Lisa and John Wilkins

The Honorable Genie Wright and Dr.
Francis Wright

Jocelyn and Ian Yanagisawa

The Honorable Lee Yeakel and Anne
Yeakel

Adam Zaner

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Glenn A. Adams

Mark E. Bivins

Wm. Terry Bray

Dr. Barbara Davis and Dr. John Davis

Thomas U. Hannigan

James P. Lattimore, Jr.

Todd Owen

The Honorable Rodney W. Satterwhite

Bernard M. Seger

Roger L. Taylor

HONORARY MEMBERS

Dr. Frank N. Bash

Former Director of McDonald
Observatory

Dr. Alan Y. Chow

Mrs. Harlan J. Smith (Joan)

MEMBER RESOURCES

The current 2024-25 membership year ends on August 31.

The 2025-26 membership year begins on
September 1 in conjunction with UT's fiscal year.

MAKE YOUR ANNUAL GIFT



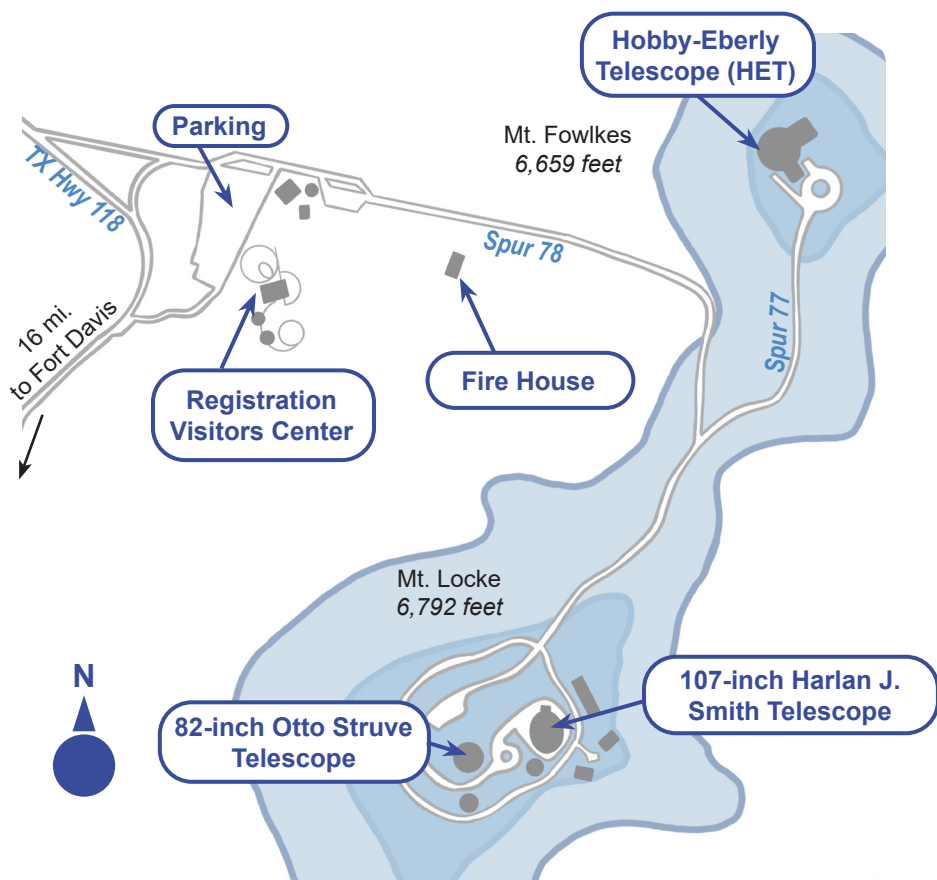
SPONSOR A NEW MEMBER



GET IN TOUCH

Email Anna Boxall at anna.boxall@austin.utexas.edu if you need to update your name preferences, contact details; if you prefer to make your annual donation by check, stock, or via a donor advised fund; or if you need to get in touch with BOV leadership.

Reach out to Keary Kinch at kinch@austin.utexas.edu if you are considering elevating your contributions, or if you want to include McDonald Observatory and the Department of Astronomy in your estate plans.



PARKING

Park at the Visitors Center and check in with staff to pick up your name badge.

If you requested a close-in parking pass for mobility reasons, staff will give it to you when you pick up your name badge. You can then park directly at the Fire House.

SHUTTLES

Use your name badge to hop on a shuttle.

Shuttle stop locations include: Visitors Center, Fire House, and the Mt. Locke Summit (107-inch and 82-inch telescopes).

TELESCOPE VIEWING

FRIDAY EVENING

Both the 82-inch and 107-inch telescopes will be open to BOV meeting attendees on Mt. Locke for special viewing opportunities. BOV members can also attend the public Star Party at the Visitors Center. Pre-registration required.

SATURDAY EVENING

Five telescopes in the Visitors Center telescope park will be open to BOV meeting attendees for private viewing. Shuttles to the 82-inch telescope will leave the Visitors Center every 15-20 minutes beginning at 9:15 p.m. for special viewing opportunities.

The 36-inch telescope is closed for maintenance and revitalization.

MEDICAL

McDonald Observatory is in a remote region with limited access to medical services. Fort Davis EMS will be onsite for the duration of the Board of Visitors meeting. The nearest medical clinic is in Alpine, TX (approximately 1 hour away). The nearest hospital is in Midland-Odessa (approximately 3 hours away).

WEATHER AND SAFETY

McDonald Observatory staff are monitoring the weather closely throughout the BOV meeting. Weather affecting nighttime telescope viewing will be announced during dinner.

In case of severe weather or other emergencies, please follow safety instructions from onsite staff and UTPD police officers.

WIFI HOTSPOTS

WiFi available at Visitors Center and Fire House

Visitors Center: VC-Guest

Password: zLcs\$3@W

Fire House: McD-Guest

Password: RU5DBs29



SUNSET

8:54 p.m. Fri. and Sat.

CIVIL TWILIGHT

9:20 p.m. Fri. and Sat.



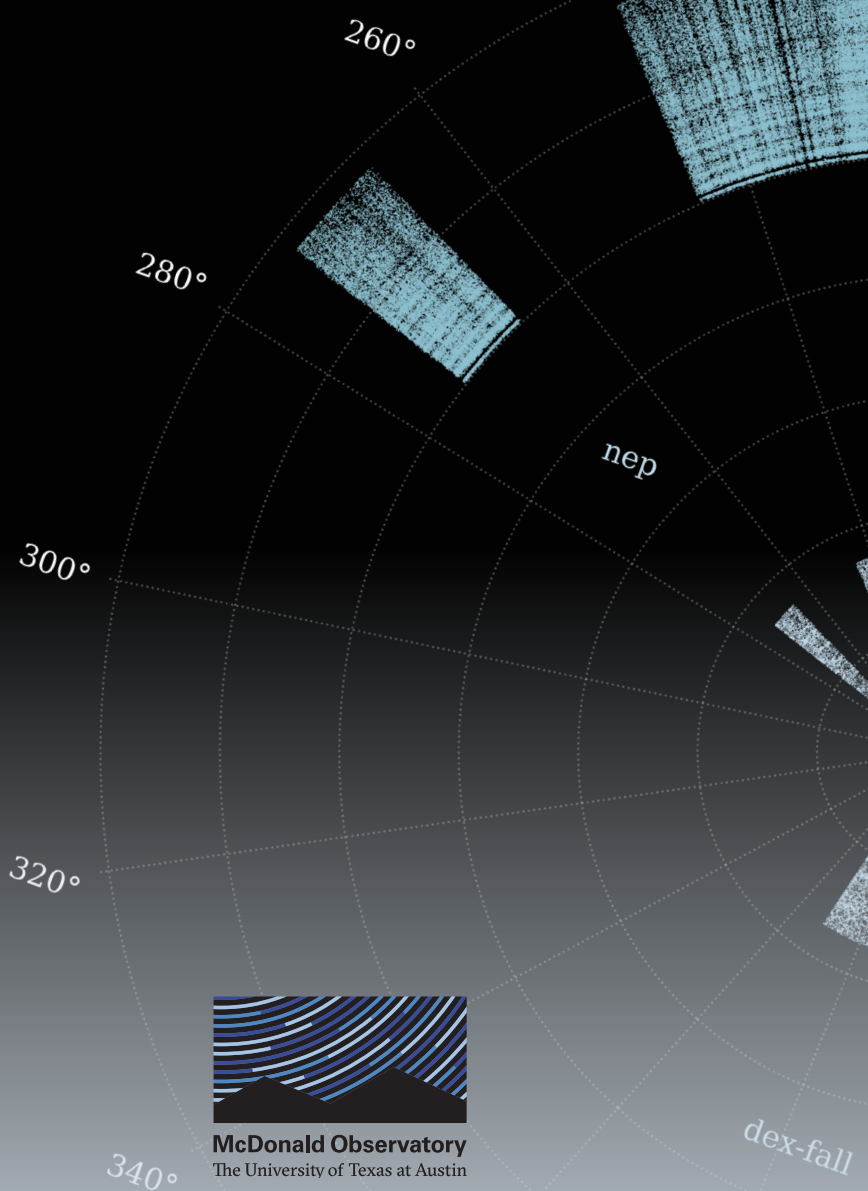
MOONPHASE

New-Waxing Crescent

MOONSET

9:54 p.m. Friday

10:26 p.m. Saturday



The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Astronomy
College of Natural Sciences

SAVE THE DATE: WINTER MEETING

MARCH 6-7, 2026 • AUSTIN, TEXAS

sites.utexas.edu/bov/meetings