



JULY
2024

MCDONALD OBSERVATORY
BOARD OF VISITORS
— SUMMER MEETING —

WELCOME

Happy 85th Birthday McDonald Observatory!

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



In 1926, Mr. McDonald left the bulk of his fortune to The University of Texas at Austin “for the purpose of aiding in erecting and equipping an Astronomical Observatory to be kept and used in connection with and as part of the University for the study and promotion of the study of Astronomical Science.”

ABOUT THE BOV

The Board of Visitors (BOV) is one of the most unique advisory councils at The University of Texas at Austin. The BOV formed in 1983, during the tenure of Director Harlan J. Smith. Its purpose is to further the research and educational objectives of McDonald Observatory and the Department of Astronomy, with an emphasis on promoting the welfare of astronomy, through public relations and philanthropic efforts. The generosity and foresight of the BOV ensure McDonald Observatory and the Department of Astronomy remain leaders in astronomical research, graduate education, instrument development, and science outreach.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

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.

Once you have checked in at the registration desk in the Visitors Center, use your name badge to hop on a shuttle and get to the various meeting locations. 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.

GETTING AROUND THE MEETING

The shuttle service will transport meeting attendees to all activities, including meals at the Fire House, talks at the 107-inch 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.

Cover image: 82-inch reflecting telescope in 1939. Credit: University of Chicago Photographic Archive, apf2-05099, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

AGENDA

FRIDAY, JULY 26, 2024

MCDONALD OBSERVATORY

3-6 p.m.

New Member Orientation
Visitors Center

5 p.m.

Registration Opens
Visitors Center

6:30-7:30 p.m.

Reception
Fire House

7:30-9:30 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 9:15 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 at 9:30 p.m.

Shuttle service from Fire House to Visitors Center begins at 9:15 p.m.

10 p.m.

Registration Closes
Visitors Center

SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

MCDONALD OBSERVATORY

7:15 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 7:15 a.m.

8:45-9:30 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 Vice Chair

Marty Heaner

9:30-10:30 a.m.

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

College of Natural Sciences Associate Dean for Research and Facilities

Andreas Matouschek

McDonald Observatory Director

Taft Armandroff

Astronomy Department Chair

Karl Gebhardt

10:30-11 a.m.

Coffee Break
107-inch Telescope Lobby and Visitors Center Cafe

11-12:30 p.m.

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

The JWST Revolution: Insights and Puzzles from the Infant Cosmos

Mike Boylan-Kolchin

Investigating the Chemistry of the Galactic Disk

Zoe Hackshaw

Using HETDEX and JWST to Identify the Smallest Galaxies in the Largest Known Super Protocluster

Jennifer Poppe

12:30-2 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.

Methods of Modern Astronomy: How we Learn About the Universe Using Telescopes and their Instruments

Niv Drory
107-inch Telescope Dome Floor

More Photons, Better Focused - A Look into the Primary Mirror Maintenance and Upgrades at the HET

Herman Kriel and Hanshin Lee
Visitors Center Theater

3-3:30 p.m.

Coffee Break
107-inch Telescope Lobby and Visitors Center Cafe

3:30-4:30 p.m.

Science Discussion Groups
Round Two
Visitors Center

Preserving McDonald Observatory's Dark Skies

Teznie Pugh and Stephen Hummel
107-inch Telescope Dome Floor

A Day in the Life of the Frank N. Bash Visitors Center

Katie Kizziar and Rachel Fuechsl
Visitors Center Theater

4:30-6:30 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

7:30-9:30 p.m.

Buffet Dinner
Fire House

9 p.m.

Registration Closes
Visitors Center remains open until midnight for restroom access

9:30-11:30 p.m.

Telescope Viewing on Mt. Locke
Shuttle service from the Fire House to Mt. Locke and the Visitors Center begins at 9:15 p.m.

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

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



Dear Friends on the Board of Visitors,

On behalf of the entire McDonald Observatory team, thank you for your membership on the Board of Visitors (BOV) and for your participation in this summer BOV meeting.

Approximately 85 years ago today, an unprecedented gathering occurred to dedicate the first telescope at McDonald Observatory, now known as the Otto Struve Telescope, or the 82-inch. The dedication included most of the great astronomers of the era, plus the leadership of the University of Texas and the University of Chicago. Names like Hubble, Baade, and Chandrasekhar gathered where we are today. The 82-inch telescope was the second largest in the world at that time.

The dedication followed the estate gift of William Johnson McDonald “for the purpose of aiding in erecting and equipping an Astronomical Observatory to be kept and used in connection with and as part of the University for the study and promotion of Astronomical Science”, which took place in 1926. It also followed the donation of the land that makes up the Observatory campus by Mrs. Violet Locke McIvor and separately Judge Edwin H. Fowlkes, both in 1933.

I am so glad that you are with us to celebrate these 85 years. What started here 85 years ago changed astronomy. Mr. McDonald’s gift and the advent of the 82-inch telescope led to not only a great Observatory with a whole collection of telescopes, but also to our Department of Astronomy, which did not exist at the time, with its excellent graduate, undergraduate and research programs. Mr. McDonald’s gift also led the way to our comprehensive public programs, including the Frank N. Bash Visitors Center and StarDate.

Please enjoy the beautiful dark skies at the Observatory, which are protected by the Greater Big Bend International Dark Sky Reserve. I hope that you have the opportunity to view celestial objects through one or more of our telescopes.

Finally, thank you for your generous support, following in the philanthropic footsteps of William Johnson McDonald.

Taft Armandroff

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



Dear McDonald Observatory,

Eighty-five years ago, our understanding of the universe was different. As a pioneering observatory, you were, and still are today, an essential part of advancing that understanding. Back then, we were making exciting advances in discovering the reaches of our solar system; your contributions to the details of the planets and their moons are considered some of the greatest. Eighty-five years ago, we had no idea that planets existed outside of our system. Among your greatest achievements is showing that not only do exoplanets exist, but the galaxy is teeming with them. Back then, we had very little concept for how stars form and die. Today, we understand the role that stars play in the chemical enrichment that led to the formation of Earth. You have helped define the fundamental physics of white dwarf stars, the final phase of most stars' lifetimes.

Eighty-five years ago, we did not know that black holes actually existed. You led the way, measuring black hole masses in galaxies and nearby systems and illuminating the important role they play in the universe. They say, "everything is bigger in Texas"; how fitting that the most massive black hole to date was discovered here with you. Back then, we did not know that dark matter existed. Your telescopes were some of the first to observe nearby galaxies rotating faster than expected, implying a new form of matter now called dark matter. And back then, we had dismissed the idea of an accelerating universe, only to realize that dark energy may be the most significant property in our universe today. Your prototype survey for our major dark energy experiment was the critical step for the whole project.

You have influenced every aspect of our understanding of the cosmos. Parts of you may be old, with instruments to exchange or upgrade – yet there is no question that your future remains bright, continuing to inspire us for years to come. I hope you find that exoplanet that hosts life – imagine that! Find more black holes – we never seem to tire of them. And please help us solve dark energy!

I don't know where we will be in another 85 years, but know you will play a significant role in whatever we discover. We will do our best to take care of you and make you shine.

Happy 85th Anniversary from all of us on the Board of Visitors!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. Gebhardt'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

A LETTER FROM
SHERYL O'BRIANT
BOARD OF VISITORS CHAIR



Dear Summer BOV Members, friends and family, and new nominees,

Welcome to the greatest place in Texas: McDonald Observatory! The Department of Astronomy, along with the Observatory, have once again prepared a fabulous weekend for you. I know you will enjoy the speakers, communal gatherings, and of course, star gazing.

Sadly, I am not able to attend this summer meeting due to a wonderful gift from my husband two years ago: a trip to the Paris Olympics. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity, so I hope you will forgive my absence. In my place, Marty Heaner, the current vice chair and your nominated Chair for the 2024-2026 term, will take over. Most of you know Marty, and I think you'll agree that he will be an outstanding chair!

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for your support, feedback, and inspiration during my service as your chair. It has been a great honor and privilege. I look forward to continuing to serve the BOV in my capacity as past chair and supporting the work of The University of Texas at Austin's Department of Astronomy and McDonald Observatory. Cheers and Hook 'Em!

With gratitude,

Sheryl O'Briant

MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Marty Heaner is the current vice chair of the McDonald Observatory and Department of Astronomy Board of Visitors (BOV). Marty will lead the BOV membership meeting on behalf of BOV Chair Sheryl O'Briant. In addition to words of welcome, Marty will lead the general membership in votes to advance four new member nominees to full BOV membership and present two new slates of nominating and executive committee members.

SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

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

FACULTY TALK

The JWST Revolution: Insights and Puzzles from the Infant Cosmos

MIKE BOYLAN-KOLCHIN, PROFESSOR

The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) has provided us a new window into the earliest epochs of galaxy formation. The results have been both spectacular and surprising. Contrary to pre-JWST models, the infant cosmos was teeming with star formation and rapid black hole growth. The emerging picture leaves many unanswered questions: Why did star formation proceed so intensely in the first billion years of the universe? How can black holes get so big so quickly? Do our pre-JWST models merely need some small tweaks, or are more dramatic revisions to our understanding of cosmology and galaxy formation required? I will provide an overview of this exciting and rapidly moving field, including UT Austin's central role in redefining our paradigm of how galaxies grew and evolved in the early universe.



Mike Boylan-Kolchin is a professor of astronomy at The University of Texas at Austin. His research focuses on theoretical astrophysics, including numerical simulations of the formation and evolution of cosmological structure and the nature of dark matter, and he is an author of over 180 refereed scientific papers. Recently, he has turned his attention to interpreting the amazing and surprising view of the early cosmos emerging from JWST observations. Boylan-Kolchin is the recipient of a National Science

Foundation CAREER Award and was named a Highly Cited Researcher in 2021. He received his Ph.D. in physics from the University of California, Berkeley, and spent time at the University of Maryland, the University of California, Irvine, and the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics before coming to Austin.

SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

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

GRADUATE STUDENT TALK

Investigating the Chemistry of the Galactic Disk

ZOE HACKSHAW, PH.D. STUDENT

The Milky Way is under investigation. The open question driving this investigation is how do galaxies form? Looking for clues left behind by our key witnesses (stars), we will explore how studying the chemical composition of stars in the Milky Way's disk can reveal our galaxy's formation history and structure. This practice is commonly referred to as stellar spectroscopy and galactic archaeology.

By analyzing the light that we get from stars in the disk of our galaxy, we discovered that the chemical makeup of these stars varies with their position in the galaxy beyond what is typically expected. Our findings show that stars' metal-content changes depending on where you look across the galactic disk. What is causing this chemical anomaly? We will examine the possible culprit for these chemical variations starting with the spiral arms of the Milky Way. With our findings and stellar spectroscopy from facilities like McDonald Observatory, we are closer to closing the case and answering the question: How do galaxies form?



Zoe Hackshaw is a rising third year graduate student advised by Keith Hawkins and joined the Astronomy Department at UT Austin after getting her bachelor's degree from the University of Florida. She investigates the formation and evolution of the Milky Way by using stars as chemical and dynamical tracers. For the past few years, Zoe has studied stars relatively close by in the disk of our galaxy using, among other tools, the Robert G. Tull Coudé spectrograph on the 107-inch (2.7m) Harlan J. Smith

Telescope. She is particularly interested in the heavy element chemistry of stars as well as stellar ages. She has begun work on her thesis studying stars that have been incidentally observed throughout the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX) to understand how the chemistry of our galactic halo evolves over space and time.

SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

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

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT TALK

Using HETDEX and JWST to Identify the Smallest Galaxies in the Largest Known Super Protocluster

JENNIFER POPPE, UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

Today's telescopes are allowing astronomers to look farther away and into the universe's distant past. Each telescope's design, location, and capabilities provide different types of information. For example, the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX) is using the Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET) at the McDonald Observatory to create a map of at least one million galaxies that are 9 to 11 billion light-years away. This telescope and related instruments observe astronomical objects spectroscopically, which allows astronomers to study the light from these objects in its component wavelengths. In contrast to HET, the James Webb Space Telescope focuses on near-infrared and mid-infrared wavelengths, which is light beyond the red end of the visible spectrum.

In this talk, I will describe how we are using data from both of these telescopes to help identify galaxies in Hyperion—a very large super protocluster of galaxies that emitted the light we measure 11 billion years ago. A galaxy protocluster is a precursor to a galaxy cluster; in other words, it is a group of galaxies that is still in the process of collapsing together to form into a cluster. Because the light we are observing from Hyperion was emitted 11 billion years ago, we are seeing what it looked like 11 billion years ago. This distance allows us to study large-scale structures such as galaxy clusters in their infancy. We are comparing observations from these two telescopes to create a three-dimensional map of potentially hundreds of galaxies within this super protocluster.



Jennifer Poppe is a retired lawyer who has returned to The University of Texas at Austin to pursue a degree in astronomy. Jennifer received her first undergraduate degree in mathematics from The University of Texas in 1995 and graduated from The University of Texas School of Law in 1998. After graduating, Jennifer practiced law for 23 years at Vinson & Elkins LLP. She focused her practice on civil litigation, primarily representing companies and their officers and directors in lawsuits and other disputes

with shareholders. However, Jennifer always considered returning to school to study astronomy. In 2021, she decided to make that dream her reality. As an undergraduate student in the Department of Astronomy, Jennifer is working with Karl Gebhardt and the HETDEX team to identify distant galaxies. In addition to being a student, Jennifer is also a supporter of Texas Astronomy, having joined the Board of Visitors in 2023.

SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

2-3 p.m., 107-inch Telescope Dome Floor

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

Methods of modern Astronomy: How we learn about the Universe using telescopes and their instruments

NIV DRORY, SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTIST

We will discuss past and current telescopes and their instrumentation, diving into the history of astronomical technology, how it all works and what is needed to make it work, and how astronomers use the data they collect to learn about the universe. We will use instrumentation at McDonald Observatory as examples of current generation equipment and take a look at research conducted there.



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.

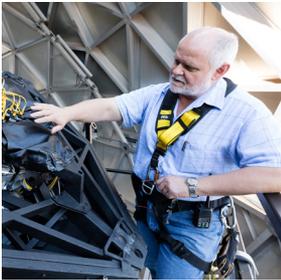
Niv returned to Texas in 2013 to work on the Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET) Wide-Field Upgrade and HETDEX, leading the development of the HET's new telescope control system and the recommissioning effort of the upgraded HET. Niv is now a senior research scientist at McDonald Observatory, contributing to 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

More photons, better focused - A look into the primary mirror maintenance and upgrades at the HET

HERMAN KRIEL, HET FACILITY MANAGER
HANSHIN LEE, SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTIST

The Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET) is one of the five largest telescopes in the world. Located at the top of Mt. Fowlkes, surrounded by the arid desert of West Texas, and under some of the darkest night skies in the continental United States, the HET, with its enormous photon collecting power, lets astronomers pierce into the deepest and faintest corners, near and far, across the cosmic space time. At the heart of such power lies the primary mirror (M1) - a smooth 10-meter diameter reflective surface formed by 91 individual hexagonally shaped mirror segments. As the single largest and most delicate subsystem of the telescope, careful alignment of these segments and maintenance of their pristine reflective surfaces are not only the key to the HET's performance, but also one of the core challenges of the telescope's daily operation. In this Science Discussion Group, the speakers will discuss these two aspects in detail and share exciting new upgrades to M1 that will bring the telescope toward its full scientific potential in the coming decades.



Herman Kriel originally hails from South Africa where he was the technical operations manager for the South African Large Telescope (SALT). Herman became the facility manager for the Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET) in 2009. Additionally, Herman served as the project manager for the HET upgrade from 2012 through 2015. This upgrade prepared the telescope for the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX).

Hanshin Lee joined McDonald Observatory in 2008 after earning his Ph.D. in astrophysics from the University of Oxford. Hanshin's research revolves around the understanding of the fundamental behavior of light propagation through optical and photonic devices, and its practical application in astronomical instrumentation. Hanshin is the lead optical scientist for a number of the Observatory's facilities, including the Simmons Dark Energy Optical System for the HET, the new VIRUS2 spectrograph for the Harlan J. Smith Telescope, and the GMTNIRS instrument for the Giant Magellan Telescope. He is also leading a group of scientists, engineers and students to develop "nano-scale" optical surface structures to help instruments collect photons from super faint "cosmic-scale" objects and structures across space and time.



SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

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

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

Preserving McDonald Observatory's Dark Skies

TEZNIE PUGH, MCDONALD OBSERVATORY SUPERINDEPENDENT
STEPHEN HUMMEL, DARK SKIES INITIATIVE COORDINATOR

Research and outreach at McDonald Observatory depend on having dark night skies free from interference from artificial light sources. Today, McDonald Observatory enjoys the darkest night skies of any major observatory in the continental United States, and is located within the largest certified dark-sky place in the world. To maintain this status in an ever-brighter world, McDonald Observatory conducts continual engagement with communities and stakeholders in the region on outdoor lighting practices. In addition to addressing the threat of ground-based light pollution, the broader astronomical community is engaged in addressing the issues posed by satellite constellations and related space activity. Join us to learn more about what it takes to preserve McDonald Observatory's skies.



Teznie Pugh received a bachelor's degree in physics with astrophysics from the University of York (UK), and a master's and Ph.D. in astronomy from Western University (London, ON, Canada). She has worked for more than a decade in observatory operations and management and has served as the superintendent of McDonald Observatory since 2020, after six years at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona. Teznie has been co-chair on the American Astronomical Society's Committee for the Protection of Astronomy

and the Space Environment since 2022. Most recently Teznie has been selected to serve in an advisory position to the US representation in the UN Group of Friends of the Dark and Quiet Skies.

Stephen Hummel received a bachelor's degree in international relations and economics from Webster University, and has been active in astronomy outreach and education since 2015. Stephen joined McDonald Observatory in 2018. His focus has been on light pollution awareness and mitigation since 2020, and took the position of Dark Skies Initiative Coordinator in 2022.



SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

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

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

A Day in the Life of the McDonald Observatory Visitors Center

KATIE KIZZIAR, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND
OUTREACH

RACHEL FUECHSL, PROGRAMS MANAGER

Outreach was part of our mission from the beginning. Back when the Otto Struve Telescope was the Observatory, visitors could mail in a postcard to request a ticket for a public tour each month. When the Frank N. Bash Visitors Center opened in 2002, it provided a new home for ongoing public engagement at McDonald Observatory. The 12,000 square foot building features a theater, exhibit hall, gift shop, and outdoor amphitheater and educational telescope park. Outreach operations have grown to include visitor programs multiple days and nights a week, serving learners of all ages. Join this discussion about the daily operations of the Frank N. Bash Visitors Center and learn about the wonderful connections we continue to make with the public today.



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.

Rachel Fuechsl is the programs manager at McDonald Observatory's Frank N. Bash Visitors Center, where she has worked since 2008. She has spent the last 20+ years of her career sharing the wonders of astronomy with the general public, students, and teachers. Prior to coming to McDonald, she worked at Chicago's Adler Planetarium and as a radio news reporter. Rachel holds a master's degree in astronomy from Wesleyan University and a bachelor's degree in broadcasting from North Central College.



2023-2024 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sheryl O'Briant
Chair

John "Marty" Heaner
Vice-Chair

Dean Chandler
Secretary

Jeff Lynn
Past Chair

Sarah Adler Hartman

Heather Bailey

Trei Brundrett

Sam Cooper

John Heasley

Bill Pellerin

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Sam Cooper
Chair

Dan Cruz

Brad Hunt

Clay Samford

Sandy Timte

Ian Yanagisawa

MEMBERSHIP ELECTIONS

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

Lawton Cummings
Summer 2024 Nominee
Austin, TX

Paul Leggett
Summer 2024 Nominee
Austin, TX

Amrie Grammer
Summer 2024 Nominee
Charlottesville, VA

**Mary Ann Rankin
and Rick Jordan**
Summer 2024 Nominees
Vienna, VA

The following slates of members have been nominated and reviewed by the current BOV executive committee for service starting on September 1, 2024.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

John “Marty” Heaner
Chair

Sam Cooper
Vice Chair

Dean Chandler
Secretary

Sheryl O’Briant
Past Chair

Steven Albright

Trei Brundrett

Cynthia Coulson

Chris Morisette

Clay Samford

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Clay Samford
Chair

Dan Cruz

Brad Hunt

Sandy Timte

Ian Yanagisawa

THANK YOU

We are grateful to the following Board of Visitors members for their generous contributions in the 2023-2024 term.

LEADERSHIP MEMBERS

Samuel W. Cooper
William and Mary Anne Dingus
Robert and Julie England
Carl P. Feinberg
Dr. Joan D. Lewis
Jack Long
Kathy and Gordon Moller
Chris Morisette
Sheryl W. O'Briant
Melissa and Don Reid
Van W. Robinson
Arthur and Lynn Schnitzer
Eric B. Stumberg
Ralph B. and Bette P. Thomas
Candace E. Williams

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Judy and Stephen Alton
Brenda and Joe Cialone
Megan and Paul Ellebrecht
Walter L. Foxworth II
Robert H. Graham
Mark L. Hart III
Sarah Adler Hartman
and Matthew Hartman
Claudia E. Hura, M.D.
Laurie and Ken Kattner
The Honorable David E. Keltner
Michael R. Levy
Jennifer B. Poppe
David A. Rose
Thomas R. Semmes
F. Ford Smith, Jr.
Dale and Roy Truitt

FULL MEMBERS

Marjorie A. Adams

Steven and Stefanie Albright

Barbara and Wayne Alexander

Henry K. Allen, Jr.

Dr. Mario R. Anzaldua

Heather Bailey and David Maduzia

Rex G. Baker III and Cynthia Baker

Rex G. Baker IV
and Dr. Maria Baker-Vidart

Paul Balmuth and Cicily Simms

Lane Beene

Memo Benavides, Jr.

Bruce A. Blakemore

Stephen H. Blount

Carla A. Blumberg

Michelle K. Brock

David and Janna Brown

Trei Brundrett

Lucius D. Bunton IV

Andrew Busey

Tobin R. Calvert

J. Callan Carpenter

Dean W. Chandler

Sally and Craig Clayton

Brandon Click
and Hilary Schneidmiller

Jim and Michelle Connor

John L. Cotton, Jr.

Cynthia A. Coulson

Edna and Daniel Cruz

Vincent M. Dawson

William J. Deaton, M.D.

Dick DeGuerin

Dr. Jerry DePriest
and Jody DePriest

Thomas and Brenda Dille

Jacqueline and Justin Dudley

Laura and Brad Duggan

Linda and Edgar Duncan

Kyle and Janell Edwards

James D. Finley

George A. Finley III

Walter C. Fisher IV

William D. Flanagan

Dr. Keith A. Fleming

Harvey J. Frye

John S. Gianforte

Noah Gillespie and Brent Huggins

W. John Glancy

Dr. Sally Goudreau
and Dr. Jeff Goudreau

Stanley Graff

Gwen and Tony Grigsby

Jeffery and Patricia Hart

Albert "Boo" Hausser

John M. Heaner

John M. Heasley

Linda K. Hedges

Dr. Stephen Hellebusch
and Juliana Hellebusch

Dr. Andrew Heller
and Mary Ann Heller

Randolph and Janis Henry

Russell S. Holdstein

Robert N. Hughes

Tamara and James Hughes

Bradley Hunt

Dr. Robert K. Hurford

Joshua Jones-Dilworth

William D. Jordan

Thomas J. Keefe

FULL MEMBERS CONT'D.

P. Knox Key

Tammy and James King

Mary and Steve Knight

Jeffrey L. Kodosky

James A. Kruger

Charles Mary Kubricht

Barbara B. Lemmon

Judy Lister

Wm. Stacy Locke

James W. Lowrey III

Kenneth L. Luskey, M.D.

Jeffrey and Susan Lynn

Dr. Humboldt C. Mandell, Jr.

Madeleine and Edward Manigold

Jeffrey W. Martin

Robert and Flora Marvin

Richard and Blix Ann Masterson

Robert J. McGee, Jr.

Ben and Kimberly Medley

Michael Mignano

Jessica and Shaun Miller

Scott C. Mitchell

S. Thomas Mitchell

M. Bradford Moody

Ed Moore

Deborah Moran

Deborah J. Murphy

Melinda and Robert B. Neblett III

Dr. Maureen J. O'Driscoll-Levy

James Pearce

Bill Pellerin and Lori Valencic

Donna C. Pierce

David Plaut and Jane Webre

John M. Pritchett

Larry Reaves, M.D. and Cynthia Reaves

Peter J. Riley, Ph.D.

Sheryl L. and G. Grant Roane III

The Honorable Gary D. Roberts and Damian Maffei

Commissioner Pat Rousseau and Cecil Rousseau

Karen and Karl Rove

Brett Rutledge

Wayne Ryback

Clayton and Allison Samford

Judge Karin Crump and Omar Samman

M. Stuart Sasser

Jay Saucedo

Norma and Robert Schafer

Eugene Sepulveda and Dr. Steven Tomlinson

Lizzy and David Shaw

Christopher S. Shields

Rasa S. Silenas, M.D.

Karen G. Skelton

James R. Small

Donna L. Snyder and Richard Donahue, M.D.

Lauren and Payton Spreen

Jane and Marshall Steves

Max Strozier

Alice Ball Strunk

Ric Sugarek

Ben Sweet

Pete Szilagyi and Kate McKenna

Sallie B. Tarride

Paul Teten and Virginia Holbrook

Ambassador Warren W. Tichenor

Sandy Gorka Timte

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Vaughan Foundation
Robie and Fallon Vaughn
Sean Wang
Rom P. Welborn
The Honorable William H. White
Carolyn H. Wildenthal
Lisa and John M. Wilkins, Jr.
Joe Williams
Big Bend Coffee Roasters
The Honorable Genie Wright
and Dr. Francis Wright
Dr. William P. Wright, Jr.
Ian G. Yanagisawa
The Honorable Lee Yeakel
and Anne Yeakel
Adam Zaner

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

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Susan Oliver Heard
Jennifer and Daniel Heath
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MEMBERS AT LARGE

James P. Lattimore, Jr.

HONORARY MEMBERS

Dr. Frank N. Bash
Former Director of McDonald
Observatory
Dr. Alan Y. Chow
Mrs. Harlan J. Smith (Joan)

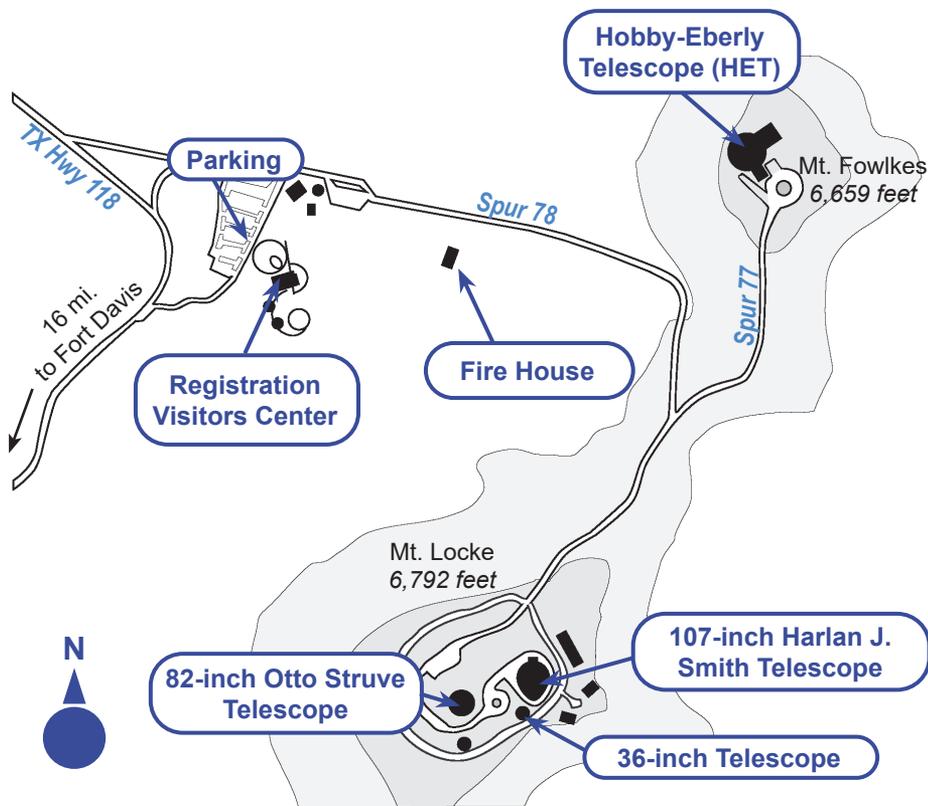
PUBLIC OFFICIAL MEMBERS

The Honorable Kay Granger

IN MEMORY

We remember Joan D. Lewis who
sadly passed away earlier this year.

NOTES



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.

SHUTTLES

Use your name badge to hop on a shuttle.

Shuttle stop locations include: Visitors Center, Fire House, Mt. Locke Summit (107-inch and 82-inch telescopes), and the 36-inch telescope (evening only).

SUN & MOON



SUNSET

8:53 p.m. (Fri. and Sat.)

CIVIL TWILIGHT

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



MOONPHASE

Last Quarter

MOONSET

12:50 p.m. Friday

1:56 p.m. Saturday

LOCAL AREA ACTIVITIES

There is plenty to do and see in the Fort Davis region! Here are a few recommendations:

CHIHUAHUAN DESERT NATURE CENTER & BOTANICAL GARDENS - FORT DAVIS, TX

This 500-acre facility with nature exhibits and picturesque hikes features spectacular views of the Davis Mountains. Open Monday through Saturday. cdri.org

FORT DAVIS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE - FORT DAVIS, TX

Visit one of the best surviving examples of a frontier military post from the American Frontier Wars era in the Southwest. nps.gov/foda

VIVA BIG BEND FEST - JULY 24-28

This annual music festival features over 65 shows at venues in Alpine, Marfa, Marathon, Terlingua, Presidio and Fort Davis. vivabigbend.com

MEDICAL

McDonald Observatory is in a remote region with limited access to medical services. Longhorn 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 & Fire House

Visitors Center: VC-Guest

Password: zLcs\$3@W

Fire House: McD-Guest

Password: RU5DBs29



McDonald Observatory
The University of Texas at Austin



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

SAVE THE DATE: WINTER MEETING

FEB. 28-MAR. 1, 2025 • AUSTIN, TEXAS

sites.cns.utexas.edu/bov/meetings