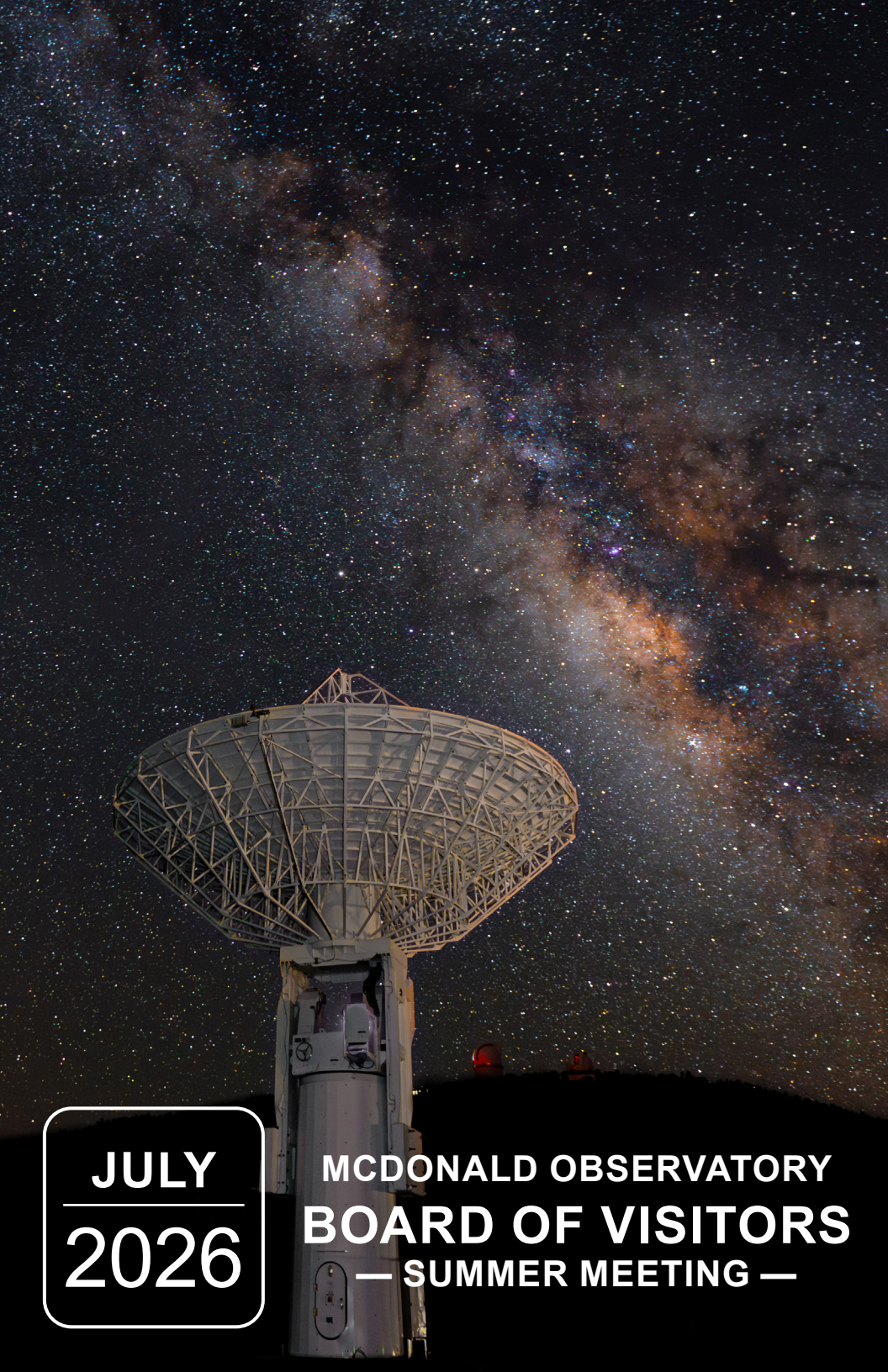




JULY
2026

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.

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

BOV member John Wilkins captured the Milky Way behind the MGO in July 2019 at McDonald Observatory. John Wilkins and his wife Lisa are based in Dallas. John originally hails from Oklahoma and has been interested in photography since High School, delving into astrophotography for the past 10 years. This particular image was almost interrupted by the appearance of a squadron of javelina!

The McDonald Geodetic Observatory (MGO) is a joint venture among the NASA Space Geodesy Project (SGP), The University of Texas at Austin Center for Space Research, and the McDonald Observatory.

RESOURCES

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

AGENDA

FRIDAY, JULY 10, 2026

MCDONALD OBSERVATORY

3-6 p.m.
New Member Orientation
Visitors Center

5 p.m.
Registration Opens
Visitors Center

6:30-9 p.m.
Reception & Dinner
Fire House

9:15-11:30 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 11, 2026

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

College of Natural Sciences Dean
David Vanden Bout
McDonald Observatory Director
Taft Armandroff

Astronomy Department Chair
Karl Gebhardt

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

Time Domain Astronomy in the Era of Big Data
Sebastian Gomez

The Universe HETDEX Unlocked
Dustin Davis

HETDEX Reveals an Unbiased Census of Ionizing Photon Escape at Low Redshifts
Maya Debski

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.

Exploring Late Stages of Planetary Evolution through Observations of White Dwarf Stars

Zach Vanderbosch

107-inch Telescope Dome Floor

Seeing Red: Could JWST's "Little Red Dots" Be Globular Clusters in the Making?

John Chisholm

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

Understanding the Smallest Dust Using the Shortest Wavelengths: The NASA Ultraviolet Polarimetry Mission PUFFINS

B-G Andersson

107-inch Telescope Dome Floor

Cosmic Time Machines: Using Today's Chemically Primitive Galaxies to Decode Our Cosmic Origins

Danielle Berg

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.

6:30-9 p.m.

Reception & Dinner

Fire House

9:15-11:30 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**



The summer Board of Visitors meeting is always a highlight for the McDonald Observatory team. Other than our weekly Star Parties, the Observatory is usually a placid place, nestled in the Davis Mountains. The arrival of approximately 200 enthusiastic supporters, eager to learn of recent progress with astronomical research and instrumentation and determined to gaze at the universe through our telescopes, dramatically increases the tempo and liveliness across the Observatory. All of us welcome you!

Those of you who visit the Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET) this weekend will notice some new hardware attached to and beside the HET enclosure. The telescope enclosures are cooled to prevent solar-induced heat build-up during the day. As hot air exits the dome, it creates turbulence which can blur our astronomical images. The original, 29-year old HET HVAC system was beginning to fail. A newly installed system approximately doubles the cooling capacity of the old system. The dome's internal temperature can now be conditioned year-round! This multi-year, multi-million-dollar project is rapidly approaching completion.

Projects like this are emblematic of other infrastructure needs and daily operations at the Observatory that are perhaps less glamorous than a new instrument, less exciting than the fascinating research you'll learn about from our scientists this weekend —but absolutely essential to our operation.

UT Austin is a founding partner in the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT), under development in northern Chile. In my talk on Saturday morning, I will discuss progress toward GMT's Final Design Review to be conducted by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in summer 2027. This is an important and required milestone for GMT to qualify for federal construction funding, which is vital to a project of this magnitude.

I invite you to enjoy the dark skies at the Observatory, protected by the Greater Big Bend International Dark Sky Reserve. Most of you live in or near cities that suffer from light pollution. A highlight of the meeting is the opportunity to view celestial objects through our telescopes, with a low sky background.

Finally, thank you for your generous support and for your service representing McDonald Observatory in your own community as Board of Visitors members.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Taft'.

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



We have been fortunate enough to watch as Astronomy has transformed from being data poor to having so much data that it is hard to sift through. I've seen this transformation in my career, where at the beginning, I would spend literally years studying one galaxy. Today, I look at millions, moving on to billions. The whole community has undergone similar expansion, where there has been an astronomical explosion of the amount of data. The reason for this growth is both scientific and technological. We have clearly expanded to trying to answer the most fundamental questions, such as where does our Universe come from, what is the long term fate of the Universe, how does life originate, and how do we detect life around other stars? Big questions require big datasets. Technologically, we can now produce large instruments and telescopes, allowing us to tackle these major questions.

The shift away from the one-off sources, like an individual galaxy or star, is natural. However, the focus is now on controlling unknown biases in the data analysis. The talks you will hear about at this meeting highlight the huge opportunity these new datasets offer, yet will show us the care one has to take to control the unknowns. Sebastian Gomez will show us the possibilities from the largest survey ever undertaken with the Rubin Telescope. Dustin Davis will demonstrate the additional science one can do with such a focused mission such as HETDEX. And graduate student Maya Debski will show us how important it is to make sure that the sources we study are representative of the whole population. We certainly understand the power of the large surveys, but we also appreciate the one-off sources as they train us in what aspect is important scientifically. I probably have spent 6 years in total on three sources: the globular cluster M15, and the galaxies NGC3379 and M87. They taught me a lot. I miss them and, finally after all this time, think of them fondly.

As we plan for the future of the department and observatory, we appreciate the role for both the individuals and the whole population. The telescopes and instruments we are working on keep this big picture in mind. As the field changes, we adapt accordingly.

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 2026 Summer Board of Visitors meeting. We are going to hear about some exciting new science this weekend, much of it impossible just a few years ago.

The tools of research are advancing at a rapid pace, and new discoveries built on them are published seemingly every day. The Vera Rubin Observatory alone will generate 10 to 20 terabytes of data each night it operates, and UT Astronomy is on the leading edge of this wave. This weekend, we will hear directly from the scientists making it happen.

Sebastian Gomez, who joined our Department of Astronomy faculty last fall, opens with “Time Domain Astronomy in the Era of Big Data,” describing how modern telescopes no longer just photograph an unchanging sky but scan it continuously, catching exploding stars and feeding black holes in something close to real time. Dustin Davis, a HETDEX postdoctoral fellow who spent more than twenty years in software engineering before returning to astronomy, follows with “The Universe HETDEX Unlocked”—the survey has now mapped more than a million galaxies and is producing science well beyond the dark energy questions it was built to answer. Maya Debski, one of our graduate students, continues that thread with her own HETDEX research on ionizing photon escape from nearby galaxies, work that bears directly on how the universe’s earliest “Dark Ages” came to an end.

Science Discussion Groups fill the afternoon. Zach Vanderbosch, our HET Resident Astronomer, will discuss what white dwarf stars reveal about the late stages of planetary evolution, and John Chisholm will ask whether JWST’s newly discovered “little red dots” are globular clusters caught in the act of forming, a question made possible by GLIMPSE, the deep-imaging JWST program he co-led. In the second round of science discussions, B-G Andersson will introduce PUFFINS, the NASA Pioneer mission he leads as principal investigator to study interstellar dust through ultraviolet polarization, with a proposed 2030 launch, and Danielle Berg presents “Cosmic Time Machines,” her work using the Hobby-Eberly Telescope to find chemically young galaxies that illuminate the universe’s earliest chemical history.

We are looking forward to a great weekend on the mountain: time with friends, and a close look at where astronomy is headed.

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2026

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

FACULTY TALK

Time Domain Astronomy in the Era of Big Data

SEBASTIAN GOMEZ, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

We are entering a new era of astronomy, where telescopes are no longer just taking pictures of a seemingly unchanging sky. Instead, they are repeatedly scanning the universe, producing enormous streams of data that let us watch cosmic events unfold in real time.

This “time-domain” window into the universe reveals a dynamic universe filled with exploding stars, black holes actively gobbling up matter, and other rare events. These phenomena—which can be observed to evolve on human timescales— help us understand how stars and black holes form, live, and die.



Sebastian Gomez joined the Department of Astronomy at UT Austin in 2025 as an assistant professor. Previously, he was a Clay Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for Astrophysics | Harvard & Smithsonian and an STScI postdoctoral fellow at the Space Telescope Science Institute, where he focused on the study of rare astrophysical transients. He earned his Ph.D. in Astronomy & Astrophysics from Harvard University in 2021, working on the discovery and classification of these transients, specifically superluminous supernovae and tidal disruption events. He is originally from Ciudad Juárez, México, near where he attended college at The University of Texas at El Paso, earning a degree in Physics in 2015.

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2026

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

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW TALK

The Universe HETDEX Unlocked

DUSTIN DAVIS, HETDEX POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

As the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment completes its primary survey, it leaves behind one of the richest spectroscopic archives ever assembled — more than a million galaxies mapped across billions of light-years. That dataset has taken on a life of its own, enabling research that ranges far beyond the original mission of measuring dark energy.

This talk explores a few of the scientists and research areas that have made use of this incredible new resource, and give our BOV members a sneak peak at what's next for HETDEX.



Dustin Davis followed a non-traditional path to astronomy, returning to academia after spending almost 20 years in software engineering and management (telecommunications, biometrics, and medical software). Dustin's original background is in computer science, receiving his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Texas at Dallas in 1997. He entered the University of Texas at Austin Astronomy program in 2013 as a non-degree seeking undergraduate then moved on to the graduate program in 2017 and earned his Ph.D. in 2023.

Dustin joined the Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX) in 2014, first working on the telescope control system and later, on science and data analysis. He has been largely involved with the organization and reduction of HETDEX data, the classification of spectra, and the exploration of ensemble galaxy properties.

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2026

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

GRADUATE STUDENT TALK

HETDEX Reveals an Unbiased Census of Ionizing Photon Escape at Low Redshifts

MAYA DEBSKI, PH.D. STUDENT

The Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment (HETDEX) is a blind spectroscopic survey that records everything within a given patch of sky, rather than targeting specific objects. This unbiased approach produces a rich dataset that researchers can leverage to study a wide range of astrophysical questions beyond dark energy.

I am using HETDEX data to build a catalog of nearby—or “low-redshift”—galaxies. I focus on galaxies that show a distinctive spectral signature from singly ionized magnesium (MgII).

My talk will explore how studying the ionized photons that escape these low-redshift MgII emitting galaxies can help us understand similar processes in the early universe. These insights shed light on cosmic “reionization,” a pivotal era that brought an end to the universe’s “Dark Ages.”



Maya Debski is a rising fourth-year PhD student in the UT Austin Department of Astronomy studying under Professor John Chisholm. She has worked with data from McDonald Observatory since her undergraduate years at Penn State and now uses HETDEX to study galaxy populations at scale. In 2025, Maya was awarded the Beatrice M. Tinsley Graduate Fellowship, which supported her development of reduction software for three instruments on the 107-inch (2.7-meter) Harlan J.

Smith Telescope on Mt. Locke. This year, she also received the Frank N. Edmonds, Jr. Memorial Fellowship for research excellence and the David L. Lambert Graduate Fellowship for her work with McDonald Observatory. Maya is also passionate about outreach and has supported the Harlan Smith Undergraduate Scholars program, which trains UT Austin students to collect data for active research using Mt. Locke telescopes.

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2026

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

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

Exploring Late Stages of Planetary Evolution through Observations of White Dwarf Stars

ZACH VANDERBOSCH, HET RESIDENT ASTRONOMER

Exoplanets are abundant and diverse, but their compositions and long-term evolution remain poorly understood. This session explores how observations of white dwarf stars and their environments can reveal the makeup of planetary systems and the processes that move planetary material into white dwarf atmospheres.



Zach Vanderbosch is a resident astronomer at McDonald Observatory's Hobby-Eberly Telescope. His research is focused on white dwarf stars and large-scale data mining of time domain surveys, with interests in astronomical instrumentation and night sky preservation. Originally from North Carolina, Zach earned his doctorate at UT Austin working with Don Winget and Mike Montgomery while spending many nights on McDonald Observatory's (82-inch) Otto Struve Telescope. Zach has since worked with the

Zwicky Transient Facility collaboration as a postdoc at Caltech and as a scientist working with the National Park Service Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division. Now, he is living the dream, getting to experience both living and working at one of the world's premier astronomical research and public outreach facilities while exploring all that West Texas has to offer!

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

Seeing Red: Could JWST's "Little Red Dots" Be Globular Clusters in the Making?

JOHN CHISHOLM, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



John Chisholm is an assistant professor of astronomy at The University of Texas at Austin, where he has been a faculty member since 2021. He earned his B.S. in physics from Boston College and his Ph.D. in astronomy from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He subsequently conducted postdoctoral research at the University of Geneva and served as a Hubble Fellow at UC Santa Cruz. He studies how massive stars shape the evolution of galaxies and the universe. His work focuses on galactic outflows

(powerful winds that regulate galaxy growth), cosmic reionization (the last major transition in the universe), and the enigmatic compact objects known as "little red dots." His group heavily uses McDonald Observatory: the 2.7-meter Harlan J. Smith Telescope to study galactic winds, and the Hobby-Eberly Telescope to investigate nearby galaxies that emit ionizing radiation and to search for new gravitationally lensed systems. He co-led GLIMPSE, a 148-hour program that received the largest allocation of JWST's second observing cycle and produced the telescope's deepest images of the early universe.

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2026

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

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

Understanding the Smallest Dust Using the Shortest Wavelengths: The NASA Ultraviolet Polarimetry Mission PUFFINS

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

The dust in the interstellar medium is important for the energy balance, chemistry, and evolution of the cosmos, including the formation of new stars, as well as for its effects on how we interpret observations of e.g. the early universe.

We can study the dust by the way it blocks some of the light from background sources as well as by its emission when heated. A complementary probe of the dust is provided by the way aligned, elongated, dust grains cause polarization of the light from background stars.

Because the efficiency of the polarization depends on the relative size of the dust grains and the wavelength, to study the smallest grains we need to use ultraviolet (UV) observations. These are, however, blocked by the Earth's atmosphere and must be done from space.

This winter, a team from the University of Arizona and McDonald Observatory was awarded a NASA space mission, called "PUFFINS", to study this dust-induced UV polarization. I will give an overview of the science of the PUFFINS mission and our plans for this mission.



B-G Andersson is the science-PI (principal investigator) for the recently funded NASA "Pioneer" mission PUFFINS. The PUFFINS team aims to launch a small spacecraft to study the polarization of the interstellar medium (ISM) by grains of dust. We hope BOV members will stay tuned for the (proposed) launch date in 2030.

B-G is originally from Sweden, where he received his Ph.D. from the University of Gothenburg, and has worked at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Johns Hopkins University, and spent 16 years with the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) Science Center. B-G is an observational astronomer who uses multi-wavelength data to study the interstellar medium. In his role as McDonald Observatory's assistant director for research support, he runs the proposal solicitation and review process for McDonald Observatory and schedules the Mt. Locke telescopes.

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2026

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

SCIENCE DISCUSSION GROUPS

Cosmic Time Machines: Using Today's Chemically Primitive Galaxies to Decode Our Cosmic Origins

DANIELLE BERG, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

In this discussion, I will describe how today's most chemically primitive galaxies can act as nearby "cosmic time machines," giving us a rare window into the physical conditions that shaped the first generations of galaxies. I will highlight how NASA's upcoming UVEX space telescope, paired with machine-learning searches across large spectroscopic surveys, will transform our ability to identify extremely metal-poor galaxies and build the samples needed to understand their origins. Follow-up observations from McDonald Observatory will play a key role in validating these candidates and measuring their detailed chemical abundances, building on our existing observing programs and spectra. McDonald data have already played a major role in our understanding of these chemically primitive systems, known as "extremely metal-poor" (XMP) galaxies. I will show how these observations reveal what makes XMPs unique relative to more typical galaxies, including their low metal content and elevated star-formation activity. Together, these projects show how UT-led facilities, new space missions, and modern data-science tools can uncover the rare nearby systems that help decode the chemical history of the Universe.



Danielle Berg is an assistant professor in the Department of Astronomy at The University of Texas at Austin. Danielle completed her Ph.D. in Astrophysics at the University of Minnesota. Prior to joining the UT Austin faculty in 2020, she held postdoctoral research positions at The Ohio State University and the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. She is deeply committed to her role as an educator, winning the College of Natural Science Accessibility Champion Award in 2023 and the Board of Visitors Teaching Excellence Award in 2022.

Danielle is a recognized expert on the chemical evolution of star-forming galaxies. Her research focuses on key elements that support life, including carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, and helium. She has led numerous competitive observing programs, including 11 Hubble Space Telescope projects and two James Webb Space Telescope projects. She also plays a major role in the upcoming NASA Ultraviolet Explorer (UVEX) mission, which aims to uncover the cosmic origins of carbon.

2025-2026 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

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Chris Morisette

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Clay Samford

Chair

Dan Cruz

Brad Hunt

Sandy Gorka Timte

Ian Yanagisawa

MEMBERSHIP ELECTIONS

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

Zachry Brown
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Rebecca McClure
Austin, TX

Iana and Don Elledge
Austin, TX

Mark Spearman
Hearne, TX

Laura and Kennon Guglielmo
San Antonio, TX

Carolyn and Art Thompson
Houston, TX

Kim Hicks and Matt Miller
Austin, TX

Cindy and Mark Ward
Harper, TX

Randy Light
College Station, TX

The following slates of members have been nominated and
proposed for your approval by the current BOV leadership for
service starting on September 1, 2026.

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Vice Chair

Chris Morisette
Secretary

Marty Heaner
Past Chair

Steven Albright

Sandy Timte

Brad Hunt

Jennifer Poppe

Ian Yanagisawa

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Sandy Timte
Chair

Trei Brundrett
Cameron Chandler

Cynthia Coulson
Dan Cruz

THANK YOU

We are grateful to the following Board of Visitors members for their generous contributions in the 2025-2026 term.

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Samuel W. Cooper
Robert and Julie England
Carl P. Feinberg
Harvey J. Frye
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Jack Long
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Dr. Frank N. Bash
Former Director of McDonald Observatory

Dr. Alan Y. Chow
Mrs. Harlan J. Smith (Joan)

IN MEMORY

Remembering those who passed in 2026

Walter C. Fisher IV
Member since 2007



MEMBER RESOURCES

The current 2025-26 membership year ends on August 31.

The 2026-27 membership year begins on
September 1, 2026, in conjunction with UT's fiscal year.

MAKE YOUR ANNUAL GIFT



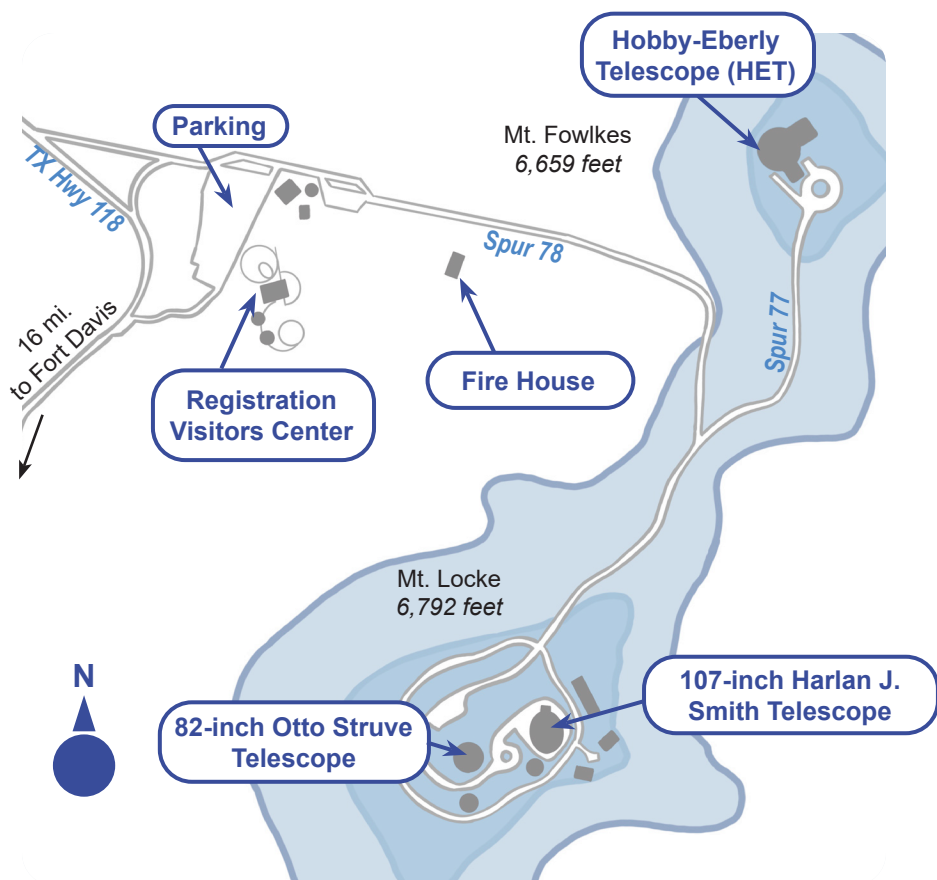
SPONSOR A NEW MEMBER



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

Guest WiFi is available at the Fire House

Fire House: McD-Guest

Password: RU5DBs29



SUNSET

9:00 p.m. Fri. and Sat.

CIVIL TWILIGHT

9:28 p.m. Fri. and Sat.



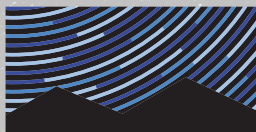
MOONPHASE

Waning Crescent

MOONSET

5:25 p.m. Friday

6:41 p.m. Saturday



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

FEBRUARY 12-13, 2027 • AUSTIN, TEXAS

sites.utexas.edu/bov/meetings