



# SVAS

Vol. 69 No. 2\* May/June 2012  
☆☆☆☆

# OBSERVER

Sacramento Valley Astronomical Society  
Founded in 1945

## Spectacular Annular Solar Eclipse!

Walt Heiges at the SVAS booth  
in Elk Grove



Photo by Lance Gaynor

Story pages 2-3

### Editors Note:

As you may know, Lynda Hall stepped down as a SVAS Board member and the Newsletter Editor effective January 2012. I, for one, will miss her high energy, truly great organizational skills, and terrific smile. I am a rookie SVAS board member, and I'm standing in as Editor (temporarily?) with the help of Ross, Walt, and our secretary Nerissa Adams. This is our first edition, and it will be small while we are assembling contributing authors. We will do our best to keep you current on club activities. The Observer is your newsletter, and we all want to hear from you the membership! Tell us about your new telescope, your favorite celestial objects, your last star party, or that new eyepiece. There is always someone in the club sharing your type of equipment, observing skills, and wants to hear your story!

Thank you in advance for your patience with this rookie editor!

Lonnie Robinson

## Current Events

**June 5th, Tuesday, 2012 setup at 2:00pm**

*Transit of Venus solar Observing Party*

*Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area.*

3300 White Rock Road, 4x4 staging area.

Rancho Cordova CA. 95742

Check with Perry P. Porter for details. See page 4

**June 9, Saturday: ATM Connection Telescope Workshop.**

11:am to 3:00pm at *Alonzo's Pizza depot.*

Get help with mirror cleaning,

Collimation, and telescope making.

7054 Sunrise Blvd. Citrus Heights, CA.

Lonnie Robinson and Bill Thomas



**June 12, Tuesday:** at 7:00pm. See page 6

Updating the recent Sutter's Mill, CA. meteor!

### Roseville Rock Rollers

**June 15, Friday:**

*General Meeting* at 8:00pm, *Board meeting* 6:30pm

The speaker will be Dr Vera Margoniner, phd.,

### What is Dark Matter?

Physics & Astronomy Assistant Professor

California State University, Sacramento

**June 16, Saturday:** *Star Party at HGO*

**July 20, Friday:** *General Meeting* at 8:00pm

*Board Meeting* at 6:30pm

**July 21, Saturday:** *Star Party at HGO.* Perry has scheduled a fix up clean up day on this date, please plan to attend early and lend a hand, especially if you are an observatory member. We will be painting the exterior of HGO. Lets make it a party and BBQ afterwards? We could BBQ Pizza!!

Check with Perry Porter for fix up, Lonnie Robinson for Pizza.

**August 17-19: Star-B-Q!** This is the SVAS, must attend, main event! We will have a great BBQ and a fantastic raffle.

## Inside This Issue Page

Solar Eclipse Booth, Current Events	1
Solar Eclipse	2-3
Venus Transit, Prairie City!	4
ATM Connection, Telescope Workshop	5
Roseville Rock Rollers	6
Officers, New Membership	7

# Solar Eclipse Viewing in Elk Grove

Perry P. Porter recruiting new SVAS members

Eclipse Images  
Projected through  
Tree Leaves

Photos by Lance Gaynor



Walt Heiges' Eclipse Projector



## Sunrise Mall Eclipse Viewing

I had a great time with Wayne Lord and Jim Carvalho at the Sunrise Mall solar eclipse viewing! I had to work, but managed to find time to show up with a solar viewer, pizza, and drinks. There was no time for Pizza! I helped so many youngsters get what was probably their first view of the sun in a telescope. It's amazing to share the joy they experienced. I had the chance to help a young lady see the eclipse who was wheelchair bound from a recent boating accident. She was partially paralyzed, and had just completed several operations. How good is that to give a little joy to someone who has been through so much! I shared my solar viewer and it traveled around to almost everyone. I thought that would be the end of it, but it came back to me fingerprints and all!

Lonnie Robinson



# Sunrise Mall Solar Eclipse Viewing

by Wayne Lord

Perry had asked early on for volunteers to be at various locations to show the public the annular eclipse. I said that since Sunrise Mall was convenient for me, I'd like to set up there. No one else offered to join me there for quite a while, until Jim Carvalho said he could make it, so that made two of us. Jim brought his 10-inch Skyquest Dobsonian with full aperture white-light filter plus a small Coronado H-alpha scope. I decided to bring my old 10- Coulter Optics that Lonnie helped revamp last year. It is built like a tank and could take the inevitable bumps from kids who for some reason can't resist touching the telescopes. That gave us three scopes and I put together some pinhole viewing devices, and brought along a very old pair of eclipse glasses. Jim and I agreed to meet on the south side of the US Bank branch on the corner of Greenback Lane and Sunrise Boulevard at 5pm. This location had the advantage of being slightly elevated above Sunrise Blvd., but still visible from the street, and with no serious interference from trees or buildings to the west.

We had just started setting up our gear when the first visitors arrived. I guess they had seen us from Sunrise and stopped to check out what we were doing.

Since this eclipse had been heavily covered in the news media, many people knew about it, so that helped us out. Jim also had contacts with his old school district and had notified them of our location and time. We had a constant stream of people, sometimes lined up 5 deep for each of the telescopes. Many people stayed around for over an hour waiting for totality, and some left to go home and bring friends and family back. I would estimate the largest crowd we had at any one time to be around 60 to 75 people. Lonnie arrived sometime during that period and helped out a lot since all three scopes needed frequent attention to re-aim them to track the sun as it set and after the inevitable bumps from unwary visitors. Lonnie brought a card-sized ellipse viewer, and along with my eclipse glasses they got passed around the crowd as did my home-made pinhole viewers. One person brought an old welder's helmet. As the eclipse progressed, Lonnie showed some of the visitors how to view the sun's image projected to the ground through a small slit between their fingers, and we also noted how the shadows took on the appearance of the ring around the sun. We handed out a lot of SVAS threefold brochures, our supply had almost disappeared by the end of the eclipse. We fielded many questions from visitors during the afternoon, and many of them expressed their thanks for us being there, providing information, and viewing through the telescopes. A man asked if it was possible to get a picture through the telescopes, so I grabbed my camera and showed him how to take a photo using eyepiece projection. Then he had to try it with his cell phone camera, and the idea caught on so many others had to try it too. This slowed down the lines quite a bit since it took most people some time to figure out where to hold their lenses over the eyepiece to get a picture. I had to ask some would-be photographers to hold off until the line diminished at my telescope.

All in all, I think that, despite minimal advertising, this was a very successful event!



# Venus Transit

**Tuesday, June 5, Setup at 2:00pm**

**Transit from 3:09pm to 9:49pm**

**Greatest Transit at 6:29**

**Sunset at 8:27pm**

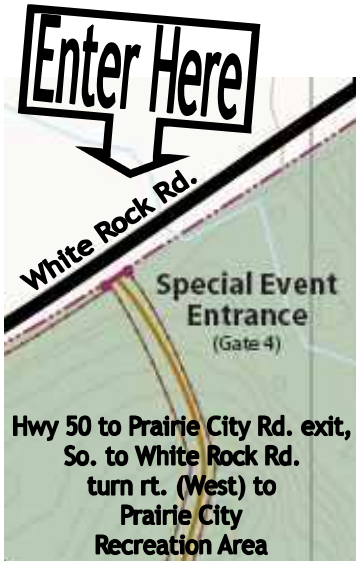
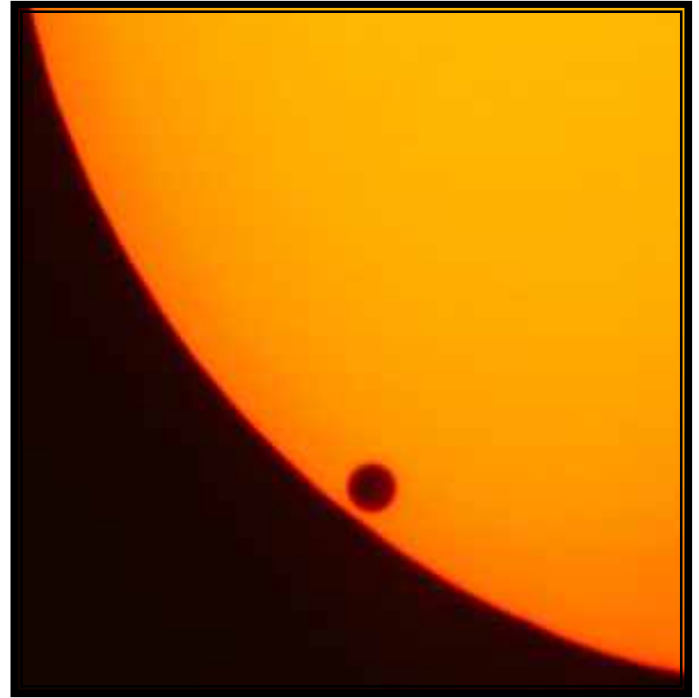
Join us for a very rare, once in a lifetime, event! Venus transits happen in accidental orbital periods of 8 and 122 years. The last one occurred in 2004 but wasn't visible in Sacramento. The last Venus transit before 2004 was in 1882! Don't miss this event!

SVAS will be setting up solar telescopes for a public viewing at the 4x4 pit area. The Bee newspaper wrote a great article Saturday about the

transit, this could be very a big event! We will have bottled water available for a \$1 club donation. Very little shade so bring lots of sun lotion, hats, and umbrellas. Contact Perry Porter if you can bring a solar scope or would like to help out.

Hope to see you there!

Editor



Meet here at the  
4x4 Pit Area



**Prairie City  
State Vehicular  
Recreation Area  
3300 White Rock Road  
Rancho Cordova**



# Telescope Workshop



## Next ATM Meeting

When: Sat, June 9, 11am to 3pm

Where: Alonzo's Pizza Depot  
Copperwood Square Shopping Center  
7054 Sunrise Blvd  
Citrus Heights, CA. 95610  
916-723-1294

Please Enter at the Rear Entrance, we open for  
Pizza at 4:00pm. Between Old Auburn & Greenback on

Hi everyone,

Introducing the ATM Connection! Bill Thomas, the ATM chairman from the Nevada County Astronomers (also a SVAS member) and I are joining forces for a new ATM group called the "ATM Connection". With the combined ATM knowledge of the two clubs, we can offer expert help and advice for most ATM projects.

We would like to invite you to our second telescope workshop Sat, June 9th, to get your scopes ready for the next Star Party on June 16th at Blue Canyon. Does your Newtonian mirror need cleaning and collimating? Would you like to build a new Dobsonian telescope? How about finishing up that mirror you started a few years ago? We can help!

I am progressing well with the clubs 16" mirror. After hogging it out to f/5, I just finished with 320sc. I would enjoy sharing the experience with club members! If interested, let me know so we can get together for a mirror grinding session or two at my house. The mirror may be auctioned off at the Star B Q, and you could be the new owner of a great mirror at a reasonable price!



Bill and I are all about having fun with Astronomy! It can be very rewarding to build your own telescope or update your current one! Drop by, if you can, just to say hello. We will talk telescopes and enjoy a breadstick or two.

Lonnie Robinson



Bill Thomas, ATM Chairman NCA.  
<http://www.yubagold.com>

# Roseville Rock Rollers



Member, California Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
Member, American Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
Member, Northern California CO-OP Field Trip Association



*Meetings at 7:00 PM at Roseville, CA (Placer County) Fairgrounds.  
Second Tuesday of each month . . . Visitors are always welcome!*

[Join us on](#)

**facebook**

**What's  
New**

● **Next General Meeting** - Tuesday, June 12, 2012, 7:00 pm  
at the Roseville Fairgrounds. Spectacular program by a NASA/SETI  
astronomer about the fall of the Sutter's Mill meteorite. Don't miss it!

## PRESENTATION ON SUTTER'S MILL METEORITE

Our June 12th presentation is going to be out of this world! We are honored and excited to be hosting this event.

The Roseville Rock Rollers Gem & Mineral Society invites your society members to a presentation given by a preeminent astronomer, Dr. Peter Jenniskens.

In April, one of the rarest types of meteorites to fall to Earth landed near us. Learn to identify and handle these rare "space rocks."

Dr. Jenniskens is an expert on meteor showers. He is the principal investigator of NASA's first Astrobiology mission, a research scientist from the Carl Sagan Center of the SETI Institute and NASA Ames Research Center.

He will be updating us regarding the recent area (Sutter's Mill/Lotus, CA) meteor fall! Local area societies are invited to join us to learn more of what this recent rare meteorite hunt can tell us about the formation of our universe.

**WHEN:** Tuesday, June 12, 2012, 7 p.m.

**WHERE:** Roseville Fairgrounds (Placer Co. FG)

Off of Washington Blvd. Roseville  
Park in Parking Lot C, look for RRR  
greeters for directions to the room.

**WEBSITE:** rockrollers.com click on June 12th

meeting for more information plus a map.

**CONTACT:** Call Jim Hutchings (530) 367-5108

# SVAS Officers 2012

**President**  
*Ross Gorman*

**Vice President**  
*Walt Heiges*

**Secretary**  
*Nerissa Adams*

**Treasurer**  
*Kirk Alexander*

**Past President**  
*Liam McDaid*

## SVAS Board of Directors

*Bob Lea*

*Charles Real*

*Ramona Glasgow*

*Michael Mehrdadi*

*Perry Preston Porter*

*Richard Sandler*

*Lonnie Robinson*

## Committees

**Membership  
Resources  
Star-B-Q**

**Outreach Director**

**Community Star Parties**

**Observatory Director**

**First Light Team**

**Amateur Telescope Making**

**Newsletter**

**Speaker Seeker**

**Ross Gorman/ Kirk Alexander  
Ross Gorman/ Walt Heiges  
Walt Heiges**

**Perry Preston Porter**

**Perry Preston Porter**

**Perry Preston Porter**

**Lonnie Robinson/ Bill Thomas**

**Lonnie Robinson/ Nerissa Adams**

**Richard Sandler**

## Where We Meet

**General Meetings** are held the third Friday of each month beginning at 8:00pm.

**Board Meetings** begin at 6:30 on the same day. All members are welcome.

Sacramento City College  
Mohr Hall Room 3  
3835 Freeport Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA.

**WWW.SVAS.ORG**

## SVAS Observer

**To Subscribe-** First send in your membership application form below, with your dues, and upon approval by the board of directors the Observer (published bi-monthly) will be sent to your supplied email address in .pdf format. Second, request to join the SVAS Yahoo Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/svas-members>. This group will keep you informed with the day to day current events and discussions.

**Articles-** Manuscripts and letters are welcome in MS Word, MS Publisher, or plain text format, and emailed to the SVAS Editor. Deadline is the 22nd of the month prior to the newsletter release.

**Advertising-** Commercial, non-personal advertising, business card, and full page are available. Classified advertising is free to SVAS members.

**Copyrights-** Except for individually copyrighted articles, permission is granted to other amateur astronomy organizations to reproduce articles in whole or in part, for internal non-profit use, provided credit is given to the SVAS Observer and the authors of the reproduced materials. Copyrighted material appears in this publication solely for non-profit educational and research purposes, in accordance with title 17 U.S.C. section 107

# SVAS Membership Application

Choose Membership Level: \_\_\_\_\_ New: \_\_\_\_\_ or Renew: \_\_\_\_\_

Student- (student ID required) \$20/yr \_\_\_\_\_

Family or Individual- (one household) \$35/yr \_\_\_\_\_

Observatory- (membership + \$40 + approvals) \$40/yr \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting- (membership + contribution) \$75/yr \_\_\_\_\_

Contributing- (membership + contribution) \$150/yr \_\_\_\_\_

Additional tax deductible contribution: Amt \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amt \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Detach and mail with payment to:

**SVAS Membership Application**

**PO Box 15274**

**Sacramento, California. 95851-0274**



## Observatory Membership Approvals

The benefits of a regular membership plus private use of the Henry Grieb Observatory (HGO) at Blue Canyon. You must be a regular member for six months or longer, be certified and approved by the Observatory Director, and then be approved by the SVAS Board of Directors.

**Note: It may take the board of directors 30 or more days to process and approve this application.**

By signing this application, I acknowledge I have accessed the SVAS website, read and understand the SVAS bylaws and the rules governing the USFS Special Use Permit. In doing so, I agree to abide by the respective "terms and conditions" of each as they relate to the SVAS, use of its property and its facilities. I further understand and acknowledge that failure to abide by these "terms and conditions" can result in revocation of use privileges and/or SVAS membership.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_