

# The Observer

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

Member of The Astronomical League

<http://sbvaa.org/>



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Since 1958

June, 2015

## Meeting:

June 27, 2015

### Location:

**First Christian Church**  
**2102 E. Foothill Dr.**  
**San Bernardino, CA**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Pre-meeting Dinner,**  
**5:00 to 6:30 p.m.,**

**Coco's in Highland has**  
**closed**

**Denny's** ← **NEW!**  
**702 E. Highland Ave**  
**San Bernardino, CA**

After the meeting telescopes will be set up for viewing and members will be available to answer questions. Bring your telescope to observe with us.

*No telescope is too humble,  
and beginners are always  
made welcome!*

## Program

### Experiencing Hubble The Cats Eye Nebula - A Stellar Demise

In four previous meetings, we have had programs on understanding the greatest images of the Hubble Space Telescope. To date we have learned the rationale for a space telescope, discussed the effects of Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 on Jupiter, delved the Sagittarius Star Cloud and looked into the star factory inside the Eagle Nebula. This time around we will examine planetary nebulae which result from the death of stars. The Cat's Eye Nebula is a prime example and one of Hubble's most popular photographs.



*(Photo credit: NASA)*

## SBVAA Officers

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

June 27, Club Meeting

July 18, Star Party, Johnson Valley

July 25, Club meeting (dinner only --  
just food & friendship)

August 15, Star Party, Johnson Valley

August 22, Annual Club BBQ

September 11 - 13, Grandview



Walter H. Haas  
1917 - 2015

Walter Haas was one of the great lights of amateur astronomy in the 20th century. Upon graduating from high school, he received an offer to study astronomy with William H. Pickering for 8 weeks. The 8 weeks was extended to 15 weeks and Haas' science career was off and running. He earned a Bachelor of Science from Case Western, a Masters from Ohio State and a PhD from University of Pennsylvania. He taught math for a number of years before accepting a position at White Sands, N.M. He is the founder of ALPO; the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers, and the co-founder with Clyde Tombaugh, et. al. of the Astronomical Society of Las Cruces.

## Club Meeting Dates for 2015

Mark your calendars:

July 25, (dinner only, no regular meeting)

August 22, outdoor BBQ

September 19

October 24

November 21

December 5, (To be confirmed later)

Grandview  
June, 2015

As your newsletter was going to press, I received a very nice review of the Grandview weekend from Rue and some photos from Megan.

Alas, Rue's article was too long to be included in the newsletter. However, I am going to prepare a "special edition" to share their experience with those of us who couldn't make the trip. It looks as though they had some "big guns" up there as evidenced by the photo below.



## Club Star Party Dates (Updated)



July 18, Johnson Valley

August 8, Wildlands Cons., Oak Glen

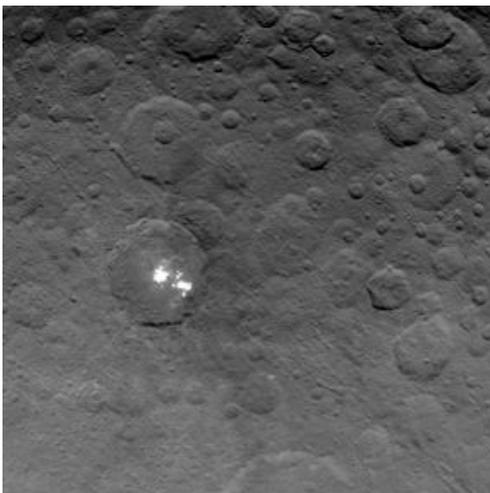
August 15, Johnson Valley

**September 11 - 13, Grandview**

October 10, Johnson Valley

November 14, Johnson Valley

December 12, Johnson Valley



## Scientists Baffled by Bright Spots on Ceres

Ice? Salt? Uncovered impact material? Many theories abound but no one has quite figured out just what these spots are. In early August when the Dawn Mission spacecraft begins orbiting Ceres at an altitude of 900 miles, scientists hope that hi-res images will help solve the mystery.

*(Photo credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/UCLA/MPS/DLR/IDA)*

## **Rosetta Mission is Alive! From Fiasco to Fantastic**

As some of you may remember, last November the Rosetta Mission's comet lander Philae touched down on Comet 67P -- in the wrong spot. This resulted in its solar panels not getting enough light for power. After about 60 hours its battery died. Now, after more than 6 months, it has managed to recharge itself and contact its ESA ground control.



Scientists eagerly anticipating Philae's next message as the lander's memory still contains more than 8,000 data packets that will tell them what has happened in recent days on Comet 67P.

Since March 12, Rosetta has been listening for the lander to determine if it had survived the cold, dark recesses of the comet. Scientists thought that if enough sunlight could fall on Philae's solar panels, it could be revived.

Problems began for the lander when devices designed to anchor Philae to the surface failed. The gravity is so weak that without the harpoons intended to fire from the feet, the probe bounced across the comet. The mishap, said scientists, could prove to be a happy accident. Had Philae touched down in its original landing spot, O'Rourke explained, the temperatures as the comet neared the sun could have burned out the lander's electronics, killing it altogether. But because it found shade -- beneath a cliff face, scientists deduced from images sent by the lander -- it was able to survive.

Now, scientists are excited at the prospect of Philae witnessing a remarkable show as 67P makes its closest approach to the sun in August.

*(Story credit: CNN)*