

# SONOMA SKIES

September 2016 E-Newsletter of the  
[Sonoma County Astronomical Society](#)



501(c)(3) Scientific and Charitable Organization  
Established in 1974



Hello members and friends,

Meeting place: Proctor Terrace Elementary School (Parking in playground off of Grosse Ave.)

Meeting Starts: 7:30PM

SCAS Business: 7:30PM-7:40PM (*Then grab your coffee and cookies*)

Guest Lecture begins: 8:50PM

Program Ends: 9:00PM

This month we are pleased to present a return visit  
by Dr. Lynn Cominsky.



Professor and Chair at Sonoma State University  
Attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Dr. Cominsky will on lecture Gravitational Waves from Merging Black Holes. Thumbs up to Lynn Cominsky, who is putting Sonoma State University on the interstellar map.

Cominsky, a physics and astronomy professor at the Rohnert Park campus for three decades, also works with NASA and other space exploration agencies on, among other things, the study of black holes. One of those agencies is Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory, which confirmed a key piece of Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity by detecting gravitational waves emanating from the collision of two black holes in deep space.

Cominsky joined LIGO's program advisory committee for a three-year term in 2007, and she now chairs the education working group for the LIGO Scientific Collaboration. "I am thrilled to be a small part of the LIGO outreach effort," she said in a statement issued after Thursday's announcement. "Studying black holes has been most of my life's work, and the discovery of gravitational waves using LIGO detectors will open an entirely new branch of astronomy." Sonoma State students should be learning all about it.

**UP COMING EVENTS!**  
**SONOMA COUNTY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY – 2016 GENERAL  
MEETING CALENDAR**

(Schedule topics subject to change)

October 12<sup>th</sup>

Patrick Kelly UC Berkeley - Confirmed

Supernova explosions, their host galaxies, and gravitational lensing by galaxies  
and galaxy clusters.

November 9th

Popcorn & Movie Night - Confirmed

December 14th

Lynda Williams (SRJC Physics Dept.) – Confirmed

The Space Act of 2015

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**SONOMA COUNTY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY – 2017 GENERAL  
MEETING CALENDAR**

January 11<sup>th</sup>

Tim Gill

A look at Sir Arthur Eddington, and his verification of Einstein's prediction that  
gravity bends light.

February 8<sup>th</sup>

Dr. Franck Marchis - Confirmed

February 8th – SETI Institute - Over the past 15 years, he has dedicated his  
research to the study of our solar system using mainly ground-based telescopes  
equipped with adaptive optics.

March 8<sup>th</sup>

STRIKING SPARKS ANNUAL AWARDS PROGRAM - Confirmed

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A very special thanks to Christine Frost and her daughter Mady for their hard work and planning of our recent Yosemite Star Party Field Trip. Again it was a great success!

Photo credit Ted Judah



Our Young Astronomers had a wonderful time sharing both the heavens and their ‘Striking Sparks Telescopes’ with the visiting public at Glacier Point. If you’re interested in ‘Striking Sparks’ for your child, applications are available at our monthly meetings or online at our homepage.



*(Photographer unknown)*

Last month was our annual Star BQ at the Robert Ferguson Observatory.

#### Contact us

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