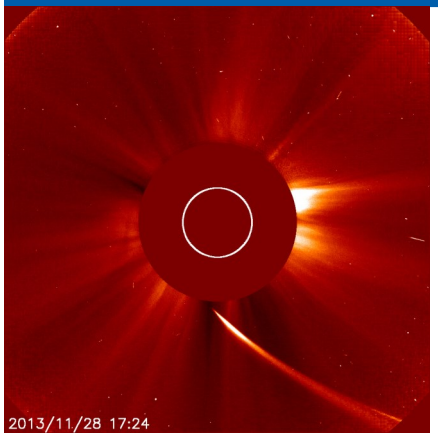
Kentucky SkyTalk



A Kreutz comet fragment evaporates while passing near the Sun. The Sun (white circle) is hidden behind an occulting disk so that the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory can observe the solar environment.

Tim Knauer — University of Kentucky
Thursday - January 12, 2022 7:00 PM
Location Chemistry-Physics Room 155

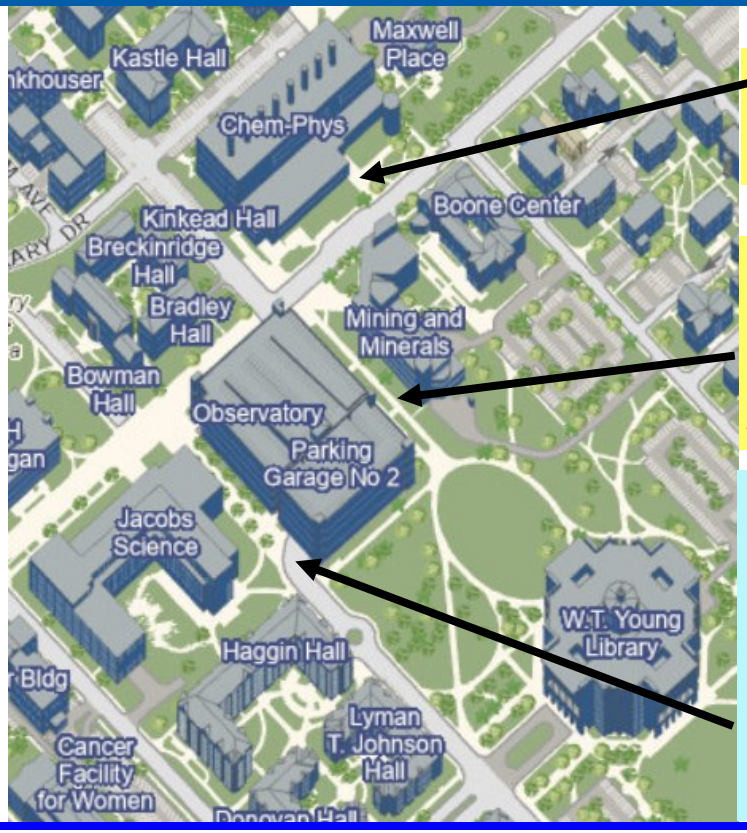
The Doomed Comets of Kreutz

Heinrich Kreutz was a 19th Century astronomer that studied a curious class of comets that pass perilously close to the Sun. They constitute a class of comets we now call *sungrazers*. Every decade or so, a largish comet rounds the Sun and becomes extraordinarily bright. Curiously, most of them have very similar orbits, implying they are fragments of a much larger comet that broke apart long ago. The SOHO satellite has discovered more than *4,000* over the last 25 years. Is the mother comet still out there lurking in a ~1,000 year orbit?

Zoom Link: https://uky.zoom.us/u/kbmLvZYQ1m
An all-sky chart for this month can be found here.

Tonight's *Kentucky SkyTalk* is part of an ongoing series. These are presented by the UK Department of Physics and Astronomy, and the MacAdam Student Observatory. Held every 2nd Thursday of the month, they are always free and open to the public.

How to find the MacAdam Student Observatory



Chemistry-Physics Building

MacAdam Student Observatory

301 Hilltop AVE

SkyTalk Event Parking

Parking Structure #2 is accessible by car from Hilltop Avenue only.

Monthly Meetings

The MSO hosts monthly public-observing sessions, each with a kick-off 40 minute presentation in the Chemistry-Physics Building. The presentations will take place even on cloudy nights. If the sky is clear, the observatory will open after the talk! Can't make the SkyTalk? Then come after!

Next month:

February 9, 2022 - **7:00 PM**