transitof VCNUS.org

History

Centuries of Discovery

2012 June 5-6

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37545 days 1 hour Until the 2117 Transit of Venus

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Party like it's 2012!

If you are hosting a Transit of Venus celebration, here are some items to consider. See the **2004 Celebration in Mishawaka**, **IN**, for scenes of an observing site.

Months before:

- Scout out event sites, with consideration given to unobstructed sightlines, security, parking, restroom availability, electricity, internet access, and absence of lights with glare (for telescope viewing later that night).
 - Secure permission from landowner or government entity to conduct event at that site.
- Get approval for tents or trailers to be set up adjacent to or near scopes, especially for telescope owners who come from afar.

Store 🔹

- Invite amateur astronomers with telescopes and solar filters to set up their scopes for public viewing. Ask them to stay beyond twilight for stargazing session and planet-viewing (Mars and Saturn).
- Invite local musicians or school bands to perform John Phillip Sousa's *Transit of Venus March* or other ToV music.
- Put out a call for Transit of Venus art through a local art organization or advocate.
- Purchase solar viewing equipment, whether simple or major. Realize that with just solar shades, Venus is small--near the limit (about a minute of arc) of what the human eye can discern. Don't wait for last minute when supplies are hard to get.
- Send out invitations--to family, friends, teachers, elected officials, special interest groups.
- Purchase and use some **Transit of Venus paraphernalia**, such as T-shirts, to start generating interest and dialogue. Be the first one "in the know", then spread the enthusiasm.
- Order tent, portable bathroom, tables. Remember, you are competing for equipment with June weddings and graduation parties. Fortunately, it's a Tuesday.
- Seek financial support and/or active participation from local businesses and organizations.
- Contact local planetarium to present slate of sky shows related to transit. Additional, flexible programming is key if you have cloudy weather during the transit.
- Partner with local schools, teachers, and districts to integrate transit of Venus education resources into their

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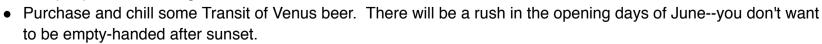


existing curriculum. Don't just pile more to-do onto their plate.

• Watch http://youtu.be/4RGr9FcBrSM for eye safety information.

Weeks before:

- Build some rear projection screens so multiple observers can gather around a single telescope and view safely. Instructions are at http://cdn.transitofvenus.org/docs/Build_a_Sun_Funnel.pdf.
- Determine with confidence where the sun will set on June 5. You want a clear view with no obstructions from the time of first contact through sunset. Mark that location for telescopes to be set up. Realize that normally clear sight-lines may be impeded. For example, if you are planning a sunset photograph with a pier and lighthouse, you may find the pier crowded with people that evening.



- Obtain a P.A. system over which to narrate and to play music.
- Obtain a shortwave radio that can broadcast a WWV time signal, which will provide time that is certain to be accurate. WWV transmits at 2.5, 5, 10, 15 and 20 MHz. Or find a ham radio operator to do this for you.
- Send out press releases and invitations to local media outlets.
- Download the free Transit of Venus phone app. Try the app's practice runs to get a sense of timing internal contact.
- Print observer's guide or an on-site handout. Include local circumstances (e.g., latitude, longitude, predicted contact times) and a space for observers to record their actual time of observed contact.







- telescope to attenuate the direct sunlight. Practice targeting the sun for an extended period.
- Print certificates for observers who witness the phenomenon, or for guests at your site who contribute their observed contact times to global experiments.
- Notify local police and emergency service providers of your anticipation of a crowd.

Day(s) before:

• Set up monitors that are capable of displaying webcasts. Be sure they are sufficiently shielded, such as in a tent, so that the images can be seen during the daytime. Alternative programming is especially important if you have a chance of cloudy weather.



- Gather supplies for kids' activities related to the transit, such as the Stained Glass Window activity.
- Mark on the ground the prime spots where pre-identified, qualified telescope owners will set up. These have clear sight lines for the duration of the transit.
- Re-watch http://youtu.be/4RGr9FcBrSM for solar viewing safety.

[This article is under construction. We welcome your input.]

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