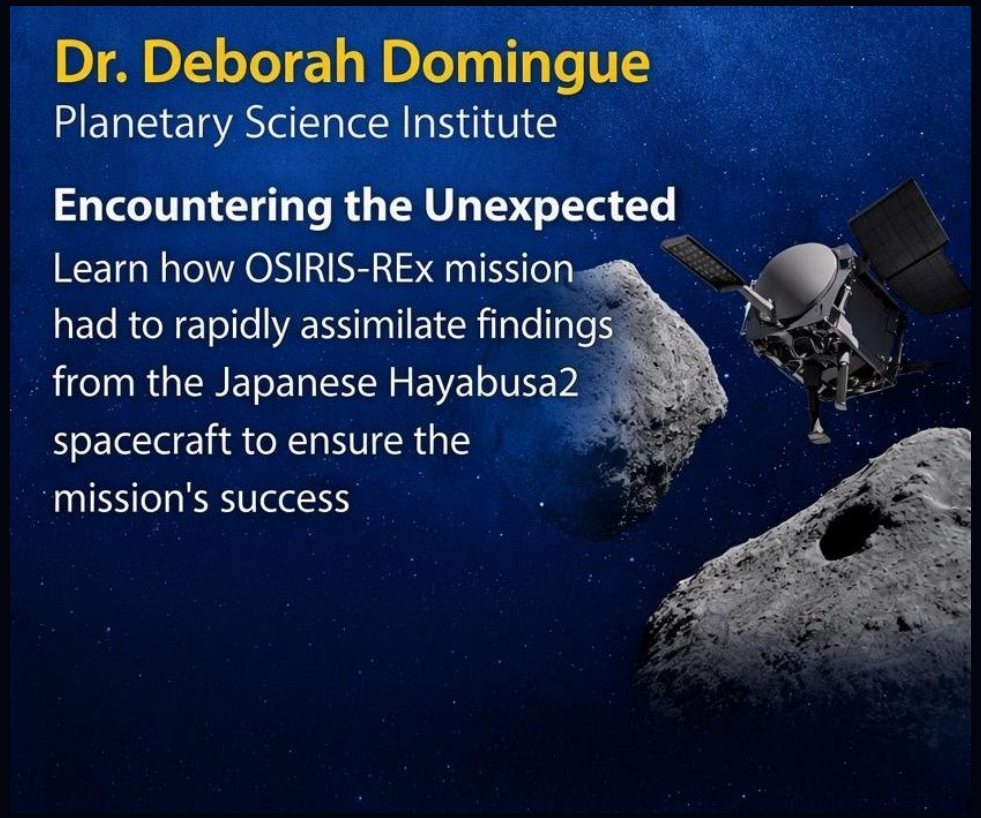
**HOWARD ASTRONOMICAL LEAGUE**

October 2026 MEMBER MEETING




# Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Book of the Month
- By-Laws Changes
- Presentation:

**Encountering the Unexpected**

**When Your Mission Assumptions Unravel!**

**Dr. Deborah Domingue**

- Seestar Transfer
- Yard Sale
- What's Up in Space
- Member Astrophotos

Welcome!

# Book of the Month

Title:

- “Take Me To Your Leader: Perspectives on Your First Alien Encounter”

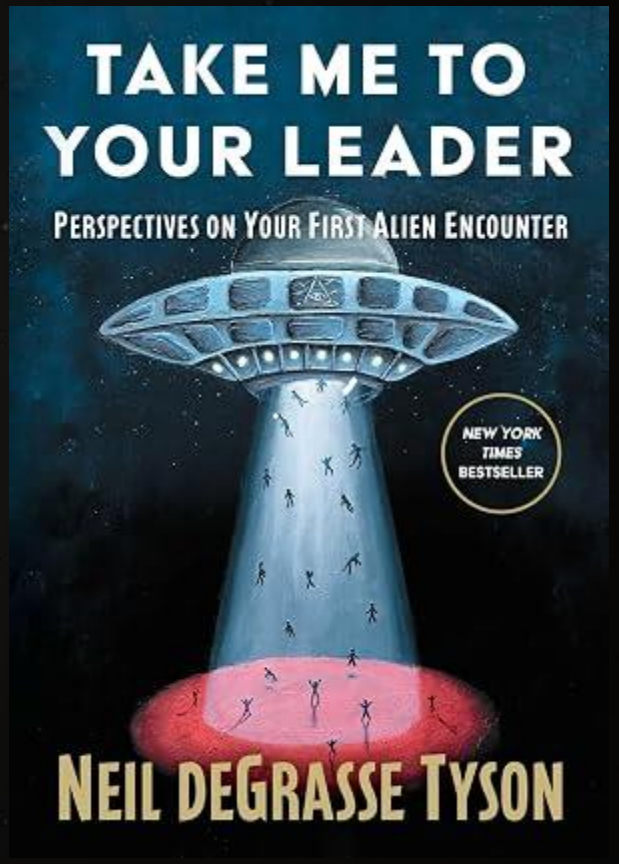
Author:

- Neil DeGrasse Tyson(2026)

Length: 240 pages

Audience Level:

- Beginner Friendly
- Intermediate
- Experienced




October, 2026

# Proposed Changes to HAL By-Laws

- Why: Improve clarity, modernize governance, and streamline board operations
- Change Summary
  - Appointed officers (Observatory Director, Webmaster) now require board confirmation, not just presidential appointment.
  - ALCOR and Librarian moved out of Membership section and defined as non-voting support positions.
  - Nomination deadline extended: now closes one week before January meeting (previously 24 hours).
  - Runoff elections added when no candidate receives a majority.
  - Removed the clause allowing general membership to seek relief through by-laws changes.
  - Amendment notices must be given at least one week prior to the vote.

# Vote: Proposed Changes to HAL By-Laws

- Quorum: 35 members
- Only HAL members are eligible to vote
  - At meeting – raise hands
  - Online – use the “raise hand” feature (as if you were asking a question

# Seestar S50 Program

https://howardastro.org/seestar-loaner-program/

Valerie Raley => Muhammad Tak

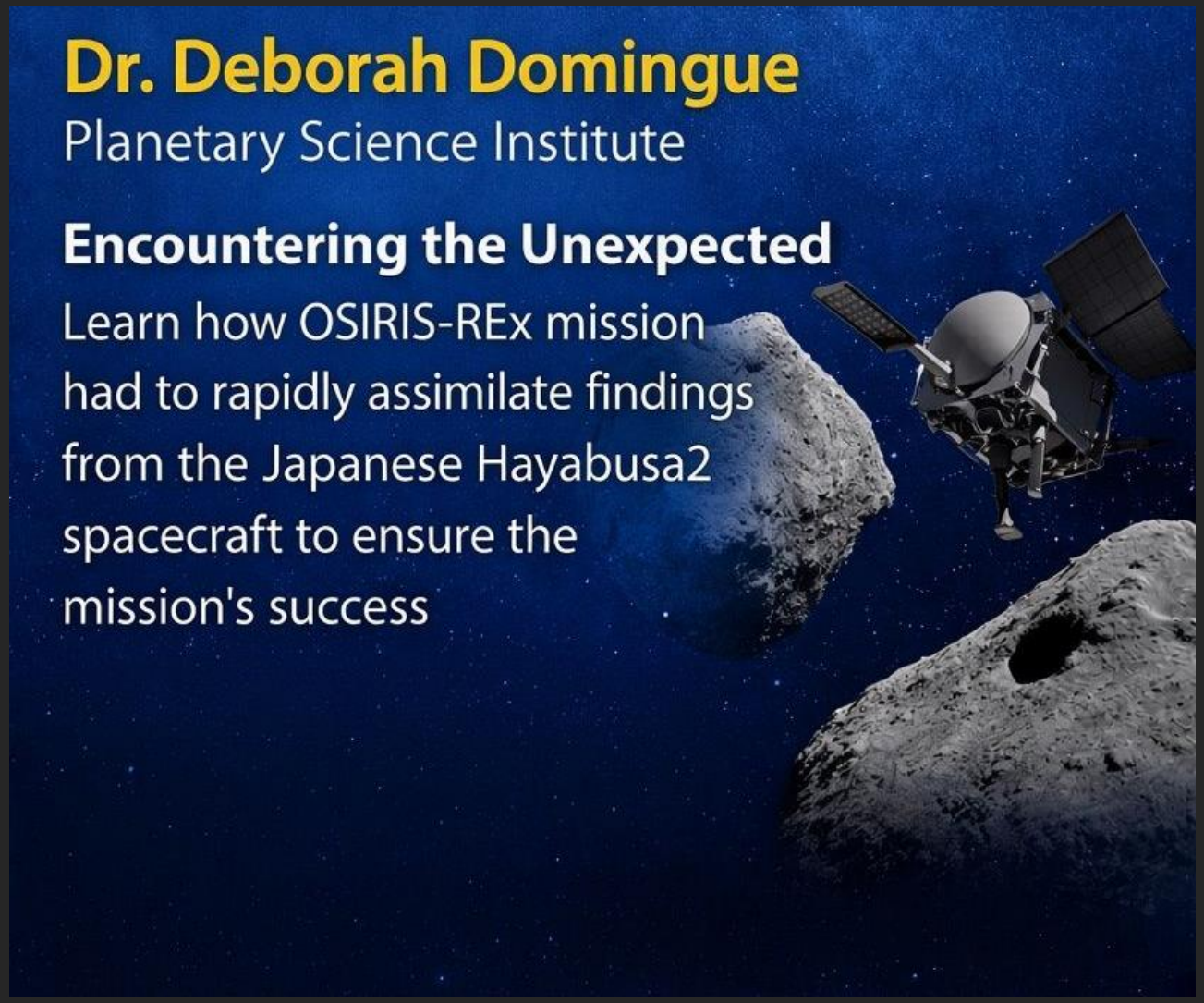
**Can I take another turn?**

Yes, you can add your name back onto the wait list

**BUT**

We prioritize members who have not had a chance to use it yet

# Our Feature Presentation




- Senior planetary scientist with decades of experience studying the surfaces, composition, and evolution of airless bodies such as asteroids, comets, and the Moon.
- Longtime member of NASA mission science teams, contributing to instrument operations, data analysis, and mission planning for multiple planetary missions.
- Experienced in mission operations, including adapting science plans when spacecraft encounter “the unexpected”.

*We're cleaning out the storage shed – here's your chance to pick up equipment at bargain prices!*

- When: October 17th from 1-3 p.m.
  *(Get a sneak peek this Saturday from 6-7 p.m.)*
- Where: Alpha Ridge outside HALO
- What:
  - Mounts
  - 8" Dobsonian
  - Meade ETX, SCT, Refractors
  - Accessories
- How:
  - All equipment "**as is**"
  - Purchase online via auction platform
- Auction is now open for Proxy Bidding (Credit Card)
  https://go.rallyup.com/astroyardsale/
- Pick up by the November Members Star Party

# What's Up in Space Headlines

October 8, 2026

## NASA Selects PRIMA Mission

- NASA selected the first astrophysics mission of the Probe Explorers class
- The **PR**obe far-**I**nfrared **M**ission for **A**strophysics – PRIMA – is a far-IR mission (30μm – 450μm)
  - Has a 5.9 ft (1.8 m) primary mirror
  - Far-IR bridges the gap between optical/NIR and radio
  - Will investigate exoplanet formation, galaxy and black hole evolution, and the origin of dust and heavy elements in the universe
  - International collaboration with France, Italy, Germany, Canada, Korea, Japan, and UK
  - Cost is capped at $1.2billion
- PRIMA will be a Principal Investigator mission, not a General Observer mission
- Entering Phase B – Preliminary Design and Technology Completion
- Launch is targeted for 2033

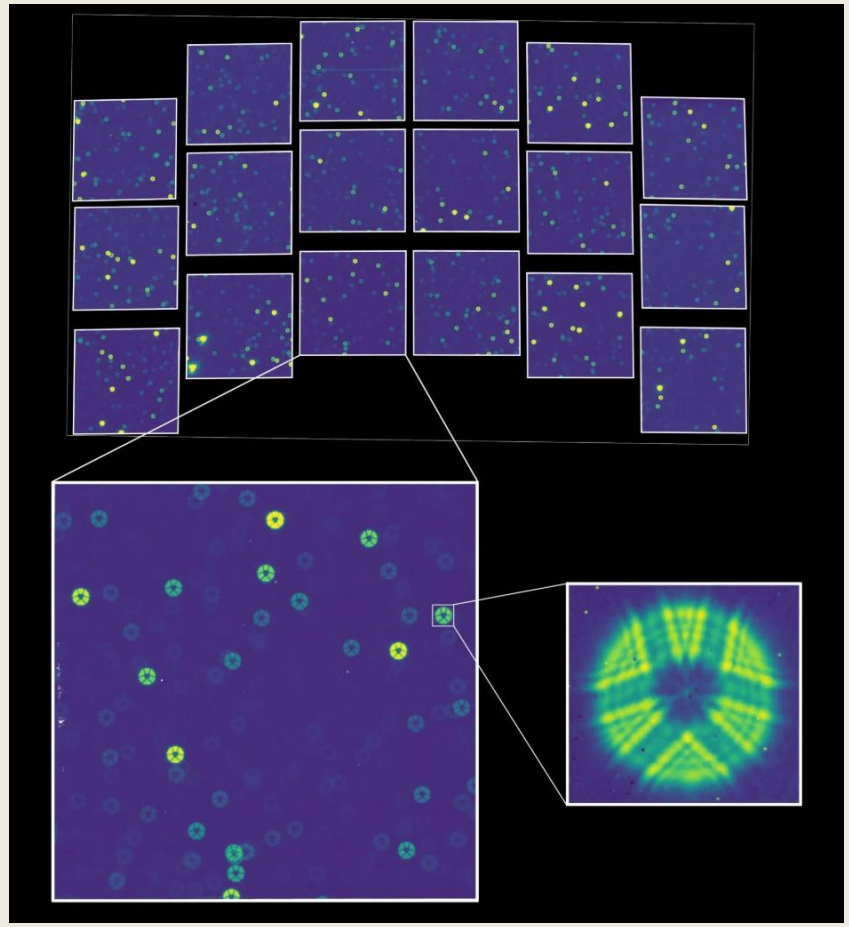
More Info: https://www.nasa.gov/news-release/nasa-selects-far-infrared-telescope-as-first-in-new-mission-class/

# What's Up in Space Headlines

October 8, 2026

## Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope Status

- Commissioning continues
  - Wide-Field Imager (WFI) started power-on on Sept. 10
    - Detectors cooled, element wheel and focusing mechanism tested, first light image
  - Communications sites tested and passed
    - Three ground stations: NASA's Near Space Network (White Sands, NM), ESA (Australia), and JAXA (Japan)
    - Data rates of 500Mb/s
    - Expect to download 1.4 terabytes/day
  - Guidance system tested successfully
  - Coronagraph Instrument obtained first images
    - Demonstrated that a focused image could be achieved
    - Imaged many stars in the Large Magellanic Cloud



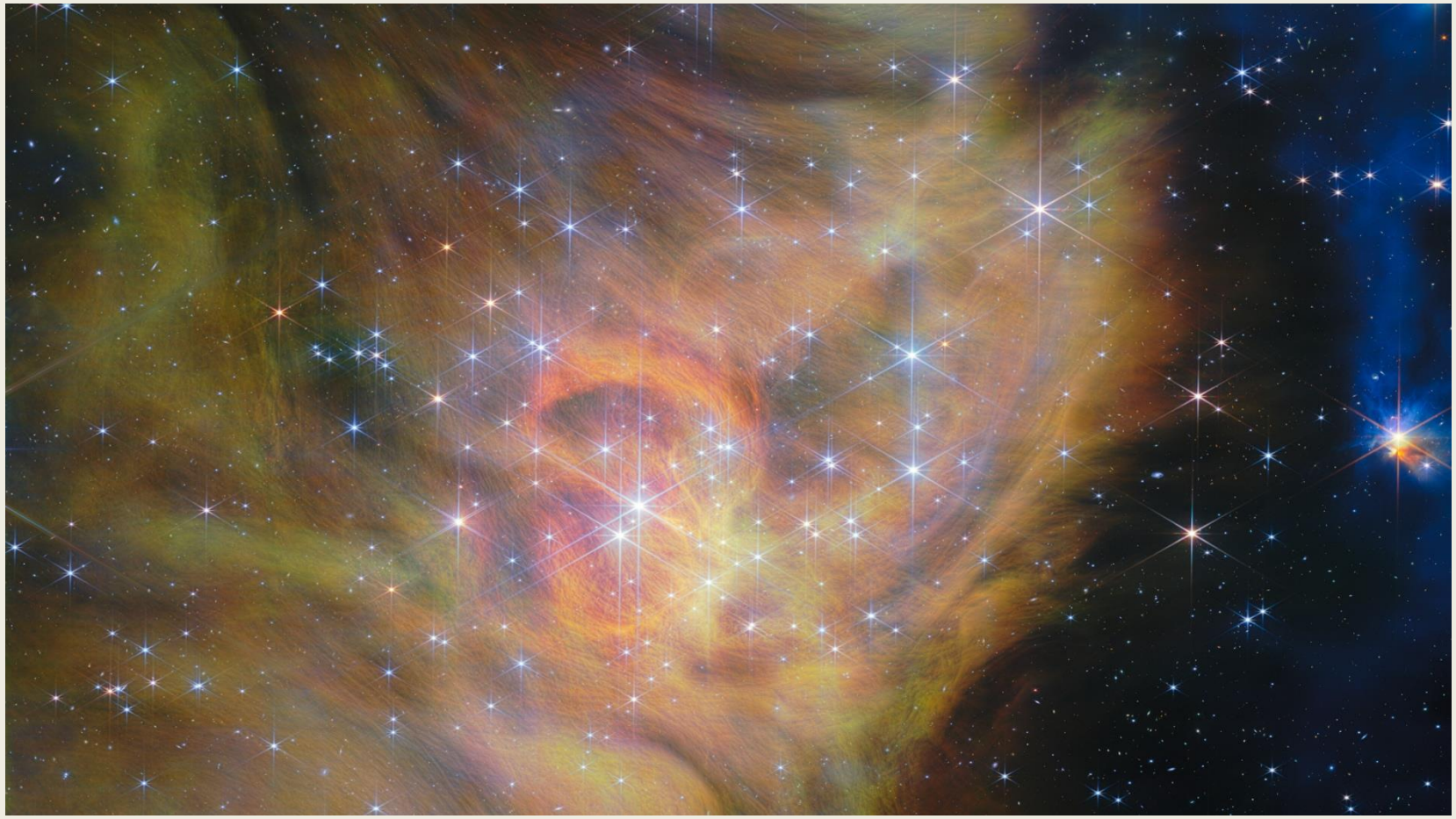
NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, Tyler Desjardins (STScI)

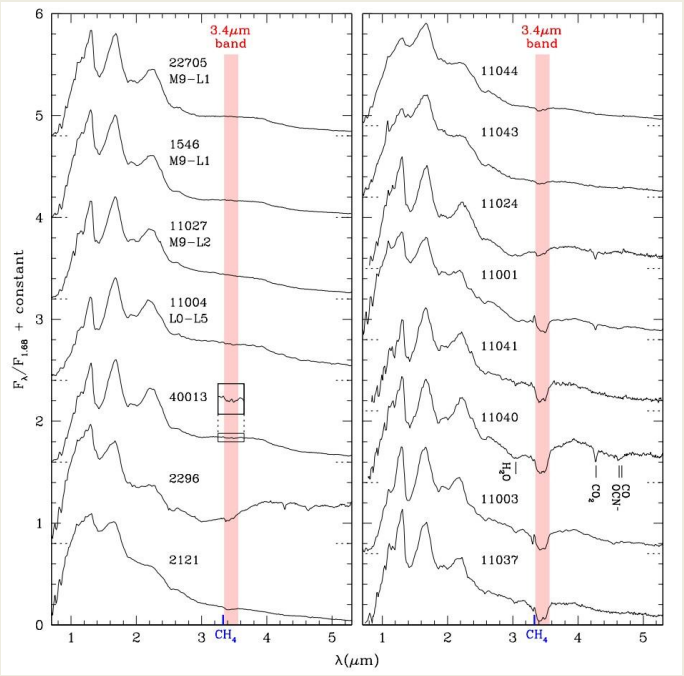
More Info: https://science.nasa.gov/blogs/roman/2026/

# What's Up in Space Headlines

October 8, 2026

## JWST Observes IC 348






Luhman, K. L. and Alves De Oliveira, C. 2025, **ApJL**, **986**, L14. (Figure 7)

ESA/Webb, NASA, CSA, K. Luhman, C. Alves De Oliveira, M. Zamani (ESA/Webb)

More Info: https://esawebb.org/news/weic2619
https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.3847/2041-8213/addc55/pdf

# What's Up in Space Headlines

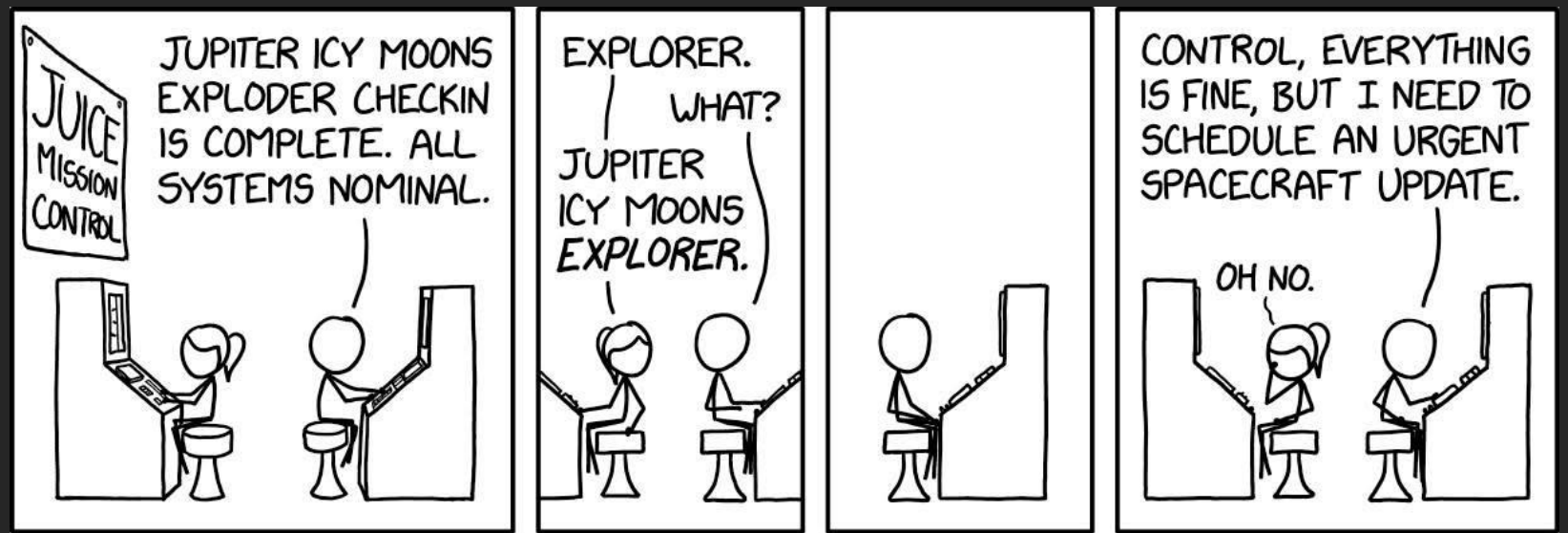
October 8, 2026

## JWST Observes IC 348

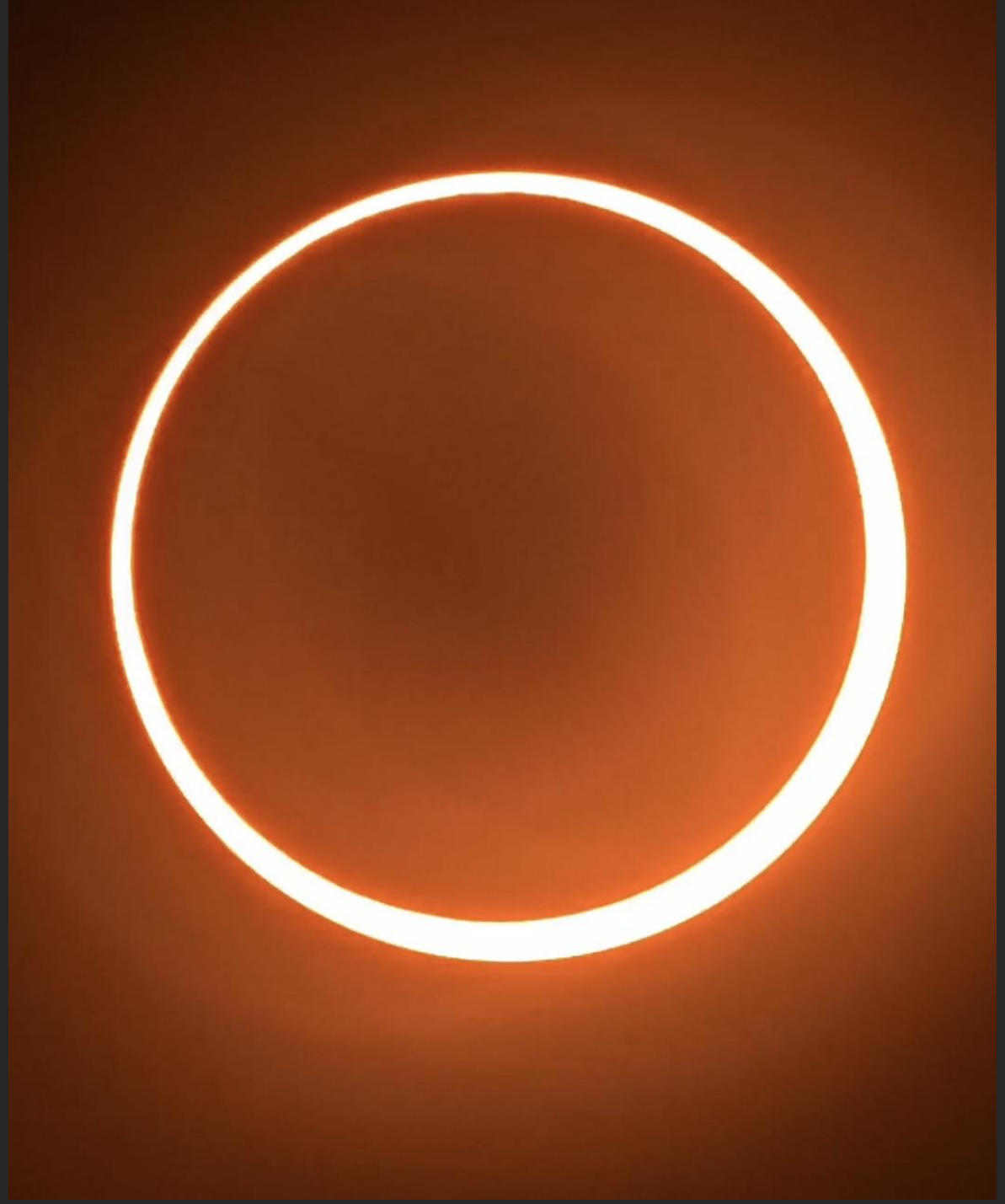
- Star-forming region ~1000ly distant in Perseus
  - NIRCam mosaic, nine rows and three columns, 16' x 20'
    - Images in four filters led to the identification of 39 suspected brown dwarfs
  - NIRSpec multi-object prism spectroscopy, wavelengths 0.6μm – 5.3μm
    - Obtained spectra for 15 brown dwarf candidates
    - The 3.4mm band is attributed to one or more unidentified hydrocarbon molecules, indicating cool temperatures and suggesting a brown dwarf
- Primary results
  - Faintest brown dwarfs have masses ~2$M_{Jup}$, constraining the minimum mass of the star formation initial mass function
  - Two others show evidence of circumstellar disks, the raw material for planet formation
  - The 3.4μm band spectral feature is stronger in cooler brown dwarfs, making it a potential classification marker; they propose a new stellar class "H" for stars with the feature

More Info: https://esawebb.org/news/weic2619
https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.3847/2041-8213/addc55/pdf

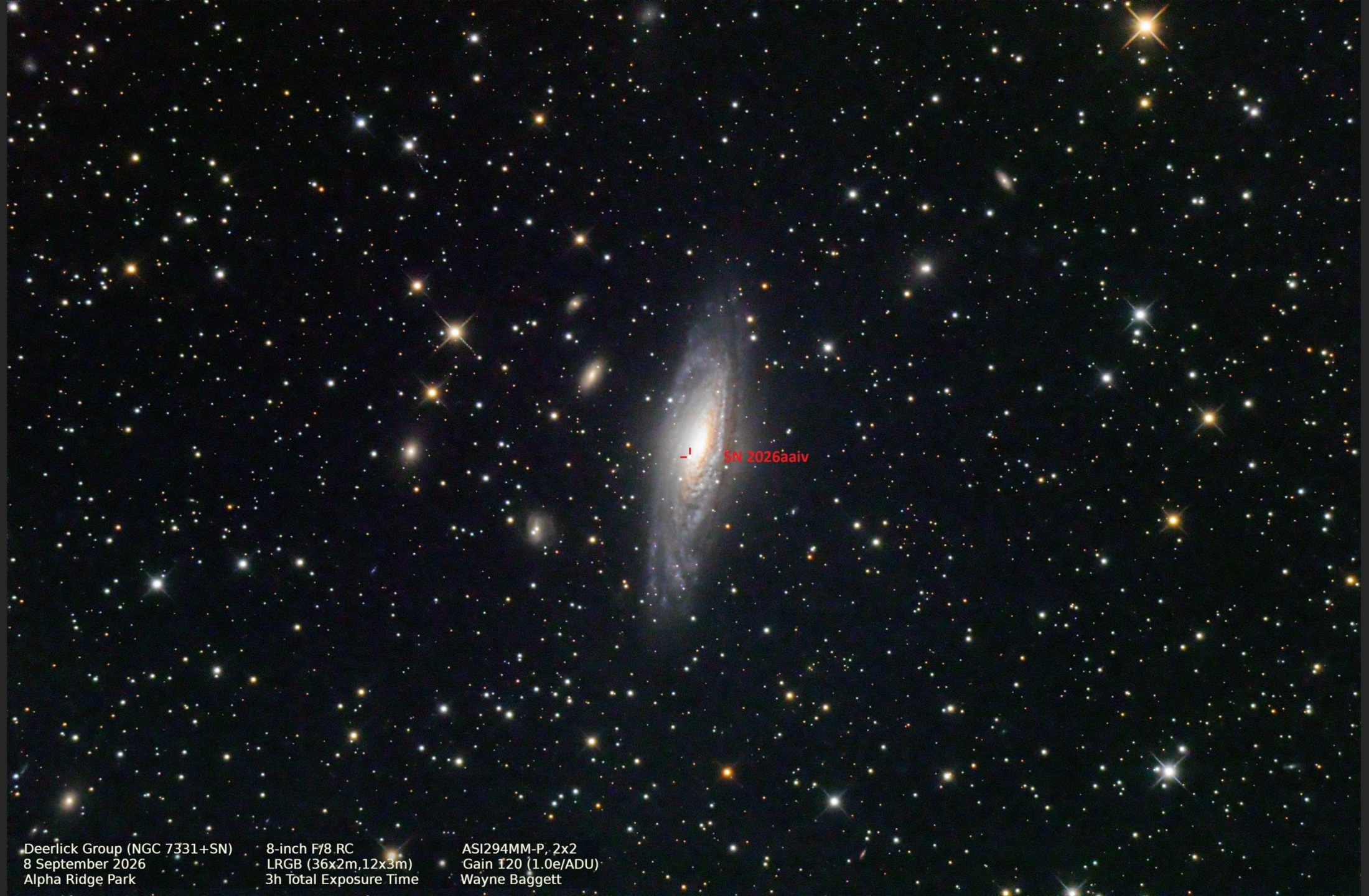
# Member Astrophotos, Sketches, & Artwork



NGC 7331 (Deer Lick)
Sep 16, 2026
Harrini Ramasamy



Annular Eclipse
Oct 2, 2024
SeeStar S50 at Hangaroa on Easter Island
Tom Tekach




Deerlick Group (NGC 7331+SN)
8 September 2026
Alpha Ridge Park

8-inch F/8 RC
LRGB (36x2m,12x3m)
3h Total Exposure Time

ASI294MM-P, 2x2
Gain 120 (1.0e/ADU)
Wayne Baggett

Saturn
Celestron C6 SCT
October 5, 2026
© Steve Rifkin, 2026

# Jupiter Occultation
# October 6, 2026

Wayne Baggett

Alpha Ridge Park, Howard County, Maryland

8-inch RC, R-band

Jupiter Pre-Occultation

Meade 12" LX200 and Canon T7i camera

James Willinghan

Aug 26, 2026

Saturn

12" Meade LX200 SCT ZWO ASI585MM and RGB filters

James Willinghan

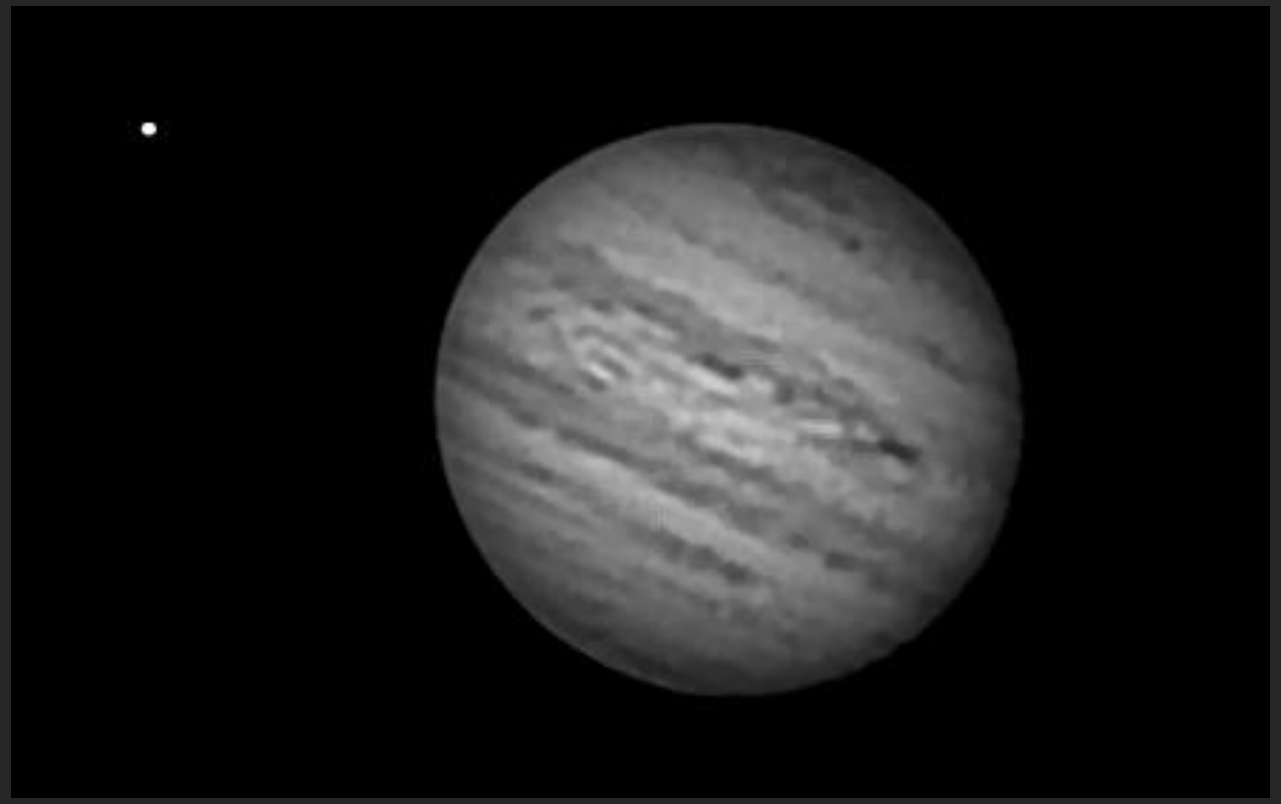
Aug 26, 2026
Canon t6i 300mm

10” f/6 Newtonian
2.5x Barlow

Jim Tomney

Oct 7. 2026

White Light



IR Band Pass

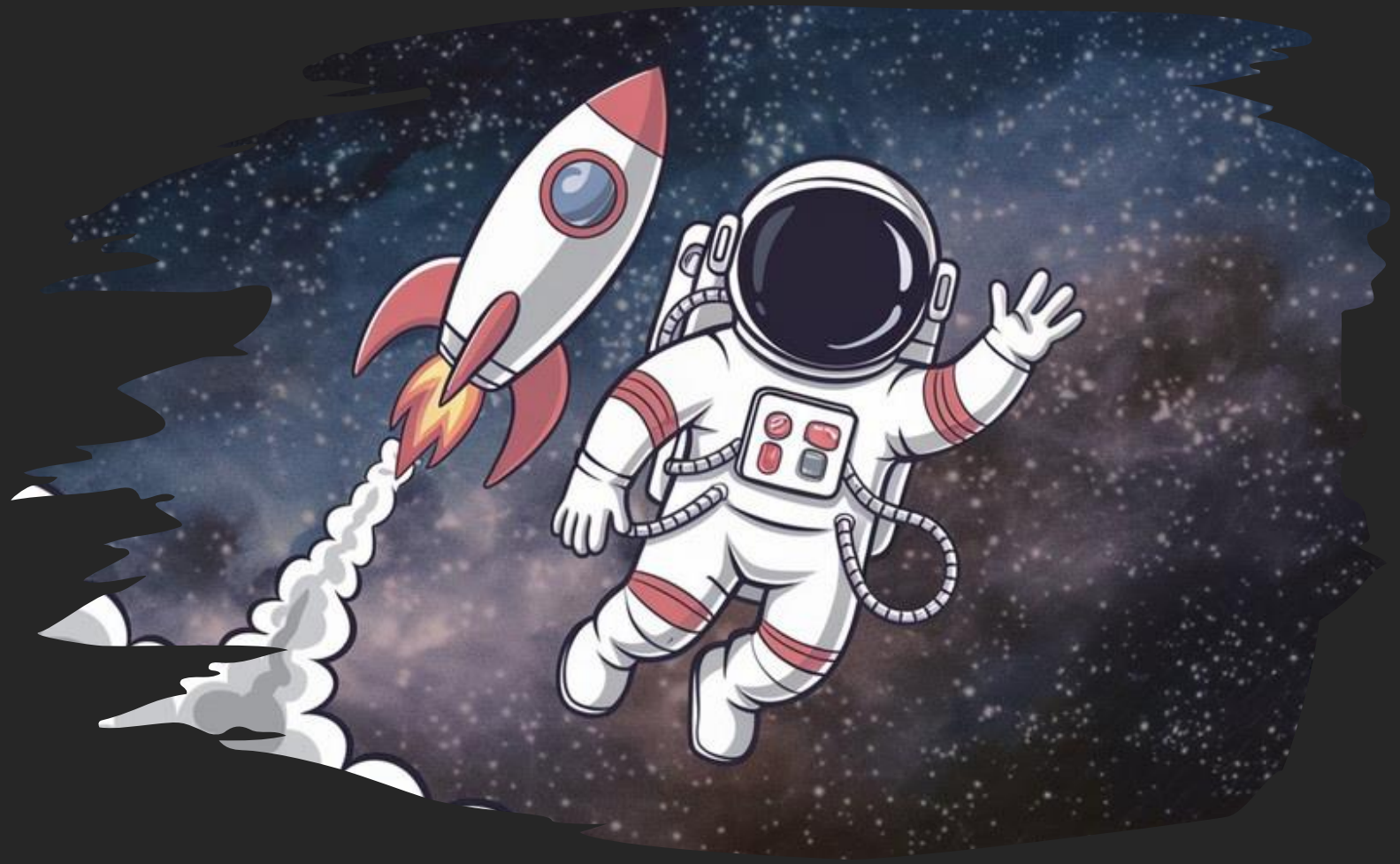
10” f/6 Newtonian with 2.5x Barlow
Jim Tomney

Wes Ferwerda

Wes Ferwerda

Wes Ferwerda

# Thanks for Joining Us!



## Be safe heading home – see you next month

👉 HAL Planning Meeting: Oct 26, 2026
HAL Members Meeting: Nov 12, 2026