

THE SUN-EARTH CONNECTION

An Education and Public Outreach (E/PO) Newsletter
for the Sun-Earth Connection Science Community - and beyond!
January 23, 2008 Volume IX, Issue 1

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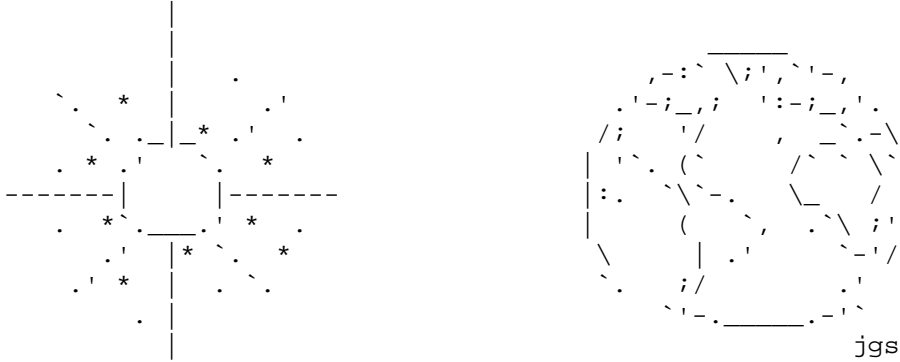


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- 1. LIVE FROM BARROW, AK: POLAR SUNRISE (JAN 24)
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Our team is headed to the Artic Circle for sunrise. NASA's Digital Learning Network (DLN), is making it possible for us to webcast some of what is being learned and observed during the scientific conference, "Polar Gateways," - such as changes in the Earth's polar regions and the impact on other connected Earth systems, our daily lives, and the future of our planet. You will hear about aurora research, as well as the cultural connections with the residents of Barrow--the majority of whom are Inupiat Eskimos--and the traditional marine mammal hunts and other subsistence practices that are an active part of their culture. Use the following URL for information to connect to the webcast.

<http://dln.nasa.gov>

The main conference web broadcast will be accessible through links from the conference homepage at www.polargateways2008.org. These presentations are targeted at multi-disciplinary scientists but some talks, e.g. with lots of graphical content, may be of interest to students.

-- Elaine Lewis, lewis@mail630.gsfc.nasa.gov

2. CREATING A COHERENT "HELIOPHYSICS STORY": TECHNOLOGY THROUGH TIME
(AND AN INVITATION TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR PODCASTS)

Heliophysics is a huge subject--far larger than the education content any one mission can possibly create--yet in order to create a coherent context for the many different parts of the "Heliophysics Story," teachers and students need to see how it all fits together. By the way, you can think of the Heliophysics Story as the grand picture of how the Sun interacts with itself, with the planets, and even with interstellar space beyond.

Technology Through Time (<http://sunearthday.nasa.gov>) was created by Troy Cline and Sten Odenwald in 2004 to provide a growing body of background information for the Heliophysics Story. We have covered such intriguing themes as: ancient astronomers and their observatories, and the development of the various technologies quantifying how the Sun works and how it physically affects other planets.

Last year, we explored the various phenomena that play a role in SPACE WEATHER. This year, we are highlighting what we call the MYSTERIES OF THE HELIOSPHERE and the many intriguing questions which remain active and controversial areas of research even today. Recently, readers learned about the puzzle of the missing solar neutrinos, and how it was finally solved in 2003. They also learned that we seem to be no nearer to understanding why the solar corona is so hot than we were a few decades ago.

In the coming weeks and months, TTT will post mysteries culled from investigations into magnetospheric physics, the solar wind, and other unusual corners of the solar system where research is still moving the frontier of knowledge forward.

With new communications technologies such as podcasting, we have begun to supplement the TTT essays with short 5-minute audio programs that provide prospective visitors (over 1000 listeners each month) with some background information to the current TTT offering. If any of you have a good voice, (please...no Alvin the Chipmunk wannabees!) and an interesting story to tell, please talk to Troy or I about slotting you into future programs!!

-- Sten Odenwald, odenwald@astronomycafe.net

3. SOLAR WEEK, MARCH 17-21, WEB-BASED EDUCATION & FUN
THIS SPRING'S REVOLVING THEME: SOLAR ENERGY

www.solarweek.org

Every fall and spring since 2000, Solar Week provides a weeklong series of Web-based educational classroom activities and games geared for elementary, middle and high school students with a focus on the Sun-Earth connection. Students learn about solar eclipses, sunspots, and solar storms through a series of activities, games, and question-and-answer sessions online with leading scientists. Revolving themes corresponding with Sun-Earth Day focus on special areas of interest. This year's theme will be Solar Energy, and our interactive message board will be graced with visiting scientists and experts.

The interactive website is especially designed to spark the interest of pre- and early-teen girls in science and also to facilitate interaction for students of both genders with leading scientists at the forefront of Sun-Earth research.

Solar Week is ideal for students studying the solar system, the stars, astronomy in general. It's also for kids wondering what it's like being a scientist, and possible career choices. Participation makes for a fun computer lab activity as well.

-- Karin Hauck, karin@ssl.berkeley.edu

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