



SAINT LOUIS ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

ATTN: CALENDAR, NEWSROOM, OR PSA EDITOR

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“Mapping the Milky Way’s Stardust in 3D”, a live illustrated presentation via video link by **Dr. Edward Schlafly of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory** will be featured at the June meeting of the St. Louis Astronomical Society. The meeting will begin at **7:30 PM Friday, June 15, in McDonnell Hall, Room 162, on the Washington University campus, Saint Louis, MO 63130.** McDonnell Hall is accessible from Forsyth Boulevard via Tolman Way. **Free yellow zone and garage parking** spaces are available. The event, cosponsored by NASA's Missouri Space Grant Consortium, is open to the public free of charge.

While at least 100 billion stars form the disk of our Milky Way galaxy, we see only the closer ones, their light blending to form the white path across the dark night sky. Stardust blocks the view of more distant regions. We see the night sky directly only in two dimensions – there is no depth perception, even with telescopes. So the effort to map the Milky Way’s dust in three dimensions is difficult. Astronomers must somehow estimate the distances to stars and the amount of stardust that lies between them and the Earth. Dr. Schlafly will talk about how distances are determined and how stardust is measured. His research team is attempting to compile a three dimensional map of the entire Milky Way. It can be used for accurately correcting astronomical observations for the effects of dust. The map also provides new estimates of the distances to star forming regions and may eventually map out the Galaxy's spiral arms.

Dr. Edward Schlafly was awarded a Hubble Fellowship to study the structure of our Milky Way galaxy. A native of St. Louis, he received his doctorate in Physics from Harvard. The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory is a member of the national laboratory system supported by the U.S. Department of Energy through its Office of Science. It is managed by the University of California.

The St. Louis Astronomical Society is an organization for individuals interested in astronomy and telescopes. The public is invited to attend its meetings, telescope observing sessions, and special events. For more information about Astronomical Society events, please visit the website, www.slasonline.org , or call 314- 962-9231.

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