



# *After Dark*

## **MSU's Astronomy Newsletter**

January 2013: No. 46

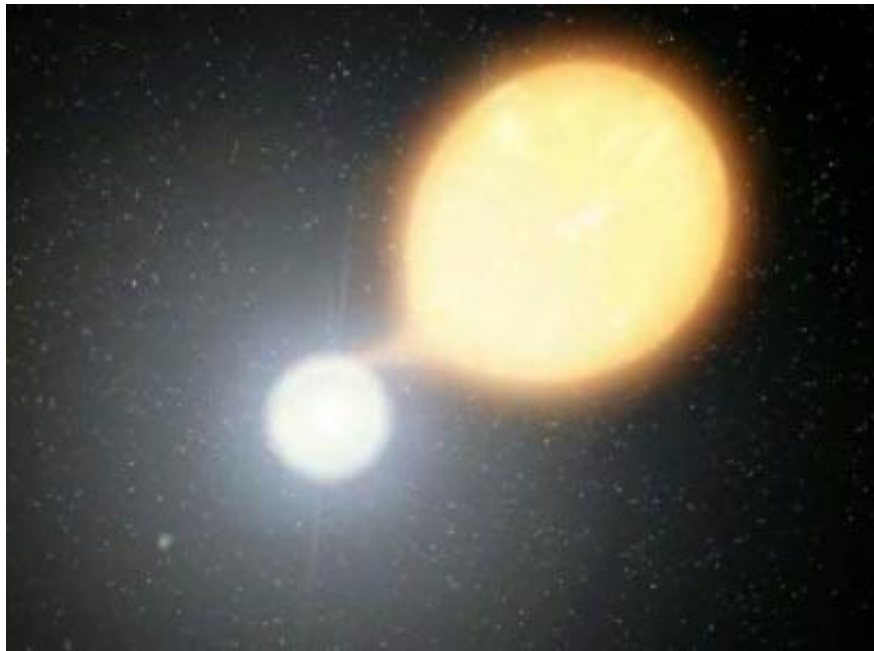
### *Upcoming Astronomical Horizons Lectures*

All lectures are free to the public and given at Abrams Planetarium, starting at 7:30pm

#### **JANUARY 17: STELLAR LIFE AFTER DEATH: VIOLENT EXPLOSIONS ON WHITE DWARF STARS**

**Dr. Laura Chomiuk**

Nova means new in Latin, but in the sky a brilliant nova explosion occurs not on a new star but on an old one. These explosions involve binary stars, one member of which is a white dwarf. White dwarf stars, with masses comparable to the sun but diameters like that of the Earth, have reached the end of their normal energy producing lives. The explosions of nova and their kin, how they are different from supernova explosions, and how we explain them are the topics for this Astronomical Horizons lecture.



A white dwarf gobbling matter from a less evolved star can set the stage for a nova explosion.

## February 21: BLACK HOLES AND GLOBULAR CLUSTERS: SPARKLING HOSTS OF FROZEN STARS

Professor Jay Strader

A globular cluster can contain a million stars but those stars are very old. Some of these stars have already become white dwarfs, with the mass of a sun compacted into the size of the Earth. Others have become neutron stars, with a mass of more than the sun packed into the size of a city. But do globular clusters contain the ultimate compact mass -- black holes? New observations say that some of them do. Globular clusters and the search for their elusive black holes are the topic of this talk.

### More upcoming Astronomical Horizons lectures:

March 21: Comets: Icy Wayfarers from the Outer Solar System (Professor Ed Brown)

April 18: The Multitude of Planets Beyond Our Solar System (Professor Steve Zepf)

## CAMPUS OBSERVATORY PUBLIC VIEWING NIGHTS

The MSU Campus Observatory opens its doors to the public two nights per month from spring through fall, *weather permitting*. This is your chance to look at planets, star clusters, and other beautiful celestial objects using the 24-inch telescope and also a number of smaller telescopes. Knowledgeable professional and amateur astronomers will be on hand. But come only if the sky is clear, and dress warmly. For a map, see [www.pa.msu.edu/astro/observ](http://www.pa.msu.edu/astro/observ).

### MSU Campus Observatory Open House

There are no open houses during the winter months, but public observing will resume in the spring of 2013.



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