



The Night Sky

The Newsletter of
The Astronomy Club of Akron
www.acaoh.org

Volume 34

Commemorative Venus Transit Edition

June 2012

The Transit Of Venus

Commemorating the transits of Venus on June 8, 2004 and June 5, 2012.



The June 5, 2012 Transit of Venus as captured by ACA member Bob Benedict.

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The Transit of Venus

By Jason Shinn

The June 5, 2012 transit of Venus was truly a roller coaster ride of emotions for observers at Fishcreek Elementary School here in Stow, Ohio! We had a great turnout from folks all around the community and beyond but mother nature was not as kind. It was cloudy and rained through nearly the entire observing window! As cloudy and rainy as it was though we could see clear blue skies on our northern horizon. What a tantalizing quagmire to behold!

The last transit of Venus occurred in 2004, which I was privileged to witness at sunrise in the parking lot of my then employer Tops supermarkets, Fairlawn. I worked night shift so I brought my 10 inch dob along with me in the car and in the morning took it out on the store parking lot to observe and image after my shift. Though we did not get to see it from the beginning I, along with a few of my coworkers and early morning customers, watched the transit to its very end. I distinctly remembered watching an airplane briefly transiting the sun along with Venus through my camera lens and being so flustered at the sight of it, forgetting to snap the picture. It was one of those great shots that slip through your grasp.

Eight years pass and now its time for Venus to once again make that magical appearance on the disk of the



ACA members Jason Shinn (center) and Ron Kalinoski (right) debate the prospect of clear skies on the horizon at the June 5, 2012 Fish Creek Elementary School Venus transit event. Image courtesy Bill DiPuccio.

sun. We waited and waited for any sign of the clouds to break and finally... about twenty-eight minutes before our last opportunity to view history slipped below the horizon... the clouds parted and we got our first glimpse of the planet. A dark disk that seemed large and alien, silhouetted against the disk of the sun, accentuated by the passing clouds in earth's atmosphere; sunspots were sprinkled here and there. It was truly an alien sight if I ever saw one! All

the disappointment, not necessarily for myself because I had seen it before, but for the many members of the public who had come and waited in the rain, including my bosses from both my jobs; all the disappointment melted into "Ooh!", and "Aah!" as the crowd clamored for an available telescope. It was a moment I shall not soon forget.

*Article by Jason Shinn,
ACA Publication Secretary.*



Clouds and rain plague the June 5, 2012 gathering at Fishcreek Elementary School. Image by ACA member Jason Shinn.

Venus Transit 2012

By Marissa Fanady

Once in a blue moon a generation is lucky and privileged enough to bear witness to an extremely rare event that will not occur for generations to come. When such an occurrence is seen people get a sense of awe and inspiration, for one brief moment the world is at peace and harmony, together forgetting about the petty differences and hopeful for a beautiful future. Sometimes people are so struck by that beautiful majestic moment that they realize this is something they want to know more about and a new generation of knowledge seekers is born. I know that somewhere in this world on June 5, 2012 this happened when the Venus Transit occurred and someone became a scientist, astronomer, and knowledge seeker. Seeing this extremely rare event did just that to me, even though I only observed the transit for about 30 seconds, but it was the best 30 seconds of my life and that moment will stay with me forever.

On the morning of Tuesday June 5, 2012 I woke up to a typical cloudy Ohio day, with hope that these thick, never ending clouds would disappear by 6:00 pm. As the day progressed I began to lose hope, as the cloud cover had not changed at all, but I remained optimistic because the weather forecast predicted clear skies by nightfall. When 5 o'clock rolled around I started gathering up my equipment and packing up my Celestron NexStar 130 SLT telescope. As long as there was a chance for the sun to come out I was going to try because this was a once in a lifetime event! By the time I arrived at Fishcreek Elementary School it had begun to rain and everyone's hope was fading fast; transit time was quickly approaching. Fellow club member Dave Jessie kept everyone's spirits up with facts about Venus and the transits with a few jokes thrown in. My favorite was when Dave told



ACA member Rick Burke captures the rain and clouds that overshadowed the June 5, 2012 observing opportunity at Fishcreek Elementary School.

everyone that Venus was named after the goddess of love because people were so struck by how bright and beautiful the planet looked, but what they didn't know is that if you were to stand on Venus you'd be crushed flat by its atmospheric surface pressure, burned by the 860 degree temperature, and melted by the sulfuric acid rain. Our ancestors named Venus perfectly because that sounds just like love haha! Well at 6:05 pm first contact was made and the transit officially began, but sadly we still had cloud cover. North of us we could finally see clear skies so over 50 people stayed hoping the clearing would come before the sun set. The most horrible part of this event was looking at this clearing north of us moving very slowly and I'm thinking come on move!!! The clearing got closer and closer until finally the sun came out just 15 minutes before sunset and members could align their telescopes. Everyone broke out in cheers because their patience was rewarded with an event that won't happen again until December 10, 2117. Club members left and right were shouting "I got it!", and before they knew it they had five to ten or more people lined up waiting to get a glimpse of the transit. People literally had to look for only 10 seconds and then let the next person see so that everyone could catch a view before the sun set. I

made my way over to Glenn Cameron's telescope to take my very first look and I couldn't believe what I was seeing! The view was amazing and I was reminded of how fragile we are because that's how Earth would look if we switched places with our sister planet. After I got my look I quickly made my way back to my telescope where my dad was showing people the transit and I took another look because, hey it's my telescope why wouldn't I right?

The Venus Transit is something that I will never forget for many reasons...that day was a roller coaster of emotions from sadness and disappointment to pure joy and excitement. I got to experience an extremely rare astronomical event with good friends and to observe the transit itself was incredible! For the first time ever the Venus transit was observed, recorded and photographed by millions of people from northwest, South America, to most of Europe and for the first time in history the crew in the International Space Station photographed the transit from space! Taking part in history is very exciting but what sticks with me the most is helping people see an event that won't happen again for 105 years.

*Article by ACA member
Marissa Fanady.*

The Transits of Venus!

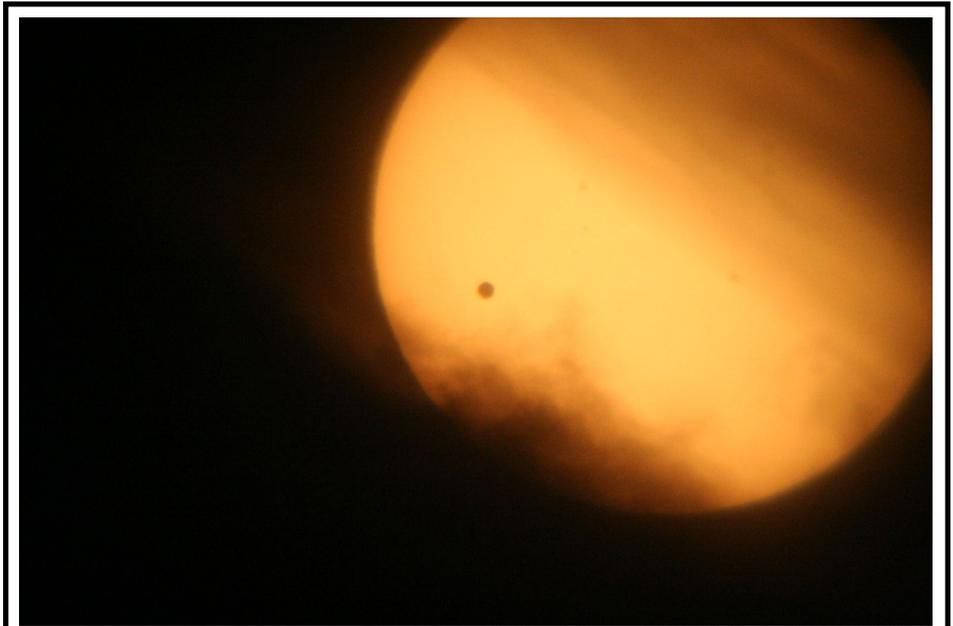
By Tom Alexander

June 8, 2004, Early!

Yawn; time to get up. There's a transit of Venus I want to catch. I'm lucky, I guess; I will be able to see two of these in my life, weather permitting. And today it is permitting! I throw on some clothes and hop in the car. Last night I had put my ancient original Meade ETX 90 in the car along with its tripod and solar filter so I wouldn't have to mess with them this morning. I head over to restaurant hill in Montrose which has a great eastern horizon. The sun is coming up as I'm setting up the scope. Pop on the solar filter and wow!! There it is; a black spot slowly crawling across the sun. When I look away from the eyepiece I see another intrepid astronomer. This guy is high class; he has a Questar 90 scope. I saunter over for a look through his piece of art. While his scope is mechanically and, for deep space, likely optically a whole lot better than mine, the view of the transit is very similar between the scopes. I go back to my scope and watch the conclusion, including the teardrop finish as Venus exits the sun. Sigh; back home for a shower, breakfast and on to work.

June 5, 2012, Midday.

The second transit is about to occur. Dave Jessie is hosting an observing session at Fishcreek that I hope to attend. I had also thought of going up to Cleveland to Edgewater Yacht Club where we keep our boat. Edgewater has a great northwest exposure over the lake and would be a perfect place to watch the transit. However, the drive after work and the fact that they are predicting close to 10,000 people at Edgewater Park, adjacent to the yacht club for a public gathering to watch the transit makes me want to stay close to home. However, the clear sky clock is showing clouds in Stow and clear in Cleveland. What to do? And then the email arrives from Edgewater- due to



ACA member Jason Shinn captures the transit on June 5, 2012 at Fishcreek Elementary School.

the expected crowds at the State park, the Cleveland police may be closing the Edgewater exit off the shore way (the only entrance to the Park and Club), so if you're coming up to the club that evening, come early! OK, that does it; I'm going to Fishcreek. But to be sure, one last check of the clear sky clock. Conditions in Cleveland will be MUCH better than Fishcreek. OK; can I leave work early? Yes!! Run home, pick up the old reliable ETX, filter and tripod and head north. Damn! Rain in Brecksville and Independence on the way up. But, skies appear to be clearing to the north. I-480 becomes an invisible force field; no rain or clouds north of that expressway! I get on the shore way expecting a backup and see.....nothing! I pull into Edgewater. The club is as empty as one would expect a little before 5 on a weekday. There are perhaps 50 cars in the State Park lot, nothing like what was predicted, but it is still early. The transit doesn't start for another hour. What to do? There's wind and it's nice; I'm going sailing! After about 45 minutes on the water, I get back and set up the scope with a great view toward the northwest. It does take me a while to get the sun lined up and by the time I get it in the field, Venus is

just touching the sun. I stayed for about 90 minutes and had perfectly clear skies. A few people came over who had been to the State Park. They had eclipse viewers which were being distributed over there, but were amazed at the view through my scope. All told, about 30 people came to look through my scope. The State Park next door was busy, but only about 1-2000 people were estimated to be there and traffic was never an issue. All in all a great observing session and I was able to open some eyes and minds to the wonders of daytime amateur astronomy.

July 3, late afternoon.

So where am I after viewing two Venesian transits? Solar astronomy is still a sideline for me; I use my ETX for that purpose 2-3 times a year. I do feel fortunate, however, to have witnessed almost an entire transit; seeing the beginning in 2012 and the end of the previous transit in 2004. A little backwards, perhaps, but that is not unusual where I am concerned!

*Article by ACA member
Tom Alexander.*

The Transit of Venus: From the Blog of Bill DiPuccio.

<http://scienceetcetera.blogspot.com/>

June 5, 2012 was the last transit of Venus across the disk of the sun that we will see in our lifetime. About 200 people attended the event at Fishcreek Elementary school in Stow, OH, under the direction of my friend and long-time astronomer, David Jesse.

Digital photos of the transit were taken from an eyepiece projection screen using a 60mm Bushnell Sky Chief II telescope (yes, its practically an antique!). The telescope set-up is shown in a photo below. I enhanced the contrast and brightness of the images for this posting.

The event was plagued by clouds and rain until the last 20 minutes or so when the sun finally appeared through a broken sky.

*Article by local amateur astronomer
Bill DiPuccio.
Visit Bill's blog at:
<http://scienceetcetera.blogspot.com/>*

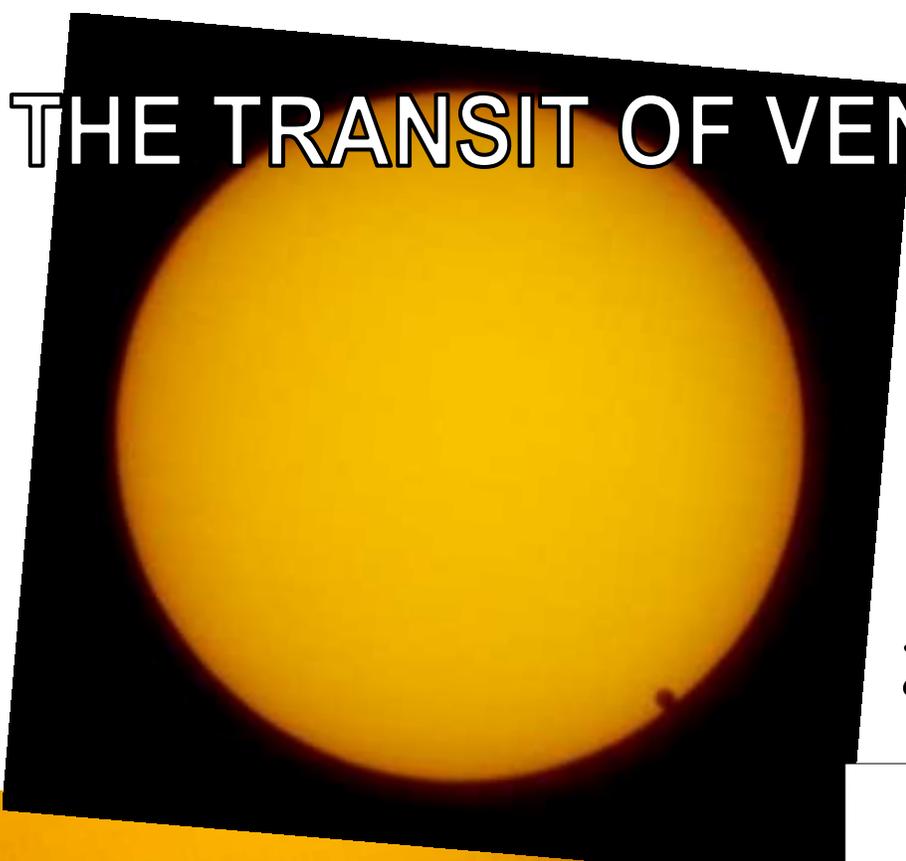


ACA member Dave Jessie (left) and Bill DiPuccio (right) at the June 5, 2012 Fishcreek Elementary School Venus transit event. Image courtesy Bill DiPuccio



The 60mm Bushnell Sky Chief II (left) and eyepiece projection setup used by Bill DiPuccio and his son Christopher to project the disk of the sun and transit of Venus (right). Images courtesy Bill DiPuccio

THE TRANSIT OF VENUS



*Transit of Venus - June 8, 2004
By ACA Member Glenn Cameron
Stellacam EX, Samsung MiniDV
cam and Meade LX90, 8" SCT*

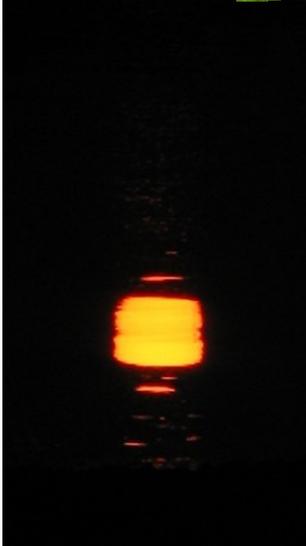
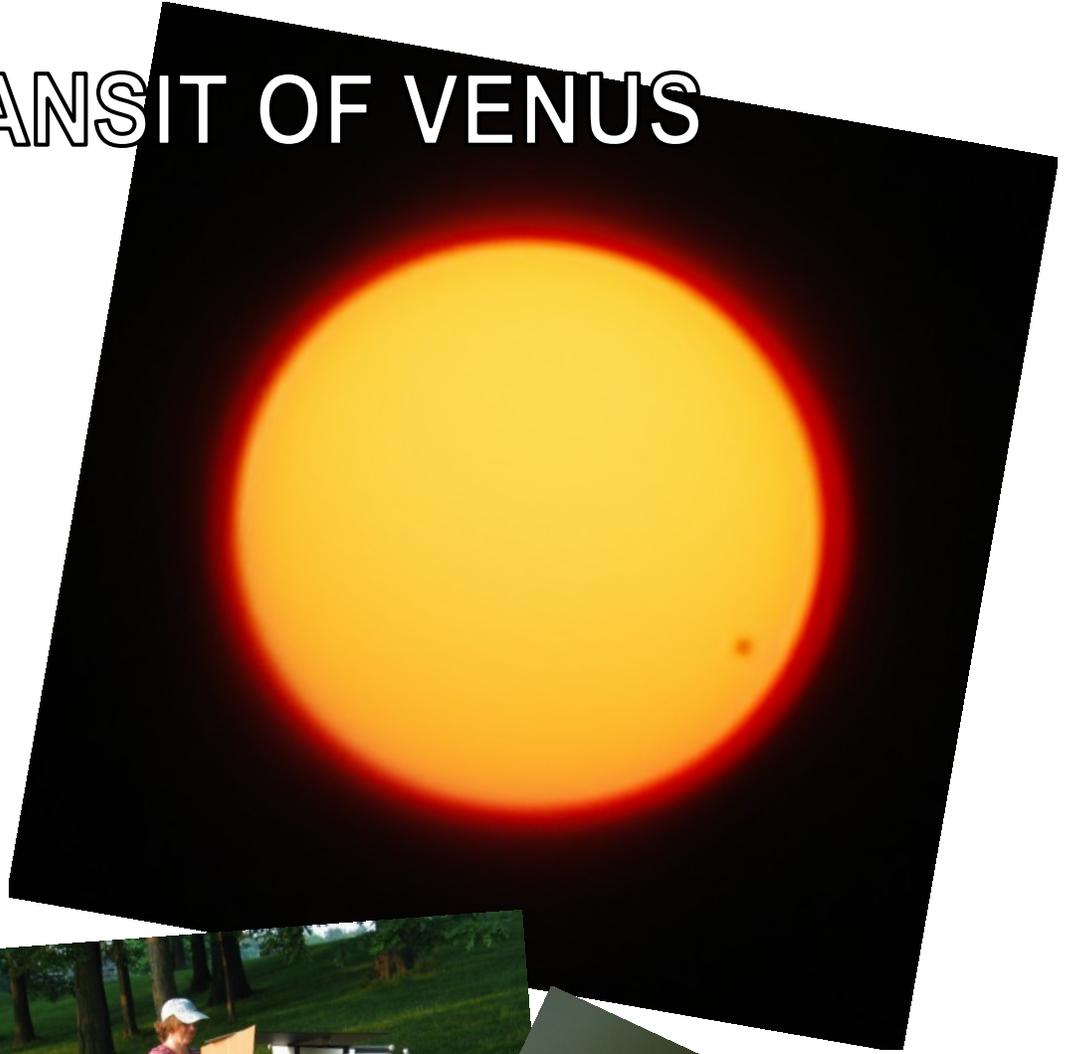


*Transit of Venus - June 8, 2004
By ACA Member Jason Shinn,
Canon Rebel SLR and 10" Dob*



June 8, 2004

THE TRANSIT OF VENUS

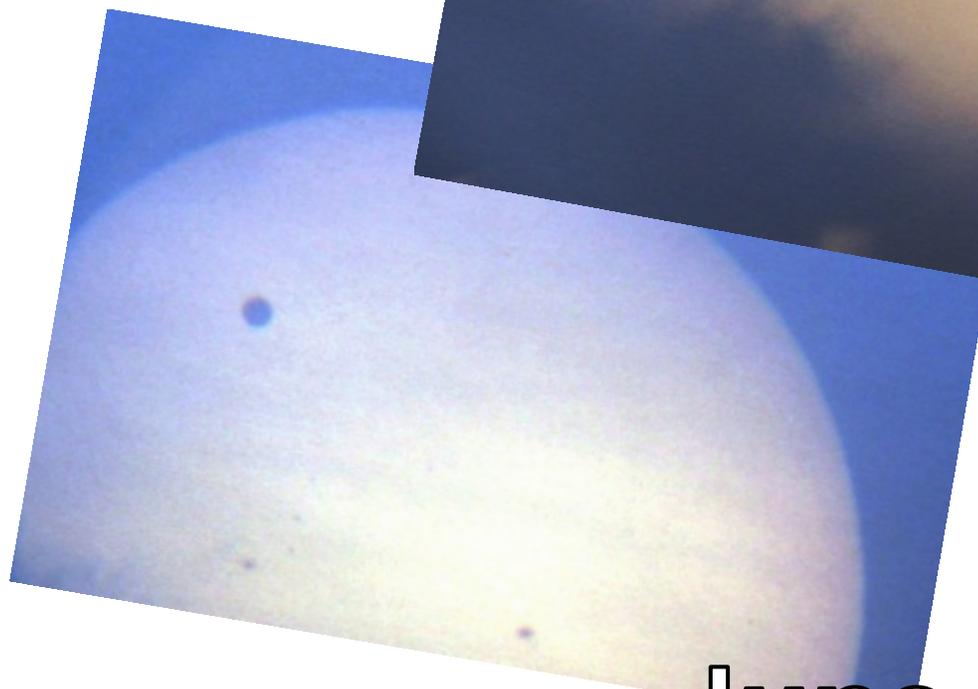
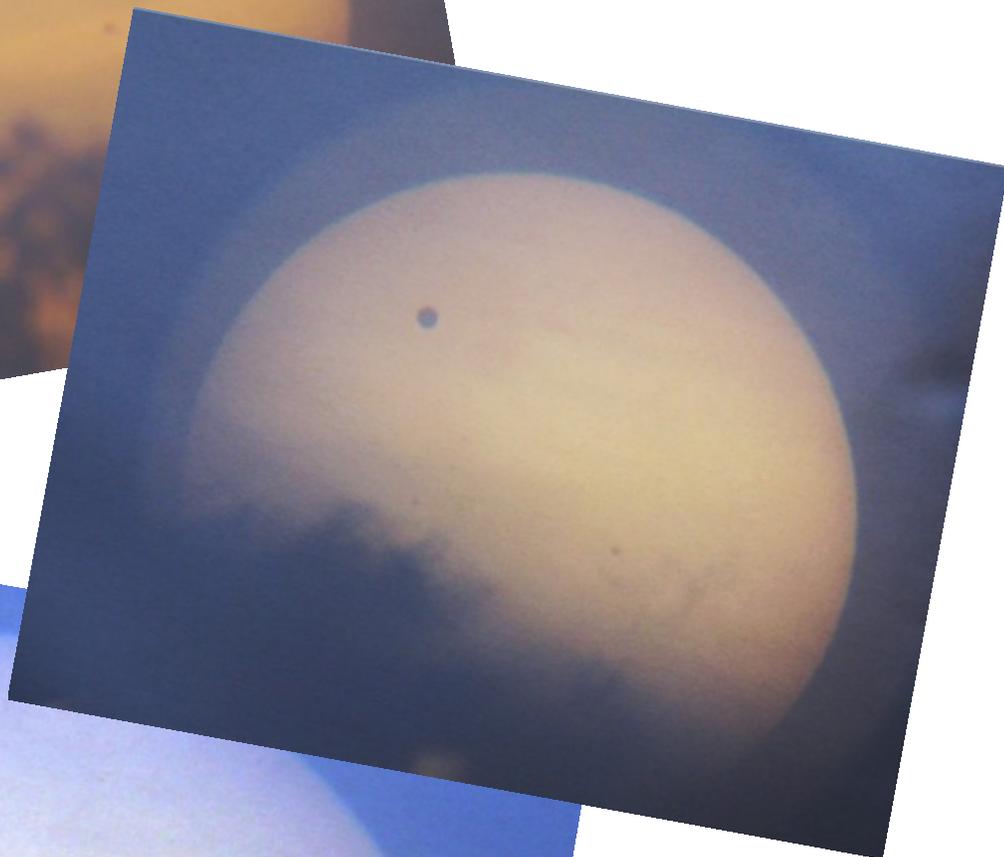


*Transit of Venus - June 8, 2004
By Justin Phillips,
Canon Powershot G3*

June 8, 2004

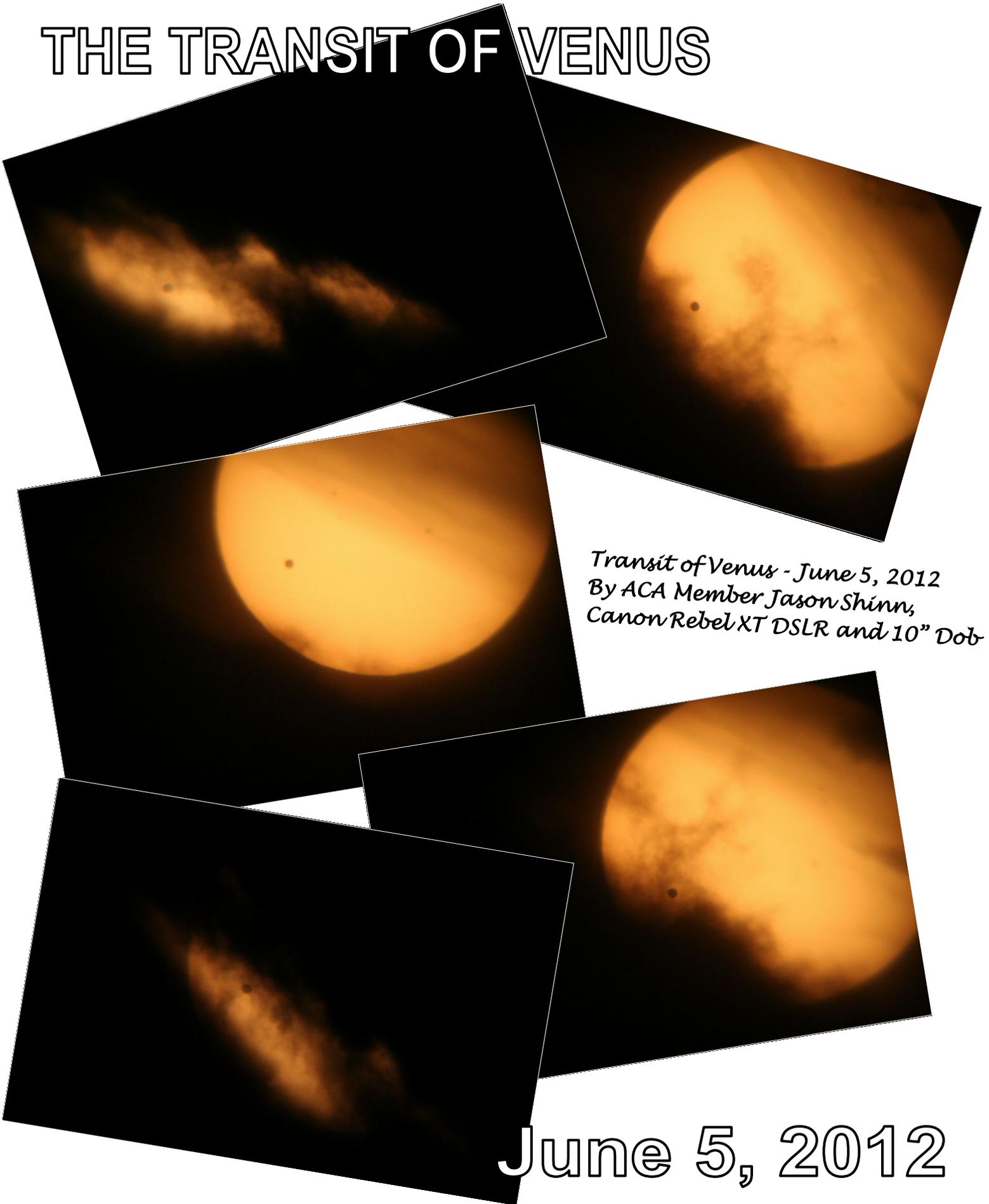
THE TRANSIT OF VENUS

*Transit of Venus - June 5, 2012
By Bill and Christopher DiPuccio,
60mm Bushnell Sky Chief II
Eyepiece Projection*



June 5, 2012

THE TRANSIT OF VENUS



*Transit of Venus - June 5, 2012
By ACA Member Jason Shinn,
Canon Rebel XT DSLR and 10" Dob*

June 5, 2012

THE TRANSIT OF VENUS



*Transit of Venus - June 5, 2012
By ACA Member Bob Benedict
Canon Powershot SX40 w/
Baader Astrosolar film*



June 5, 2012

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Newsletter of the Astronomy Club of Akron

c/o Jason Shinn, Editor
1025C Hemlock Hills Dr.
Akron, OH 44313

The Astronomy Club of Akron
c/o Glenn Cameron
8019 Glendevan St. NW
Massillon, OH 44646-9018

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Astronomy Club of Akron annual memberships renew in the month of May.

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JUNIOR (ages 12 to 17) _____ \$15.00

ADDITIONAL ADULT member ___\$15.00

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP _____ \$40.00

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