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## Cal Poly Professor to Speak About the Moon, Mercury and NASA on Feb. 24

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Learn about the surfaces of the moon, the planet Mercury and one of NASA's newest space missions at a special hands-on lecture Thursday, Feb. 24, with Cal Poly Physics Professor John Keller.

Keller will speak about the moon, Mercury and what things were like during the first billion years in our solar system. He'll also discuss the NASA Messenger mission to Mercury. The unmanned spacecraft will begin orbiting Mercury, the planet closest to the Sun, on March 18.

Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars are terrestrial (rocky) planets. Mercury is an extreme: the smallest, the densest, the one with the oldest surface, the one with the largest daily variations in surface temperature, and the least explored.

Keller's presentation is free and open to the public. It is sponsored by the Central Coast Astronomical Society. Participants can get their hands on replicas of lunar rocks collected by U.S. astronauts on Apollo missions to the moon. The lunar replicas are on loan from the San Luis Obispo Children's Museum for the evening.

The event will run from 7-9 p.m. in the Wesley Building at the United Methodist Church, 1515 Fredericks St., in San Luis Obispo.

For more details on the astronomical society, visit [www.centralcoastastronomy.org](http://www.centralcoastastronomy.org).

For more details on the NASA Messenger mission, visit:

[http://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/messenger/main/index.html](http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/messenger/main/index.html).

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