

ONLINE CHAT WITH DR. GLEN MACKIE

Year 5 @ Wodonga Primary School

Tuesday June 12, 2007

me: Hi Glen, we are here!

Sent at 1:34 PM on Tuesday

me: Hi - I've initiated a chat now...

Sent at 1:37 PM on Tuesday

me: Hi Can you see this?

Sent at 1:45 PM on Tuesday

Glen: this looks better - can you see me?

me: Yes we can!!

Sent at 1:48 PM on Tuesday

Glen: OK, great - To save time maybe I can post the questions from the list - I have a few answers ready to go - some answers also have other web sites to look at (at the same time, or after)

me: That sounds great!

Glen: 1. Is it true that one of the planets with a ring will end up getting a new ring? – Mollie
this was a good question - here is my answer

Rings are usually formed around planets when small satellites (or moons) get too close to the planet – they get destroyed and the particles left form the ring. So it is quite possible that new rings may form around planets that already have rings.

Sent at 1:50 PM on Tuesday

me: thanks glen from mollie

Glen: 2. What is the heaviest object in our universe? – Isaak

another good question - in fact all the questions are rather good - in the sense that there are sometimes no simple answer - but a range of possibilities

my answer includes a web address - not sure if that will copy correctly!

The heaviest individual object is an elliptical galaxy at the centre of what we call a rich cluster of galaxies that has 1,000s of individual galaxies.

There are many examples of such galaxies: one of the nearest to us is M87 that is in the nearby Virgo cluster

<http://seds.lpl.arizona.edu/messier/m/m087.html>

me: thank you from Isaak

Glen: 3. I read in a book that Neptune once had a Great Dark Spot but it disappeared. Is this true and how did it happen? – Hannah

Yes, it is true – I showed Neptune to some classes when I visited. We do not understand why it happened though.

<http://www.nineplanets.org/neptune.html>

<http://www.nineplanets.org/neptune.html>

<http://www.solarviews.com/eng/neptune.htm>

Sent at 1:55 PM on Tuesday

me: Thanks Glen for the answer to my question. Hannah

Glen: My personal opinion is that sometimes the temperature in the cloud tops change - when this happens sometimes we can see through the top level into the clouds below. After a while the temperature goes back to the same temperature as the rest of the planet surface, and we do not see any colour change

Sent at 1:57 PM on Tuesday

Glen: Our solar system is expected to remain very much as is for billions of years. In some other planetary systems around other stars we find "Jupiter-like" planets very close to the parent star. In this case we think that the "Jupiter-like" planet has moved inwards to be very close to its star. Some stars may have even "eaten" their large planets if they moved inwards. So in some planet systems planets can move or migrate

Sent at 1:58 PM on Tuesday

me: What was that question you just answered?

Glen: Will the planets ever disappear? – Maddison

me: Thank-you!

Glen: sorry, i may have forgotten to hit "enter"

me: I'm so sorry Glen, the bell just went so the kids are going out to recess..

Do you think it might be possible to reschedule another time?

Glen: OK, we can finish the other questions off another day(?) Just give me a time/day and I'll confirm.

me: Thanks a lot Glen! From all of us!

Glen: over and out !!!

me: Bye

Sent at 2:02 PM on Tuesday