

# Open Forum 2

## Web Site Transcript

### Chapter 11

**A = Erica, radio host**

**B = Adam Richards, studio guest**

A: Good morning listeners, and welcome to Window on Tomorrow, the show that brings you the latest in lifestyle trends and fads. Today, we are talking to a young man who had a heavenly idea for honoring the angel in his life. On the recent occasion of his fiancée's birthday, he gave her a very special gift, and he is here today to tell us more about it. Adam Richards, welcome to the show.

B: Thank you Erica, it is a pleasure to be here.

A: Exactly what did you buy for your fiancée's birthday?

B: As you mentioned in your introduction, it was a heavenly gift, fit for an angel. I named a star after her.

A: Tell us how you do that. Can you just go out on a clear night and choose a star and give it a name?

B: No, it isn't that easy. After all, most of the stars that we can see with the naked eye were named long ago, usually more than once, as different cultures gave them different names.

A: So if you didn't name one of those stars I see in the night sky, which one did you name?

B: One you've never seen, and are unlikely to see unless you own a very powerful telescope. You see, every year—every day really—astronomers are discovering new stars. Telescopes become more powerful every year, and there are literally hundreds of thousands of stars—an infinite number I suppose . . . though I've heard the number of stars currently visible is approximately 18 million. And each of those stars needs a name. One of them is now called Rebecca Ann.

A: Let me see if I have this straight . . . right now, as we speak, somewhere overhead there is a star named Rebecca Ann.

B: Rebecca Ann Wilson, to be exact. Soon to be Rebecca Ann Richards.

A: You say you named the star, but you can't exactly put a name tag on it, or a sign or something like that . . . so how did you accomplish this?

B: There is an organization called "The International Star Registry" that was founded in 1979, and they record the name you choose and provide you with a star. You get the precise information telling

you where the star is in the sky—these are called telescopic coordinates—and a sky chart with your star circled for easy identification. I also found the booklet they provided on astronomy really helpful.

A: The International Star Registry—that is the name of the organization that keeps track of the names of these new stars. Is it a governmental agency . . . part of the United Nations?

B: No, it's an independent organization that is recognized by the amateur astronomical associations in nearly every country. They have agreed to adopt any name for a newly discovered star that is registered with any affiliated organization in any of these countries. So, now that I've registered Rebecca's name, and have been assigned a star, I know that someone in London, or Tokyo, or New Delhi who wishes to name a star after his fiancée will not be naming my . . . well her star.

A: You mentioned amateur astronomical associations. Are you an amateur astronomer yourself?

B: I suppose I am. I'd say that I've become one recently. After I presented the certificate and information to Rebecca for her star, she was so pleased that she bought me a telescope for my birthday. It took us a long time to locate her star, and frankly, it's not easily visible with the type of telescope we have . . . but it got both of us really interested in astronomy. We haven't joined a club yet, but we have watched a couple of videos that we got from the International Star Registry catalog. Then, she bought me a copy of Amateur Astronomer. I'm not sure how far this will go, but so far, we have learned a lot, and are still very interested.

A: Have you considered naming another star?

B: We were talking about that just the other day. At first, I thought that people only named stars after their fiancées or husbands or wives. Now that I think about it . . . that was a really silly thought. You can name a star after anyone—a son or daughter in honor of his or her birthday, as a holiday present, or for an anniversary. I think it is a great gift for nearly any occasion.

A: We'll keep that in mind. Thank you for coming today.

B: It was my pleasure.

A: Now it is time in our program for . . .