

Light Pollution Abatement: Dan Taylor

The Town of Lakeshore now has a manual for developers with identical lighting standards as Windsor. Dan will attend the International Dark Sky Association annual meeting in Quebec to present a paper on the successful adoption of lighting standards by the City of Windsor. The recent LaPalma Declaration by UNESCO includes every citizen's right to see the night sky. In Essex officials are trying to understand need for FCO lighting in parking lots.

Casey Masterson, a downtown Windsor resident, has been watching the City install "ball lamps" with shielding on the downtown Ouellette Avenue street-scape project.

Directorate of Observing: Steve Mastellotto in June

Occultations, their definition and how and why to observe and record them were explained by Steve. In general terms they happen when one body passes in front of another, blocking light from the observer. These seemingly mundane astronomical events can yield surprising amounts of information. Further, they offer the amateur an opportunity to record and report events of scientific significance.

At Hallam asteroid/star occultations have been observed, some only visually and others with timing and video recording equipment set up on the Henry Lee telescope by Steve and fellow observers. Advance notice an event may be observable along a narrow path on Earth's surface is available off the net.

If all factors are favourable, and the event occurs as forecast, observers along the path might see a star dim or wink out for a few seconds via an asteroid passing. If several observers along the path compare timings it is possible to infer the likely shape of the asteroid. Making such observations is filled with anticipation, tension and celebration if the predicted event is observed and data captured for science.

Steve also showed a video of he and his team's attempt to observe and digitally record the image of Omega Centauri from the West Beach of Point Pelee in mid winter as it briefly rose and sank back into the hazy Southern horizon across frozen Lake Erie.

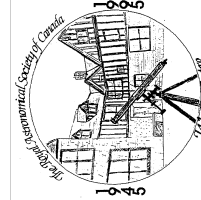
Astronomical events over the Summer were listed and included Star Parties, interesting objects in the July and August skies as well as noting the site, www.skymaps.com for observers maps.

Meeting adjourned by Pierre with thanks for Steve's presentation and for all those who have helped make this year a success. Our next meeting is on September 18th at 7:30 p.m.

David Panton Recording Secretary



AURORA



Sept 2007 The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Windsor Centre Volume 33, Number 2

Flyer

Next Meeting

Tuesday, Oct 16th, 2007
7:30 p.m.

Maidstone K of C Hall
10720 County Road 34
(Old Talbot Road)

Speaker: T.B.A.

Topic: T.B.A.
NOTE THE NEW STARTING TIME.

Upcoming Events

Hallam Observatory Open House:

		Moon Age
October 13	7 p.m.	2 days
November 17	7 p.m.	8 days
December 15	7 p.m.	6 days

Celestial Events:

Sept 23	Autumnal Equinox (6am)
Oct 11th	New Moon
Oct 21st	Orionid meteor shower
Oct 26th	Full moon

Centre Events:

Oct 9th	Council at Dave Panton's
Feb 2008	Council at Donna Ronconi's

Our new e-home:

<http://www.rascwindsor.com/>

Monthly Meeting Minutes for June 19th, 2007 compiled by Dave Panton

Chaired by Dr. Pierre Boulos

Welcoming members and guests as they arrived, Pierre briefly conducted some business. Minutes from the May meeting were read and accepted following a motion by Harry Brydon seconded by Tina Chichkan. Then Pierre reviewed topics in coming programs and also informed members of the new 7:30 p.m. meeting schedule start time to begin in September.

Main Presentation by Paul Pratt.

Paul is a naturalist with the City of Windsor at Ojibway Nature Centre and is a recognized expert in birds. Paul explained how he became interested in astronomy. Doing night surveys of bird activities. He often wondered about the carpet of stars above. Paul is now an active member of Windsor Centre, always willing and able to answer questions in his field. Amateur astronomers have many opportunities to enjoy nature's night activities while observing the heavens above.

Paul listed a wide variety of night birds, their habits and calls as they go about their affairs in the dark of night. Owls are the first birds one might imagine being important night birds but there are many others. Photographs, calls and habits of Owls were first on his list but soon he expanded it to include Woodcocks, very common at Hallam. They often fly by both heard and seen. We see them running this way and that on local roads at night.

There are also Night Hawks, mainly pursuing insects, catching them in their wide open mouths. Two species of Bats also share the night sky, chasing insects on the fly. We often enjoy calm nights at Hallam and those windless times are also best for bird migration. Smooth air is easier to fly in than turbulent so it is prime time for bird migrations. Radar images show huge flocks of birds doing their annual migration at night. Some fly long distances over open oceans at night navigating by the stars as they move from Summer to Winter habitats and return the next season to raise another family of young.

We also have lots of insects, active only at night, fire flies are the most notable. Crickets are active at night too, and we hear their cheery sound at Hallam often. Also active at night are a variety of toads and frogs. Sometimes people at Hallam are a bit nervous on hearing the strange sounds coming from the grove of trees but they are all normal. They give us proof, we are not the only animals enjoying the night at the observatory.

There are also plants, active as much as plants can be at night. They blossom forth only in the dark, for good reason. Their pollination depends on the activity of insects only active at night.

Paul's many gorgeous photographs and enthusiastic presentation was a hit,

bringing an appreciative round of applause. Pierre thanked him for helping us learn there is more to the night than astronomy.

Coffee Break and 50/50 Draw:

Pierre reminded members of their valuable Canadian Tire money donations (\$80 this year). He also noted a Fund Raising Committee was set up at the June Council meeting to consider how to fund observatory operation on a long term basis.

Pierre won the 50/50 and turned it in to Ken Garber. A bonus draw for an electronic organizer was won by Mike Mastronardi.

Reports:

Secretary: David Panton Nil report

Treasurer: Ken Garber

Current bank balance \$3197.47, paid up members, 86. For sale, planispheres, \$8. Calendars gone, surplus given away at picnic.

Newsletter Editor: Ken Garber

Ken needs articles and photographs. The next issue is the full one so material is needed.

Librarian: Rick Marion Rick was not in attendance.

Public Education: Randy Groundwater

At Point Pelee, Randy will host a group of Grade 6 Dougall School students. They will learn the basic constellations. On the night of June 29/30 about 20 youth members of the Muslim Association of Canada will pay a visit to Hallam Observatory. Al DesRosiers introduced a family to astronomy at the observatory. Randy did extra duty, returning to the observatory to reopen it for a group of lost late comers arriving at the observatory after closing it for the night.

Regular Hallam open house will be held this coming Saturday night.

To the volunteers who have helped man the observatory, bring telescopes and assist during open houses. Randy gave all a vote of thanks.

Public Relations: Tina Chichkan

Tina reported the Annual Picnic was a success. The weather was perfect and there were attractions for all from rocket launches, good food, an International Space Station passage overhead and for those who stayed after dark marsh mellows toasted on Pierre's fire pit set up in the dark observing area behind the observatory.