

AURORA



Volume 34, No. 2

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Windsor Centre

Oct. 2008

Some notable 2008 — 2009 Events

October 21st (Tonight!)	Orionid Meteor Shower
November 17th	Leonid Meteor Shower
December 13th	Geminid Meteor Shower
December 21st	Winter Solstice
January 3rd '09	Quadrantid Meteor Shower

Proposed 2009 Observatory Open Houses (All Saturdays)

January 31st	July 25th
February 28th	August 22nd
March 28th	September 26th
April 25th	October 24th
May 30th	November 21st
June 27th	December 19th

Coming Events

Friday, December 5, 2008 (December Social)

Next Council Meeting February 10th, 2009

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Calendar of Events

NOTE the NEW STARTING TIME

Our next meeting...

November 18th , 2008 **7:30 p.m.**

at

K of C Maidstone Recreation Centre
10720 County Road 34 (Old Hiway 3)

Guest Speaker: Julianna Grigorescu

Topic: Ligo

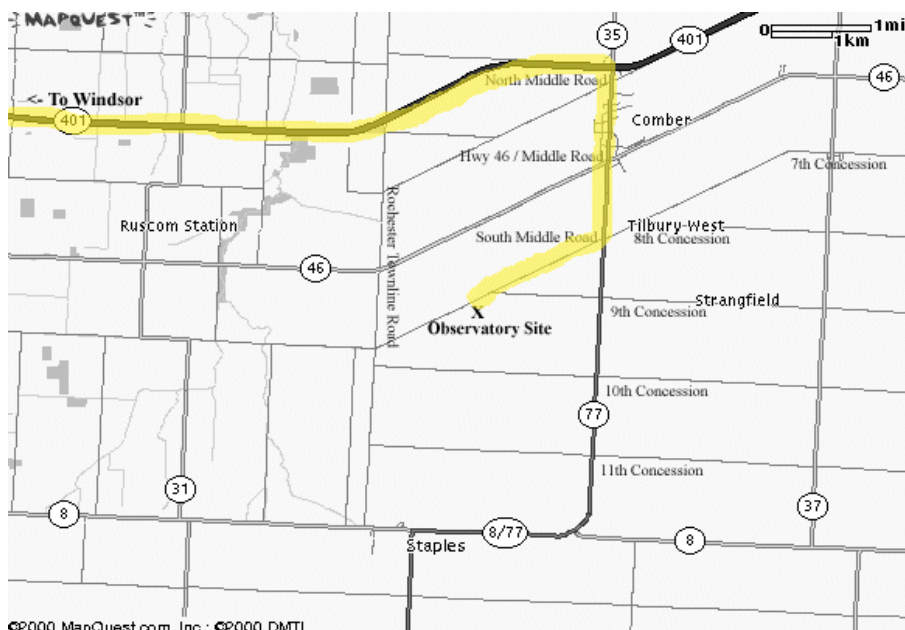
A Little Fund Raising

Got any Canadian Tire money lying around that you'd like to get rid of?

Why not donate them to the Centre?

To date we've collected more than \$100 and of that, about \$65.00 has been spent on trees planted on the grounds, oil and gas for cutting the grass, chain lube for the dome, some bug spray and even a kettle for you tea, coffee and hot chocolate drinkers.

Bring them along to any meeting and drop them off at the treasurer's table, and they will be put to good use.



Hallam Observatory Site

Directions: The map above shows the Comber area and it includes the major highways (401, 77, 8 and 46) that are in the area of the observatory.

The most direct route from Windsor is "highlighted" on the map which is to take 401 East to Highway 77 South to South Middle Road. While on South Middle Road you go about 1 kilometer and just after the barely discernable point where Concession 9 joins it you will find the observatory site on the South side of the road.

If you hit the Rochester Townline Road (i.e. you come to a stop sign and have to turn left or right) you have gone too far.

Submissions

Aurora is published monthly except for August. The October, December, February, April and June issues are full newsletters (usually 6 pages) with a number of member submitted articles. The November, January, March, May and July issues are short flyers (2 pages) with one short article. September is a dual issue with the full 6 page newsletter mailed just **before** the meeting and a flyer available **at** the meeting. Submitted articles can be of any length from a paragraph to multiple pages. I can scan pictures and/or diagrams (both prints and film) to support your article and the originals will be returned to you. Submission deadline is the 1st of the month.

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Ass't: Dan Anzovino

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Membership

The Windsor Centre of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month (except July and August) at the K of C Maidstone Recreation Centre. In addition to regular meetings the centre hosts a number of observing nights, a picnic and a December social. Members receive a copy of the Observer's Handbook, a subscription to SkyNews magazine and access to the Centre's library and telescopes. And optionally (at extra cost) the RASC Journal (in print form—Online is free).

Annual Membership Fees: Please see the RASC website at www.rasc.ca for current rates

Contact Ken Garber at (519) 966-3478 or visit our website at <http://www.rascwindsor.com> for more information.

MEETING MINUTES

September 16th 2008 as recorded and compiled by Dave Panton

Pierre welcomed members back from a great Summer. Minutes from the June meeting were read and accepted after a motion by Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu seconded by Rick Marian. The main program for the evening was not available. Reports from member's activities over the summer were featured in lieu of same.

Paul Pratt's photos of Sagittarius and the Milky Way during the Persied meteor shower were shown along with the sole meteor he caught after dozens of exposures. A unique shot by Steve Mastellotto featured the Hallam warm room in the foreground and a new Moon in the West forming the end of a straight line containing Mars, Saturn and the star Regulus. This photograph was the featured RASC photo of the Month. Mike Mastronardi ran a 2 minute video promoting the International Year of Astronomy 2009.

Pierre reported the Point Pelee combined RASC Windsor Centre/Friends of Point Pelee observing session on the West Beach was a great success and thanked all who helped, giving special thanks to Paul Pratt for organizing the affair. The event raised \$260 for Windsor Centre.

The Pelee Island Winery event was also a great success although the sky was not as spectacular. Many members volunteered their time, telescopes and talents for 50 guests. It was sellout and raised \$930. Both these events may be held again in 2009. Pierre also suggested a star party be held on Pelee Island in 2009.

Al Des Rosier has organized an RASC Windsor Centre fund raising garage sale from his home on busy Lesperance Rd. Sept. 20th and 21st. Members have already donated many valuable and highly salable items.

Art Rae brought a CD featuring a variety of NASA video clips from the recent close Cassini spacecraft flyby of Saturn's Moon Iapetus.

Light Pollution Abatement: Dan Taylor

The new Home Depot outlet on Division Rd. West of Walker has some non compliant lighting. Dave Panton reported on his less than fruitful efforts with the City building department. Dan asked for additional assistance from members.

Susan has written to the DRIC project team to ensure all lighting will be the FCO type. She also contacted LaSalle authorities suggesting all the cobra head street lights be replaced with FCO fixtures.

Dan circulate a petition to discourage the Dakota Dunes Casino in Saskatchewan from shining their inverted light teepee up into the night sky. He also mentioned suggestions for better lighting can be made by individuals, sighting a single successful call he made to the MTO. Newly installed glare type lights on highway 3 were quickly changed to FCO fixtures.

The shopping development near Ojibway Park is a new concern. He and Mike Mastronardi will work to encourage FCO lighting. Dan also mentioned an all-sky survey pending in Canada. Light pollution will be measured from the ground using Sky Quality Meters.

Coffee Break and 50/50 Draw

Tom Sobocan brought in his usual collection of delicious goodies and served them with hot chocolate and coffee. The 50/50 draw was held and the meeting resumed. Pierre introduced three new members, Ken Williams, Brian Lake and Don Bondy.

Reports

Pierre noted as past president Steve Mastellotto will prepare a list of nominees for the November election. The next council meeting will be held at Steve Mastellotto's home on October 14th.

Secretary: David Panton

Dave reported he was up to date.

Treasurer: Ken Garber

Ken reported our current bank balance is \$2565.84. There are 96 paid up members. Twenty eight Year 2009 calendars are on order.

Newsletter Editor: Ken Garber

For new members Ken explained the system of alternate monthly meeting "Flyer" and "Aurora" newsletters. Members written articles are always in demand.

Librarian: Rick Marion

Rick has finished his inventory of RASC Windsor Centre books and saved it on a CD. Two of several club reflecting telescopes available for member rental. There are also two old collector's item refractors in non rental inventory.

Public Education Director: Open Position

Tom Sobocan may have a group of students interested in a visit to Hallam. He also described a contest for high school science teams. The winning team will receive one hour of observing time on an 8 metre telescope.

Public Relations: Tina Chichkan

Tina reported both the July and August observatory open houses had attendance of about 15 people. Both the Point Pelee and Pelee Island Winery public events were very successful. A group of grade six students had a wonderful visit to the observatory. The next open house date is October 4th.

Continued >>>

MEETING MINUTES continued

General Assembly in Toronto:

Mike Mastronardi attended and voted our 28 proxies. He described a very successful weekend a visit to see (and operate) the most recent version of the Canadarm at Downsview airport.

Observatory Director: Peter Bondy

Peter was absent. Al Des Rosier reported Canadian Tire money donations are spent to purchase items such as wasp spray and a new kettle for the observatory.

Membership Chair Person: Paul Pratt

Paul will be making a presentation at Ojibway Nature Centre in the Fall.

Miscellaneous:

Pierre described a local CBC three part astronomy radio program hosted by Barbara Peacock had been a success. He and two other members were interviewed. The following persons will present the next three observers reports.

September, Steve Pellarin

October, Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu

November: Juliana Grigorescu

Members reported observations over the summer including watching Jupiter's Red Spot progress across the face. One photo by Paul Pratt showed a Moonlit night migrating bird silhouetted by the Moon.

Director of Observing for September: Steve Pellarin

Steve highlighted the coming astronomical events and added a series of space craft views of Saturn's moon Iapetus showing stunning details of its many geologic features.

Pierre thanked Steve for his presentation and adjourned the meeting at 10:01 p.m.

Beautiful Antares by Juliana Grigorescu

Beautiful as you are,
Red as you are,
Big as you are,
You are unique.

Worrier of the stars
To some you are dear,
Your evil look
I learned not to fear.

You come and go,
In fall you are shy,
I sometimes wonder why
You never ruled the sky.

Proposed Council for 2009

Compiled by Past-President Steve Mastellotto

Executive

Past President – Steve Mastellotto

President – Dr. Pierre Boulos

1st Vice President – Paul Pratt

2nd Vice President – Tina Chichkan

Secretary – Dave Panton

Treasurer - Ken Garber

National Council Representative –

Mike Mastronardi

Councilors

Dan Anzovino

Randy Groundwater

Steve Pellarin

Paul Preney

Donna Ronconi

Ken Roung

Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu

C. Joady Ulrich

Appointed Positions

Honorary President - Dr. William Baylis

Alternate National Council Rep. – Open

Aurora Editor – Steve Mastellotto

Director(s) of Observing –

Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu

Steve Pellarin

Director of Public Education –

Randy Groundwater

2009 IYA Coordinator – Mike Mastronardi

Librarian – Rick Marion

Light Pollution Abatement Director –

Dan Taylor

Observatory Director – David Panton

Recording Secretary - David Panton

Web Master – Steve Mastellotto

Solar Cycle 24

From the ARRL Propagation Report

Wondering when Cycle 24 will begin?

It seems like we've been at solar minimum forever. In fact, there have been several news releases hinting that this solar minimum period between Cycle 23 and 24 is unusual.

The analysis of recent spotless days compared to historical spotless days (see http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2008/11jul_solarcycleupdate.htm) led Dr. David Hathaway (NASA solar physicist) to conclude that nothing is unusual about this solar minimum period. Another way to look at solar minimum is to look at the duration when the smoothed sunspot number is below 20. Historically this duration has ranged from a short 17 months to a long 96 months, with an average of 37 months.

Cycle 23 descended below 20 in February 2006, and Cycle 24 is predicted to ascend above 20 in early 2009. That's around 36 months, so everything appears to be pretty normal so far and agrees with Dr. Hathaway's conclusion. We'll just have to be patient until Cycle 24 starts ramping up. The good news is that we have seen three sunspot regions tied to Cycle 24 (January 4, April 13, and May 5), so it's coming.

Einstein's Telescope

Here's a little gem of an article about Einstein's telescope you all might enjoy: (from Randy G.)

http://www.redorbit.com/news/space/1566086/lost_einstein_telescope_put_on_display/index.html

Albert Einstein with the telescope

(Photo: Courtesy of the Albert Einstein Archives)



Time to Renew ??

Don't forget that you can renew your membership at the treasurer's desk, by snailmail to the National, or online at the RASC 'store' at

<http://www.store.rasc.ca/>

Renewing S & T

If you are a subscriber of Sky and Telescope and have done your renewing through the Centre, you can now renew directly with S&T. You need not send your form and payment to the Centre.

If you are not a subscriber but wish to be, send your first payment to the Centre Treasurer for forwarding to S&T and you'll be able to renew directly after that.

2009 Meeting Schedule (All Tuesdays)

November 18th, 2008

(December 5th - Annual Social)

January 20th, 2009

February 17th, 2009

March 17th, 2009

April 21st, 2009

May 19th, 2009

June 16th, 2009

July and August - no meetings

Updating your membership information

If you have changed your mailing address or have changed or updated your email address, you need not contact Head Office yourself.

Just send me the information change(s) - either by snailmail, email or at the meetings - and I can perform the updates for you locally.