

**Break and Fifty-Fifty Draw:** Winner was Mario Fabris, who donated the winnings back to the Centre.

### Announcements

- Hallam Observatory Open House is May 18<sup>th</sup>
- Point Pelee Dark Sky Night to be held from the evening of May 11<sup>th</sup> through overnight on the 12<sup>th</sup>. International Migratory Bird Day is all weekend, and park staff hopes we prop the event up and try to make it a big night.
- Science Rendezvous is also on the 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Astronomy Day is April 28<sup>th</sup>. Booth table display to be set up in our purchased plot for the event.

**Director of Observing Report, Steve Pellarin:** We're losing Jupiter, but gaining Saturn in the night sky, as well as the spring constellations. Galaxies are good sights this time of year, also with a much clearer view now with less dust from Milky Way. Steve also mentioned that his website – [leviathanastronomy.com](http://leviathanastronomy.com) has maps and charts for finding galaxies.

Earth is getting rather close to Saturn. The ringed planet is at opposition on April 28<sup>th</sup>, and it looks a bit bigger in our sky. You can more easily view the Cassini Division and the other harder-to-see Encke Gap with the gas giant's axis tilted 18°, so the rings are wide open to see.

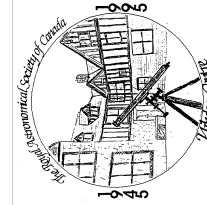
Lyrid Meteor Shower lasting from April 15<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>, caused by debris coming from Comet Thatcher. During the peak one could expect 15-20 meteors per hour. Full Moon is on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Starting in early May, Venus is starting to pop up into the western sky. It will begin climbing into the sky away from the Sun and approach not too far away from Jupiter.

Rick thanked Steve for his presentation and **adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.**

Reported by Matt McCall, RASC Windsor Centre Secretary.



# AURORA



May 2013

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Windsor Centre

Volume 38, No. 8

## Flyer

### Next Meeting

Tuesday, June 18, 2013

7:30 p.m.

at

[Ojibway Park Nature Centre](#)

5200 Matchette Road

Speaker: TBD

Topic: "TBA"

### Upcoming Events

**Council Meeting:** The next meeting of Council will take place on Tuesday June 11, 2013 starting at 7:30 p.m.. The meeting will be at the home of Dan Taylor.

**June Picnic:** The Windsor Centre will hold our annual picnic on Saturday June 15 at Hallam Observatory. The picnic will be "Pot Luck" style with the Centre providing BBQ'd hot dogs and hamburgers. We ask that you bring a side dish or dessert.

**Open House Night at Hallam:** The next open house night at Hallam is on Saturday June 15 at 9:30 p.m..

## Monthly Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2013

The monthly meeting of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Windsor Centre was held at the Ojibway Park Nature Centre on April 16, 2013.

Windsor Centre **President Rick Marion** chaired the Meeting. Rick called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. and welcomed members and guests to the Ojibway Nature Centre.

A motion to accept the Minutes of the March 19, 2013 members meeting was made by Steve Mastellotto, seconded by Greg Mockler. **MOTION CARRIED.**

### Main Speaker

Rick introduced the main speaker, **Denis Grey, from the RASC National Council and the Toronto Centre**, and the topics of his presentations: **Centre By-Law updates**, to be followed by a main talk on the **Texas Star Party**.

Mr. Grey began by stating they would be rewriting the National By-laws and each Centre will need to review and most likely rewrite their By-laws. CNCA (Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act) is a new federal law effective since 2010, which requires changes for all Not-For-Profits and charities that are incorporated federally. Affects RASC National now, but not local Centres just yet. The next slides he showed spoke of centre board of directors – they must be elected by membership as a whole, no appointments, no centre-elected representatives, all members must be voting members except in very limited circumstances – no proxy voting or associate members.

Proposed new By-Law #1 was drafted July 2012, amended by National in the past several months, and is on the agenda for 2013 General Assembly. Current RASC structure has thirty-five centre reps – this structure can't stand due to some members not having been elected, etc. Possible new structure would have much smaller board of directors.

National Advisory Council replaces existing National Council as an advisory body. NAC will conduct one in-person meeting of the GA separate from the meeting of the board. Chair of the NAC will be elected at the annual meeting by NAC itself. It will also participate in one advisory and consultative in-person meeting jointly with the board at the GA.

Associate Members become full voting members of the society as Family Members on July 1, 2013.

**Main Talk – Texas Star Party:** The 2009 star party was held deep in the heart of West Texas. Denis stated he decided to attend it the weekend before

his business conference in Austin, Texas. He began with the basics of the star party. Occurs around Third Quarter or New Moon weekends in either April or May, there are vendors with swap tables, astronomers travel to it to give talks on astronomy, and the good thing about it is that it has lots of hobbyists that attend for the same beneficial purpose. Camping excursions are available with great opportunities for astrophotographers. RVs can be parked on site at the ranch, though there's a hotel nearby. Various cabins can hold a few people each. Full on-site cafeteria is provided, but Denis said there is very high fried-food content. Location is dry, 30° N latitude, time zone is Central time.

There is a traveling astronomy shop that drives from place to place such as star parties: 'The Astronomical Super Store that comes to you!' was present at the Texas Star Party in 2009. There was a salesman there that had virtually every type of screw for most telescopes in case someone lost even the smallest vital item while attending. With an entire case of drawers on hand, he would charge about \$10 for these components, or any price if he could.

Proximity to Johnson Space Center generally results in some guest speakers from NASA and even astronauts coming out to speak and give presentations. Program highlights for that year included speakers such as Terrence Dickinson and his topic – Visiting the Atacama. Famous Canadian astrophotographer Jack Newton presented as well, along with Robert Reeves speaking on DSLR Focus.

Astronaut Don Pettit gave a talk on 'Amateur Astronomy from the ISS'. In space he tried to take photos of Earth from the space station, noticing the pics we're all blurred by the speed the station was moving. He made a Barn Door Tracker using leftover parts from the 'IMAX: Space Station' movie, so he could steady and focus images. He also made long-exposure star-trails on-board ISS since the station maintains its attitude toward the Sun. As it orbits Earth, the solar panels are always pointed toward the Sun, but because the ISS maintains its orientation, it's a very good astronomical mount.

McDonald Observatory is a major U.S. national observatory located not far from where the Texas Star Party is held. Three major domes are on site. Denis spoke in detail on one of the main telescopes: The 2.1 Metre (82") Otto Struve Telescope (1939). Very similar in design to the David Dunlop Observatory telescope outside Toronto.

One of the reasons astronomers know for an absolute fact that men really did walk on the Moon is because of the Lunar Laser Ranging experiment. Retroreflectors were left on the surface by various Apollo missions, and one of the actual lasers used to determine precise distance between Earth and our satellite is found at McDonald Observatory.

Rick thanked Denis for his excellent presentation and announced a quick break.