

# AURORA



Volume 34, No. 1

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Windsor Centre

Sept. 2008

## 2008 Meteor Showers

Extracted from Sky and Telescope

Shower	Radiant/ direction	Morning of maximum	Hourly Rate
Orionid*	Orion (SE)	Oct. 21	10-15
Leonid*	Leo (E)	Nov. 17	10
Geminid*	Gemini (S)	Dec. 14	75

\* Moonlight interferes

### Observatory Open Houses

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October 4, 2008 7:30 p.m.

November 8, 2008 7:00 p.m.

December 6, 2008 7:00 p.m.

See [www.rascwindsor.com/pages/open-house.php](http://www.rascwindsor.com/pages/open-house.php)  
for more information and updates.

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## Calendar of Events

### NOTE the NEW STARTING TIME

#### *Our next meeting...*

September 16th , 2008 **7:30 p.m.**

at

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

=====

<b>September 20th</b>	<b>Garage Sale</b>
<b>October 14th</b>	<b>Council Meeting</b>
<b>October 21st</b>	<b>Next Regular Meeting</b>

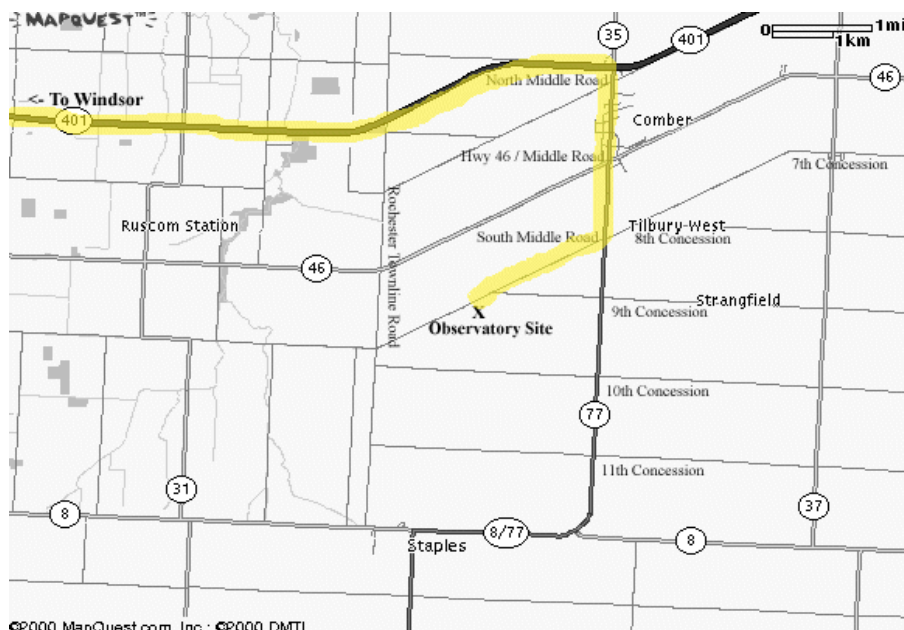
### A Little Fund Raising

**Al DesRosiers** has generously taken on the task of organizing a garage sale at his 149 Lesperance Road home on September 20th. Windsor Centre's expenses exceed our current revenue so this event is very important and help from all is requested.

Donating saleable items is a great way to assist. Volunteers will be needed to help prepare for the big day and on sale day.

His home is on a high traffic road and prior fund raising sales at his home for other groups were successes.

If you have any items no longer wanted or needed please give Al a call at 519-735-9550 or email him at [alanclaire@hotmail.com](mailto:alanclaire@hotmail.com)



### 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.

Editor: Ken Garber  
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](http://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

June 17th, 2008 as recorded and compiled by Dave Panton

## **Chaired by Dr. Pierre Boulos**

The minutes from the May meeting were read. Paul Pratt made the motion to accept, Harry Brydon seconded and the motion carried. Pierre introduced Steve Mastellotto and indicated his presentation would involve Astronomy conducted on line using remote robotically operated telescopes.

Main Presentation:

## **Virtual Astronomy by Steve Mastellotto**

Steve, ever the one to venture into the exotic has spent a lot of time investigating a new field of amateur astronomy whereby it is possible to access telescopes in far distant places via the internet, take photographs and receive the results on line. Inconceivable not long ago this is not only possible, but in some cases can be done at no cost if waiting in cue is not a concern.

## **Three sites were tried**

A British group with the "The Bradford Robotic Telescope" operating unattended in Tenerife has equipment like ours at Hallam but loaded with cameras and other equipment for remote operation. Access is via [www.telescope.org](http://www.telescope.org) and one merely needs to follow a series of menus to set up photography criteria and wait for results a few days later. Great sample shots were shown by Steve. This telescope is operated at no cost to users.

Another site called "Slooh" operates telescopes at three locations, again like ours at Hallam but fitted with masses of attached cameras and accessories. There is always one in darkness as their locations are spread across the globe from The Canary Islands to Chile and a third in Australia. These people have modest fee structure the most expensive is only \$50 per year for unlimited access. Steve showed several very nice photographs from this site. Their home address is [www.slooh.com](http://www.slooh.com).

Sierra Stars Observatory at [www.sierrastars.com](http://www.sierrastars.com) operate a 24 inch telescope in California. Not quite remote, owner operator Rick Williams lives nearby and services his 24 inch telescope as needed and administers a complex system of charges and credits for users. It is relatively expensive at \$50 for a 50 minute trial. The photographs taken with his equipment are superb and compare favorably with the 200 inch Palomar telescope capable of taking photographs only one magnitude dimmer at mag 21. Sample Photographs can be accessed at no charge.

Pierre thanked Steve for his thoughtful and well presented talk about this exciting new branch of amateur astronomy.

## **Coffee Break and 50/50 Draw**

Tom Sobocan's refreshments were enjoyed during break too soon over and then on to the 50/50 draw, won by Al DesRosiers and generously donated to club coffers.

## **Annual Picnic Report**

This years picnic was a wonderful success thanks to lots of effort by organizers, a great turnout with many children adding to the fun. Tina did a great job and the affair will be remembered for years to come. An important part of the picnic was attendance by Dave and Gail Ainslie as well as our soon to be new land lords Moe and Sherri Trepannier. All four enjoyed the evening and we feel we are off to a good start in our coming relationship. Steve showed lots of photos of the event.

## **Council Meeting at Pelee Island Winery**

Pierre explained how this unusual event happened and how we will be joining PIW in a wine tasting and astronomy event at the winery in Kingsville on August 23rd. Fund raising is the objective. Another fund raising event is the pending garage sale at Al Des Rosiers home in September.

## **Reports**

### **RASC Annual General Assembly in Toronto:**

Steve asked members to check their choices and sign their proxies for Mike Mastronardi to take to the GA where he will use them to vote on our behalf. This gives Windsor Centre recognition among other centres. Art Rae asked why is National planning to spend so much on International Year of Astronomy events in 2009. Steve replied, the funds are from endowments for that purpose, not from general membership funds.

Pierre reiterated our need for both a National Representative and a Director of Public Education.

## **Secretary: David Panton**

Dave noted the Council meeting minutes were finished. Given the importance and timing of all the items covered he will send them via e-mail within the next day or so.

Treasurer: Ken Garber

Ken reported our current bank balance is \$3404.75. Of the current 99 paid up members nine will soon expire and he was hoping for renewals to keep our membership up. He plans to ask members via e-mail to help plan his 2009 calendar order.

## **Newsletter Editor: Ken Garber**

Ken has used his supply of locally written articles and can use more.

## **Public Education Director: Open Position**

## **Public Relations: Tina Chichkan**

Tina was unable to attend the meeting

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## MEETING MINUTES continued

### **Light Pollution Abatement: Dan Taylor**

Dan showed a photo taken from an aircraft above the cloud layer covering the Toronto area. The light glow through the clouds is an indication of the tremendous waste of energy polluting our night skies with wasted light. He reported Windsor has recently accepted LPA concepts and will soon begin a residential awareness campaign. A major concern in Saskatchewan has been created by new grossly over lit casinos operated by native people. Contact Regina Centre for more information regarding how to assist.

### **Membership Chair Person: Paul Pratt**

Paul organized a joint night bird watching and astronomy event at Point Pelee for the night of August 2nd. He needs help from members with telescopes.

### **Observatory Director: Peter Bondy**

Peter was absent. Steve Mastellotto reported the portajohn at the observatory had been blown over and pushed some distance away by storm winds. It was righted, hosed out and was back in service in time for the picnic.

### **Director of Observing for June: Juliana Grigorescu**

Juliana passed out observer's guides for June and then reviewed the main events for the month. An interesting astronomical event occurred in a Siberian June 100 years ago when a piece of comet Enke entered the Earth's atmosphere and burst releasing the energy of a 5 megaton bomb. Evidence is still visible on the ground in trunks of flattened trees. June features our shortest night, only 8 hour from Sunset to Sunrise. We also have the opportunity to see Comet Boattini in Cetus during mid July, Don't miss it or you will have to wait 65,000 years for its next appearance. Noctilucent clouds are sometimes visible this time of year. At Hallam it was noted Capella never sets.

Pierre thanked Juliana for her thorough presentation and adjourned the meeting at 10:05 p.m.

David J. Panton  
Recording Secretary

## 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.

## 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/>

## Pelee Island Winery by Steve Mastellotto

"On Saturday, August 23rd the Pelee Island Winery held "A Night Sky Tour" fundraising event with the Windsor Centre. Over 50 tickets were sold at \$30 each and the price included a free glass of wine, finger foods and a night sky tour hosted by club members. After Randy and Pierre gave a short talk guests were treated to an observing session on the winery's patio. Although the skies were partly cloudy everyone had a wonderful time and got a chance to look at a number of objects through about 10 different telescopes. The event raised \$930 for the club. Thank you to everyone who helped out."

## An Evening at Point Pelee by Paul Pratt

On August 2, 2008 the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada-Windsor Centre joined up with the Friends of Point Pelee to offer a night of public viewing at Point Pelee National Park on Saturday August 2, 2008. People started showing up before 8:00 pm and by night's end over 150 people had attended the event. Pelee Wings Nature Store provided Tim Horton's coffee and Celestron Star Scopes for the night.

We had perfect weather for the evening and people had ample room along the West Beach to set up telescopes and blankets. In addition to the dozen telescopes set up by RASC members there were several participants who also brought equipment. Jan Rogers, manager for the Friends of Point Pelee and myself provided an introduction to the event while Randy Groundwater and the park superintendent talked about the importance of Pelee's 2006 designation as a Dark Sky Reserve.

Soon after sunset we had views of the thin crescent moon, only +30 hours old, Saturn and Jupiter. As darkness descended the Milky Way become more and more prominent, likely the best view of the summer. Members became busy helping people to become orientated to the night sky, pointing out constellations, asterisms and prominent Messier objects. The telescopes were always busy and green laser pointers crisscrossed the night sky. I walked by groups looking at the Andromeda Galaxy, Ring Nebula, Dumbbell Nebula and Hercules Cluster. We had a great look at a transit of the International Space Station, several satellite passes and a brilliant slow moving fireball through Cassiopeia.

The evening ended around 11 pm with hopes that more night programs will be offered at Point Pelee in the future. Thanks to Ken Roung, Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu, Dave Panton, Mike Mastronardi, Tina Chichkan, Randy Groundwater, Rick Marion, Steve Mastellotto, and Barb van Wingerden who brought out their telescopes and helped make this event a great success.





On Saturday, August 2nd the Windsor Centre along with the "Friends of Point Pelee" held a public viewing session at Point Pelee National Park on the West Beach. Over 150 people attended with adults paying a \$5 admission. Proceeds were split between both groups and we raised \$255. The night was clear and we all witnessed a beautiful sunset, Space Station pass, a fireball (extremely bright meteor) and many deep sky and solar system objects. We had over a dozen telescopes on the beach and the only regrettable thing was we had to shut down at 11:00 p.m.. Thanks to everyone who helped out! **Photo by Steve Mastellotto**





Captured Perseid

**Picture by Paul Pratt**

Canon 40D with 20 mm lens mounted on an AstroTrac TT320: 11:27 pm Aug 11 2008:

2 minute exposure at f3.5 ISO800. The small central smudge is M31, the Andromeda Galaxy.

# 2008 Annual Centre Picnic

Photo by Steve Mastellotto

