

winning him twelve dollars.

Steve Mastellotto asked for the **new members and visitors** in the crowd to stand up and introduce themselves.

Main Presentation, Juliana Grigorescu - "Life of a Star". Juliana gave a very comprehensive and knowledgeable presentation starting by asking the simple question, "Why is the sky dark at night?" Sometimes called Olber's Paradox, it was postulated over a century ago. It helped inspire all sorts of discoveries from the expansion of the universe to the life cycles of stars.

She started from the concept of shock waves within the matter of creation causing portions to gather into areas of greater density. There were huge size variations in them but as gravity shrank their size bringing matter together stars started to form.

Their development, life cycles and eventual fates relate to mass, and how the initial elements are transformed by the reactions within them.

Over enormous time stars have a variety of fascinating life cycles. Some stars collapse in a few moments forming immensely dense small objects. Others explode entirely. Some balloon out and form huge red giants. Then there are the white dwarfs and smaller still, "black holes" so dense their gravity prevents even light from escaping. The Planetary Nebulas we admire from Earth are another example, remnants from an exploded star. Far more was covered than can be reported in these brief minutes.

All enjoyed Juliana's comprehensive presentation.

Steve thanked Juliana for her well done work.

Wrap up Presentation: As it was too close to closing time at the Nature Centre, David Sobocan missed showing several professional quality color slides he recently shot at the observatory.

Meeting adjourned by Steve Mastellotto at 10:15 p.m.

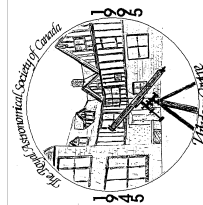
David J. Panton
Recording Secretary

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8 inch telescope on an equatorial mount with enhanced coatings on custom mirrors, JMI focuser, telrad and remote power supply. Asking \$1,300. Call Ken Rounge at 738-3479 or email at kenrounge@yahoo.com



Aurora



Volume 29, Number 8
The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Windsor Centre
April 2004

Flyer

Next Meeting

Special Time and Location!

Saturday, April 24, 2004

2:00 p.m.

at

The University of Windsor
Erie Hall - Room 1120

Speaker: Ivan Semeniuk

Topic: *"Seven Worlds in Seven Days - New Visions of the Solar System"*

Upcoming Events

Messier Marathon: Saturday March 20th at Hallam Observatory. Observing begins promptly at dusk.

Club Outing: A special trip is being organized to The Detroit Science Center for Saturday March 27. We plan to visit the planetarium, IMAX theatre and enjoy the exhibits. See Steve Pellarin for details.

Earth Day: Sunday April 25th we will once again participate in Earth Day at Ojibway Park. The event runs from Noon - 4:00 p.m. and setup will be from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m..

Summer Picnic: Our annual picnic will be held on Saturday June 12th at Hallam Observatory. More details to come.

General Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2004

President, Steve Mastellotto: Steve asked members to read the minutes from the last meeting. No errors were found. A motion to accept them was made by Harry Brydon, seconded by Peter Bondy and they were carried.

Reports

Correspondence Secretary, Joady Ulrich: Joady reported he had heard from member Adrian McManus who has a copy of Starry Night Deluxe for sale for \$35 and a telescope lens grinding machine for \$250.

Treasurer, Ken Garber: Ken gave a summary our current financial situation. There is \$4,700 in the regular account and \$870 in the Trillium account. Donations in lieu of flowers in memory of Henry Lee totaled \$1,520. The calendars are all sold. As of this date there are 124 paid up members.

Librarian, Milica Rakic: Milica reported the latest magazines are in.

Newsletter Editor (position open): On a temporary basis past Newsletter Editor Steve Mastellotto is producing the monthly Flyer. Meeting notices are all sent out by e-mail. Steve needs new or changed addresses to keep his list current.

Public Education, Randy Groundwater: The Rotary Club presentation has been postponed to April.

Public Relations, Robin Smallwood: The RASC Windsor Centre will have a display at Earth Day held at Ojibway Park. In view of the position of the Planets, a public observation night will likely be held in May.

Light Pollution, Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu: No report.

Observatory Committee, Peter Bondy: The heavy steel gate design and construction project by Peter and group has turned into a major project. It is well under way and will be welded and finished in 7 to 10 days. It should discourage all but the most determined criminals from attempting to break into the building.

The security light will blaze down on the observatory with a 250 watt halogen light when tripped by intruders. Members were given instructions in it's operation.

The insurance situation is being handled by Steve Mastellotto who reported the telescope will not be installed until we have coverage. The cost is expected to

be \$1,300 per year at this stage of negotiations. Coverage for total assets of \$100,000 is being sought. Public liability is covered under our National organization's policy.

Director of Observing, Steve Pellarin: Steve gave a history of the 110 Messier objects and their popularity with amateur astronomers. A Messier Marathon at the observatory is planned on Saturday beginning at dusk on March 20th. The event involves finding as many as possible. At this time of year, in theory it is possible to see them all in a single night. Tim Bennett holds the record at 103. Cunning, a knowledge of the sky and strategy help but fun is the key!

Steve then reviewed the wide variety of sights to be seen in March. Jupiter will be at opposition (closest to Earth) and will have as many as three moon shadows visible at one time. This was displayed later in a vivid Starry Night Pro animation by Steve Mastellotto. Saturn's rings are nicely oriented and present a stunning sight in even modest telescopes.

Asteroid 6 Hebe will be visible in binoculars. Zodiacal light is a another feature of the March sky after sunset.

Business

Ivan Semeniuk has become available to speak to our group on **Saturday April 24th**. The regular **April meeting will be cancelled** and this event substituted. Coincidentally it is International Astronomy Day. The following day is Earth Day.

Steve Pellarin is organizing a field trip to **The Detroit Science Center** on the last Saturday in March. The DSC has a new digital planetarium. If enough people sign up for the trip it may be possible to have a private showing in the planetarium. Additional attractions include viewing Mars images via their direct link to JPL and examining a variety of Mars exhibits and an IMAX theatre.

Meeting location, Steve Mastellotto indicated that the current Ojibway Nature Centre meeting place is just about perfect in every way, except more seating room is needed. Half a dozen places have been checked out to date but none found satisfactory. The search is still on.

A new **fund raising event** will be held during the month of July. We will be the host organization for the Riverside Sportsmen's Club's Wednesday "six dollar all you can eat pasta and salad" nights. By coming and bringing lots of family and friends we could raise as much as \$1,000.

Coffee Break: The 50/50 draw winning ticket was held by Vern Richards,