

# Saskatoon Skies

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2007

The Newsletter of the Saskatoon Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada



## General Assembly 2007 in Calgary

Here Les Dickson is standing in front of the Saskatoon RASC Centre display at the GA 2007. We had a very good representation of ten members from the Saskatoon Centre; Mike and Anna Clancy, Les Dickson, Kathleen Houston, Christine Kulyk, Jim Huziak, Rick Huziak, Gordon Sarty, Wade Selvig, Tenho Tuomi, and Barb Wright.

*Photo by Tenho Tuomi*



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### In This Issue:

|                                                              |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Membership Information; Bottle Drive; Officers of the Centre | 2  |
| U of S Observatory Hours; Light Pollution Abatement Website  | 2  |
| Calendar of Events; Minutes of the Executive Meeting         | 3  |
| Minutes of the General Meeting; Making a Charitable Donation | 3  |
| New Star Shelter; Sky Buys & Mirror Cells                    | 4  |
| Books For Sale                                               | 4  |
| Astronomy Roundup, Calgary GA 2007                           | 5  |
| Casinos Are About to Destroy Our Land of the Living Skies    | 6  |
| The Sleaford Page                                            | 7  |
| Dryland Sextant                                              | 8  |
| Observer's Group Notes                                       | 8  |
| Prince Albert Relay for Life                                 | 9  |
| The Messier, H-400 & H-400II, FNGC, Bino & EtU Club          | 10 |
| Fund Raising Dinner; ???                                     | 10 |

# ASTRONOMY AMONG THE PEOPLE

# MEMBERSHIP? IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO JOIN!

**Regular: \$65.00 /year    Youth: \$34.25 /year    Lifetime: \$1100**

The Saskatoon Centre operates on a one-year revolving membership. You will be a member for the next 12 months no matter when in the year you join. If you do not want to join at this time, ask to get onto our FREE 3-month Temporary Membership list. You will receive regular mailings of our Saskatoon Skies newsletter and will be invited to participate in Centre activities. Members are encouraged to renew early to avoid disruption in publications. Renew through the membership coordinator, Mike Clancy, or renew through the National Office and let Mike know that you did!

## Benefits of Membership in the Saskatoon Centre

- knowledgeable & friendly amateur astronomers
  - use of the Sleaford Observatory
  - use of the U of S Observatory (after training)
  - Saskatoon Skies Newsletter
  - Observer's Handbook
  - The Journal of the RASC (bimonthly)
  - SkyNews Magazine (bimonthly)
  - use of the Centre library
  - rent the Centre's Telescopes  
*<http://www.usask.ca/psychology/sarty/rasc/telescopes.html>*
  - discounts to Sky & Telescope Magazine\*
  - free, no-cost, no-obligation, 3-month temporary membership if you don't want to join right now!
- \* New subscription or renewal of Sky & Telescope? Send new info or renewal notice, plus credit card # to Norma Jensen, 128 - 4th Street East, Saskatoon, SK S7H 1H8, or email her at [njensen@scs.sk.ca](mailto:njensen@scs.sk.ca).

## U OF S OBSERVATORY

The U of S Observatory is open to the general public every Saturday of the year. Admission is free. The observatory is located on campus, one block north of the Wiggins Avenue and College Drive entrance. On clear nights, visitors may look through the vintage 6-inch and tour several displays. Current events are recorded on the Astronomy Information Line at 966-6429.

### Observatory Hours:

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| January-February | 7:30-9:30 pm   |
| March            | 8:30-10:30 pm  |
| April            | 9:30-11:30 pm  |
| May-July         | 10:00-11:30 pm |
| August           | 9:30-11:30 pm  |
| September        | 8:30-10:30 pm  |
| October-December | 7:30-9:30 pm   |

## SASKATOON CENTRE'S MAIN OFFICERS:

**President** – Garry Stone, 857-4707  
**Secretary** – Al Hartridge, 373-0034  
**Vice-President** – Barb Wright, 249-1990  
**Treasurer** – Norma Jensen, 244-7360



## BOTTLE DRIVE & CANADIAN TIRE \$

by Darrell Chatfield

We have paid for a few more items for Sleaford with Canadian Tire money, namely hand sanitizer, and a utility knife. If you cannot make it to a meeting but would like to contribute, your Canadian Tire money please call me at 374-9278.

**LIGHT POLLUTION  
ABATEMENT  
WEBSITE AT:  
[www.ras.sk.ca/lpc/lpc.htm](http://www.ras.sk.ca/lpc/lpc.htm)**

**Newsletter Editors** – Tenho Tuomi, Ken Maher **Copy & Collate**– Les & Ellen Dickson **Labels & Temps** – Mike Clancy **Web Posting** – Gord Sarty

Saskatoon Skies is published monthly by the Saskatoon Centre of the RASC. Distribution is approximately 100 copies per issue. Saskatoon Skies welcomes unsolicited articles, sketches, photographs, cartoons, and other astronomy or space science articles. Articles can be sent by mail in any format to the Centre's mailbox. Submitted materials can be returned upon request. Submissions may also be sent by e-mail – preferred as plain unformatted ASCII text files without line breaks. Images sent by e-mail should be attached .JPGs (.GIFs also accepted). Send e-mail submissions to the editor at <[tuomi@sasktel.net](mailto:tuomi@sasktel.net)>. Please send articles in "generic" formats with simple formatting – one tab at the beginning of paragraphs, one space after commas and periods. A separate by-mail subscription to Saskatoon Skies is available for \$15.00 per year. Saskatoon Skies is also posted on our Saskatoon Centre homepage as a .pdf file and can be downloaded free-of-charge. Members may choose to receive the newsletter by regular mail or via the Internet. Articles may be reprinted from Saskatoon Skies without expressed permission (unless otherwise stated), but source credit is requested. DEADLINE for submissions is the 26th of each month. Saskatoon Skies accepts commercial advertising. Please call the editor for rates. Members can advertise non-commercial items free of charge.

# RASC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|                   |                                                                            |                                                                                       |          |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Aug 9-12</b>   | <b>Saskatchewan Summer Star Party</b> - Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park | Barb Wright                                                                           | 249-1990 |
| <b>Aug 17</b>     | <b>Observers Group</b> - 8:30 p.m., Sleaford Observatory                   | Larry Scott                                                                           | 934-5801 |
| <b>Aug 28</b>     | <b>Total Eclipse of the Moon</b> (morning)                                 |                                                                                       |          |
| <b>Sept 6-9</b>   | <b>Alberta Star Party</b> , Eccles Ranch Obs., Caroline, AB                | Rick Huziak                                                                           | 665-3392 |
| <b>Sept 7</b>     | <b>Observers Group</b> - 8:00 p.m., Sleaford Observatory                   | Larry Scott                                                                           | 934-5801 |
| <b>Sept 7-9</b>   | <b>Spruce Woods Star Party</b> , Spruce Woods Provincial Park, MB          | <a href="http://winnipeg.rasc.ca/sprucewoods">http://winnipeg.rasc.ca/sprucewoods</a> |          |
| <b>Sept 11-16</b> | <b>Northern Prairie Starfest</b> , Black Nugget Lake, Toffield, AB         | Rick Huziak                                                                           | 665-3392 |
| <b>Sept 17</b>    | <b>RASC Executive Meeting</b> - 6:30 p.m., 175 Physics, U of S.            | Garry Stone                                                                           | 857-4707 |
| <b>Sept 17</b>    | <b>RASC General Meeting</b> - 7:30 p.m., 175 Physics, U of S.              | Garry Stone                                                                           | 857-4707 |
| <b>Oct 15</b>     | <b>RASC Executive Meeting</b> - 6:30 p.m., 175 Physics, U of S.            | Garry Stone                                                                           | 857-4707 |
| <b>Oct 15</b>     | <b>RASC General Meeting</b> - 7:30 p.m., 175 Physics, U of S.              | Garry Stone                                                                           | 857-4707 |

## Minutes of the Executive Meeting June 11, 2007

by Al Hartridge

1. Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting. Moved by Barb Wright, seconded by Jim Young and carried
3. Application to Centre Project Fund: the deadline is June 14, Darrell Chatfield will look into this.
4. Treasurer's Report: given by Norma Jensen  
There are two \$5300.00 five year term deposits, a GIC for \$3023.00 rolling over monthly, and just over \$6000.00 in the checking account of which 3 or \$4000.00 may be put into another GIC.
5. Sky and Telescope: no real advantage is seen in obtaining subscription through our centre.
6. 16" telescope: a focuser bearing kit is on order to fix the slop in the focuser on the Meade 16 inch telescope.
7. Funding Committee has been struck to get a proposal together to present to businesses and corporations for donations.
8. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

## Minutes of the General Meeting June 11, 2007

by Al Hartridge

1. Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. Approval of minutes of previous meeting. Moved by Rick Huziak, seconded by Ellen Dickson and carried.
3. Events committee: Jeff Swick said that registration for SSSP 2007 is at 36 at present.
4. Observing Group: Larry Scott: would like to get a group to do some lawn mowing and daytime observing in July.
5. Prince Albert Relay for Life: Garry Stone said that this turned out to be a fun event for those who attended. There was lots of interest from the participants in the telescopes that were set up.
6. Presentations:
  - Size Matters - Scale and Distance in the Universe - Jeff Swick
  - Device for measuring Sun altitude - Garry Stone
  - 1979 Solar Eclipse - Tenho Tuomi
  - Refractor for Sale - Chris Martin
  - 2009 GA proposal - Rick Huziak
7. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

### To Make a Charitable donation to RASC Saskatoon Centre

write a cheque out to RASC and place on the bottom that the donation is to the Saskatoon centre – a tax receipt will be issued in December of that year . Mail or give to the current treasurer.



## New Star Shelter

by Ron Waldron

After five years of storing two telescopes in my outdoor shed, my wife got tired of me telling her that there was no more room in the shed to store things. (we have no garage). She suggested that we buy and erect a second shed that would be dedicated

totally to my telescopes (10" dob and 3" refractor).

Well, that has been done and although it is not a backyard observatory like Bob Johnson's (I prefer the ability to move my telescopes around in the backyard to optimize views), it is a fairly neat star shelter for both telescopes complete with red light and viewing desk.

I thought some members might be interested in my latest acquisition. Now, of course, there is room in the original shed to store other things that were, by necessity, in our basement.

Don't wives have wonderful ideas! :-)

## SKY BUYS & MIRROR CELLS

*The Saskatoon Centre's Swap and Sale Page!*

**FOR SALE:** Antares 12"DOB asking \$850.00 or best offer. Please contact Beverly Davis at 306-285-3639 or [fadavis@sasktel.net](mailto:fadavis@sasktel.net)

**FOR SALE:** 12" Orion SkyQuest Intelliscope with object locator. Regular \$1400.00, first \$850.00 takes it, never used. Bob Johnson [bjohnson53@shaw.ca](mailto:bjohnson53@shaw.ca)

**FOR SALE:** Celestron PowerSeeker 127. New in box. Sells for \$199.99. If anyone is interested in making an offer they can contact Gisele Wonta at 933-9589



## BOOKS FOR SALE

by Bruce Brandell, Sales Coordinator

All items will be available at our next meeting or call 249-1119, or email [bruce\\_brandell@yahoo.com](mailto:bruce_brandell@yahoo.com)

| Title                                       | Author           | #Avail | Price   |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------|--------|---------|
| RASC 2007                                   | RASC             | 4      | \$14.00 |
| Skywatcher's 07                             | S. Schadick      | 6      | \$18.00 |
| Skywatcher's 06                             | S. Schadick      | 1      | \$5.00  |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b>                        |                  |        |         |
| RASC Centennial Mug                         |                  | 2      | \$5.00  |
| RASC Stickers, blue or white                |                  | lots   | \$1.00  |
| SSSP 2001 Pin (Summer Triangle)             |                  | 29     | \$2.00  |
| SSSP 2002 Pin (Comet)                       |                  | 17     | \$2.00  |
| SSSP 2006 Pin (10)                          |                  | 17     | \$5.00  |
| <b>Books</b>                                |                  |        |         |
| The Backyard Astronomer's Guide             | Dickinson & Dyer | 2      | \$45.00 |
| The Beginner's Observer's Guide             | L. Enright       | 2      | \$19.00 |
| Observer's Handbook 2006                    | RASC             | 5      | 10.00   |
| Observer's Handbook 2005                    | RASC             | 1      | 5.00    |
| Isabelle Williamson Lunar Observing Program | RASC             | 7      | \$10.00 |
| Skyways – Astronomy Handbook for Teachers   | M.L. Whitehorne  | 2      | \$20.00 |
| Pocket Sky Atlas                            | R. Sinnott       | 5      | \$24.50 |
| Binocular Highlights                        | G. Seronik       | 4      | \$35.00 |

*Title*

*Author*

*#Avail*

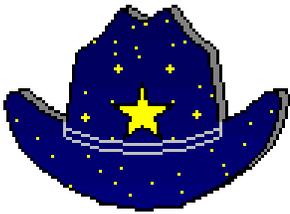
*Price*

### Books

| Title                                  | Author                 | #Avail | Price   |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|---------|
| Exploring the Sky by Day               | T. Dickinson           | 5      | \$9.50  |
| Exploring the Night Sky                | T. Dickinson           | 1      | \$9.50  |
| Night Watch                            | T. Dickinson           | 1      | \$33.00 |
| Summer Stargazing                      | T. Dickinson           | 5      | \$18.00 |
| Night Sky Atlas                        | R. Scagell             | 3      | \$27.00 |
| Stargazing with a Telescope            | R. Scagell             | 2      | \$14.00 |
| The Moon Observer's Guide              | P. Grego               | 5      | \$14.00 |
| The Sun Observer's Guide               | T. Spence              | 3      | \$14.00 |
| Stars                                  | Zim, Baker & Chartrand | 1      | \$10.00 |
| Firefly Planisphere                    | Firefly                | 5      | \$19.00 |
| Firefly Astronomy Dictionary           | Firefly                | 3      | \$14.00 |
| Night Sky Star Wheel                   | Sky Publishing         | 2      | \$15.00 |
| Patterns in the Sky                    | K. Hewitt-White        | 5      | \$19.50 |
| Scientific American Book of the Cosmos | D.H. Levy              | 1      | \$48.00 |
| Deep-Sky Wonders                       | W. Houston             | 2      | \$24.50 |
| Mars Observer's Guide                  | N. Bone                | 2      | \$14.00 |
| Deep Sky Observer's Guide              | N. Bone                | 2      | \$14.00 |
| Practical Astronomy                    | S. Dunlop              | 4      | \$14.00 |
| Field Map of the Moon                  | Sky & Telescope        | 6      | \$12.50 |
| Moon Map (laminated)                   | Sky & Telescope        | 3      | \$6.00  |
| Messier Card                           | Sky & Telescope        | 10     | \$5.00  |
| Saskatoon's Stone                      | Mysyk & Kulyk          | 11     | \$3.00  |
| The Messier Objects                    | S.J. O'Meara           | 1      | \$39.00 |

# Astronomy Roundup, Calgary GA 2007

by Barb Wright



The annual General Assembly was held in Calgary June 28 to July 1. It was in conjunction with AAVSO and ALPO annual meetings. There were 203 registrants, a combined total from all three groups. Les Dickson, as our Centre council rep., attended council meetings on Thursday.

Les Dickson, Rick Huziak and Barb Wright were present at the afternoon session of council meetings to present Saskatoon Centre's proposal to hold the 2009 General Assembly at Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park and Dark Sky Preserve in combination with SSSP.

Les very competently presented, via PowerPoint, the advantages of Cypress Hills and how well a GA fits with SSSP. The motion to award to Saskatoon Centre the 2009 GA was passed. So, Saskatoon Centre, GA 2009, International Year of Astronomy, is ours to host!



*Thursday evening tour at the Rothney Astrophysical Observatory. All Photos by Tenho Tuomi.*

The rest of the Calgary weekend passed with many choices of talks to attend Friday and Saturday, appealing to members of each of the three organizations. Among the presenters were Gord Sarty and Rick Huziak, part of a session on variable stars: High Mass X-ray Binaries for Small Telescopes.

As part of the displays, SSSP had a display of the star party and the SCN film that was made last summer. Mike Clancy also displayed his book about Saskatchewan Parks. Gary Stone sent his display on the "Dryland Sextant" that he made.



*Wade Selvig, one of our distant members.*



*Mike and Anna Clancy and their poster paper on Astronomy in Saskatchewan Parks: A User's Guide*

The RASC General Assembly was Sunday afternoon, when members were brought up to date on RASC activities from the past year, future plans and the financial statement.

A Bison BBQ, Stampede breakfast, and Banquet with award presentations filled up the weekend.



*Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the Saskatoon Centre's display.*



*Tenho Tuomi, Les Dickson and Kathleen Houston enjoying Calgary's hospitality.*

An invitation for us to attend the 2008 GA in North York was extended - "Astronomy night in Canada"

# Casinos are About to Destroy Our Land of Living Skies

by Richard Huziak, Saskatchewan Light Pollution Abatement Committee (SLPAC)

On or before August 10, 2007, the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Association (SIGA) Dakota Dunes Casino located 23-kilometers south of Saskatoon will turn on seven up-facing spotlights, which will form a teepee about 200 meters tall. However, as the beams cross they will extend upward forever into space forming an even larger inverted tepee, since there are no absorbers in place to stop them. Each of the seven lights will be 332 million candle focused 4 kW xenon plasma arc lamps. The lights are expected, according to SIGA quotes, to be seen for 100 kilometers in all directions. This tepee of light is located 7 to 10 kilometers from Pike Lake Provincial Park, Beaver Creek Conservation Area, Brightwater Science and Nature Camp and the Dundurn Military Base. There are over 500 rural acreages also located within a 25-kilometer radius, whose view of the sky and whose yards will be forever changed by this light. SIGA has also erected 126 side-facing lights in their parking lot, which cast shadows in yards in Pike Lake, 7 kilometers away.

So, why is SIGA doing this? Because there is nothing illegal about a single business polluting as much sky as they want with as much light as they want. Saskatchewan has no laws prohibiting or regulating what can be done with any light despite our lobbying at different government levels for over 10 years, and the apparent success and public awareness of the Cypress Hills Dark-Sky Preserve.

To make things worse, SIGA has tendered for the delivery of 24 such lights that will also create light tepees above their casinos being renovated or built in Moose Mountain, Yorkton, Swift Current, Prince Albert and North Battleford. Despite the protests of the SLPAC and a new ENGO called Rural Environmental Preservation Association of Saskatchewan - (REPAS) formed by the residents of the Hamlet of Beaver Creek and Pike Lake, this

lighting scheme will move forward. SIGA did not have the courtesy to answer any of our letters or sit with us in a single meeting. SIGA seems to not care about the environment in any way or about the protests of the citizen who moved to the country to live in a natural rural environment. I should note that our committee does not oppose the casino, just the environmental damage that is being done. But thousands of casinos run viable businesses worldwide without light tepees!

Furthermore, despite over 100 letters to the Government of Saskatchewan, including letters to Premier Lorne Calvert, Minister of the Environment John Nilsen, the Minister Responsible for Liquor and Gaming Authority Debra Higgins, and others, we have received only letters thanking us for our concern and notes that they forwarded our concerns to Minister Nilsen. No one has moved to intervene or secure a meeting for us. Note that the Government of Saskatchewan receives 36% of casino profits, so

for all practical purposes they are a legal partner. So much for Premier Calvert's Green Strategy! If this is the Green Strategy, we are all sunk! If this is the meaning of Land of Living Skies, then we have it completely wrong!

However, despite the bright outlook for the night sky, all is not lost. REPAS will be challenging the Saskatchewan Environment Management and Protection Act (EMPA) looking for an eventual injunction to have the light turned off permanently, and we are also looking at challenging the Saskatchewan Environment Assessment Act. Furthermore, the Saskatchewan Law Reform Commission (SLRC) is reviewing the issue of light pollution and should by the end of the summer make a favourable recommendation to the government that they should adopt some sort of light pollution policy.



*This artist's concept of the Dakota Dunes Casino is now reality. But the tepee does not stop where the picture ends, but continues off for dozens of kilometers in all directions. Will your night sky survive?*

But for all this to happen, we need people to start complaining, and continue complaining loud and long. We need every astronomer and concerned citizen to stand up and be counted ... every astronomer. We need to continue the letter writing and e-mail campaign to SIGA and the provincial government protesting over and over that the environmental destruction of the night-time sky and the light trespass and nuisance that the lights will create on August 10th is simply not acceptable!

It is also certain that mountains of complaints from local residents will start up again once the casino lights turn on on August 10th. What the government needs to hear are the voices of hundreds and thousands of complainants! I urge every one of our members to write letters and send emails to your local MLA, MP, every politician and SIGA representative and to continue to do so until this issue is resolved.

If you don't already have your favourite politicians in mind, we have addresses at the bottom of our casino protest and chronology webpage:

- see [www.dakotadunescasino.ca](http://www.dakotadunescasino.ca) -

(we were smart enough to buy their Canadian domain name :)). But write to whomever you think will listen. You can learn more about our light pollution projects at our normal LPA webpage at:

<http://www.ras.sk.ca/lpc/lpc.htm>

Those who live in cities who will get future tepees of light (Yorkton, Swift Current, etc) should also write directly to their mayors and city councilors pointing out the controversy that Dakota Dunes has created, and suggesting strongly that they need to act now to pass legislation that prevents these lights from being erected to begin with. (Please copy me with your letters and replies so we can determine how well we are doing).

Saskatchewan is the only province with casinos that have up-light tepees. In times of environmental awareness I don't think this is something we want to be proud of. Please don't sit back and allow our Land of Living Skies to be destroyed through inaction.

## The Sleaford Page

by Rick Huziak

Summer maintenance at Sleaford has been lead by Larry Scott, who's spent a few evenings cutting grass. Thanks Larry!. Users should be reminded that grass cutting and general maintenance happens because someone goes out there early and does it! When cutting grass (Larry has found out), cut the observing field, behind and under the U of S Rolloff, around the Warm-up Shelter, Patterson Dome, schoolhouse, stone plaque, driveway and parking lot. Please be careful around buildings as not to dent the aluminum siding. Gas and the lawnmower are located in the schoolhouse, and the schoolhouse key is in the Warm-up Shelter on the electrical wall.

A tool kit and the site eyepieces are now located in Locker 152, which is now padlocked, but accessible using your Sleaford RASC master key. There are tools to fix almost anything. Please keep the tool kit neat.

On June 19, Bill Hydomako and I serviced the 16-inch telescope, replacing factory nylon spacers with a steel thrust-bearing washer kit, and now the focus on the telescope slides smoothly, and the mirror flop and backlash issues have been eliminated. You will now find view through this telescope extra-pleasing. We

are about to purchase an additional 8x50 straight-through finder for the 16-inch to be placed on the bottom edge of the scope.

Bill and I have also started planning the future observatory for the 16-inch and a larger classroom that could accommodate several dozen people. Currently, with students or tours at the site, there is simply not enough room in the existing Warm-up Shelter on frosty evening. Dale Johnson is looking at ways to raise large funds or how to get sponsors for the buildings.



*"Saw these on my way back from Sleaford on July 14th at about 03:15. A nice show of NLC's in the pre-dawn sky."*

*Photo by Larry Scott.*

# Dryland Sextant

by Garry Stone

This is used to measure the altitude of the sun. The instrument is first leveled using the plumb line. The sun is allowed to shine through the square tube and it makes two bright lines at the bottom block. When the lines are equal width then the instrument is accurately set.



Photos by Garry Stone

The arm is first roughly aligned and locked with the thumbscrew. Then fine adjustments are made by rotating the off-centre cam. The magnifying glass is used to read the altitude accurately. On the scale 5 millimetres equals one degree. One millimetre would then be 12 arcminutes. This instrument is actually a half size replica of the original instrument that Garry built.



The original idea for this instrument was to try to duplicate the observation made by Eratosthenes around 250 BC to measure the

circumference of the earth. Eratosthenes had observed that on the longest day of the summer solstice, the midday sun shone to the bottom of a well in the town of Syene (Aswan). He observed that at Alexandria, his home town, the sun cast a shadow with the vertical equal to 1/50 of a degree (7 degrees 12 minutes) during the summer solstice. From knowing the distance between Syene and Alexandria, he was then able to calculate the circumference of the earth.

By using two of the instruments about 300 km apart north and south, and getting the exact distance by GPS, I hope to be able to calculate the circumference of the

earth and duplicate Eratosthenes' observation.

# Observer's Group Notes

by Larry Scott

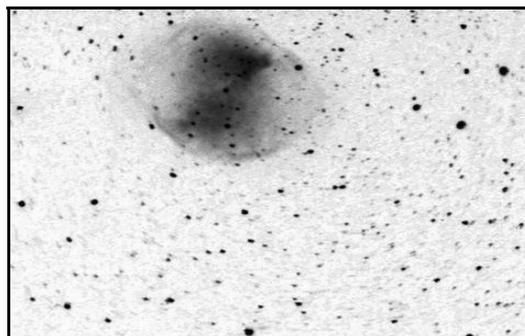
We've managed to sneak in two "official" observing sessions since the last newsletter.

The first occurred on a cool, clear June 8th evening with Norma and Bill. Under reasonably good sky conditions (6-7/10) and very good mosquito conditions (3/10) we saw Saturn, Jupiter, some nice aurora briefly, the space station, a space shuttle chasing it, a magnitude -6 iridium flare, and some summer Messier's.

Not bad for a night of two hours of almost-dark before the sky began to lighten again. With the temperature falling from 16C to 7C during the night the bug population was low and lazy,

which leads into our next session on July 13th.

A well attended affair on a pleasantly warm and humid evening. Skies were again quite good for the eight members who withstood a voracious attack by legions of blood-sucking vampires for varying lengths of time. I'd make this one as sky conditions 7/10 and mosquitoes at least 9/10.



Here is a picture of M27 taken by Bob Johnson at Sleaford last Summer. You can see other photos by members at our club's Yahoo group: <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rascstoon/>

The good news is that by our next session on August 17th there should be a lot less bugs and a lot more dark sky. See you out there.

# Prince Albert Relay for Life

by Ken Maher and Tenho Tuomi

Imagine coming upon a giant tent city / all-night party with over 700 participants up and going from 7:00 p.m. until 7:00 a.m. This is a "Relay for Life." This year the organizers for Prince Albert Relay for Life cancer fundraiser and victim memorial on June 1 invited our astronomy club to set up some of our scopes for this year's event.



*The moon and Jupiter in the morning hours.  
Photo by Tenho Tuomi*

Teams of 10-20 people raise funds and then make sure that at least one person from their team is walking the track at all times through the night. We were there to make ourselves available throughout the night as one of the extra activities for those who were not currently walking. Ken Maher, Garry Stone and Tenho Tuomi volunteered and had a great time sharing our hobby.

We set up our scopes near the track at the Communiplex shortly after 8 p.m. By sweeping Tenho was able to find Venus before the sun set, and we had an immediate audience. Garry later on found Saturn and Mercury. Jupiter rose shortly after the sun set and then we were really in business. Tenho had his scope on Jupiter. Ken had his on Venus and Garry had his on Saturn and people went from one scope to the other. We lost all count of how many looked through our scopes that night but it must have been hundreds. At times there were up to eight people lined up to see Saturn in Garry's scope.

At 1:00 a.m. things slowed down as a scavenger hunt was started, but then a very neat thing happened. The organizers of the scavenger hunt asked if we could be part of the hunt, and provide a task to do. So we asked each group of four who came to take a scope, use its telrad or red-dot finder to find Jupiter, and to look through the eyepiece and tell how many moons were visible (There were three that night). One group of young women was thrilled at the thought of working a telescope, and downright giddy when they found the target all by themselves. It was really something to see. A lot of



*Helping brother to see Venus. Photo by Tenho Tuomi.*

people in Prince Albert learned how to use a scope that night. The Newtonians worked well for that. In fact several groups came back after just to try it again!

This Relay for Life was Prince Albert's seventh annual but, Relays for Life are now held in almost every major city across Canada (including Saskatoon). These events should be something that we seriously

look at for promoting astronomy. It is such a natural fit ... so many people looking for something to do during the night hours.

Some astronomy purists may be put off by the amount of noise (there was a DJ and announcements all night), and the unavoidable light issues (the bunch by the tennis courts were pretty harsh). Being on the "edge" of the gathering there were also some interesting displays of security chasing down rowdy party crashers. But the amount of outreach we were able to do in one night was staggering. Hundreds of people (no exaggeration!) looked through our scopes, asked lots of questions, and were amazed to see the moon and planets up close. The time between 8:00 p.m., when we started, and 3:30 a.m., when we packed everything up was over in a flash!

Some expressions we heard that night: What do you have in this one? Where do you look? Is that your telescope? How much did it cost? Cool! (Most common expression) I am going to get my mom (dad) to see this. Let's come back when the lineup isn't so long. I have a telescope at home but don't know how to use it. Why don't you start an astronomy club in Prince Albert? They even brought their own language (when we were talking declination and right-ascension).

Regarding Venus: Is that the moon? How do you know it is Venus? How far is it?

Regarding Saturn: Is that a Saturn? It is just like the picture. Sure you don't have it pasted inside, like a sticker?

# The Messier, H-400 & H-400-II, FNGC, Binoc & EtU Club

*Join the Club! Observe all 110 Messier, 110 Finest NGC, 400 Herschel I or 40 Herschel II  
Explore the Universe, or 35 Binocular Objects and earn great OBSERVING CERTIFICATES!*

## MESSIER CLUB

### Certified at 110 Objects:

R.Huziak, G.Sarty, S.Alexander,  
S.Ferguson, D.Jeffrey, D.Chatfield,  
B.Christie, K.Noesgaard, M.Stephens,  
B.Hydomako, T.Tuomi, L.Scott,  
G.Charpentier, B. Johnson, M. Clancy,  
L. Dickson

|                  |         |
|------------------|---------|
| Brent Burlingham | 109     |
| Ken Maher        | 105     |
| Ron Waldner      | 105     |
| Donna May        | New! 97 |
| Brent Gratias    | 96      |
| Mike Oosterlaken | 93      |
| Norma Jensen     | 92      |
| Lorne Jensen     | 89      |
| Kathleen Houston | 84      |
| Margo Miller     | 77      |
| Wade Selvig      | 75      |
| Garry Stone      | 57      |
| Ellen Dickson    | 30      |
| Jeff Swick       | 24      |
| Barb Wright      | 23      |
| Brian Friesen    | 15      |

Bruce Brandell 5

## FINEST NGC CLUB

### Certified at 110 Objects:

R.Huziak, D.Jeffrey, G.Sarty,  
D.Chatfield, T.Tuomi

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| Larry Scott        | 110 |
| Scott Alexander    | 97  |
| Bill Hydomako      | 55  |
| Sandy Ferguson     | 23  |
| Mike Oosterlaken   | 20  |
| George Charpentier | 12  |
| Ken Maher          | 8   |
| Mike Clancy        | 7   |

## Chatfield BINOCULAR

### CERTIFICATE (35 Objects):

M.Stephens, T.Tuomi, M.Clancy,  
R.Huziak, K. Maher

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Brent Gratias    | 36 |
| Mike Oosterlaken | 32 |
| Anna Clancy      | 24 |

## EXPLORE the UNIVERSE

### Certified for Certificate:

M.Clancy, T.Tuomi, K.Maher, Brent  
Gratias

## HERSCHEL 400 CLUB

### Certified at 400 Objects:

D.Jeffrey, R.Huziak, D.Chatfield

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Gord Sarty       | 251 |
| Tenho Tuomi      | 222 |
| Scott Alexander  | 117 |
| Mike Oosterlaken | 68  |
| Sandy Ferguson   | 18  |

## HERSCHEL 400-II CLUB

### Certified at 400 Objects:

|                   |     |     |
|-------------------|-----|-----|
| Darrell Chatfield | Up! | 299 |
| Richard Huziak    |     | 211 |

The Messier & Finest NGC lists can be found in the Observer's Handbook. The Explore the Universe list is available on the National web site. The Herschel 400 list is available at the web site listed below. The Binocular List will be available at each general meeting or can be mailed out on request to distant members.



On-line Messier and Finest NGC lists, charts and logbooks - check out:

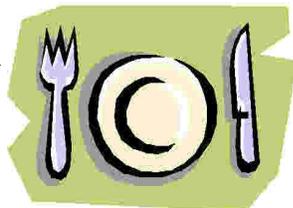
<http://www.rasc.ca/observe.htm>

On-line Herschel 400 List - check out the official site at:

<http://www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/herschel/hers400.html>

## FUND RAISING DINNER

Mulberry's (sturdy  
stone) - 124-3rd Ave  
North,



*has been postponed until the fall, due  
to limited interest.*

contact Barb (249-1990) [wrightb@sasktel.net](mailto:wrightb@sasktel.net),  
or Norma (244-7360) [njensen@scs.sk.ca](mailto:njensen@scs.sk.ca).



On July 7, Rick, Kathleen, Tenho and Velma went to the Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park to show slides and give a talk on astronomy. Unfortunately it was cloudy so that we could not have a public star night as well. Photo by Tenho Tuomi.