

Saskatoon Skies

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

Vol. 40, No. 5

May 2009

Saskatoon Astronomy Week



When Centre members set up their scopes at the Farmer's Market on April 4 as part of Saskatoon Astronomy Week, Saturday shoppers enjoyed a peek at the Sun. Dean Sproull, a member from Lloydminster, was a popular draw with his 11" SCT. (See more on pages 6-7.)

Photo by Jeff Swick



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To view *Saskatoon Skies* in colour, see our Website:
<http://homepage.usask.ca/~ges125/rasc/newsletters.html>

MEMBERSHIP? IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO JOIN!

Regular: \$77.00 /year

Youth: \$41.00 /year

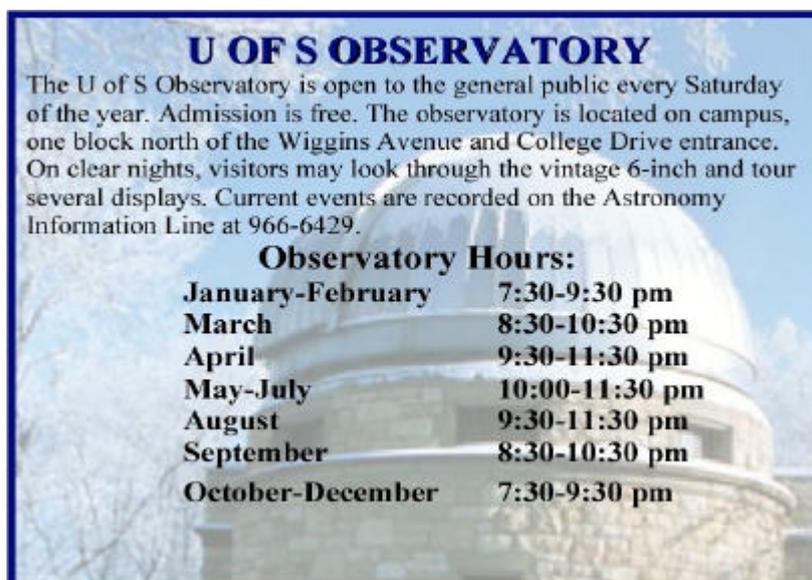
Associate: \$33 /year

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, Mark de Jong, or renew through the National Office and let Mark 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 (electronic format)
- SkyNews Magazine (bimonthly)
- use of the Centre library
- rent the Centre's Telescopes
<http://homepage.usask.ca/ges125/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 norj@sasktel.net .



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:

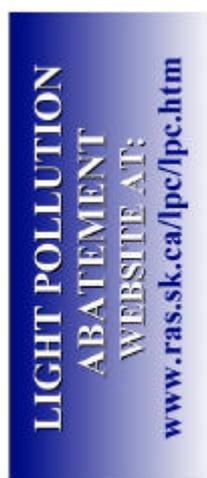
January-February	7:30-9:30 pm
March	8:30-10:30 pm
April	9:30-11:30 pm
May-July	10:00-11:30 pm
August	9:30-11:30 pm
September	8:30-10:30 pm
October-December	7:30-9:30 pm

SASKATOON CENTRE'S MAIN OFFICERS:

President – Barb Wright, 249-1990
Secretary – Al Hartridge, 373-0034
Vice-President – Jeff Swick, 373-3902
Treasurer – Norma Jensen, 244-7360

**Bottle Drive &
Canadian Tire \$**
By Darrell Chatfield

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

Newsletter Editors – Christine Kulyk & Tenho Tuomi
Copy & Collate – Les & Ellen Dickson
Labels & Temps – Mark de Jong
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 material. **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 to the editor at clkulyk@sasktel.net – preferred as plain unformatted ASCII text files without line breaks. Images sent by e-mail should be attached files.

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 indicated), provided that proper source credit is given. DEADLINE for submissions for each month's issue is the 20th of the preceding month. Saskatoon Skies accepts Commercial advertising. Please call the editor 306-858-2453 for rates. Members can advertise non-commercial items free of charge.

RASC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 11	RASC Executive Meeting – 6:30 pm, 175 Physics, U of S	Barb Wright	249-1990
May 11	RASC General Meeting – 7:30 pm, 175 Physics, U of S	Barb Wright	249-1990
May 15	Observers Group – 9:00 pm, Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	934-5801
June 15	RASC Executive Meeting – 6:30 pm, 175 Physics, U of S	Barb Wright	249-1990
June 15	RASC General Meeting – 7:30 pm, 175 Physics, U of S	Barb Wright	249-1990
June 26	Observers Group – 9:30 pm, Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	934-5801
July 24	Observers Group – 9:30 pm, Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	934-5801
July 24-26	Calgary RASC Star-B-Q – Caroline, AB	http://calgary.rasc.ca/starbq2009.htm	
Aug 13-16	RASC General Assembly & SSSP – Cypress Hills	Barb Wright	249-1990
Sep 5-7	Spruce Woods Star Party – Spruce Woods Park, MB	http://winnipeg.rasc.ca/sprucewoods/	
Sep 15-20	Northern Prairie Starfest – Black Nugget Lake, AB	http://www.edmontonrasc.com/nps.html	
Sep 19-20	Alberta Star Party - Starland Recreation Area, AB	http://calgary.rasc.ca/asp2009.htm	

Minutes of the General Meeting, April 20, 2009 *by Norma Jensen*

Following our Spring Potluck Social at 6:30 pm & an Astronomy Art Activity in which many members and their families participated, a brief business meeting was held.

1. Meeting called to order at 8:30 pm.
2. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting: Moved by Ellen Dickson, seconded by Rick Huziak, and carried.
3. Resolution to give Larry Scott permission to take Sleaford lawnmower to mini-tune for tune-up: Moved by Norma Jensen, seconded by Bruce Brandell, and carried.
4. Sleaford Site: Rick Huziak to give Darrell Chatfield a list of needed repairs/maintenance.
5. Newsletter needs reports of latest public education events.
6. Discussion of general protocols in recording minutes and in approving/responding to them.
7. Christine Kulyk presented a proposal to publish a special issue of *Saskatoon Skies* to celebrate 40 years of the RASC Saskatoon Centre. Christine will get cost quotes so that we can decide about this at a future meeting.
8. Election of Events Coordinator: Patricia Gakis was nominated by Christine Kulyk and voted to the position unanimously.
9. SSSP/GA (Barb Wright): Heads-up about all the various volunteer needs for this year — Be prepared to roll up your sleeves!
10. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

President's Message

by Barb Wright

First, a BIG thank you to everyone who took part in our Saskatoon Astronomy Week and 100 Hours of Astronomy events! Thanks especially to organizers and site captains Jeff Swick, Ellen Dickson, Graham Hartridge, and Ron Waldron. Thank you also to our City's Mayor and Councillors for proclaiming Saskatoon Astronomy Week, and to all the people in our community who welcomed us into their facilities, helped publicize our events, or came out to enjoy them.

Thank you also to everyone who took part in our Messier Marathon on March 28 or the Astronomy

Weekend at Anglin Lake on April 17-18. Our IYA celebrations have gotten off to a great start, and we look forward to seeing all of you at upcoming events, such as the "Galileo Gala" on May 11 and the GA/SSSP in Cypress Hills on August 13-16. **Registration for the GA/SSSP is now open!** Volunteers are urgently needed to provide overnight billets in Saskatoon for RASC Council Reps before and after the event, plus transportation, and a host of other stuff. Please call me at 306-249-1990 if you can help!

MONDAY, May 11, 7:30 PM
Room 175, Physics Bldg., U of S

There will be an Executive Meeting at 6:30 pm.

General Meeting & “Galileo Gala”

Get ready to be entertained by music and video to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Galileo’s first telescopic observations.

BOOKS FOR SALE

by Bruce Brandell, Sales Coordinator

Look for these featured titles available for purchase at an upcoming meeting:

CELESTIAL SAMPLER

by Sue French (2005) ----- \$26.00
An in-depth month-by-month sampling of the stars and constellations, with valuable tips on observing techniques followed by 12 very clear monthly sky charts showing constellations, asterisms, clusters, and nebulas. For example, on pages 126-7, you are led from Albireo (head of the Swan), through Anser (in Vulpecula) to the Coathanger (Brocchi’s Cluster), which I readily found with 10x50 binoculars last summer.

ATLAS OF THE CONSTELLATIONS

by Giles Sparrow (2007)-----\$15.00
Charts and diagrams of all 88 constellations, with brief descriptions of the main features of each, including clusters, galaxies, parts of the Milky Way, and nebulas. Features detailed maps of six selected parts of the celestial sphere: the North and South poles, the Square of Pegasus, Orion, Ursa Major, and the Milky Way.

Editor’s Corner

by Christine Kulyk

First, I want to say thank you to Kathleen Houston for organizing the Astronomy Art Activity at our April meeting. I thoroughly enjoyed having the chance to take part in a group activity that produced something tangible as well as creative. It was especially great to



see all the kids and other family members. Let’s plan more hands-on activities for future gatherings!

Second, let’s welcome Patricia Gakis to the Centre Council. Pat was elected as our new Events Coordinator at the April meeting, replacing Jeff Swick, who has moved into the position of Vice President.

Finally, congratulations to Stan Shadick, whose immensely popular *Skywatcher’s Calendar* (published by Heritage House) has won a Bronze Award at the 2009 National and World Calendar Awards, in the category of Most Original Wall Calendar. Check with our Sales Coordinator, Bruce Brandell, if you haven’t yet purchased your copy of the *Skywatcher’s Calendar 2009*.

Photo by Tenho Tuomi

Anglin Lake Starry Nights

by Norma Jensen

On April 17-18, we went on our second annual trek to Anglin Lake to spend the weekend looking up. This year, there were no visitors to our site, so we spent a very dark evening in mini-star-party mode. Mark de Jong hunted variable stars, while Barb Wright, Norma Jensen, and Murray Strankay looked at any and every thing. Shelley LePoudre enjoyed her new Dob. Mary de Jong, Cass West, and Kathy Strankay also spent time with us, as did Nigel West with his binoculars. The only “watchers beware” were the pools of water and soft grounds of spring that we could feel and hear, but not see.

There was some excitement while looking for Comet Cardinal when Norma spotted a bright fuzzy in Auriga. (Later, at Sleaford, it was determined to be NGC 1907 near M38.) A beautiful green, black-banded aurora rose in the north to our delight and then dismay, as it moved to cover all but a bit of the eastern sky.

Still, a great evening; and we were happy to have set up, as we woke Saturday to cloud and later, rain. Ron Waldron and Mike Clancy came that day to give afternoon talks to visitors — which we became. Ron spoke about IYA and backyard astronomy, showcasing his star shelter and scopes and speaking of his wife Val’s support for his astronomy passion. (Hand on heart, he also told a story of an earlier sacrifice for love.) Mike talked about lunar astronomy. (Drat! No Robert Service poem this year to accompany the presentation.) Murray showed us a free-download program for night skies called World Wide Telescope. Debbie Greening from Land of the Loons Resort graciously provided us with a wonderful Saturday evening meal at \$10 a plate and a complimentary pancake breakfast on Sunday morning.

Same time next year?

Help Saskatchewan Set a Meteorite Record

by Christine Kulyk

Be a part of Saskatchewan meteorite history! Volunteers are urgently needed to help recover meteorites from the Buzzard Coulee, Saskatchewan, fall area. There are lots of pieces still lying on the ground, but time is of the essence now, as farmers will soon be starting spring tilling, which will bury some of the meteorites.

Alberta is the current Canadian record holder as the Bruderheim meteorite shower of 1960 yielded ~700 meteorite fragments, totalling over 300 kilograms. At last count, over 500 pieces have been found from the Buzzard Coulee fall so far. Now, you have the chance

to help put Saskatchewan over the top and beat Alberta’s record!

Several of our members have already taken part in the search, including Garry Stone, Tenho Tuomi, Gord Sarty, Bob Johnson, and Rick Huziak; but many more are needed. Contact Christine Kulyk (306-374-0811; clkulyk@sasktel.net) to join the hunt. For details, see the [Prairie Meteorite Search Website: http://www.ucalgary.ca/prairie_meteorite_search](http://www.ucalgary.ca/prairie_meteorite_search)

Meteorite hunter Mel Stauffer of the University of Saskatchewan has recently managed to acquire a 2-kilogram chunk of Buzzard Coulee meteorite (with approximate dimensions 11x10x8 cm). He is back out in the field now, but when he returns, he will put together a display for the U of S Natural History Museum so that we can all have the chance to see this visitor from space that has become a special piece of Saskatchewan history.

Line search at Buzzard Coulee, April 15.

Photo by Tenho Tuomi



Saskatoon Astronomy Week Part Two

Our April issue carried reports from some of the events that took place during Saskatoon Astronomy Week and the 100 Hours of Astronomy effort that was part of the International Year of Astronomy (IYA) initiative. Here are some more highlights.

Ellen Dickson: On April 2, Ron Waldron's IYA 100 Hours of Astronomy presentation and a presentation by Richard Huziak on the Buzzard Coulee Meteorite took place at the Fairhaven School. The audience was made up of over 200 people of all ages (children to seniors): teachers, parents, and students.

After the presentations, all went outside to look through five telescopes and one pair of binoculars. A lot of people didn't even realize that the Moon was so interesting: one woman, after looking through Les's binoculars, was blown away by seeing the Moon through my scope with a Moon filter. She was like the little girl that looked through Jeff Swick's telescope (as he reported in the April issue) when she gasped



Ron's "Galileo Scope"

Photo by Ron Waldron

and said, "I just had my Galileo Moment." She returned time and time again to the scope to see the Moon throughout the evening.

On April 3 at the Lakewood Civic Centre, approximately 14 scopes arrived to service the public with sidewalk astronomy. Again the Moon was an easy draw, with Saturn (I believe) a close second. The number of people at the event was approximately

150.

Saturday morning, April 4, caught us early risers at the Saskatoon Farmer's Market with solar observing across the street from the main Market doors (by the parking lot). A lot of people showed up to observe and then talk to the table crew indoors. We had at least five people join as temporary members. A number of people were interested in our Dark Skies display and then seeing the various good versus bad lighting right in the area. Attendance to this event was ~250 people. A good turnout by both attendees and RASC volunteers.

On the evening of April 4, the last official event of the 100 Hours of Astronomy was held at Beaver Creek, with a presentation by Kathleen Houston. This event took the cake in my humble opinion. Kathleen had them "packed into the rafters." I have never seen the interpretive centre so packed. It was standing room only, and then only slightly standing room, so much so that there were people in the lobby area around the doors about four to six deep. Think of a whole lot of dominoes...and you've got the idea.

Kathleen presented the information in a "gentle" style: no shouting, no rebuking, just a smooth delivery, without a lot of ums and "ands." You would think that she had been doing this for years, not just her first time. Kudos, Kathleen, well done.



Farmer's Market

Photo by Jeff Swick



Beaver Creek

Photo by Jeff Swick

volunteered to be Mr. G. I asked him to spy our local Moon for the audience with his amazing handheld telescope. At the opportune time, a young girl held up my rough drawing of the gibbous Moon on cardboard, looking unmistakably

Following this incredible presentation was the night viewing, with another ~200 people. People that did not attend the presentation came for the viewing and weren't disappointed. There were lineups of ~10 to 14 people at each telescope. Ouch. Some were quite amazed at the sights. Others (younger) were intrigued with our green laser pointers. (Ahhh, the simple joys of youth!) A good time was had by all.

Galilean in character to show the detail seen for the first time in his drawings. Mr. G used a rare telescope from my collection of cardboard tubes, transformed into a New Year's Eve rainstick noisemaker.

The unofficial event — the Gastronomy — was attended by 12 people at Thomas the Cook on Idylwyld Drive. Dinner was enjoyable, and everyone was stuffed. I would call this entire series of events a whopping success.

When I talked about the discovery of the Galilean moons, a smiling girl held up my mottled coloured exercise ball as Jupiter, and three small children each had balloons as the moons of Jupiter. A fourth moon was added to the group when I explained how Galileo saw all four moons six days after his first observation in January of 1610. One moon even spontaneously orbited around Jupiter, which pleased the audience! She was very happy with the enthusiasm of the spectators.

Kathleen Houston: I was very excited about giving my first talk at Beaver Creek. I set up my materials for the talk, reflected on the plan to have actors create a play about Galileo's discoveries, show slides, and demo how to put my truss tube telescope together. I laid out the IYA goodies on the steps for the audience to take, and a young boy was very happy to help me with the slide projector. Ron Waldron's refractor scope was a helpful prop.



Several kids got into the act during Kathleen Houston's presentation at Beaver Creek

Photo by George Charpentier

Galileo's discovery of Jupiter's moons is one of the reasons this year is International Year of Astronomy. Galileo made his observations with the latest innovation in telescopes, which is quite remarkable. I was inspired by the drawings that appear in *Sidereus Nuncius* and my research for the GA/SSSP 2009 pin design.

I wanted Galileo's discoveries to be an experience, and invited actors from the audience to help me tell the story. A tall First Nations young boy

SKY BUYS & MIRROR CELLS

The Saskatoon Centre's Swap and Sale Page

5" Astroscan telescope. Red exterior. Good condition.

8" Celestron Celestar Deluxe S/C telescope. Includes many extras and upgraded items, such as finder, W/O diagonal, Feathertouch focuser, Telrad, Bob's Knobs, Dry Eye dew heater system, padded main scope case, and tripod bag. This scope has great optics, as attested to by a former Celestron employee at a previous SSSP. This scope has seen me through 3 certificates, and will track for hours on end. If you want a great scope, then please consider this one. Over \$3,300 invested. Asking \$1,700. Will consider offers.

Please contact Darrell (306-374-9278; novachat@sasktel.net) about any of the above items.



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The Planets This Month, May 2009

by Murray D. Paulson, RASC Edmonton Centre

The end of April saw a fine evening apparition of **Mercury**, and over the following three weeks, it will make a dash back to the Sun for superior conjunction. On May 18, Mercury will pass 40 arc-minutes below the Sun. It then departs to the morning sky, where it will be very difficult to observe, even at its greatest western elongation in the second week of June. This is an apparition best viewed in a daytime scope.

Venus starts off the month residing in Pisces in the morning sky. If you are an early riser, you may see it shining at magnitude -4.5 in the southeast. It will lie close to the horizon just before sunrise (5:45 am). In the eyepiece, it presents a 37" crescent. The crescent will fatten up over the month, and by June 6, Venus will come to dichotomy, a 50% illuminated disk. It will shine at magnitude -4.3 at the time and span 23.6". At this time of year, the ecliptic is so tipped back toward the horizon that it is easier to set up a scope with computer or setting circles to find the planets in the daytime. The seeing is much better higher up, and you don't have to get up so early!

At the beginning of May, **Mars** shines at magnitude 1.1 and shows a tiny 4.5" disk in the eyepiece. It doesn't get much better as we turn into June when Mars still shines at magnitude 1.1 and subtends a 4.7" gibbous disk which won't show much detail in the eyepiece. The god of war spends the month in Pisces. During this month, Mars follows 6 degrees behind Venus as it heads away from the Sun.

Jupiter starts off May shining at magnitude -2.2, and sits in eastern Capricorn. In the eyepiece, it has expanded to a 38.1" disk but lies low in the southeast morning sky. The twilight will make for a narrow window to spot it. Use binoculars in the southeast before sunrise. On May 28, Jupiter passes 23' below magnitude 7.8 Neptune. It will be cool to see these two gas giants in the same high-power eyepiece field. Jupiter will subtend 41.3" at the time and reside at 4.78 AU, compared with Neptune out at 29.8 AU. Jupiter now shines at magnitude -2.4. Summer twilight

will make this a bit difficult to observe, but it is certainly worth a try.

Saturn has been quite a spectacle this year with the rings near edge on. This month, they are noticeably much wider than the first times I saw it this season. This month, the rings are tilted up at 4.1 degrees, and Saturn shines at magnitude 0.7. In the eyepiece, the planet subtends 18.8". By the end of the month, Saturn will have faded slightly to magnitude 0.9, and the disk will have shrunk imperceptibly to 18.0". Have you gotten any of the Titan events? I have been skunked so far. (The events are synchronized to the wee morning hours, and through some trick of the elements, I have been clouded out for all of them.) There are a few left, so give the next two a shot. The good thing is they happen at a much better time of night. Good luck, and clear skies!

Titan Events for May (Eclipses & Shadow Transits):
Ec=Eclipse (D=Disappearance; R=Reappearance)
ShI=Shadow Ingress; ShE=Shadow Egress

Date	Event	UT	Local time	Local Date
7-May	EcD	7:23	1:23	May 7
7-May	EcR	12:40	6:40	May 7
15-May	ShI	5:26	23:26	May 14
15-May	ShE	10:39	4:39	May 15
23-May	EcD	6:30	0:30	Night of May 22
23-May	EcR	12:06	6:06	May 23
31-May	ShI	4:32	22:32	May 30
31-May	ShE	10:00	4:00	May 31



Pieces of heaven:
Buzzard Coulee
meteorites collected
by Murray Paulson,
Brad Newman, and
Jen Newman on
April 9-10.

Photo by Murray Paulson

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 II, 135 Lunar, or 35 Binocular objects, or Explore the Universe 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. Hydromako, T. Tuomi, L. Scott, G. Charpentier, B. Johnson, M. Clancy, L. Dickson, B. Burlingham

Ken Maher	Done!	110
Norma Jensen		108
Ron Waldron		105
Brent Gratias		96
Mike Oosterlaken		93
Kathleen Houston		89
Margo Millar		77
Wade Selvig		75
Garry Stone		57
Ellen Dickson		32
Jeff Swick		24
Barb Wright		23
Bruce Brandell		5
Katelyn Metanczuk		4

FINEST NGC CLUB

Certified at 110 Objects:

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

Larry Scott	Done!	110
Scott Alexander		97
Sandy Ferguson		23
Mike Oosterlaken		20
George Charpentier		13
Ken Maher		10
Mike Clancy		7

Chatfield BINOCULAR CERTIFICATE

Certified at 35 to 40 Objects:

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

Brent Gratias	Done!	36
Mike Oosterlaken		32
Anna Clancy		24

EXPLORE the UNIVERSE

Certified for Certificate:

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

Sharon Dice	New!	23
Katelyn Metanczuk		15

Isabel Williamson Lunar Observing Certificate

Norma Jensen		50
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HERSCHEL 400 CLUB

Certified at 400 Objects:

D. Jeffrey, R. Huziak, D. Chatfield

Tenho Tuomi		398
Gord Sarty		251
Scott Alexander		117
Mike Oosterlaken		68
Sandy Ferguson		18

HERSCHEL 400-II CLUB

Darrell Chatfield		315
Rick 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 website.

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/observing>

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

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

Copies of the Isabel Williamson Lunar Observing Program Guide can be purchased from Bruce Brandell.

Program details can be found at: <http://www.rasc.ca/williamson/index.shtml>



Observers Group Notes

by Larry Scott

Very little to report from Sleaford, as the April 17 Observers Group was cancelled due to weather conditions. We did get out on April 19 for a few hours. A pleasant evening with dry, calm conditions, but we were clouded out around midnight. We were able to spot Comet C/2008 T2 (Cardinal) in Auriga, as well as a few other objects, before the skies turned on us.

Next scheduled Observers Group will be May 15 at 21:00. Sunset is 20:52, followed by about an hour and a half of twilight. That is the Friday of the long weekend, so if you're unavailable, then I will probably be back out the following weekend. Check <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rascstoon/> for updates. Dark, moonless evenings are available from about May 12 to 26. If you have any questions or requests, please call me at 934-5801.

Note from Ken Maher: After a year of waiting M83 has come around again and tonight I got it! My Messiers are now done.

I miss having such an excellent group as you all to go out observing with, not having made any astronomy contacts down here in Collingwood. So you were the first ones I wanted to tell when I got home. Clear Skies everyone!