

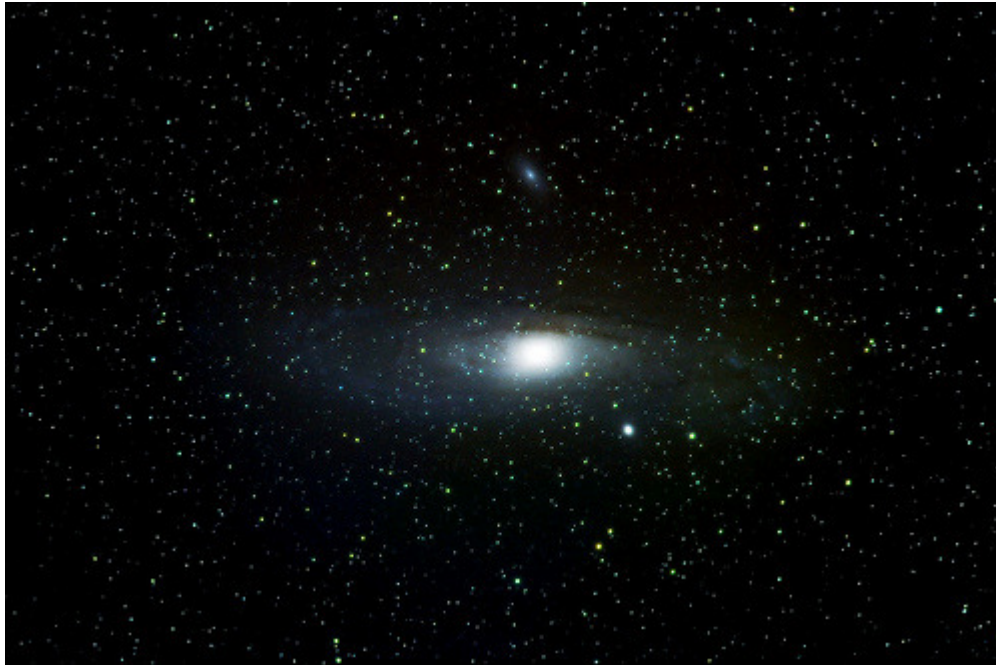
Saskatoon Skies

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

Vol. 43, No. 10

October 2012

Annual General Meeting this Month



Who says you can't take decent photos from inside the city? Take a good look at the Andromeda Galaxy M31 taken with a Nikon D5000 at ISO 800 on the evening of Sept. 21st by Dick Kirk. The equipment used was a Skywatcher Equinox 80ED APO with a Tele Vue 0.8 field flattener.



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To view *Saskatoon Skies* in colour, see our Website:

<http://homepage.usask.ca/~ges125/rasc/newsletters.html>

MEMBERSHIP? JOIN TODAY!

Regular: \$80.00 /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 National Office at <national@RASC.ca>!

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
 - 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 – Jeff Swick, 373-3902
Secretary – Ron Waldron, 382-9428
Vice-President – James Gorkoff, 644-1343
Treasurer – Norma Jensen, 244-7360

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

If you cannot make it to a meeting but would like to contribute your Canadian Tire money please call me at 934-7046.

**LIGHT POLLUTION
ABATEMENT
WEBSITE AT:
www.ras.sk.ca/lpc/lpc.htm**

Newsletter Editor – Ron Waldron
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 rmwaldron@shaw.ca as a .doc, no indents, no tabs, one line between paragraphs. Images: .jpg please, no larger than 1 – 1.5 MB, sent by e-mail as 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 1st of the month. Saskatoon Skies accepts commercial advertising. Please call the editor 306-665-3392 for rates. Members can advertise non-commercial items free of charge.

RASC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 13	Observers Group – Dusk, Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	
Oct. 15	RASC Executive Meeting – 6:30 PM, 175 Physics, U of S	Jeff Swick	373-3902
Oct. 15	Annual General Meeting – 7:30 PM, 175 Physics, U of S	Jeff Swick	373-3902
Nov. 17	Observers Group – Dusk, Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	934-5801
Nov.19	General Meeting – 7:30 PM, 175 Physics, U of S		

For a complete list of club events, please check out: <http://www.usask.ca/rasc/activities.html>

RASC SASKATOON CENTRE GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, October 15th, 7:30 PM

Room 175, Physics Bldg., U of S

Program

Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers

Stories and Stars – What I Did With My Summer Holidays

A presentation by Mike Clancy

NOTE: There will be an executive meeting at 6:30 PM

Where is Ask Astro?



Are You an Ask Astro-Nut? (pun intended)

I know I am. Where else can you get your astronomical queries answered both accurately and anonymously? I never knew who he/she was before I became editor and I certainly have noticed his/her absence since I became editor.

It could be as simple as waiting for a question. If you have a question for Ask Astro, why not send it to me, the new editor and I will put it on our RASC Yahoo site to see if we can get Ask Astro to respond.

Ron Waldron, editor (rmwaldron@shaw.ca)

What I Did with my Summer Vacation

Stories and Stars around the Province – by Mike Clancy



Anna and I began the task of revisiting Saskatchewan's provincial and regional parks to revise the Users' Guide we'd published back in 2006 so we organized a tour that saw us criss-cross the province several times in order to accommodate work, family and home needs. The bulk of the travel was done from mid June to mid July so daylight hours were plentiful as we'd a lot of photography to do, but this left us little time to observe the stars. We partnered with Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport to provide our "Stories and Stars" binocular-oriented astronomy talk as we travelled, giving 8 such presentations and handing out a lot of RASC information as we went. For those of you not familiar with the talk, I intersperse a variety of Robert Service poetry with brief talks of astronomical interest – I talk about the Northern Lights after reciting "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" for instance. Sometimes the skies cooperated and sometimes not which is fairly typical! On a couple of talks Tenho Tuomi joined me with his ever-popular "Meteorites and Meteor-wrongs" talk while his charming wife Velma gave a stirring rendition of "The Gingerbread Man". It was a full and busy summer, and all I will provide here is a brief overview of our peregrinations!

20Jun12 – Good Spirit Lake Provincial Park – I spoke with the park staff and a school group on the beach, enjoying a late, late evening until the bugs

drove us away; there were 18 people in attendance and the skies generally cooperated as I helped the park staff set up and use their brand-new Sky Watcher 8" Dob; "first light" for them was Saturn!

21Jun12 – Duck Mountain Provincial Park – the park staff had arranged the talk with a school group so I presented to 45 staff, children and family/teachers. A huge bonfire had been built which gave dramatic effect to the stories but they hadn't arranged binoculars so the only equipment we had was my travel 'scope and 15x70 Celestrons! This limited what we could see so I concentrated on the Summer Triangle, constellations and views of Saturn and Mars. Several of the participants had never seen Saturn's rings except in pictures so they were quite excited!

04Jul12 – Meadow Lake Provincial Park (Kimball Lake) – I presented to 60 or so people in two waves; the first had small children so they departed shortly after the stories while the second group showed up to observe under what turned out to be fairly clear skies. Of interest was a family from South America who had never really seen the Northern Hemisphere stars so they were very attentive! One young lady, perhaps 10 years old, became my helper in handing out materials; her mother came up to me afterward to thank me as the child had certain behavioural difficulties and yet clearly enjoyed being "a part of the show", as it were!

09Jul12 – Moose Mountain Provincial Park – only 17 people turned out to observe which a real pity as the night turned out to be the clearest of them all; the Milky Way was so bright it cast shadows! The group had their own equipment and we observed long after the usual end time; questions seemed endless and certainly tested my abilities – I was exhausted by 0100hrs!

10Aug12 – Tenho and Velma joined Anna and I at Emma Lake Provincial Park to present to 41 people on a fairly poor night for observing. It was cloudy and somewhat clammy with rain threatening in the area so most of the audience had drifted off by 2200hrs when the skies started to clear a bit – by

2230hrs it was as clear as could be and the only people left were an Asian family with 3 small children as well as 2 ladies who'd wandered over late. Still, they enjoyed a "private" tour of the heavens under a sky so clear that the Andromeda Galaxy could be seen naked-eye!

11Aug12 – We joined Tenho and Velma at Narrow Hills Provincial Park (Lower Fishing Lake) to give a presentation to 39 people on the beach, and again the skies scowled at us. Rain showers had been dancing through the area all day and the best we could manage that night was "sucker-hole" viewing of a few objects. Still, I think everyone in attendance enjoyed themselves and the comments were favourable – we've already been invited back for next year!

16Aug12 – Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park – I'd been asked to give the "Living Skies" lecture at the Saskatchewan Summer Star Party so I spoke to 110 or so people in the open-air amphitheater. While this was no observing component so it was also the shortest of all presentations at about 45 minutes instead of the more typical 2 ½ hours. I was honored by the offer, and I think everyone enjoyed themselves!

15Sep12 – Ogema Regional Park – I'd been asked to give a presentation on the "Star Gazer Express", a tourist train operated by the Southern Prairie Railway. We'd tried to set up a series of similar excursions, but there were issues with illness in my extended family, poor ticket sales for some of the late-evening runs, not to mention weather-related delays. As a result, of the 8 scheduled performances this was the only one! Still, the 38 people on the train enjoyed the show and the skies kind of cooperated. The night was clouding over and we would get an early-morning shower so the skies were kind of milky but we still got in binocular views of Capella, the Andromeda Galaxy, Mirfak Star field and Perseus Double Cluster as well as a tour of the constellations from Ursa Major to Sagitta and the Brocchi Cluster. Binary stars were seen as well as a faint and short-lived aurora display so we enjoyed a warm night for 1 ½ hours or so although there was so much more we could have seen had the night been cloudless – the southern horizon seemed limitless at first!



So, to conclude, we travelled nearly 15,000km to revise our manuscript and gave 8 astronomy presentations as we drove about. Nearly 400 people heard me speak (which might be a good thing, you'll have to ask them!) and we handed out bundles of RASC information at every stop along the way. It was tiring and yet a lot of fun, particularly when people are so clearly enjoying their tour of Saskatchewan's Living Skies!

Observer's Group Report

by Larry Scott

The September 15th Observers Group was clouded out. It was, however, a beautiful fall day which allowed Dick and I to mow the yard in preparation for the Sleaford Open House the following Saturday. Hopefully we're done mowing for the year and won't need the snow blower till Christmas.

I'm sure much will be written elsewhere regarding the Sleaford Open House on September 22nd. In brief, pleasant weather and decent skies kept Rick, Norma and myself observing till about 04:00 !

The next Observers Group is scheduled for October 13th with Moonless evenings from the 7th to the 19th.

Meeting Minutes – September 17th, 2012 *by Ron Waldron, Secretary*

Minutes of the Executive Meeting

The meeting began at 6:34 PM

Approval of Minutes of June Executive Meeting – Moved by Les Dickson seconded by Ron Waldron . Passed

Treasurer – nil report

Fundraising – nil report

Centre Rep – nil report. Sleaford Site Coordinator Report – nil report

Events Coordinator

Barb Wright reported that the cheque from national office for the transit of Venus event has been received and a full statement of expenses will be forthcoming.

Stan Shadick has let us know that no students are available to run telescopes at Sleaford this weekend so members will need to bring their own scopes in large numbers. The pre-Sleaford barbecue / Potluck for members begins at 4:30 PM. The convoy leaves the Field House at 7:00 PM so members should be setup by 7:00 PM.

Members are encouraged to help with the 3rd Avenue United Church fundraiser Galileo Concert in November. There will be more information about this at the next meeting.

SSSP

Les Dickson reported that there were more people than any other year (excluding the 2009 GA) and everyone went home happy. Good weather conditions, a good program, and good volunteers seems to be the magic formula.

Membership – nil report

Light Abatement – nil report

Site Coordinator's Report – Jeff Swick reported that Darrell and Rick have done more finishing work inside the warm-up shelter. The new wing has carpet on the ceiling. The hand drier area has been reinstalled to a new are. Other members have cut the grass to prepare for the Sleaford Public Open House.

Other

Jeff Swick reported that nil report the basement of the Observatory is being cleaned out by Rick and Jim Goodridge. They are making decisions as to what should be kept / discarded.

Members present decided on an alternate date for the February Meeting due to Family Day. The date will be the second Monday of the month, February 11th

A nomination committee consisting of Jeff Swick and Jim Gorkoff was struck to prepare a slate for the upcoming elections in October

Jim Gorkoff reported that with all the changes at National Office, we will need to change our paradigm for Directors and Officers of this organization. The present Directors we have listed are Rick, Tenho, Barb, Ron and Norma. These will remain in place until we have made the necessary changes.

Ellen Dickson informed the executive that Dick Kirk has been submitting his astrophotos to the Weather Network and they have been shown on television.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:28 PM

Minutes of the General Meeting

Meeting began at 7:40 PM

Approval of Minutes of June General Meeting – Moved by Mike Clancy, seconded by Les Dickson. Passed

Committee Reports (see minutes of the Executive meeting)

New Business

Jim Goodridge reported to members that on November 20th, the City of Saskatoon is giving a workshop on how to apply for and write grants. The workshop

takes place at the Cosmo Civic Centre. All applications have to be submitted by January 15th.

Presentation

“*Magnificent Desolation*” a 40 minute IMAX video was introduced and shown by Ron Waldron as a tribute to the passing of Neil Armstrong, the first man to set foot on the moon

Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM

Sleaford Open House – A Great Success! *By Ron Waldron*

It was a gorgeous Saturday evening when members of our centre gathered at Sleaford to host the annual Sleaford Open House. The air was still and warm, the sky was transparent and clear save for the glow of the first quarter moon which would set around 11:30 PM.



Photo by Jeff Swick

Four hours earlier, members had gathered for a pre-Open House Pot-Luck Barbecue. Because of the deteriorating condition of the School House, the meal was spread out on tables placed in the newly renovated Warm-Up Shelter. Perfect weather and good company made for a great gathering.

Members then began setting up their scopes for the expectant onslaught of public who were waiting at the Field House to be led convoy style by member Stan Shadick.

Field House to be led convoy style by member Stan Shadick.

Around 8:00 PM a long line of car headlights could be seen approaching from the east. Approximately 30 vehicles were safely parked on the north side of the grid road, allowing for non-participating vehicles (and perhaps even a combine) to safely pass.

Estimates were that 100 people enjoyed the experience. Some members stayed well after 1:00 AM when the last participants were seen leaving.

Having been to many of these Open Houses which are normally held in October, it is my feeling that September offers a warmer and equally pleasing experience. I would suggest that the incoming executive look at moving to this month for future Sleaford Open Houses.



Photo by Jeff Swick



Notification of Amendments *by Jim Gorkoff*

In connection with our Annual Meeting and election of officers, members will be asked to elect the directors of "The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada Saskatoon Centre Incorporated". The current directors are Richard Huziak, Norma Jensen, Tenho Tuomi, Ron Waldron and Barb Wright. I propose that we maintain the same number of directors and the same directors and in that regard I will be moving the following resolutions for the approval of the members at our annual meeting:

"Be it resolved that the number of directors of the corporation remain at 5 and that the election of the 5 existing directors be approved, they being Richard Huziak, Norma Jensen, Tenho Tuomi, Ron Waldron and Barb Wright."

"Pursuant to subsections 150(1) and (1.4) of the Act, the members of the corporation resolve not to appoint an auditor nor a person to review the financial statements of the corporation."

Let this serve as prior notification of these proposed resolutions. Please be prepared to discuss and vote on each of the above.

President's Report *by Jeff Swick*

Well; what a wonderful Open House and BBQ we had out at Sleaford. It was nice to see so many new members out to visit our facility for the first time. Some of Folks travelled quite a distance. It was good to visit with you. I see Darrell and Rick have done more work out there and it's really starting to shape up. Hopefully our new members will start to feel comfortable using the facility on their own and remember if you have friends or family over that you should feel free to bring them along.

As we head in to October, it means that we have our annual centre elections. My term as President comes to an end and Jim Gorkoff our current Vice-President will assume the presidency for a two-year term. All other positions are open so if you would like to put your name forward for election or have question about what various positions entail, please, send me an email and I will be happy to advise you.

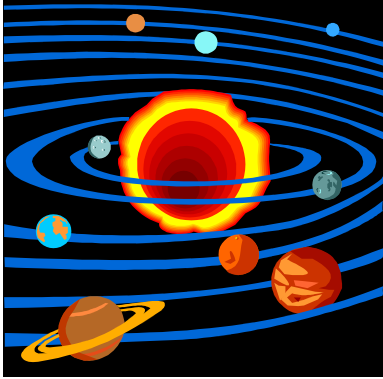
For observing this season we are trying something new. Jim Goodrich has offered to host a weeknight-observing group at his acreage located a few minutes south of town. Look for details to be announced.

We also have several members volunteering at the campus observatory on Wiggins Ave on Saturday nights so stop by and say hello.

In closing, I'd be remiss if I didn't say congratulations to Kathleen Houston as her sketch will be the back cover of this year's Observers Handbook. Well done indeed.

See you out at Sleaford

The Planets this Month – October 2012 *by Murray D. Paulson*



This month we find **Mercury** below the ecliptic and all but invisible in the glare of the twilight sky where it has been since back in September. It will be a better bet to hunt it down in the daytime to watch the small disc grow in to a gibbous through “First quarter” phase, but I am getting ahead of myself. That 50% phase won’t occur until after Halloween.

This year has held a few great **Venus** events and quite the sight it has been. In April I watched Venus pass under the Pleiades, and in June we saw the Transit of the sun. August held the bonus of a lovely daytime occultation of Venus but a thin crescent moon. Great year indeed! As we move into September, Venus has passed the greatest western elongation and is now in a slow return to the sun. It is amazing how quickly it popped out into the morning sky after the transit, and gained that greatest elongation. Early in the month, Venus shines at magnitude -4.1 in the morning sky and shows a 18.3” gibbous disk in the eyepiece. By the mid of next month, Venus will still shine at magnitude -4.0, but the gibbous disc will shrink to 14.4”.

Mars is in Libra this month and will move into Scorpius. Mars is also in the evening sky and is lost in the twilight glare due to the fall ecliptic as well. Mars shines at magnitude 1.2 and has a 5.1” disc. By mid October, it will shrink slightly and move further down into the fall ecliptic and it stats then will be a 4.7” disc shining at magnitude 1.2.

Jupiter is high in the morning sky and was well worth waiting up for at the star parties. At the start of September it rises just before 11 pm and shines at magnitude -2.3. In the eyepiece it will show you a 40.4” disc. By mid October, it will make a dramatic shift into the evening sky, and rises at 8 pm. It will then show a 45.7” magnitude -2.6 disc. It will be officially Jupiter season! Note, Jupiter lies in Taurus and so will sit high in the sky as it transits the meridian. The moon and Jupiter will be a close pair on October 5th.

Saturn is lost in the suns glare this month and will be in conjunction with the sun in late October. It will e a while before it pops out into the morning sky and reappears.

Uranus comes to opposition this month on the 29th, and in a striking coincidence the moon will be full, passing only 3.8 degrees above Uranus on this night. Cool! Not a very photogenic pairing, but nice anyway. Uranus will shine at Magnitude 5.7 and shows a 3.7” disc in the eyepiece. Use the chart in the handbook or your favorite astronomy software to help you find it. The pale blue green disc is obvious in a mid to high power eyepiece.

Neptune starts off the month in Aquarius and shines at magnitude 7.8. You will need a finder chart to locate it, but it is fun to hunt down in a telescope. In the eyepiece you will see its greenish blue disc which is all of 2.3” in diameter. You need high power to resolve it and make it distinct from the background stars. Neptune also has a moon, Triton, that is within reach of midsized amateur scopes. It shines at magnitude 13.4 over the month of September. I located it every night at the star party in August and noted its change in relative position from night to night. It has a 5.9 day orbital period around Neptune so make a drawing and compare it from night to night. By mid October, Neptune will shrink imperceptibly to 2.33” but still shines at magnitude 7.8. It will stick around for a little while longer as an evening object.

Observing Clubs and Certificates

Join the Club! Observe all 110 Messier, 110 Finest NGC, 400 Herschel I or II, 140 Lunar, 154 Sky Gems 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. Hydomako, T. Tuomi, L.
Scott, G. Charpentier, B. Johnson, M.
Clancy, L. Dickson, B. Burlingham, K.
Houston*

Norma Jensen	109
Ron Waldron	105
Wade Selvig	75
Garry Stone	57
Bernice Friesen	45
Wayne Schlapkohl	43
Barb Wright	40
Ellen Dickson	34
Jeff Swick	24
Graham Hartridge	9

Chatfield BINOCULAR CERTIFICATE

Certified at 35 to 40 Objects:

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

Jim Goodridge	Up!	12
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FINEST NGC CLUB

Certified at 110 Objects:

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

Larry Scott	Done!	110
Scott Alexander		97
Norma Jensen		58
Sandy Ferguson		23
Kathleen Houston		23
George Charpentier		13
Mike Clancy		7

EXPLORE the UNIVERSE

Certified at 55 to 110 Objects:

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

Wayne Schlapkohl	Done	55
Sharon Dice		31
Jim Goodridge	Up!	35

Isabel Williamson Lunar Observing Certificate

Certified at 140 Objects:

T. Tuomi

Norma Jensen	133
Jeff Swick	29

HERSCHEL 400 CLUB

Certified at 400 Objects:

*D. Jeffrey, R. Huziak, D. Chatfield, T.
Tuomi*

Gordon Sarty	251
Scott Alexander	117
Sandy Ferguson	18
Larry Scott	20

HERSCHEL 400-II CLUB

Darrell Chatfield	Done!	400
Rick Huziak		246

LEVY DEEP-SKY GEMS

Certified at 154 Objects:

Tenho Tuomi	149
Darrell Chatfield	70



The Messier, Finest NGC and David Levy's Deep-Sky Gems lists can be found in the *Observer's Handbook*.

The Explore the Universe list is available on the National website.

On-line Messier and Finest NGC lists, charts and logbooks: <http://www.rasc.ca/observing>

On-line Herschel 400 List: <http://www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/herschel/hers400.html>

Binocular List is at: http://homepage.usask.ca/%7Eges125/rasc/Chatfield_Binocular_List.pdf

Copies of the Isabel Williamson Lunar Observing Program Guide can be purchased at meetings.

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