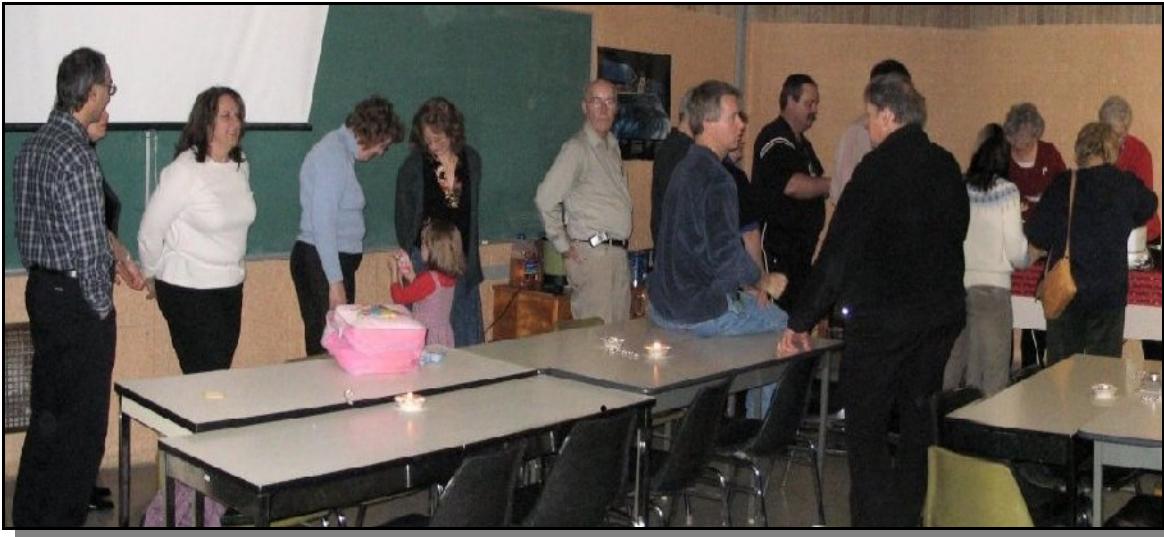


Saskatoon Skies

Vol. 38
No. 1
January
2007

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



Christmas get-together at the Saskatoon Centre

On December 18 the members and spouses of the Saskatoon Centre gathered for a social potluck supper instead of having their regular monthly meeting. This was enjoyed by all. Thank you Barb for the idea!

Photo by Tenho Tuomi



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The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
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Happy New Year!

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
- 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.

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

Thanks to \$3.65 from Jim Wood we have collected \$188.75 in Canadian Tire Money! If you cannot make it to a meeting but would like to contribute, your Canadian Tire money please call me at 374-9278.

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

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>. 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

Jan 12	Observers Group - 8:00 p.m., Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	934-5801
Jan 15	RASC Executive Meeting – 6:30 p.m., 175 Physics, U of S.	Garry Stone	857-4707
Jan 15	RASC General Meeting – 7:30 p.m., 175 Physics, U of S.	Garry Stone	857-4707
Feb 09	Observers Group - 8:00 p.m., Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	934-5801
Feb 12	RASC Executive Meeting - 6:30 p.m., 175 Physics, U of S.	Garry Stone	857-4707
Feb 12	RASC General Meeting - 7:30 p.m., 165 Physics, U. of S	Garry Stone	857-4707
Mar 09	Observers Group - 8:00 p.m., Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	934-5801
Mar 16 & 17	Messier Marathon - Dusk, Sleaford Observatory	Larry Scott	934-5801



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

Title	Author	# Avail	Price	Title	Author	# Avail	Price
Calendars							
RASC 2007	RASC	11	\$14.00	Skyways – Astronomy Handbook for Teachers	M.L. Whitehorne	2	\$20.00
Night Watcher	S. Schadick	3	\$18.00	Exploring the Sky by Day	T. Dickinson	2	\$9.50
Miscellaneous							
RASC Centennial Mug		2	\$5.00	Exploring the Night Sky	T. Dickinson	2	\$9.50
RASC Stickers, blue or white		lots	\$1.00	Night Watch	T. Dickinson	2	\$33.00
SSSP 2001 Pin (Summer Triangle)		29	\$2.00	Summer Stargazing	T. Dickinson	1	\$18.00
SSSP 2002 Pin (Comet)		17	\$2.00	Night Sky Atlas	R. Scagell	3	\$27.00
SSSP 2006 Pin (10)		17	\$5.00	Stargazing with a Telescope	R. Scagell	2	\$14.00
Books							
The Backyard Astronomer's Guide	Dickinson & Dyer	2	\$45.00	The Moon Observer's Guide	P. Grego	2	\$14.00
The Beginner's Observer's Guide	L. Enright	3	\$19.00	Zim, Baker & Chartrand	Zim, Baker & Chartrand	1	\$10.00
Observer's Handbook 2006	RASC	5	10.00	Stars	Firefly	3	\$14.00
Observer's Handbook 2005	RASC	1	5.00	Summer Stargazing	R. Sinnott	2	\$24.50
Isabelle Williamson Lunar Observing Program	RASC	8	\$10.00	Firefly Astronomy Dictionary	W. Houston	2	\$24.50
				Pocket Sky Atlas	Mars Observer's Guide	2	\$14.00
				Field Map of the Moon	Deep-Sky Wonders	2	\$14.00
				Moon Map (laminated)	Mars Observer's Guide	2	\$14.00
				Saskatoon's Stone	Deep-Sky Wonders	2	\$14.00
				Sky & Telescope	Mars Observer's Guide	2	\$14.00
				Sky & Telescope	Field Map of the Moon	2	\$13.50
				Sky & Telescope	Moon Map (laminated)	5	\$6.50
				W.K. Mysyk & C.L. Kulyk	Saskatoon's Stone	5	\$3.00

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.

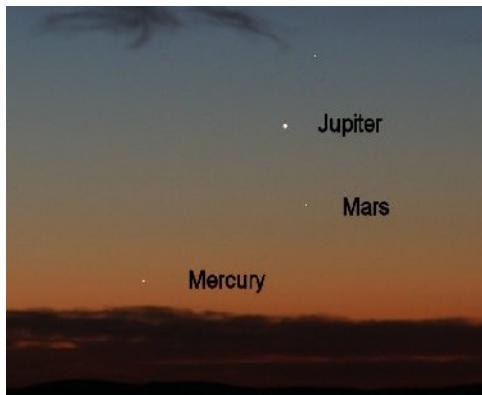


Bruce Brandell selling books and maps to Darrell Chatfield

Photo by Tenho Tuomi

On the morning of December 10, Jupiter, Mercury and Mars met in the “tightest three-planet meeting to occur between 1980 and 2050” as the SkyNews magazine put it, with Mercury and Jupiter only 10 arcseconds apart. Clouds prevented my observing that, but two days later I was able to get this picture of the trio. I could not see Mars visually but computer enhancing brought it out in the picture.

Photo by Tenho Tuomi



SKY BUYS & MIRROR CELLS

The Saskatoon Centre's Swap and Sale Page!

FOR LOAN TO MEMBERS:

Slide set for talks on general astronomy and light pollution. You can borrow this set any time you want to give a talk to your favourite group. Contact Rick Huziak at 665-3392.

FOR SALE --

Sky Atlas 2000.0, 2nd ed., deluxe version. Stars are black on white background, while deep-sky objects are color-coded by type. Fold out charts in a 12 by 16 inch book (charts unfold to 21 by 16 inches), spiralbound, with plastic slip cover. \$25.00. Contact Les Dickson, 249-1091 or dicksonl@sasktel.net

MONDAY, JANUARY 15 7:30 PM

ROOM 165, U OF S

Saskatchewan Parks: An astronomers Perspective - Mike Clancy
Siding Springs Observatory in Australia – Gord Sarty

Note: There will be an executive meeting at 6:30 p.m. in room 175.



The IAU Announces the IYA

an excerpt from <http://www.astronomy2009.org/content/view/106/45/>

The International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA2009) will be a global celebration of astronomy and its contributions to society and culture, stimulating worldwide interest not only in astronomy, but in science in general, with a particular slant towards young people. The IYA2009 is deemed to mark the monumental leap forward that followed Galileo's first use of the telescope for astronomical observations, and portray astronomy as a peaceful global scientific endeavour that unites astronomers in an international, multicultural family of scientists working together to find answers to some of the most fundamental questions that humankind has ever asked.

Several countries have already formed National Nodes to work on the planning and preparation of activities for 2009. These committees are collaborations between professional and amateur astronomers, science centres and science communicators. The IAU plans to liaise with, and involve, as many as possible of the ongoing outreach and education efforts throughout the world, including those organized by amateur astronomers.

Despite the IYA2009 being still in its early planning stages, a number of very exciting ideas have already been

put forward. One of the core ideas is to bring Astronomy closer to all citizens of planet Earth by giving them the opportunity to interact with amateur and professional astronomers, as well as to participate in “sidewalk astronomy” events in planetariums and public observatories where several different activities, such as looking through a telescope and observing our Universe, will be held.

Aiming at awakening the public awareness of astronomy and science in the developing countries, the IYA will, based on a resolution adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2005, be launching the Universe Awareness (UNAWE) program in 2009. Such a scheme has been designed to broaden the minds of economically disadvantaged young children across the globe, enhance their understanding of the world and demonstrate the power of rational thought.

The IYA2009 is, first and foremost, an activity for the citizens of Planet Earth, which will convey the excitement of personal discovery, the pleasure of sharing fundamental knowledge about the Universe and our place in it and ultimately, the value of the scientific culture.

The Christmas Get-together: A Picture Essay

by Tenho Tuomi

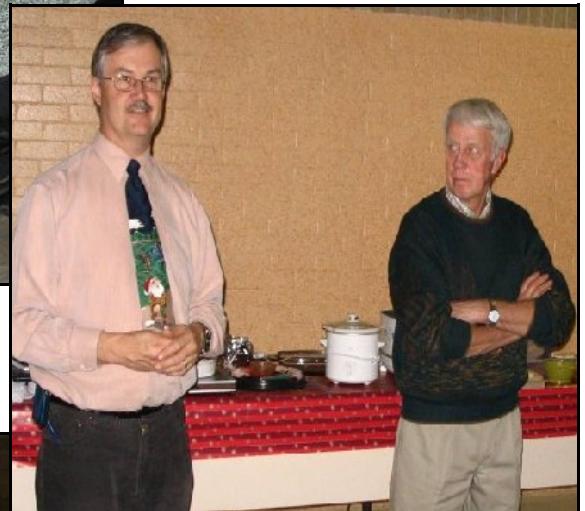


Norma Jensen, Ron Waldron



Above The Dicksons (Les & Ellen), Garry Stone, Bruce Brandell and others.

Above Spouses Myrna Stone, Anne Clancy, Velma Tuomi and Marianne Hydomako



Above Past-president Ron Waldron saying his farewells, with president Garry Stone.



Left Mike Clancy, Rick Huziak, and the 2006 Grey Cup game ball.

The Adventures of Thuban and Polaris

in the Cypress Hills (Part 2)

by Alden Foraie, Miriam Martin & Nicole Dancey

Reprinted by permission from the Regina RASC newsletter, Stargazer – September/October 2006

[Last month we heard how Cypress Hills' park interpreter staff members, Miriam Martin a.k.a. Mimi and Nicole Dancey, with the help of Norm Leier and Alden Foraie from the Regina Centre, started doing 'tour guides of the stars' for the public visiting the park. We heard Mimi's (Thuban) story of her thoughts and details of how the park's first summer of public observing went. Here we continue with Nicole's thoughts. – Ed]

Nicole's Thoughts: (Polaris)

Well, where do I begin? Thuban didn't leave much for me to say... she's always trying to steal the starlight, even though everything now revolves around me!!!

Things in the Cypress Hills are wonderful!! We just finished our last astronomy program of the summer on Sunday night and it was another incredibly dark night. It was our BEST program yet... under crystal clear skies!! After the program and after the moon had set, Mimi and I had time for a picnic under the stars... a Milky Way picnic... and it was incredible!! It was a wonderful chance to reflect on the summer days and nights gone by...

I was working in Regina this past winter, when I first heard that our park had purchased a telescope and binoculars. I was really excited, but realized that I knew nothing about burning balls of gas and dust, shapes of stars overhead or whether or not there is life out there. Well, I still don't know if there actually is 'life' out there, but I do know that we are in the Land of Living Skies and that as we look up, open our imaginations and dive into the depths of the universe, we realize that the skies above are more alive than anything I've ever known... and that's also how this summer has made me feel.

It all began in early May, when Alden Foraie and Norm Leier came to the Cypress Hills to show us a thing or two (or five thousand) about astronomy. They had worked long and hard on a manual called 'A Crash Course in Astronomy & Observing'... I very quickly dubbed this manual my bible. The first night they were with us was excellent, because although the skies were cloudy, they showed us how to set up our equipment, taught us the difference between an eyepiece, a finder scope and a rigel quickfinder, how to collimate a telescope and many other things. We were all very excited and hoped afterwards that they weren't offended by our seemingly contagious laughter because we owned something called a Big

Barlow. They also stayed with us for a second night, but neither Mimi nor I could make it out with the group.

Well, needless to say we very quickly set up an Interprovincial exchange with Joan, Tyler (our practicum student), myself and the Cypress Hills-Alberta interpreters who were in much the same situation as we were. Yep, we were expected to deliver astronomy programs real soon to the public... and I still had never actually used the telescope or even set it up by myself. Well, after two wonderful nights of viewing at Horseshoe Canyon in Cypress Alberta and Lookout Point in Cypress Saskatchewan, I had decided that I was going to hold my own astronomy programs for my Saturday events in June. Yep, Tyler was finished at the end of May and Joan was away, but I was going to deliver public astronomy by myself with our telescope and binoculars!!! I was on an astronomical mission!

So, after that point I found a new sense of determination within and began to study... my 'bible,' constellation books and other astronomy info. I found star charts on the internet and thought surely people would be impressed by that... even if I couldn't tell them much else. I began to create a collection of constellation cards... giant flashcards really, with a whole lot of information on them. As park interpreters, it is our job to gain a general understanding of everything and deliver it to people in an interesting manner. So, I began to learn some mythological stories along with the names and shapes of constellations and tried to remember the names of some of the brighter stars in the sky.

My first two programs in June were scary for me, but went well. I soon realized that people were completely amazed and breathless, at simply seeing Saturn and Jupiter through the high-powered binoculars and telescope. I made laminated stars that I handed out to people. On one side of each star was an astronomy-related name and on the other side was a fact related to astronomy, dark sky preserves, light pollution etc. I began my program by using these stars as an introduction, icebreaker and a way for me to remember what the heck I should talk about. Each person introduced themselves as their astronomy name and then told us about their interesting astronomy fact. I filled in the gaps with extra info.

I have to admit that Mimi and I have come a long way from those days.

I will never forget how excited we would get after an astronomy program, when the two of us would stay to try to find more ‘cool stuff.’ One of my favorites early-on was Albireo, the beautiful gold and blue double star in Cygnus.

Being that I live in the park during the summer, I was always trying to get other summer staff to come out with me to practice. I’ll always remember the night of August 12th when I finally convinced 8 other park staff people to go on a night hike with me. What an amazing evening. We hiked the Highland trail and enjoyed the meteors of the Perseid meteor shower on into the night. As we rounded the far end of the trail and came to the bridge where the stream flows gently underneath, we all lay down to get a better view of the night sky. Of course they all laughed when I happened to have a backpack on with three big astronomy blankets... they didn’t laugh long after I decided to share them. They were all amazed as I began to work my constellation magic and share much of what I had already learned to that point. It was that night that I decided that I definitely needed my own personal ‘awe-inspiring, audience-wowing, coolest-tool-on-earth ever LASER!’

Well, it was around that time of the summer when I was really getting the itch to find more things in the sky and even cooler stuff with the telescope, but I was kind of nervous to go out to Lookout Point by myself and sit there as cougar bait... or worse yet, tourist bait (just kidding). On more than one occasion, other park staff had agreed to go out with me, but then ‘got tired.’ I eventually dug deep, as only Polaris could, and worked up the courage to sit out at Lookout Point by myself and practice my constellation tours. The next night, I found the courage again and set up my telescope and practiced finding new things. It was then that I found the Ring Nebula and the Dumbbell Nebula for the first time. I was sooooo excited and found it very exhilarating to be out there by myself under the vastness of the sky and actually be able to find a few things all by my lonesome.

Finally, the SSSP arrived. Mimi and I had been waiting all summer! I was so excited. Thursday night, after the incredible First Nations Astronomy presentation at the amphitheater, we went out to the Meadows and joined the Alberta interpreters (as Mimi already mentioned). I ended up camping out there with them after drooling over all the cool stuff that many of the astronomers had been showing us. I couldn’t sleep that night. I have slept under the stars many times before, but this time my eyes just wouldn’t close. It was as if I had been hypnotized by the stars.

The rest of the weekend was truly amazing. Helping with the public star gazing nights was awesome, but the

highlight for me, by far, was on Saturday night when I set up our park telescope in the Regina corner of the Meadows. I stayed throughout the night and saw many new things. All the guys were so incredibly supportive and helpful all weekend long!! I was continually impressed by the Regina gang and Richard Huziak at how helpful they were. They were excited at how excited I was and were all very eager to show me more. I found M81 & M82 for the first time by myself, as well as the Veil Nebula, Wild Duck cluster, the ET cluster (among others) and even a few that I had worked on by myself such as M33 the Triangulum Galaxy. I was in awe as the night progressed, one hot chocolate after another. I was amazed by the blue snowball and many other awesome objects. One of my favorite things ever, was seeing Orion’s Nebula for the first time in my life through Vance’s telescope... and then actually looking at it through our own telescope as well. What an incredible sight... one I hope never to forget! Well, that was not the end of the night. I soon heard an alarm

clock going off, and a man emerged from one of the tents off in the twilight. He informed me that he was awake to watch Venus and Saturn rising together. What an incredible sight it was... the two planets framed by the tops of the Lodgepole Pines!!! Well, eventually I found my bed in my little camper just after 7:00am.

Needless to say, the next day at work, was a little slow. I realized that I have become a part of something wonderful. When I was standing in our campground washroom, staring at the cement floor and I could swear I saw the ET cluster staring back at me!! I’m pretty sure he winked at me too!

Well, my summer here in Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park – Saskatchewan is winding down, but my adventures under the night sky in the hills are not over. I just found out that I got a fall/winter interpreter position on the Alberta side of the park!!! I’m pumped!

Well, I wanted to say thank you to all of you who have supported us and helped us in so many ways. Without you, we would not be where we are today, and all the people who have raved over our programs this summer, would not have been able to take home their cherished family memories under the night sky in the Cypress Hills. As Alden has recently confirmed for us, we feel that we are a part of something really special and we hope to continue to share what we know with many people for years to come. Please look us up, if you’re ever visiting either the Saskatchewan or Alberta sides of the Cypress Hills. Clear Skies to You All and take care!.



*Photo reprinted from StarGazer,
Sept/Oct 2006*

Of Stars, Afghanistan, and the CFL

by Mike Clancy

Now, this article isn't strictly astronomical in nature; in fact, it actually doesn't have much to do with star-gazing at all. It really just highlights the power of an idea. As Garry Stone has already told you the basics of why I missed the November meeting, I feel justified in telling you The Rest of The Story.

My son Brendan is a member of a local militia unit, The North Saskatchewan Regiment (NSkR), and volunteered for a tour of duty in Afghanistan. He deployed in February of 2006, returning safely 05Aug06. Tenho and Garry may remember the talk I gave at Douglas Provincial Park and the unseemly haste with which we departed; Anna and I were heading back to Saskatoon to pick Brendan up from the airport! Anyway, when he left I gave him a Riders flag, asking him to take it with him wherever he went. I've got it framed in the basement now; not only did he sign it, he



also added the places he went – it's quite a memento. He called me from Afghanistan on Father's Day and we joked about how the flag was in greater danger from his comrades (he deployed with 1st Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, an Edmonton-based unit) than ever it was from the Taliban!

This got me to thinking – why not provide a flag from each team in the CFL, signed by all players and coaches, to be sent via the military mail system (no shipping costs that way) to Canada House, Kandahar Airbase, Afghanistan for permanent display. That way all the soldiers (and they come from across Canada, no matter where the main battle group originates) will be reminded of home and better

times. I got started with the original mailing 28Jun06 and began dealing with 10 bureaucracies. You can well imagine how many requests teams get for signed memorabilia, and they all have one primary requirement: it must be a registered charity. I also had to deal with the military system as well as the league office. This all takes time, so it should be no surprise that the first flag arrived from Calgary in July, followed closely by the Riders then somewhat of an avalanche of positive replies. The original idea was for each team in the league to hand their flag over to a local military unit (I checked; there's an armories within a few blocks of every stadium in the league) who would then ship it on individually. This plan went off the rails almost instantly; providing the names of local commanders wasn't as easy as I'd imagined. People were on holidays, otherwise busy, and unwilling to reply to what seemed like a scam (according to one source). Finally I asked for the flags to be sent to me and I would see them handed over to the NSkR who would move them on. I had a local ceremony where I handed 4 flags over to 4 veterans of that conflict; I'm proud to say Brendan received the Rider flag!

By this time both the military high command and the CFL Commissioner's office had become very excited indeed about the whole project. The Chief of Defence Staff, General Rick Hillier, decided that he would receive all the flags from the Commissioner, Mr. Tom Wright, during the Grey Cup weekend. The final decision was that the presentation would take place during the Commissioner's Gala Luncheon, 19Nov06, and I was invited to witness the event. This all occurred in early November, and it became a bit of a struggle to arrange travel and lodging – the Grey Cup was on and all the flights and hotels were full of football revelers. I could fly in Sunday morning but I would have to take the bus back Monday morning; I managed to scrounge lodging with a colleague who'd moved from my lab to Winnipeg some years back.

As for The Great Day, it was my understanding that I was simply a witness, and would be acknowledged by the Commissioner and General Hillier during the presentation but that would be the limit of my participation. I'd been told the dress code was "business casual" so I wore my Rider jersey under my Vanier Cup volunteers vest; I was the only man in that crowd of 300 – 400 people not wearing a business suit (blazer, slacks, team sweater or shirt and tie) which caused a few eyebrows to rise in my direction!

The luncheon started bang on time, 20 minutes late, with the Commissioner's opening address during which he remarked that the project I'd started is unique in the history of both the CFL and the military. This was the first time that a collection of flags bearing the signatures of all the players and coaches in the league for that year had been brought together in one place for distribution overseas – I never knew that; perhaps it helps explain what followed! Tom Wright introduced me to the assemblage then asked me to join him on the podium where he presented me with the flag collection amid tumultuous applause. He then asked me to speak, for which I was totally unprepared!

I managed to say how I felt a bit of a fraud as the real heroes are in uniform serving this country both at home and abroad. This simple speech got a 5-minute standing ovation! Before I could do anything else, Mr. Wright then shook my hand and gave me the first game ball of the day (there's a story about game balls which I'll tell you over beers someday). As a devout card-carrying football fan, this gesture literally drove every other thought out of my head; I had to put the flags down to take the ball!

The Commissioner then called up General Hillier to speak (his address to the assemblage was inspired, by the way – there's another story that needs beer) and HE called me back to the podium where I was given the Chief of

Defence Staff medal (to my sure and certain knowledge there are only 2 such medals in civilian hands; mine and Commissioner Wright's) and an offer to travel to Afghanistan with the General over Christmas to personally take the flags overseas! Strange as it may seem, I was struck speechless for the second time in one hour; all I could blurt out was that Brendan is getting married in late December and I dare not miss the wedding!

After regaining my seat luncheon was served (I stole one of the menus; I'll show it to you over those previously-mentioned beers) and I was the media darling. I was speaking to various media types and CFL cognoscenti for the next two hours or so. I didn't actually finish with the interviews until about 1430 hrs and then had to scramble a bit to get to the game which was pretty much anti-climactic. I was numbed by all the unexpected fuss and the bitter cold, and slept well on the bus ride home the next day. When I started this project up 5 months ago I never in my wildest dreams expected any of this to happen; I fully expected to stay firmly in the background with my name never mentioned in polite company. Man, oh man – was I ever wrong!

By the way, Anna was glad I turned the General down regarding a trip to Afghanistan; she doesn't have to do me bodily harm to keep me home now!

Observer's Group Notes

by Larry Scott

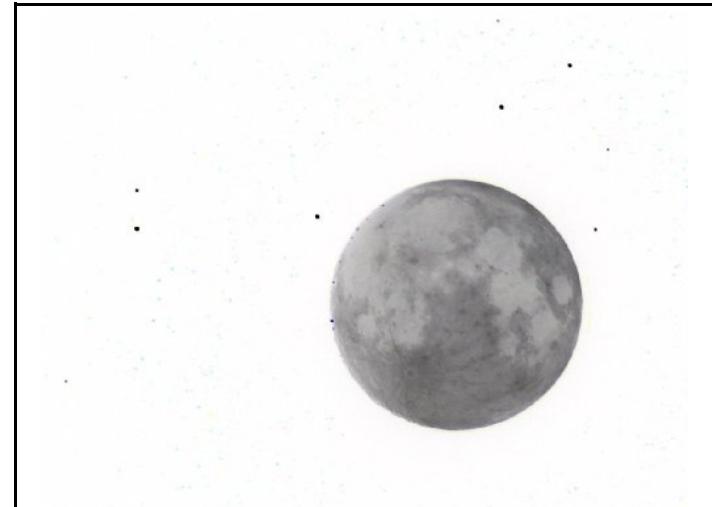
Welcome to the great cloudy north. My last good observing session was October 25th. Since then I have missed the Mercury Transit and the November/December Observers Group meetings due to blizzard conditions.

Norma, Jeff, and I did manage to get out to Sleaford on Dec. 20th for an evening of viewing. There was a fair amount of humidity but it was clear, calm and at -10 C, not too bad for a December night.

As the year comes to an end and I look back at my Observers Group notes, I must confess that my early trepidation at taking over Bill's spot as coordinator has been squashed. This job is a cakewalk. All I have to do each month is pick a date and wait for the inevitable clouds to roll in.

If I do happen to choose a clear night there are usually only 2 or 3 observers showing up. So if you really want to crush me, you could all show up for the next meeting on January 12th at Sleaford (weather permitting ha, ha, ha!).

See you out there.



Every 18 years the Moon's orbit carries it far enough north to cover the M45 Pleiades star cluster in a year-long series of passes. One of the least favorable of these was on December 3 for it was during full moon. However I still managed to capture it by taking two pictures at 1/50 sec and 1/4000 second, and overlaying one picture over the other on the computer.

– Tenho Tuomi

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

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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	
<u>Brent Burlingham</u>	<u>107</u>
<u>Ken Maher</u>	<u>105</u>
<u>Brent Gratias</u>	<u>96</u>
<u>Mike Oosterlaken</u>	<u>93</u>
<u>Lorne Jensen</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>Kathleen Houston</u>	<u>83</u>
<u>Margo Miller</u>	<u>77</u>
<u>Wade Selvig</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>Norma Jensen</u>	<u>67</u>
<u>Garry Stone</u>	<u>57</u>
<u>Ellen Dickson</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Jeff Swick</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>Barb Wright</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Brian Friesen</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Bruce Brandell</u>	<u>5</u>

FINEST NGC CLUB

Certified at 110 Objects:

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

<u>Larry Scott</u>	<u>Done!</u>	<u>110</u>
<u>Scott Alexander</u>		<u>97</u>
<u>Bill Hydomako</u>		<u>55</u>
<u>Sandy Ferguson</u>		<u>23</u>
<u>Mike Oosterlaken</u>		<u>20</u>
<u>George Charpentier</u>		<u>12</u>
<u>Ken Maher</u>		<u>8</u>
<u>Mike Clancy</u>		<u>7</u>

Chatfield BINOCULAR

CERTIFICATE

Certified at 35 Objects:

<i>M.Stephens, T.Tuomi, M.Clancy,</i>	
<i>R.Huziak, K. Maher</i>	

<u>Brent Gratias</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>Mike Oosterlaken</u>	<u>32</u>

Anna Clancy

24

EXPLORE the UNIVERSE

Certified for Certificate:

<i>M.Clancy, T.Tuomi</i>

HERSCHEL 400 CLUB

Certified at 400 Objects:

<i>D.Jeffrey, R.Huziak, D.Chatfield</i>

<u>Gord Sarty</u>	<u>251</u>
<u>Tenho Tuomi</u>	<u>222</u>
<u>Scott Alexander</u>	<u>117</u>
<u>Mike Oosterlaken</u>	<u>68</u>
<u>Sandy Ferguson</u>	<u>18</u>

HERSCHEL 400-II CLUB

Certified at 400 Objects:

<u>Darrell Chatfield</u>	<u>290</u>
<u>Richard Huziak</u>	<u>211</u>

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>



Many hours of hand work went into the making of this very fine looking quilt. Most of the work on the star was done on a treadle machine, for those of you who know about quilting. The side of this quilt is 85" x 101", which is large enough to fit a queen size bed! (value \$2500)

RASC RAFFLE

(Lic. # L06-0213)

by Darrell Chatfield

The RASC RAFFLE is now on, I will have ticket booklets at all the meetings from now until April/07. The other two prizes are a Viewsonic 19" flat screen monitor, and a Weitzel scratch art "Owl" print. The raffle is to raise money to house our new 16" Meade scope. Pick up your books of tickets today!

Ticket prices are: \$2.00 each, or three for \$5.00.

Draw Date: April 21, 2007 at Saskatoon, SK.

See our web page for more information:

<http://www.usask.ca/psychology/sarty/rasc/raffle.html>