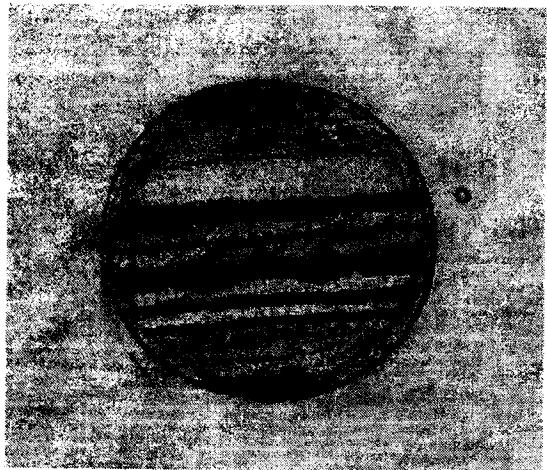


# *Saskatoon*

# *Skies*

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

Volume 30, Numbers 9  
September 1999



Jupiter and Saturn make return appearances to the evening sky beginning this month. Rick Huziak made these two sketches of Jupiter on Sept. 2 at 2:50 am and on Sept. 7 at 1:50 am from the center of Saskatoon using his 10-inch f/5.6 Newtonian at 235x. The two views show almost exactly the same features (thus the same face), after 12 complete rotations and 119.0 elapsed hours. A quick calculation shows that Jupiter's rotation period, as gleaned from these sketches, is 9 hours 55 minutes. Check your Observer's Handbook to see how close this calculation is.

## RASC Calendar Happenings

Date (1999)	Event	Contact	Telephone
Sep 8 - 12	Alberta Star Party - Caroline, AB	Rick Huziak	665-3392
Sep 10	Junior Astronomers Registration	Sandy Ferguson	931-3184
Sep 11	Observer Group at Sleaford (Sat. only)	Darrell Chatfield	374-9278
Sep 17 or 18	Public Star Night at Beaver Creek	Brian Friesen	384-2963
Sep 20	General Meeting - SSSP Results	Erich Keser	374-4262
Oct 15 or 16	Open House & Starnight at Sleaford Observatory	Rick Huziak	665-3392
Oct 18	General Meeting-Elections & Doug Miller- Optics	Erich Keser	374-3262
Oct 22	Junior Astronomers Meeting	Sandy Ferguson	931-3184
Nov 5 or 6	Observers Group at Sleaford	Darrell Chatfield	374-9278
Nov 15	General Meeting- Alister Ling (Edmonton Centre)	Erich Keser	374-4262
Nov 17	Leonid Meteor Shower (storm?)	Rick Huziak	665-3392
Nov 19	Junior Astronomers Meeting	Sandy Ferguson	931-3184

## Sky Buys and Mirror Sells

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

**Wanted:** Construction materials for the Sleaford Observatory - We'll take 2x4's, 4x4's, 2x6's, 2x8's, nails, screws, rebar, concrete, landscaping materials, plywood, siding, beer and any other useful construction stuff. *SUMMER is here - it's time to build!* We also need a 'garage sale quality' lawnmower. We will pick up - call Rick Huziak at 665-3392.

**For Sale:** Great astronomy books: *Introduction to Practical Astronomy* (Jones) \$10.00, *Burnham's Celestial Handbook* (hardcover, 3 vol.) \$50.00, *Peterson's Field Guide to the Stars* (softcover) \$10.00. Call Darrell Chatfield, tel. 374-9278.

**For Sale:** 1-1/4" eyepiece & filters - Kellner 9mm eyepiece \$40.00, Lumicon OIII and Light Pollution (Deep Sky). Call Darrell Chatfield for pricing and trials. tel. 374-9278.

**For Sale:** Tasco Model 11TR 4-1/2" aperture, 900 mm f.l. Newtonian telescope. Comes with 20 mm and 4 mm eyepieces, 2X barlow, moon filter, equatorial mount and tripod. Call Gerald at 244-9918.

**For Sale:** 1-1/4 Omcon Diagonal, excellent shape. Call Darrell Chatfield for price, tel. 374-9278.

**Wanted:** Someone other than Darrell to sell stuff!

# Saskatoon Centre

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***Saskatoon Skies*** is published monthly by the Saskatoon Centre of the RASC. Distribution is approximately 140 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. 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 UUEncoded, attached .GIFs, .JPGs or similar. Send e-mail submissions to the editor at <[huziak@SEDSystems.ca](mailto:huziak@SEDSystems.ca)>. Submitted materials can be returned upon request. Please send articles in "generic" formats, with standard grammatical formatting appreciated - 5 spaces at the beginning of paragraphs, two spaces after periods, one space after commas. A separate subscription to ***Saskatoon Skies*** is available for \$12.50 per year. Articles may be reprinted from ***Saskatoon Skies*** without expressed permission (except where 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.

## A Satisfying Summer with a Touch of Sad

by Erich Keser, President

In November, our Saskatoon Centre will be celebrating its thirtieth anniversary. Sadly, it will be without one of its main founders and a person who has been a bedrock of strength and dignity for this organization through those three decades, Professor John E. ("Ed") Kennedy. Ed fought a long battle for well over a year with a form of cancer which many patients succumb in a few months, and very nearly made it to this coming anniversary. I can well remember how heroically he handled the awful side-effects of chemotherapy, and many will recall how he continued to attend meetings and perform his duties as Honorary President month after month, until he finally had to resign from that post in May. Ed asked me out of that meeting for a private word. I can recall the blotches that he showed me on his wrist all too clearly, but will also never forget the calm firm manner in which he informed me that he knew what was coming and finally had to step down. Professor John E. Kennedy's last year and a half with us were a demonstration of quiet, steadfastness and dignity which we would all do well to reflect on.

One important success of the Saskatchewan Summer Star Party 1999 was in saying a fitting goodbye, briefly to Professor Kennedy, Dr. Gerhard Herzberg, and at greater length to Father Lucian Kemble in a manner was moving but also uplifting, as a celebration of wonderfully productive lives. In fact, the entire star party —except for the skies—was almost a charmed event this year. In our third year of running this hugely successful event, we finally seem to have arrived at a balance in many areas. There were enough talks on a good variety of subjects and levels, but not too many (as had happened in 1998). They were also lightened and supplemented by the very effective door

prize draw which Vice-president Darrell Chatfield had organized virtually on his own, and by the photo contest, which was a little smaller this year, but nevertheless went well. The other programmed activities, especially the youth activities which Sandy Ferguson organized (and which got much help from non-members) went very well, too.

Though we kept costs as reasonable and flexible as possible for participants, it is already clear that the financial earnings this year will be the best yet. This is due to careful budgeting and close monitoring by Treasurers Jim and Barb Young, and was helped in no small part by excellent calendar and literature sales organization (and selling!) by Jean Dudley and the drink sales that Scott Alexander and Brian Friesen organized.

The new comfortable, air conditioned, fully darkenable new facilities for presentations were a HUGE improvement. And the meal of roast beef and turkey received consistently excellent reviews, too. As a real testimony to many months of quiet effort by Ellen and Les Dickson, registration went very smoothly and pleasantly. Also, thanks to their work and that of Barb Young (and despite some last minute scrambling!) those who needed hotel, cabin and condo units were successfully accommodated.

Despite a couple of light sprinkles, campers in the Meadows reportedly slept well, too. Unfortunately, this was partly because the skies, for the first time in three years, gave us some real problems. Thursday night's promised "early viewing" became an opportunity for early sleeping, and Friday night didn't provide much reason for insomnia either. Luckily, the skies did open up enough on Saturday night to permit Sandy to conduct the traditional Binocular

Starwalk and Regina to do their Public Star Night. The seeing came and went, until 3:45 am Sunday morning when Alister Ling and I watched the International Space Station go over.

As luck would have it, the best night was Sunday/Monday, when most had left. Those remaining included Dan and Kim Kulak and Alister Ling and family from Edmonton, and Bob and Rosemary Christie and some of their friends, Yannis Pahatouroglou and a friend and my family from Saskatoon. There were far too few of us there for that windy but wonderfully transparent night, but then the Park staff informed us that the week before the first of us came had been clear, and I couldn't help but notice that the week after was, too. Murphy's Law continues to reign with the other basic laws of the universe!

The worst aspect of the weather was that it (and predictions of it) caused numerous last minute cancellations and no shows, and also reduced last minute and day registrations. Despite this, *and* the European eclipse *and* the competition of Mount Kobau and other Star Parties, SSSP'99 ended up with about 225 registrations. This is a sure indication that SSSP has a very good future as long as the Regina Centre and our Centre can continue to put time, enthusiasm and effective planning into it. Sincere thanks, on behalf of all the attendees to all of those, both members and supporters, who helped out.

Now that SSSP is over, (except for article writing and early organizing, booking and publicity) there are other important priorities for our Centre. The most important of these is the Sleaford Observing Site, on which Bill Hydomako, Darrell Chatfield and Rick Huziak have continued to work throughout the summer months. You will note from Rick's report that

the University has also made a great deal of progress on their new roll-off, which is already in active use, with four excellent telescopes that Centre members can have access to, with proper training (see Rick). There will be an official Open House, to welcome especially the Sleaford community and to possibly finally sign the Partnership Agreement that we have been negotiating for the last two years. Help with construction will be welcome (please call Darrell Chatfield), as we want to get more things completed (maybe even the toilet!) before the Open House and the onset of winter.

Apologies for this somewhat rambling report and also for this being the first report in several months. I have become very busy with my work at the Saskatoon Open Door Society and am doing my best to complete my duties. These will end at the October General Meeting, and I earnestly beseech all members to start thinking about ways in which they could help to lighten the heavy load of work and responsibility which tends to fall on far too few shoulders. What could *YOU* do to help with meetings, with the site, with the Junior and Young Astronomers, with School talks, with SSSP 2000? Please call me at 374-4262 or e-mail <keser@duke.Usask.ca> anytime!

## **Bergbusch Visiting in January**

SSSP keynote speaker, Dr. Peter Bergbusch has postponed his planned visit to Saskatoon until early next year due to professional and teaching commitments. On his trip here, he plans to speak both at the University of Saskatchewan and at the RASC General Meeting.

## THE SASKATCHEWAN SOGGY STAR PARTY

by Sandy Ferguson

Yes, another hugely successful star party has come and gone and participants are still nattering about the weekend. However, a lot of that nattering has to do with the weather, as well as the excellent talks, events and food! For the first year since SSSP began the opportunities to observe were few and far between.

A number of our Centre members traveled down to Cypress Hills on the Wednesday, to relax for a day or two before the business of the weekend starts. Wednesday night, though, was clouded out and any opportunity to look for some early Perseids fell through. Thursday during the day was cloudy with some sunny periods. In late afternoon it appeared to partially clear and our hopes for great skies began to soar. Then came the downpour around 7:00 p.m. Following that there was a magnificent rainbow - we thought perhaps it was an omen for clear skies. 'Fraid not - at least not immediately. The evening was socked in, but along about 10:00 p.m. parts of sky began to open up! Then close again. Then open up again. You get the picture. Meanwhile, it was getting colder and colder...

Suddenly, a sizeable hole in the clouds directly overhead exposed parts of the Summer Triangle. Excitement was rampant and there was a great flurry of activity as meteor observers and their lawn chairs shoved and tripped over each other, jockeying for the best position from which to view the shower! Finally, about 10 observers were settled in their chairs, facing various directions, complaining about the temperature. From 10:35 p.m. to 11:25 p.m. we diligently watched the sky for Perseids, which appeared through shifting holes in the clouds. In that period of time we counted 32 Perseids and 10 non-Perseids. Some of the non-Perseids belonged to various other showers going on at the time (the delta Aquarids, for example) and some were sporadic. We packed it in, finally, as the cold and dampness were getting hard to take (and this meteor recorder's fingers couldn't move any more). These numbers are very good, given the ever-present shifting cloud that obscured our viewing area. There must have been many more Perseids flying around up there in that time period that we couldn't see! Everyone finally packed it in. Did I mention it was getting colder and colder??

I had a revelation that night. I discovered that I wasn't the great outdoors person I've always considered myself to be. Lying on a damp camp cot, in a damp tent, wearing two layers of heavy clothing, shivering under *TWO* sleeping bags and watching my breath spiraling upward, I spent a sleepless night reminiscing about old times spent on warm, sandy beaches in places like Barbados. At one point I must have started to drift off, but awoke abruptly when I heard myself cry out for my Mommy.

Sometime during the night the rain started again - or so I thought. Peering through a 4" gap in the tent door at 6:00 a.m., I could see that the whole Meadows area was shrouded in fog! What appeared to be rain was just the moisture dripping from the trees onto the tent. Rows of abandoned telescopes stood shrouded in mist, which gave the whole scene an eerie quality! That fog didn't even begin to dissipate until around 10:30 in the morning! It was, however, a bit warmer!

On Friday the star party began. The talks on Friday night were well attended and it gave everyone a chance to get together with old friends and acquaintances from previous star parties. Again the evening was cloudy (I think that was the night lightning appeared in the late evening!), so observing was out. This meant that Rick's Variable Star Clinic (*for sick variables...*) and my Binocular Starwalk had to be cancelled.

Saturday dawned sunny and breezy. The kid's activities area was set up in the Meadows and for about 1-1/2 hours they were kept busy with crafts, solar observing and face-painting. Many participated in a solar system distance scale demonstration, where children were dressed up as the sun, moon and planets and strung out at appropriate distances across the field.

The Saturday afternoon talks were also well attended, as was the evening dinner. The turkey and roast beef buffet was a real hit! Dr. Peter Burgbusch's talk on Saturday evening to a full house was well received. Later on in the Meadows area we were able to hold the binocular starwalk - through intermittent cloud - but miraculously, around 2:00 a.m. the sky cleared beautifully and the rest of the night was given over to some serious observing for the first time that weekend!

Weather aside, it was a smashing star party. It just goes to show that astronomers can have a great time even when the sky is grim. With regard to the children's activities on the Saturday morning I'd like to thank the following for all their help: JOYCE KERPAN, LOUELLA JENSEN, AUDREY PAVOLICH (and her first-aid kit craft), MICHELLE HOTTON (and her babysitting efforts on Sat. evening), SHARON HARTRIDGE, BARB YOUNG, MARLA KOWELCHUK, NYLA DEAN, BARBARA CHANCY (who provided face paints and expertise), MARIE GREEN, HELEN DEAN, CHRIS DEAN, MONA EREMONTI and ONE OTHER MOTHER WHO HELPED WITH THE CRAFTS AND WHOSE NAME I NEVER GOT! Finally, thanks to GRAHAM HARTRIDGE for being such a great gopher! See you next year!

## **Karen's Awesome Adventure at the August 11th Euro Eclipse A Beginner's Guide to Solar Eclipses!**

**by Karen Butler, Goonhilly Earth Station, Cornwall, England**

[OK...pull out your map of southwest England - Cornwall to be exact. Karen Butler, a work-related acquaintance, sends word of her "awesome" first-time eclipse experience. Even though it was cloudy with rain, the effect of this eclipse will leave a life-time impression on her, and may even create a new eclipse chaser! - Rick H.]

"The eclipse was awesome !!!!! It really was. I did take my camera down to Gwithian (we cycled there to avoid any traffic and prevent any hassle parking) and guess wot? It didn't work. The batteries were flat. (No, dear - I didn't check it B4 I left home). Well, not to worry. As Sloane said - photographs wouldn't have done it justice and we'll always have the memory.

It sounds really naff - there was thick, dense cloud. We got 'drown' cycling down there. It just sort of went a bit darker than a rainy cloudy day in Cornwall. But then suddenly during the two and a bit minutes of totality - wow!!! Total darkness but different to night time. And the backdrop of Godrevy lighthouse against this sky of varying wonderful colours ..... I was gob-smacked. I literally couldn't speak. It was a truly "awesome" experience. People on the cliffs set off fireworks. The whole of the St. Ives and Carbis Bay coast line was awash with camera flashes. There was a hushed silence. And it went really cold. Then quicker than it had come, it went. Apparently, on the Lizard and at Newquay (and a little bit at Falmouth) the clouds parted and you could see a bit of the eclipse itself. But wot we saw was truly awesome in itself. *And I'd love to see another one. I think the next one is in South Africa in Dec 2001".*

## S.S.S.P. 1999 Observing Report

by Darrell Chatfield

The observing at Cypress Hills this year proved to be hampered by clouds on all of the star party nights. We had arrived there on Thursday, Aug. 12, to spend an extra day at the park, and hopefully observe an extra night. Well, that didn't happen. After unpacking, I went up to the Meadows to see who was around. I was able to see Rick, Sandy, Bob, Brian, Scott, Al, and Brian Barnhill from our club, and members from the Lethbridge and Calgary clubs. Seeing as the sky was thick with heavy clouds, we just visited around the telescopes that were set up.

Friday saw the beginning of registration, informal talks, etc. for the star party. The sky later on that night again was clouded over, so we all watched the various cloud patterns roll on by! Again, most of us just visited, and swapped "stories".

Saturday, after the formal talks, we all went up the "hill" as I call it, because there were moments of clear sky. So a huge exodus of star party members came to hopefully observe. Even though more clouds did appear, Sandy was able to start her Binocular Starwalk. A good number of people attended, and were able to see in between the cloudy patches. People observed as best they could from 10:30 p.m. until 1:30 a.m. And then suddenly, the cloud layer broke to reveal totally clear skies. You could almost hear a cheer coming from the rows of people behind the scopes and binoculars. I was parked around most of the Saskatoon club people mentioned above. I spent quite a bit of time showing the sky to Andrew Krochko, and Andrew Jones, a former Calgary club member, with my 10" Meade. We enjoyed such sights as M13, M11, M57, M31, M51, M76, NGC 891, NGC 404, and the Owl cluster. Scott had set up his C4, while

Brian Friesen and Sandy were using their binoculars. Of course, Sandy had the lawn chair! There was also a running but friendly feud with myself and Jean Dudley, another of our members. It was a 'war of words', because either I couldn't hear right, or she was meaning something else as we talked on. Of course, with all the laughter, this escalated so much, that later on we had a visit from the local Conservation Officer. He informed us that we could be heard in the next campground! He was not impressed. However, we settled down, and also helped Jean out in setting up the C8 she brought from Kelsey Institute where she works. Ken Noesgaard was also a help in this area. At one point, Sandy said there was a firefly buzzing around my backside. So I finally figured out it was the flashing green light from my cellular phone!

I was able to try out the Nagler 13mm eyepiece I had just bought in Calgary. It worked quite well, but there was a lot of humidity in the air, which cuts out a lot of viewing with higher magnifications. At one point, I went over to the Lethbridge Club's new Meade LX200 12" scope. It was impressive, with the go-to command feature, where you put in the number of the object you want to see, and it goes there automatically. I still prefer the star hop method!

Rick had wandered around as usual, but finally set up next to Paul Campbell of the Edmonton Centre. They were having a galaxy hunting contest, seeing who could spy the faintest one. Paul's scope has a professionally made mirror made by an optician Barry Arnold. Rick says it is very impressive.

All in all, at least we got in some viewing. I lasted until 4 a.m., while others went until 5 a.m. I was thankful it did not rain and that we were able to see some of the sky.

## Mount Kobau Star Party 1999

**by Murray D. Paulson (Edmonton Centre)**

**Lee Johnson of Vancouver put it aptly, "This is the worst Kobau ever!"** Not since 1991 had we seen so little of those wonderous Kobau skys. I remember that year awakening the sound of the rain on my tent and the noises that my neighbor made as he tossed his water logged tent and wet camp gear into the back of his truck. He sang a short tune... "*Mount Kowww-pieeee Star Parrr-tee*" to no particular tune. I remembered this and it became a famillair refrain for my comrads-at-arms as the days and the bad weather wore on.

I made Kobau on Sunday the 8th of August and set up camp and my new 5" scope amidst a group of old friends. I was surprised by the numbers on the mountain. There must have been 20 parties set up already. The evening weather was promising and we had a so-so evening of transparancy, but the seeing was great! Saturn and Jupiter were worth the trip. Monday was even better seeing and I saw an Io shadow transit followed by Io's transit itself *AND* you could see Io when it was mid disk! The Great Red Spot was a pale cream colored hollow nestled into the belt with small ovals following it. Delicate festoons arching off of the North Equatorial Belt and a lot of detail in the polar regions... Wow, it dosen't get any better than this. Saturn was great and I could see Cassini's division as well as the more diffucult Encke's division. Subtle blotches on the inner edge of the B ring were the signs of the "spokes" in the rings. I was having such a good time, that I put off starting photography until the following evening. The Tuesday evening seeing was poor, but the transparency was good. I took a few shots to try and catch Perseids, then did a few 135 mm shots of selected regions. (My last!) Then Kobau turned to nights full of rain. The next time we saw stars was on the Saturday evening. By this time, many had abandoned the mountain for warmer and drier sites. I had postponed my binocular walk to Saturday evening because of Friday evening's opaque sky. It cleared up just after sunset and we had an hour of looking about before I was needed for the "tour". I made my way, binoculars, charts and chairs in hand to the lower parking lot. The sky was closing up as even as I walked up. We did manage to spot M6 and M7 through an arch of the clouds in the south. But this *sucker hole* soon disappeared leaving us to ponder our binoculars while searching for another sucker hole to look through.

This year we had a few notable scopes on the mountain, but not the likes of previous years. The largest Dob was a 20" and the largest refractor was a 6". We did spot Venus' and Mercury's delicate crescents on one clear day, in two of the refractors on the mountain. Bill Eckberg of Everet, Washington won *Best First Time Telescope*. Phil Johnson of Calgary won *Most Innovative Design* for his ultra compact 8" travel scope and Arnold Rivera of Edmonton won *Mechanical Excellence* for his Parallelogram Binocular mount.

**Epilog:** I and a few friends stayed over the Sunday in hopes of a reprieve to no avail. So, we packed up in the fog and rolled down the mountain. I stayed at a campground down in Osoyoos with Rick Keppler of Calgary and we enjoyed hot days and clear nights for the next few days. Yes, this proves that the universe is a perverse place. When you give up, it all comes to you. We set up our scopes in the campground away from the glare of the lights and managed to capture a few objects on our lists as well as a few surprises in how good the skies were there. Next year will be better, right?

## JR. ASTRONOMERS/YOUTH GROUP 1999-2000

by Sandy Ferguson

The Juniors and Youth Group will be starting up this month for another season. There is one change though - both groups will meet together on the same night (I've had to free up a Friday night this year). We will again be meeting at Nutana Collegiate in the Students' Lounge at 7:30 p.m. each meeting night. Dates for meetings throughout the year are:

**Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> (Friday)** - Registration Night and presentation of Astronomy Day and Cypress Hills Star Party activities

**October 22nd** - first regular meeting starts

**November 19th**

**December 10th** - Yearly tour of U of S Observatory (tentative date)

**January 14th, 2000**

**February 11th**

**March 17th**

**April 14th**

Hope to see familiar faces and some new ones as well! Any questions just call Sandy at 931-3184 or email at <ferguson15@hotmail.com>.

### The Future SSSP Dates

**August 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>, 2000**

**August 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>, 2001**

**August 9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002**

**August 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003**

**August 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

**August 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

## Remember the Beaver Creek Public Star Night!

I'm sure a lot of members have forgotten, but we are committed to a Beaver Creek Public Star Night on September 17 or 18 (depending on the weather). Bring your scope and set up by 7:30 p.m. at the Creek. The star party runs from dusk until midnight. For more information, contact Brian Friesen at 384-2963.

### October is Election Month

October is election month for the Saskatoon Centre. Please try to attend this meeting and cast your vote for the new executive. Note that all terms come up for re-election this year, including the two-year terms of the President and Vice-president. Also vacant will be the position of Honorary President, unfilled since Professor Kennedy's resignation in the spring. Nominations for all positions are open - send your nominations to the Centre mailbox, or nominate someone by contacting any member of the executive.

## EDITOR NEEDS COOL NEWSLETTER STUFF

Else next issue is real barren. Articles, photos (i.e. SSSP!, etc), cartoon, and whatever greatly appreciated.

## **The New RASC Webring**

**by Mark Grice, Ottawa Centre**

<markgrice@home.com> <<http://members.home.net/markgrice>/ICQ#20626798>

Hello all RASC affiliate centre webmasters/contacts.

The intent of this email message is to introduce you to the newly formed RASC Member Home Pages Webring. The idea occurred one evening whilst trying to track down the web sites of a couple of members. I consulted with some members of the RASC executive as I wanted to ensure that the RASC approved of the idea and would let me use the RASC name. With the assistance, advice and ideas of some of those I contacted, the ring is now up and going and is open to all RASC members and affiliate centres to join. All of the details can be found at the ring home page <<http://members.home.net/astroring>>. This site can also be reached via the webring logo on the RASC's main page.

Why am I sending you this email? As webmaster of your respective centre sites, I have a favour to ask. The more sites in the ring, the more useful and fun it will be. Here is where you can help. If you have already read more than you want to from me, hit the delete button now.

If you are still here, some ideas for spreading the word:

- enter your centre's web site in the ring
- if you maintain a list of personal web sites of members of your centre, forward the info to them
- if your centre has a newsletter (print or electronic) print up a small notice
- mention it at your next centre meeting to any members who may have personal home pages they wish to share in the online community of other members.

Thanks for your time and hope to see some of your websites in the ring.

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**Duct tape is like the force. It has a dark side, a light side and it holds the universe together.**

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*It's never the wrong time to join the  
Saskatoon Centre*

**Note: Membership renewals or new memberships received from now on  
will be carried forward to the 1999-2000 year.**

Membership runs from Oct. 1 to Sep. 30.

Please send payment to the Centre mailbox.

**Regular - \$40.00   Youth - \$22.50   Life - \$720.00**

# The Messier, FNGC & H-400 Club

## MESSIER CLUB

Certified at 110 Objects: Rick Huziak, Gord Sarty, Scott Alexander, Sandy Ferguson, Dale Jeffrey, Darrell Chatfield

Bob Christie	(*AWARDED*)	110
Ken Noesgaard	(*new*)	76
Wade Selvig		64
Erich Keser		51
Tyler Cottenie		33
Stan Noble		28
Brent Gratias		26
Terry Nelson		21
Les & Ellen Dickson		20
Brian Friesen		15
Ellen Kaye-Cheveldayoff		13
Andrew Krochko		4

## FINEST NGC CLUB

Certified at 110 Objects: Rick Huziak

Dale Jeffrey -COMPLETE! (& applying)	110
Gordon Sarty	97
Darrell Chatfield	97
Scott Alexander	83
Sandy Ferguson	...23

## HERSCHEL 400 CLUB

Certified at 400 Objects: not yet!

Rick Huziak	329
Darrell Chatfield	188
Gord Sarty	137
Scott Alexander	70
Sandy Ferguson	...18

The Messier, FNGC and H400 lists are meant to promote observing! Please send in your observations of these objects, and I'll publish them in the newsletter!

## Join the Messier, Finest NGC and H-400 Club!

Observe all 110 Messier, 100 FNGC or 400 H-400 objects and earn your  
**CERTIFICATE!**

The first 2 lists can be found in *the Observer's Handbook*. The Herschel 400 list will be available at each general meeting for 50 cents (covers photocopying) or can be mailed out on request to distant members.

**Congratulation to Bob Christie who has now been awarded his Messier Certificate! Way to go Bob!.**

The observing war continues with many members sending in their totals. Unfortunately, with poor SSSP skies, many members lost their most recent opportunity to catch a few more objects, especially M6, M7, M68 and other very low objects that are much easier from the southern Cypress latitudes! Better luck next year!

**CHALLENGE:** Come one everyone! If you are not on the list, you are not observing! Make an effort this month and observe at last one Messier object to get onto the list. Let's see if we can get EVERY Saskatoon member observing and blow away other wimpy armchair Centres!

Phone or send observing numbers to  
**<huziak@SEDSystems.ca>**

## **University Observatory Hours for Public Viewing**

The U of S Observatory is open to the general public every Saturday evening. Admission if free. The observatory is located on campus, one block north of the Wiggins Avenue and College Drive entrance.

**Hours: September 8:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.  
October – February 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.**

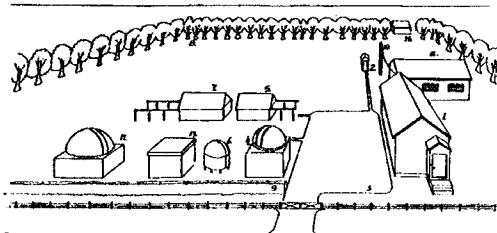
On clear evenings visitors may look through the 6-inch refractor to view Jupiter, Saturn, the moon, star clusters and other exciting astronomical objects. For further information, phone the recorded Astronomy Information Line at 966-6429.

You are invited to the  
**General Meeting of the Saskatoon Centre**  
**Monday, September 20, 1999 at 7:30 p.m.**  
Conference Room, National Hydrology Research Institute building  
Innovation Boulevard

Presenting:  
**How Cypress Hills Went**  
**&**  
**Int'l Astronomy Day, eh? – A Retrospective**

**by Erich Keser, Rick Huziak, Sandy Ferguson  
and other Saskatoon Centre Members**

This event is open to the general public. There is no admission charge.



## The Sleaford Observatory

*Longitude: 105 deg 55' 13" +/- 13" W Latitude: 52 deg 05' 04" +/- 08" N*

by Rick Huziak

### **Open House, Grand Opening and Sleaford Starnight Planned for October 15 or 16 –**

Yup, that's right. We plan to have a Grand Opening in mid-October, with appropriate pomp and circumstance. Stay tuned for details to be given in the October issue of *Saskatoon Skies*.

**Fundraising** – Well – kinda pokey. This will resume now that SSSP is out of the way. There has been no work from those approached, but we will send in an application to National Office before the October Council meeting.

**Construction** – It's time to get going with this. There is a request to have the toilet installed before the October 15<sup>th</sup> Grand Opening. We are not sure that this is possible, but it will be worth trying! In the next week, you will most likely be getting a telephone call asking for volunteer effort! But don't wait for the phone to ring! Call Darrell Chatfield or Bill Hydomako, and be a keener! Remember, donation of useful building materials, even onzies or twozies are very useful!

**The University Roll-off Observatory** – This observatory is now up and running, and is visited by four Astronomy 212 students every clear night, regardless of the phase of the moon. Three telescopes are more or less aligned (the C-14, the Meade LX200, and the Meade 8) and the Zeiss 6-inch Maksutov will be aligned this week. The observatory also now contains a working photometer, spectrometer and CCD camera, along with 2 or 3 computers to run all of this stuff. One of the computers also has a copy of ECU – quite useful at the site. To date, I am the only RASC member trained for this facility, but that could change in short order. These students have already imaged many Messier objects, measured the light of a half-dozen variable stars and done spectral classifications of the Uma Moving Group! Pretty cool!

### **Outside Pier for a C-8**

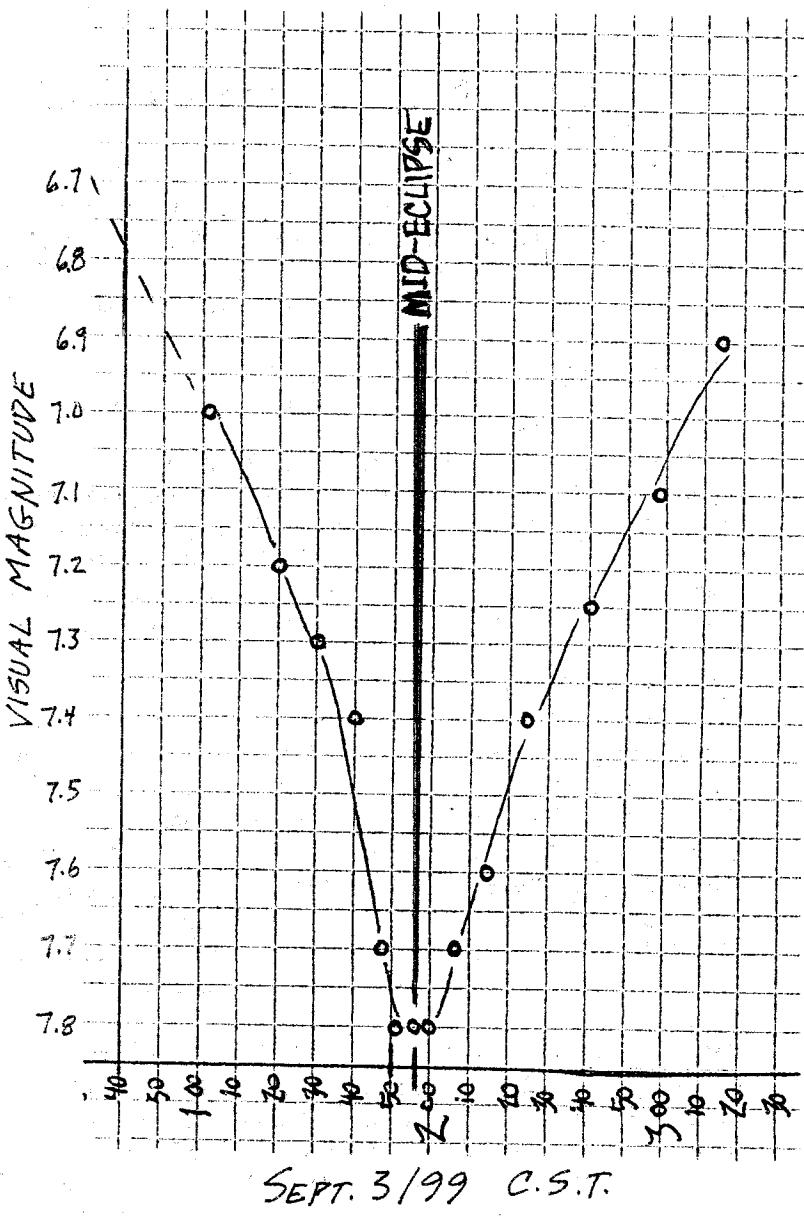
The old Patterson/Williams C-8 pier is now in place just to the east of the warm-up shelter. A C-8 telescope can be installed and removed nightly, and the pier will provide reasonable alignment for general observing. Power can be run by a temporary extension cord.

## Another Assymetrical Eclipse of RZ Cas

By Rick Huziak

A few months ago in this newsletter, I described a strange eclipse of RZ Cassiopeiae, where star remained at minimum for an hour, instead of a few minutes. This month, I observed another strange eclipse of this star, this time it was an *asymmetrical eclipse*. On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1999, I observed a seemingly normal eclipse, but when I went to plot the results, I found that the star faded faster going into the eclipse, then came out of the eclipse at a far more leisurely pace! Using the *tracing-paper method*, I found the time of minimum light to be 01:56 a.m. Sept. 3. It can be seen from the light curve to the right that all the points on the ascending branch are closer to the mid-eclipse line, and those after minimum are farther away. This effect may be due to one of the stars intrinsically varying in light during the eclipse, or may be caused by non-uniform heating (hot spots) on one of the stars. This easy-to-observer variable holds many surprises, and amateur stellar-eclipse chasers will one day help to resolve the mystery of RZ Cas.

Next mid-eclipse CST times (to nearest 15 min) for Sept: 14, 22:45; 16, 04:30; 20, 23:15; 26, 22:30; 28, 03:30.



## SKY VUE TELESCOPES

144 Edgehill Cl. N.W.

Calgary, Alberta

Phone (403) 239-8386

email - [SkyVue@cadvision.com](mailto:SkyVue@cadvision.com)

### **"POST SASKATCHEWAN STAR PARTY SALE"**

#### **TELESCOPES**

TELEVUE RANGER - 70mm F6.8 c/w 20mm plossl - \$1,100

ANTARES 951GP - 100mm F10 c/w GP mount, Vixen optics, 6x30 finder - \$1,000

VISTA 508 - "the portable one" - 80mm F5 c/w 45diag., 17mm plossl, 6x30 finder \*\*\*\$275.\*\*\*

VISTA 767 - 3" reflecting telescope c/w 5x24 finder, tripod, 1.25" 25mm Kellner - \$100. WOW

VISTA 4.5" optical tube assembly c/w metal tube, 1.25" focuser, 5x24 finder - \$75. A STEAL

#### **BINOCULARS - while they last!!!**

Bausch & Lomb LEGACY - 7x50 or 7x35 Reg.price \$190. NOW only \$130.

#### **ONE ONLY OF THE FOLLOWING - Don't Wait**

Fujinon FMTSX 10x70 - superb sky viewing, ultra long eye relief - was \$1000 now \$890

Fujinon FMTSX 16x70 - bigger is better - 95% light transmission - was \$1100 now \$960

Fujinon WPXL 7x50 - fully coated, light weight, waterproof - was \$ 310 now \$ 250

Antares 10x70 - the next best, multicoated, centre focus - best buy now \$ 350

Antares 15x80 - add this one to your Santa wish list - one only now \$ 400

#### **BITS AND PIECES**

Antares Nebula Mid Band filter 1.25" - \$73. 2" - \$121. Antares Colour Set (6) 1.25" - \$67.

Antares Cross Polarizing filter 1.25" - \$35. MOON FILTERS - \$10.

Thousand Oaks Nebular - Broad Band - Narrow Band - and O-3 filters 1.25" - \$140. 2" - \$240.

Thousand Oaks Solar Filters for 70mm Fujinon Binos -\$150. - for 80mm Antares Binos - \$150.

6x30 Finder and Bracket - \$50. Focuser #811 - 1.25" - \$27. Diagonals - various sizes CALL

Camera Adapter - direct to "T" ring 1.25" only \$15. 2" only \$30.

TELRADs - \$60. Telrad Dew Shields - \$20. Telrad extra bases - \$15.

MIRROR SET - **ONE ONLY** - 8" F6 Primary with 1.80" Secondary - \$375. /set

Red L.E.D. Flashlights - a must for star parties - \$25

#### **EYE PIECES**

OMCON - super plossls - 7.5 or 10mm @ \$48., 12.5 or 26mm @ \$55., 32mm @ \$74.

VISTA - 1.25" Kellner - 25mm or 10mm @ \$27.50 UNBELIEVABLE !!!

TELEVUE - Plossl - 8 or 11 or 15mm @ \$130., 25mm @ \$150., 32 or 40mm @ \$180.

RADIANS, PANOPTICS, NAGLERS, POWERMATES - CALL FOR BEST PRICES

Barlows - OMCON - 2Xs - \$33. ANTARES - 2Xs - \$63. 3Xs - \$75.

**ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING - GST is extra**

**SSSP SALE PRICES END SEPT. 30/99**