



Volume 26 #2
March / April 2005

The Niagara **WHIRLPOOL**

Celebrating 25 Years in Publication



*Sunrise over the Atlantic Ocean
at 25 deg 3 min N, 77 deg 28 min W
taken on February 14, 2005*

NIAGARA WHIRLPOOL

The Newsletter of the
Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
Niagara Centre

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Original articles on astronomy and related subjects, observation reports, book reviews, letters, images and other items are needed. Please submit them at the meetings, mail them to RASC Niagara Centre, P.O. Box 4040, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 7S3, or e-mail them to the editor at astro_nuts@cogeco.ca.

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Niagara Centre Website.

E-mail Discussion List & Member's Only Area

The Niagara Centre has an e-mail discussion list and a member's area on the website. By subscribing to the e-mail list you will be able to post messages and carry on discussions about astronomy and activities with other Niagara Centre members. This is a great way to interact and get to know other members, or enhance your knowledge of astronomy. Please note that a log-in procedure is required to initially join the Discussion List. Complete instructions are available on the discussion list page on the website.

A member's only area of the website is also available. This area contains Niagara Centre information for the use of its members only. The member's area contains astrophotography by Niagara members, the Niagara library book list and lots of other Centre related info of interest to members.

To receive the log-ins and passwords for the e-mail discussion list and member's area, contact Les Welgan or Ron Gasbarini and they will send you the needed information by e-mail.

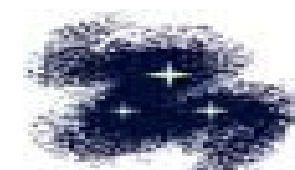
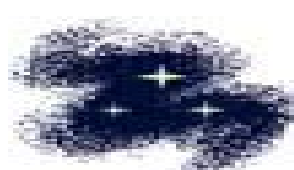
Upcoming General Meetings

Niagara Falls Public Library at 7:30 pm

March 17

April 21

May 19



Editor's Note

By Deloris Welgan

I hope you enjoy the newest feature in the Whirlpool titled "Niagara Members Around the Globe".

We have a few people who moved away from this area but still remain members of the Niagara Centre. I've asked them to be "reporters" for this newsletter and they kindly accepted the positions. I thought it would be a great way to bridge the miles between us.

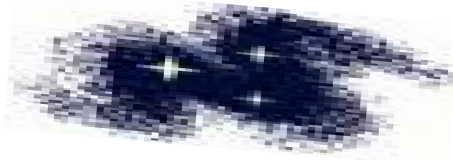
John Nemy and Carol Legate are long time members and close friends of many of our current members. They moved to British Columbia a few years ago. They have graciously accepted the role of "National Correspondent". As well as images we all know John is famous for, they will submit bimonthly reports on the highlights of the West Coast stargazing scene.

Bob Doran joined the Niagara Centre shortly after it became part of the RASC. His job took him to North Carolina about twenty-six years ago. He is going to be one of our "International Correspondents" and has offered to submit some points of interest from a Southern State perspective from time to time.

Another "International Correspondent" is one of our members who has been doing research in Hawaii for quite a few years. Robert Jedicke has written articles for the Whirlpool in the past and has expressed an interest in doing so again sometime in the future. He offered to send us some photos from Mauna Kea and Hawaii.

Many thanks to our Corre-

spondents for their interest in contributing to the newsletter.



President's Message

by Brian Pihack

It's March and thoughts of spring start to occupy ones mind. Three things immediately pop into mine.

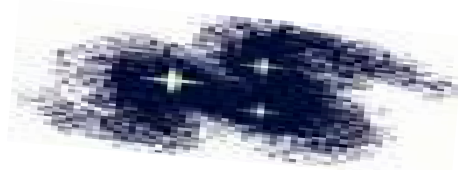
The first is that our annual banquet is less than two months away. This year on April 23, the Niagara Centre will be hosting a night with Jay Anderson. This is the gentleman who, along with Fred Espanic, pen the NASA bulletin for Solar eclipses. He is also the retired head of "Environment Canada, Western Provinces". I have heard him talk on several occasions. He is as informative as he is entertaining. The Discovery Channel always turns to him to explain some unusual weather phenomenon and he does so albeit humour and astronomy are thrown in for good measure. As always, I try to appeal to the membership to join us for this evening. The club stands to benefit from this night, more so than other times, and with a new observatory in progress well that's getting ahead of myself. Please come out and join us. Talk to Joyce Simms for ticket purchases. You can call her at 905-262-5276.

The second thought has to do with the new observatory. I am sure Denis

Maheau and Les Marzi will be organizing a few work parties. So if the call goes out, please show up and participate in our club functions.

The last thought I have has to do with what I started to discuss at the last meeting. For those of us in Niagara Falls or St. Catharines area, the drive out to Wellandport can take the spin off a night of observing. I made mention that a site a little more convenient for a "quick" nights of observing, out towards Niagara on the Lake, would be well utilized. I received an offer from a member, which I will bring up at the next executive meeting. There are still some "details" to work out but this is a genuine possibility. As well, if you have any ideas, connections, thoughts on the matter, please show up at the next executive meeting [e-mail me for details] or send me an e-mail.

The last point I will bring up is that key fees for the observatory are past due. They run from January to December. Some people have not paid their 2004 dues despite being contacted by me. I don't want to have to chase down each and every one of you but you will be contacted in the next two weeks by e-mail of how much you owe. Please take care of this matter as soon as is possible.



Edmund Scientifics

www.scientificsonline.com

Secretary's Report

by Les Welgan

As you can tell by the snow outside, spring is just around the corner. Star gazing hasn't been the best lately but personally, I've enjoyed having a normal winter for a change. I'll take snow over rain any winter.

Anyway, back to astronomy related issues. I'd like to welcome three new members to our centre: Jane Gadsby, Gary Meek and Richard West. I hope you will take advantage of all the activities and information our centre has to offer. To date our membership total stands at 136.

There are a couple of events coming up which I would like to remind you about.

First is International Astronomy Day. The date chosen this year is Saturday, April 16th and our centre will be participating. Further information will be made available as plans are finalized.

Second is our annual banquet which will be held the following weekend, Saturday, April 23rd at the Delphi Room, same place as last year. Our guest speaker is Ray Anderson. Our president, Brian Pihack has more information about this in his report.

That's all for now. I hope the skies start clearing soon and temperatures begin to warm up so we can get back to enjoying our favourite pastime.



California Nebula taken November 14th
by Les Marczi

Librarian's Corner

by Darlene Sloggett

Take a minute and check out all the books available to you in our club.

Ron Gasbarini keeps the web page updated with all new additions and a list is accessible on the members only page. Book donations are always welcome. Below is a list of some new ones we received this month. We have over 165 titles for you to choose from. If something catches your eye, stop in and see me at the meeting. I will be happy to set the book aside for you. It is nice to see so many people interested in learning more about astronomy to make our club more enjoyable.

Some new titles include:

- Field Book of the Skies
- The Growth of Physical Science
- Field Guide to the Stars & Planets

Starlight Nights

The Beginning of the Long Dash

Find the Constellations

Footprints on the Moon

Curiosities of the Sky

There are many more including a French version called L'Astronomie.

Please check your bookshelves to see if you have any book belonging to the club or maybe one you would like to donate. If you would like to write a short book report after reading your selection, I would be happy to include it in my report for the newsletter to encourage others to read it as well.

We have books for all ages and levels of learning. Relaxing under the night sky is more enjoyable when you know what to look for.

NIAGARA MEMBERS AROUND THE GLOBE

View from North Carolina, USA

By International Correspondent

Bob Doran

While my interest in astronomy has not abated, my observing has fallen off. I do have a scope, a Meade ETX 125, but have not used it very often for a couple of reasons.

While you people in the north are somewhat limited in observing by the cold and snow, the weather here in North Carolina is just the opposite. We have very hot and humid weather, 90F and 90% humidity, for much of our summer which runs from late May well into September. That kind of temperature, even into the evening, makes it difficult for a northern boy who prefers cooler weather to observe. Imagine trying to observe with sweat running down into your eyes and requiring a towel to mop your face as an accessory to be carried like eye pieces!

When my company transferred

us here 26 years ago, we had four days to find a home and purchase it in a city we had never been in before. One of the first things we found was it was very rare to have a house with a basement and/or a garage. While it is more common to find homes with a garage now, at that time that was not the case. The result was that I had no room to store a scope. At the time we moved here, I had a Meade 8" reflector and the only place I could store it was in a second story bedroom where I had my ham radio equipment. Thus every time I wanted to observe, I had to take the tube off the mount, carry them downstairs set it back up and observe then reverse the process when I was finished and re-assemble. Usually when I got it downstairs and set up, "I was too pooped to peek".

We have a big home with four bedrooms but located in somewhat of a dip with tall trees, some about 80 feet, on three sides. Thus, my field of view is either directly overhead or slightly to the northeast. The trees are nice for a radio ham to attach antennas to, but they don't lend themselves too well for astronomy.

However we may be able to solve the problem in the near future. Now that I have retired for the second time, from the company I worked for and later as a faculty member of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, we are planning to move back north, hopefully back to the Lewiston area where we lived before. So, we may be able to attend Niagara Centre meetings in the next year or so and at the same time solve our observing problem.

I do miss the Niagara Centre and its people. I joined the Niagara Centre shortly after it became part of the RASC. I was Secretary for almost all of the time I was there except for two terms as President, one term being when we co-hosted the Annual Meeting with the Hamilton Centre. The early years of the Centre were a challenge with only ten or so members, at times. There were some real struggles to keep the Centre going for a few years until we got it turned around. I have been a member now for over 40 years and hope I can remain one for another 40 years!



I produced this image of the Moon on Friday, December 17th, 2004 around 7:30pm with a SAC7 CCD camera and my little 90mm Sky-Watcher mak at f/13.9. I processed the AVI frames in AstroVideo and adjusted the color slightly in Photoshop. It's my first image of the moon and only my second attempt at using the camera. The craters Theophilus, Cyrillus, and Catharina are visible to the left of Mare Nectaris (Sea of Nectar).

by Todd Bundy

**National Council
Representative's Report**

by Joe Otonicar

I attended the RASC National Council Meeting (NC051) on February 26th and have some good news and some not so good news.

The good news is that the various committees are willing to make spending cuts to the tune of about \$16,000.00 or around one third off the projected 2005 deficit. The bad news is that the majority of Council proposes another hike of the membership fee.

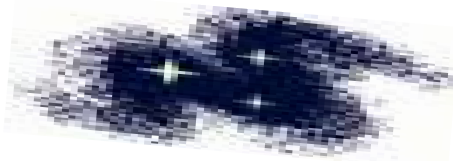
Many other groups and societies have publications made by and for their members. Most are willing to sell these to non-members at a higher price to create an income to offset the lower member price. Usually the higher the number of units printed, the lower the unit cost.

A good portion of RASC revenue is from the sales of our publications. I refer to the RASC Journal, Observer's Handbook, The Beginners Observers Guide, Skyways and the Calendar. The main reason for our deficit is because those at the helm geared publication pricing to non-members at an abnormally high Canadian/US exchange rate without factoring in an allowance for our dollar making any form of comeback. I feel that some of the books are under priced. I also feel that they could be promoted more aggressively to institutions and non-members. A proper re-pricing would make them more appealing to book vendors like Chapters, Amazon etc. Even the company I work for would gladly carry them but the difference between the

wholesale and retail prices are so small it's not worth their while.

I strongly believe that the National Council must make every attempt to build muscle because I don't see much more fat. If we can get the necessary money from publication sales instead of the members, I think we should make that effort.

People, I need your thoughts, questions, concerns and input! Tell me I'm right or tell me I'm wrong. Come out to the meeting and track me down. I'm easy to find. I'm the guy selling the 50/50 tickets. Call me in the evenings at 905-935-2526 or e-mail me at liljoemurphy@idirect.com I hope to hear from you soon.



**Don't forget to
contact Joyce Simms
for your Banquet
tickets
NOW !!!
April 23, 2005
is just around
the corner.**

**Kendrick Astro
Instruments**
2920 Dundas St. West
Toronto, Ont M6P 1Y8
Phone 416 762 7946
Fax 416 762 2765
www.kendrick-ai.com

A T T E N T I O N

**Niagara Centre, RASC Annual
Banquet 2005**

"An Evening with Jay Anderson"

**Noted solar eclipse expert, astro-
photographer and meteorologist.**

Subject of talk to be announced.

Saturday, April 23, 2005

Delphi Banquet Hall

4414 Portage Road

Niagara Falls, ON

(beside Chatters Restaurant)

Doors open at 5:30 pm

Dinner at 6:30 pm

Jay Anderson at 8:00 pm

Banquet tickets - \$45.00

Speaker only - \$15.00

**Don't forget to reserve your
tickets!**

Contact Joyce Simms

NIAGARA MEMBERS AROUND THE GLOBE

West Coast Watch

by National Correspondents

Carol Legate & John Nemy

“Skiing Stars”

Touring southern Colorado and Utah this past February, we experienced the ultimate in stargazing, high altitude views of the starry night. As we set off for a ski and archaeoastronomy holiday, we knew we were heading for the mountains but had no idea that we would consistently be at elevations of 2000 metres (7000 feet) and higher. Looking at the sky from 2000 metres, the observer peers through 25% less atmosphere than from sea level. Stars and planets are brighter and show more colour and the subtle structure of our galaxy, the Milky Way, is unmistakable.

The old mining town of Telluride is located in the very southwestern corner of the state of Colorado at a southerly latitude of 38 degrees. Telluride is a tad remote for North American standards but can be easily accessed off Route #145 near Durango. This funky village is at the end of a spectacular box canyon at the

foot of the Telluride Ski Resort. A high-speed gondola lift operates as a regular mode of transportation whisking skiers and foot passengers from the valley to the high alpine and another moun-

tain village. The gondola runs until 12:00 midnight everyday and tops out at Station St. Sophia, 3211 metres (10,535 feet). The prospect of sky watching from here filled us with faint photon anticipation. We planned a two stage attack, first a sun/moon watch and later a starry sky vigil. Dressed for the cold of 3200 metres, we



headed up the gondola and walked out at the upper station to witness the end of the day. We were greeted by a 24 hour old, 1% illuminated crescent of a new Moon hovering over

grand finale of our high altitude observing was the Milky Way, a band of stars, nebulae, dark and light zones arcing literally from horizon to horizon. The river of stars started in the cluster like constellations of Cassiopeia and Perseus in the north and continued right down to the edge of the southern horizon with Pups and Columba revealing themselves to these awestruck Canadians. It was a winter star party, Rocky Mountain style!

Our trip also included visits to

distant summits. The scene beat out any sci-fi movie. Then stars started to pop out everywhere, by the time astronomical twilight ended, the sky was ablaze with stars of the winter sky that are brighter because they are actually closer to Earth than most summer stars. The

many ancient ruins, including cliff dwellings and astronomically aligned free standing observatory towers left behind by the original inhabitants of this region, the Anasazi peoples. The night skies they would have pondered 1000 years ago made us envious.



**Jay Anderson,
our Guest Speaker
on April 23, 2005**

**Get your Banquet
Tickets NOW.**

**Contact Joyce
Simms...**

You can see and hear John!

Where: Hamilton RASC Annual Banquet

When: Saturday, May 14, 2005

Title: Alien Worlds: The Search for other Earths

Speaker:

**John Nemy
The Pacific Observatory
Whistler, BC**

Subject: Astronomer & futurist John Nemy, presents a dynamic visual and musical look at the search for extrasolar planets.

Nemy's shows link's humankind to the stars. Images from some of the best high altitude observing sites from around the world are accompanied by live narration, instrumentation and music from Nemy's latest CD "SKY". Also, tune in and hear John's new CD on CBC Galaxie Radio.

For ticket's contact: Steve Barnes / Sky Optics

<http://www.skyoptics.ca/>

Toll Free 1-877-631-9944

Email : sbarnes@skyoptics.net



*Comet Machholz
from Callahan Valley*

January 4.

by John Nemy

NATIONAL NEWS

Astronomy Day Coordinator's report 2005-02-26

International Astronomy Day 2005 is just seven weeks away.

On that day, professional and amateur astronomers all over the world bring the Universe to the public, through public observing sessions, displays, and information booths in science centres, planetaria, and malls. The RASC joins groups from some 30 countries in celebrating International Astronomy Day.

For Centres with larger aspirations, International Astronomy Week is officially April 11th to 17th. By coincidence the entire week constitutes the 35th anniversary of the famous Apollo 13 mission which gripped the world from April 11-17, 1970. This would be a good "theme of the day" or feature talk; while recognizing the distinction between the science of astronomy and the adventure of space travel, A-Day is designed to share our science with a wider audience, partly in the hope of attracting new members. As your humble coordinator can personally attest, many a teenage space geek has turned into an adult astronomy geek. Presumably, there are more of the former who have not yet made the jump.

As always, A-Days in Canada

are organized at the Centre and community level. While a definitive census is not yet available, it is hoped that the Society will meet or even exceed 2004's record of 23 participating Centres. In addition to science centres, malls and bookstores, it seems that more Centres are exploiting the natural partnership that exists between the Society and public libraries. A presentation about astronomy books is a natural fit, a chance to celebrate the sometimes-maligned pursuit of armchair astronomy with an audience of readers.

I am very pleased to report that Centre Francophone de Montréal will host official Astronomy Day activities for the first time. CFM will be hosting its first "public observing night" of 2005 at the Parc-nature de l'Île-de-la-Visitation in Montreal on April 16th. For the last several years the Centre has been hosting monthly "public observing nights" around the Moon's First Quarter during the summer months. This year they have expanded this schedule and will start the season on A-Day.

Many/most Centres incorporate public observing sessions into their A-Day events. As always, Astronomy Day 2005 features a well-placed waxing Moon. First Quarter occurs right on the 16th, creating ideal lighting conditions along the lunar terminator certain to impress anybody who has never had a chance to see the Moon close-up. Soaring well above the top of the ecliptic, Luna will dominate the evening sky, and will be well-placed until well past local midnight. The Moon will also be high during the daytime hours, and its

position in the polarization band will make it seem exceptionally bright and detailed. Members of the public will be pleasantly surprised at how well the lunar maria and highlands can be resolved with just the unaided eye.

Other observing highlights of the chosen date once again include the giant planets Jupiter and Saturn. This will be the last good A-Day for Jupiter, which is two weeks past opposition and therefore accessible at the onset of dusk. By 2006 the King of Planets will have dipped much further south and will rise relatively low and late. Saturn, always a crowd pleaser, will be well-placed high in the south at sunset, a few degrees SW of the Moon. The Big Dipper will soar near the zenith, pointing the way to Polaris as well as the spring luminaries Arcturus and Spica. These easy star hops are a perfect introduction to the neophyte.

The Astronomy Day page on the RASC website will be regularly updated in the weeks leading up to A-Day. I am following up with the Centres to consolidate information about A-Days activities across the country. I encourage Centre reps to contact me directly or follow up with your local A-Days coordinator to provide details of your Centre's activities for national consumption. I will be happy to answer questions and assist in any way I can.

Bruce McCurdy
Edmonton Centre
Astronomy Day National
Coordinator

Members' Observing and Observatory Director's Report

by Les Marczy

Well spring is just around the corner and so is the warmer weather. Conditions lately haven't been the best however last Members Night proved to be favorable. We had a very good turn out and the evening was quite enjoyable. A member of the Mississauga Astronomical Society and

refractor and all CCD cameras to go along with it. I can't believe he got all that stuff in a small car. Needless to say, I learned a lot and look forward to getting out with Bob again.

As comet Machholz starts to fade, it still proves to be a nice target. It can be observed all night, as it is circumpolar. After sunset you can locate comet 2004 Q2 near Polaris, glowing at around mag. 5-6.

It's an excellent time of the year for the planets also. Both Saturn and Jupiter are

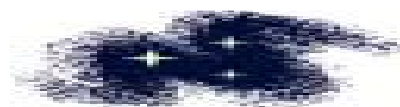
observable for most of the night. Nice clear cold nights with steady seeing should produce wonderful images. Bundle up, take your acclimated telescope out and enjoy the view.

Observatory construction should resume in another month or so. I will be contacting all of you in the spring. The 16" has been removed from the observatory for repairs. The primary mirror is going in for refiguring to correct it's under correction and to be recoated. Also, the spider vane and diagonal need modification. This will be a very big optical improvement. I'll let everyone know when it's back up and running again.

Up Coming Members Nights:

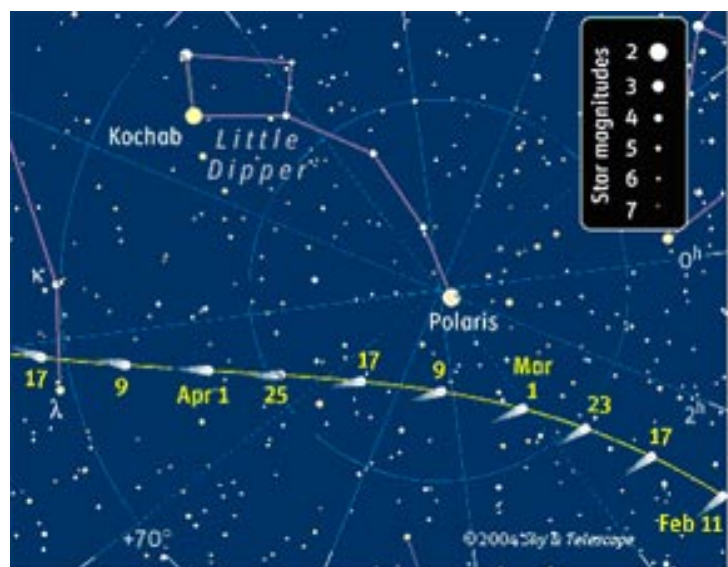
- Sat. Mar. 12th
- Sat. Apr. 9th
- Sat. May 7th
- Sat. June 4th

(rain dates will be the following Sunday of posted dates)



(below) M-31, The Andromeda Galaxy, this shot is featured on our home page...This is an accumulation of 95 mins. of exposure time, taken with the Canon 10-D and Takahashi Sky 90 II @ f/4.5.

by Les Marczy



RASC contacted me before our last Members Night. He wanted to know if he could join us at the C.C.C.A. Observatory to do some imaging. I welcomed Bob (Anderson) with open arms and told him I'd save him a spot. After a few regulars showed up, Bob pulled in and we did our introductions. I had most of my equipment set by then so I offered to help him set up.

I knew I was in for a treat when Bob pulled out a Monolith Pier (\$3000 US). Then he grabbed his mount, a Paramount ME, the Cadillac of German equatorial mounts. I was impressed....this is my dream machine. To top it all off, he had a 7" TMB



Beginners Under Dark Skies Report

by Mike Panucci

I would like to welcome beginner and existing members to an upcoming BUDS night at the Chippawa Creek Conservation Area observatory in Wellandport. The BUDS night will be held Saturday, March 12th beginning at sunset. This is also a planned Members' Night.

I want to send a special invitation to beginner members who attend Stan's beginner classes at AN Myer. I plan to speak at Stan's class on March 3rd to share some observing techniques with beginner members. My topics will review some stargazer methods. It would be beneficial for newcomers to learn a few secrets to stargazing.

I will briefly review:

- Choosing a Dark sky location.
- Adapting your eyes to darkness.
- Dealing with Dew.
- Preparing your equipment for the outdoors.
- Planning a celestial object list.

As with previous BUDS nights, the instrument of choice will be the binocular. It is an excellent astronomical instrument but please feel free to bring your telescope. There are some excellent celestial showpieces to observe. Together we will star hop through the winter night sky. We will sharpen our star and constellation locating skills.

I am hoping to see a few of Stan's students join us on the March 12th BUDS night. The BUDS program is about learning to observe and

having fun. Hunting down a Messier or NGC object is very rewarding at our club's dark site.

Come and join us.



(above) M42, the Orion Nebulae
by Scott Barnes

(below) The Moon, one of the first images taken with my new Canon 20-D DSLR. I shot this with my Takahashi Sky 90 II NSV @ f/12 on Feb 18

by Les Mardzi



Do you have your Banquet tickets yet?

Don't miss out on a great evening.

Contact Joyce Simms right away!

FEATURE

MY LIFE AMONG THE STARS

By Andrew Beaton

I heard about the RASC almost by accident about a year and a half ago. While at Chapters, I read a flyer stating that the RASC would be out in the parking lot for the lunar eclipse and the public was invited to attend to learn and enjoy this astronomical event. I've always had an interest in what's beyond our little planet, stemming from watching a lot of PBS and gazing a lot at the sky. I grew up in Chippawa. Trust me, there's not much else to do there when you're not of age. I pocketed my newly-purchased digital camera and off I went...not knowing what to expect of the evening.

To my surprise, and against everything I'd heard, the folks at the RASC turned out to be a fairly entertaining, interesting bunch. Nothing like the dry, witless stereotypes I had heard about astronomers. The very first person I met at the starnight was Brian Pihack, who if you know him, is far from dry and witless. He was helping John Vanderbrugge calibrate the huge 16" scope, which was the largest scope I had ever seen up to that point. Everybody who had set up a telescope went out of their way to ensure the public had a good time and learned a little about the eclipse. By evening's end, I came away with several good photos and an invitation to come out to the next monthly meeting. I decided then and there to become a member and I am very glad I did.

About a half a year ago I decided to take the plunge and run for the Board of Directors. I believe that there's really no better way to become involved than

to be a part of how the club runs. I have really enjoyed my time on the Board of Directors.

I am very happy to be a member of the RASC Niagara Chapter. Not only have I increased my knowledge of astronomy, I have had quite a lot of fun, and have met a lot of nice people. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have taken time out of your busy schedules to help the club whether it be to book speakers, build observatories or to teach classes. Finally, I would like to thank all of my fellow members who have made my being in the RASC Niagara Chapter such a pleasurable experience. While the science behind astronomy is about the technology, the life behind astronomy is its people.



Khan Scope Centre

Ray Khan

3243 Dufferin Street

Toronto, Ontario M6A 2T2

Phone 416-783-4140

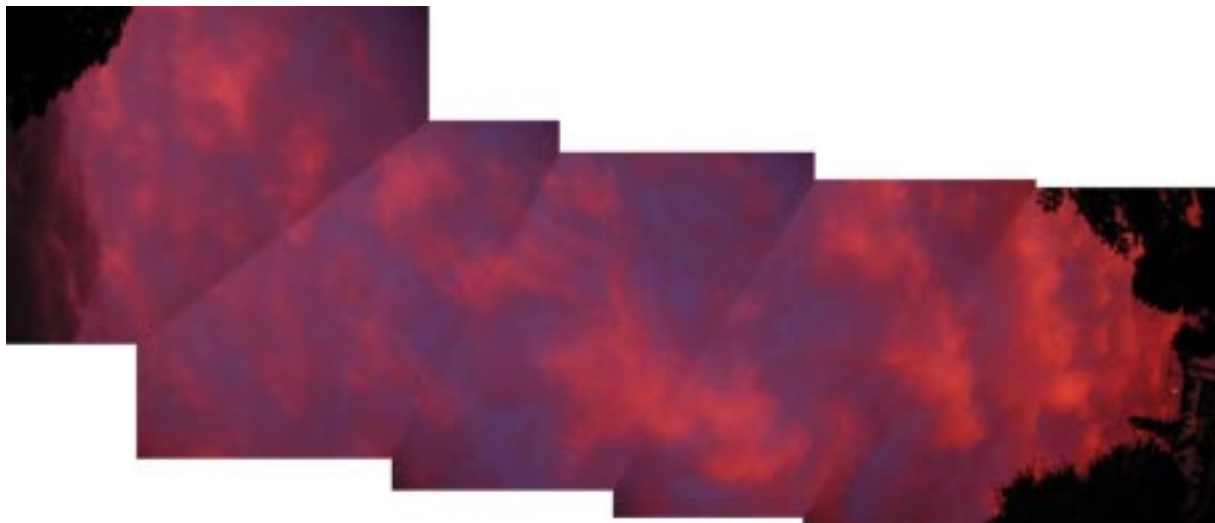
Fax 416-783-7697

www.khanscope.com



(below) The Rosette Nebula. I took this shot at the observatory, during the January Members Night. It's 21-90 sec. images @ ISO 800, taken with the Canon 10-D and Takahashi Sky 90 II @ f/4.5. Assembled with ImagesPlus, Photoshop and Neat Image. by Les Marczy





(top) Here is a sunset panorama, extending from the southern horizon, to zenith and down almost to the northern horizon. I photographed this on Sept 17, 2004. I stitched together the individual photos with Adobe Photoshop Elements. The clouds are actually the remnants of one of the powerful Florida hurricanes that travelled far enough north to reach my geographic area. The panorama might have been technically a bit better if I had varied the individual brightness of the photos so that they matched more closely along the borders.

by Bob Winder

(Left) The Horsehead Nebula
by Les Marczi.



(bottom left) I caught the moon and Antares occultation this morning from my driveway in St. Catharines. That's the brightest star I've ever seen occulted. Monday to Wednesday evening was total clouds and snow, so I'm glad it cleared in time.

The disappearance was great. Antares just hung there, and hung there, then blam! gone. That was 6:00 a.m.

Reappearance at 7:16 was a little more sketchy. It was daylight and there were occasional clouds. It was suddenly there, but I don't know if I saw the reappearance or noticed it a few seconds after. The orange color was easily apparent. No chance at the secondary in daylight.

This shot was with my stellarvue 85mm.

by Philip Downey



FEATURE

A Visit to the Kennedy Space Center

By Les & Del Welgan

February 12, 2005 will be a day that will remain in our hearts and minds for a very long time. It's the day a special dream came true when we spent the whole day at the Kennedy Space Center.



(above) A somber look at the dedication exhibit for the John F. Kennedy Space Center. It's unfortunate JFK was unable to see his vision come to fruition.



(above) We entered the grounds under the watchful eye of an Astronaut performing an extra-vehicular activity (EVA)



(left) Entrance to the Rocket Garden.
(far left) Rocket engines from various spacecrafts displayed in the Rocket Garden.



(above) Viewing the Apollo 8 Command Module from the White Room at the end of the Gantry. It's hard to imagine three men sitting in this small space for their seven day mission around the moon.



"Kidding" around in the Shuttle.





(top left) Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB). The American flag is the size of a football field. Our tour bus could have driven on one of the white lines and not even touched the sides. You can still see some damage to the building created by the devastating hurricanes that hit Florida.

(top right) International Space Station (ISS) module test facility.

(above left) The Crawler transports the launch vehicles to the launch pads. (above) Launch Pad 39-A. All but one Apollo missions were launched from here.

(left) Apollo 8 control room.



(above) Docking collar on the Apollo Command Module for the Lunar Excursion Module (LEM) (right)



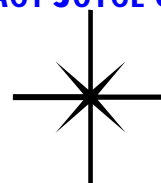


Sundog sunrise taken from my backyard on February 25 by Les Welgan

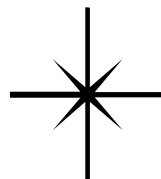
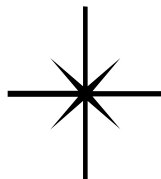
**JAY ANDERSON
IS OUR
GUEST SPEAKER
ON APRIL 23, 2005**

**GET YOUR BANQUET
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NOW.**

CONTACT JOYCE SIMMS...



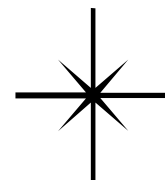
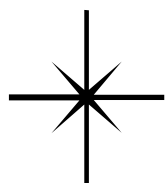
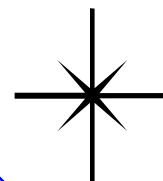
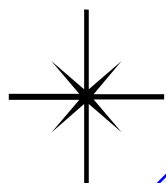
HISTORY
75 years ago - Clyde Tombaugh discovered Pluto.... Feb.18 1929
441 years ago - Galilao Galileis' birthday.... Feb.15 1564



Sky Optics
Steve Barnes
4031 Fairview Street, Unit 216B
Burlington, ON L7L 2A4
Phone 905-631-9944
Fax 905-633-8293
www.skyoptics.net

Local Coordinates

CCCA Observatory	Lat. 43 0' N	Long. 79 30' W
Fireman's Park	Lat. 43 9' N	Long. 79 7' W
St. Catharines	Lat. 43 11' N	Long. 79 14' W
Thorold	Lat. 43 7' N	Long. 79 18' W
Niagara Falls	Lat. 43 6' N	Long. 79 5' W
Niagara on the Lake	Lat. 43 15' N	Long. 79 4' W
Welland	Lat. 43 0' N	Long. 79 16' W
Fonthill	Lat. 43 2' N	Long. 79 17' W
Fenwick	Lat. 43 1' N	Long. 79 22' W
Port Colborne	Lat. 42 53' N	Long. 79 14' W
Beamsville	Lat. 43 10' N	Long. 79 28' W
Grimsby	Lat. 43 12' N	Long. 79 34' W
Vineland	Lat. 43 9' N	Long. 79 23' W



Niagara Centre Store

RASC 2005 Calenders	\$13.00
Beginner's Observer's Guide	\$15.00
RASC 2005 Observer's Handbook	\$16.00
Planispheres	\$15.00
RASC Lapel Pins	\$ 6.00
Centre Crest	\$ 5.00
RASC Cloth Crest	\$13.00
Bucket Style Hat (Tilley shape)	\$13.00
Stainless RASC Mug	\$16.00
RASC stickers	\$ 2.50
Key Chains	\$ 2.50
See Dave Stremlaw for above items.	

Magazines

Group rates available for Sky & Telescope and Astronomy.

Anyone interested in getting the club discount for subscriptions to these magazines should contact Dave Stremlaw. With a group subscription plan you also receive 10% discounts on Sky & Telescope's wide selection of astronomy books.

Sign up with Dave at the next General Meeting or call him at 905-892-2767 to get these great discounts.

Astronomy stuff for sale?

Free ad space for members.

Contact Deloris Welgan - see contact information in this issue.

Slide/Negative Scanning

For anyone wanting to have their slides/negatives converted to digital files, I can scan them at high resolution, 2800 dpi, and save them onto a CD-R. Cost: \$1.00 per file, \$5.00 for CD-R. Contact Les Welgan at 905-934-4647, astro_nuts@cogeco.ca

For Sale

Supercircuits PC-23C monochrome low lux video camera (unmodified). Asking \$100.00. Contact Rick Eller at 519-426-2471.

For Sale

15 inch Obsession-style truss tube Dobsonian telescope

1. Primary mirror f/5-2inch thick with enhanced coatings (96%), Nova Optical Systems (Ronchi test provided), coated by Spectrum Coatings
2. Secondary mirror 2.6 inch with Dielectric coatings (98%), Nova Optical Systems (Ronchi test provided)
3. Protostar spider and secondary holder with internal dew heater
4. Kendricks dew controller and heaters, Telrad with internal heater
5. Sky Commander digital setting circles and encoders (9000 object data base, Go-To)
6. Remote electric collimation system (allows user to collimate from eye piece unassisted)
7. JMI DX-1 two-speed focuser (coarse and fine focus)
8. Astrosystems telescope cover for star parties, etc.
9. Onboard power consisting of 2 x 7 amp rechargeable batteries (14 amps, 12 volts)
10. Cast aluminum altitude bearings
11. Counterweight balance system to allow use of cameras, etc.
12. Quality construction with Baltic Birch hardwood, maple, stainless, aluminum, etc. A complete large aperture telescope ready for deep sky observing. Price: \$5700. Contact John VanderBrugge at 935-9355.

The club has a wide variety of T-shirts and sweatshirts in different sizes and styles for sale.

Contact **Glen Pidsadnick** if you are interested in purchasing one to support the club.

BlackHooded sweat shirts=\$35.00

BlackRegular sweat shirts= \$30.00

Black&Natural T shirts = \$20.00

Black&Natural Long sleeve T-shirts = \$23.00

For Sale Reduced Price

Finished but uncoated 8-inch f/3.8 mirror, 1 3/8" thick Pyrex. Comes with proper plywood shipping crate. Suitable for a fast Newtonian or it is cored if you want to make a Cassegrain. If you would like to pick it up I will also include the tube and mirror cell that were built for this as well as a polished but unfigured Cassegrain secondary. Mirror was completed a year-and-a-half ago. It looks ugly as I started with a rough looking blank, but this will have negligible effect on the image. Asking \$50 or best offer. Contact Joe Iannandrea at 905-991-0781.

Event Horizon



March 3 Antares/Moon occultation, 6:00 am
 Beginners Class at A.N.Myer School, 7:00 pm
 March 10 New Moon, 4:10 am
 March 12 Members Night at CCCA, dusk
 BUDS Night at CCCA, dusk
 March 17 General Meeting, Niagara Falls Public Library, 7:30 pm
 Guest Speaker: Dr. Black speaking on "Cosmology, Big Bang and String theory, making it simple!"
 Beginners Class, Library before meeting, 6:45 pm
 March 19 Public Star Night, Fireman's Park, dusk
 March 25 Full Moon, 3:58 pm

April 3 Daylight Saving Time Begins
 April 7 Beginners Class at A.N.Myer School, 7:00 pm
 April 8 New Moon, 3:32 pm
 April 9 Members Night at CCCA, dusk
 April 16 Public Star Night, Fireman's Park, dusk
 April 21 General Meeting, Niagara Falls Public Library, 7:30 pm
 Beginners Class, Library before meeting, 6:45 pm
 April 23 Annual Banquet, Delphi Room, 5:30 pm
 April 24 Full Moon, 5:06 am

May 5 Beginners Class at A.N.Myer School, 7:00 pm
 May 7 Members Night at CCCA, dusk
 May 8 New Moon, 3:45 am
 May 14 Public Star Night, Fireman's Park, dusk
 May 16 Double Shadow Transit on Jupiter, 5:48 am
 May 19 Double Shadow Transit on Jupiter 1:45 pm
 General Meeting, Niagara Falls Public Library, 7:30 pm
 Beginners Class, Library before meeting, 6:45 pm
 May 23 Double Shadow Transit on Jupiter, 7:43 am
 Full Moon, 3:18 pm
 May 26 Double Shadow Transit on Jupiter, 8:40 pm
 May 30 Double Shadow Transit on Jupiter, 9:37 am