

NOVA

NEWSLETTER OF THE VANCOUVER CENTRE RASC | VOLUME 2011 ISSUE 2 | MARCH/APRIL 2011

Guiding the Guides...	1
The Cabin the the Sky...	2
President's Message	3
Observing Sites	4
Upcoming Events	6
Astronomy Day 2011	8
From the Librarian	9
Members' Gallery	10
In Memoriam	11

Looking Ahead

Remember, you are always welcome to attend meetings of Council, held on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30pm in the Ray Whittick Lounge.

Mar. 10: Sharon Proctor: Grouse Mountain Observatory: an early 20th century dream.

Apr. 14: Harvey Richer of UBC: Watcher of the Sky: The Highs and Lows of Being an Observational Astronomer.

Next Issue Deadline

Material for the May Nova should be submitted by Monday, May 1, 2011. Please send submissions to:

novaeditor.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Title image: Jason Rickerby

Guiding the Guides to the Stars

by Leigh Cummings

On Thursday, January 27th, I had the honour of being invited to a meeting of the 1st Alouette Girl Guides to help them earn their Astronomy Badge. I have to admit, as this was to be my first time organizing and presenting on my own, I was more than a little nervous. Luckily for me, I had gained insight and experience from volunteering at SFU's StarryNights program. I had learned a lot from watching a true "pro" in action with young people of wide age groups. I also had a great deal of help in preparing my power point presentations from fellow RASC members Wayne Lyons and Mark Eburne. Without help from these guys, I wouldn't have gotten far.

I had prepared two PowerPoint presentations in advance for the night. One was to be very brief in the hopes that the weather would bring a clear sky full of stars to help me teach the girls. Like all born and raised West Coasters, I have learned not to venture out without an umbrella close at hand. My "umbrella" was a longer presentation that would allow me to accomplish the same task indoors, of helping them fulfill the

requirements for their merit badge.

On the day, of course, the weather people predicted a chance of every type of weather possible, short of hurricane and blizzard. I was glad I had prepared to be flexible.

Wayne asked me if I could use a hand and a couple of more telescopes on the night. I gladly accepted his help as he is a superb observer and is so very good with young people. Wayne left me much to my own devices through the night but was there when I needed him to pick up the slack. His help was very appreciated, not only by me, but also by the Guide leaders and the girls themselves.

I'm glad to report that the presentation went very smoothly. Knowing that I could expect challenging questions from twenty-five young ladies of varying ages, I had studied up as best I could on the subject matter. And boy, did I get some great questions! "How are stars born?" I was asked after showing Mark's image of M42 and explaining how it is a stellar nursery. While I answered as best as my knowledge base could allow me, I couldn't help thinking, "I could

continued on page 6

How Amateur Astronomy Changed Everything for One Lucky Family

In the last year, I have been astoundingly fortunate to be able to realize the dream of every amateur astronomer. In my case, the dream has roots that go back to a month-long rural summer camp, the year I finished elementary school.

I was hooked on astronomy at that camp, thanks to a counsellor who introduced the glory of the summer sky to a small group of us, the nerdiest kids in the camp. Over the course of a few magical evenings, he fired our imaginations with his account of the astounding nature of the fuzzy patches that he pointed out to us by eye, and what they implied about the scale and age of the cosmos. There was no turning back.

I saved up money from my paper route, and was able to buy my first telescope that winter, a 60mm refractor. Before long, I saw the rings of Saturn for the first time, through that scope, my scope, an experience that burned itself into me. Then did I get some mileage out of that telescope! Reading and daydreaming about astronomy, I built up an inventory of factoids that proved very handy when questions were put to me by people who would stop at my telescope, on the sidewalk outside my home in urban Montreal. I never missed a new show at the Dow Planetarium, and bought a small collection of postcard-sized astronomical images from its gift shop,

which I scotch-taped around the borders of the sky and moon charts on my bedroom wall.

Throughout more than a year of solid "apprenticeship" with my small refractor, I stared at the ads for telescopes in *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy* magazine (the latter having recently burst onto the scene: oh those gloriously evocative, richly-coloured illustrations!). One "big" telescope in particular beckoned.

I took on a much larger paper route, and after struggling with the deliveries for many long months, I finally had enough money (with help from my parents) to order it. It was the Criterion 6" RV-6 Dynascope and, at a (barely) affordable price, it would come with an amazing accessory (for its day): a clock drive!

It took almost a year of additional longing for the RV-6 to be delivered. Thereafter, and for about the next two years, until I finished high school, I went into amateur astronomer overdrive. I spent endless days compiling

ranked lists of deep sky targets, raking over the *RASC Observer's Handbook*, and *Peterson's Field Guide to the Stars and Planets*, while pouring over my prized *Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory Star Atlas* (almost always far too detailed to be practical, but it made me feel like a scientist). And I spent almost every clear night, including in the frigid dead of winter, trying to star hop to the objects on my lists, often frus-

Engineered For The Last Word In Breathtaking Performance... Priced For First Choice In Value... Fully Equipped With Many Extra Features!

You'll Marvel At How
The superb Optics Of
This Portable

6-INCH RV-6 DYNASCOPE®

Give The Same Exquisite Definition
As Far More Expensive Instruments!

This staunch leader of the Dynascope line has won widespread recognition from schools, colleges, and professionals, as an outstanding achievement in a 6-inch telescope. Since it was introduced a few years ago, our finest 6-inch model has become filled with complimentary letters from excited amateurs and professionals all over the country. Each one duly amazed at the superior optical performance of the 6-inch Dynascope! Here is large aperture in a quality instrument at a price that compares with many such telescopes. And this low cost includes such exclusive extra features as electric drive (patented), setting circles, and rotating tube! There are no "extras" to run up your cost! This is absolutely breathtaking! The close tolerances of the precision construction assure the accuracy and smoothness of operation once associated only with the finest custom models. The heavy-duty motor with electric drive provides the stability essential for satisfactory viewing, yet there is easy portability, because in a matter of minutes the entire telescope can be dismantled into three easy-to-handle sections.

Only the finest engineering ingenuity, coupled with volume production and modern manufacturing methods, makes this handsome 6-inch model available at such reasonable cost. You can order it with complete confidence that it will live up to your expectations in every way, and this assurance is guaranteed under our full-credit warranty. Send your check or money order today. Or use our liberal time-payment plan and take time to pay.

You Could Pay \$100 More Without Getting All
These Superior Features (Except on Another Dynascope)

- EXQUISITE OPTICAL SYSTEM INCLUDES 1/8 6-INCH PARABOLIC MIRROR** made of PYREX glass, accurate to better than 1/16 wave, zinc-coated coating, and guaranteed to match the intricate optics of refractive and reflective slides with super-precision mounted.
- NEW DYN-O-MATIC ELECTRIC DRIVE** with smooth self-starting clutch that engages and disengages automatically as the wheel rotates. Just set the drive when manual operation is desired. Motor and drive are mounted on a sturdy AC base.
- TWO EYEPIECES:** Achromatic Ramsden 7X (18 mm), 10X (21 mm), or eyepiece 10X (17 mm), 10X (18 mm), Achromatic Ramsden, \$14.95 each; 22X (8 mm), 32X (4 mm), Orthoscopic, \$19.95 each.
- SOLID NEON EQUATORIAL MOUNT**, extra-reinforced design. Advances easily in any latitude.
- SETTING CIRCLES** fully graduated, and declination, hour-angle, and right ascension.
- 6 X 30 FINDERSCOPE, ACHROMATIC, COATED,** with cross-hair, and low-power, double-convex, 10X bracket with 1/8" eyepiece.
- STRONGLY HANDSOME WHITE PVC BRACKET TUBE** with porcelainized Duralite finish, durable, yet light. Walls are 1/4" thick. Longest section, 18", allows maximum rigidity and allows quick assembly and portability, with or without tube.
- BRASS BACK-AND-FORTH EYEPIECE HOLDER** has precision-ground and steel for smooth, more positive focusing. Takes standard 1 1/4" oculars, negative or positive.
- STRONG, VIBRATION-FREE, ALL-METAL TRIPOD** with light alloy remountable legs. Provides sure, steady support, plus lightweight portability.

Including... • **ELECTRIC DRIVE (Patented)**
• **SETTING CIRCLES • ROTATING TUBE**
A Complete Instrument, No Costly Accessories Needed!

Model RV-6 Complete
with Dyn-O-Matic Electric Drive
and All Features Described Below

\$21995

L.S. Hartford, Conn.
Shipping Wt. 77 lbs.
Express Charge Collect
\$10 Crating Charge



An Avalanche Of Orders ...

A few months ago a leading independent consumer advice publication rated our RV-6 very well indeed, in a most informative article on telescopes. Naturally, we were pleased. Then came the avalanche as our normal production rate could not keep up with the demand. We were almost a year's worth of orders at our normal production rate. We were disappointed. Unprecedented! And frustrating for those who naturally wanted their RV-6 Dynascope right

away. In addition, our industry developed shortages, like most others. Critical materials were not available to the standards we maintain above any other consideration. What could we do? We stepped up production as much as we could—but remember, this is a precision, handcrafted instrument... which is why we put the rating in the first place. We also hurried along planned moves into modern facilities more than three times as large. We offered our backlog to anyone who did not want to wait. They accepted! Production has been more than doubled, and is still moving up... and the backlog is shrinking. We are sorry to have been delayed in shipping your Dynascope and hope you will understand why you have been kept waiting. But when you get your RV-6, be confident, it will be the truly highly rated RV-6 Dynascope.

Criterion Manufacturing Co.

620 Oakwood Ave., West Hartford, Conn. 06110
Manufacturers of Quality Optical Instruments

Dept. STR-79, 620 Oakwood Ave., West Hartford, Conn. 06110

Please send me, under your unconditional guarantee, the RV-6 6-inch Dynascope. Payment of \$219.95 plus \$15.00 crating charge is enclosed.

Send FREE ILLUSTRATED LITERATURE describing the RV-6 6-inch Dynascope and all the telescopes in the Dynascope line.

Send FREE ILLUSTRATED LITERATURE on your new DYNATRACER™ Variable-Speed Control for RV-6 or other electric-drive telescopes.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

trated by stretches of sky rendered barren by the heavy light pollution at my street, just one block from a major thoroughfare, the Decarie

continued on page 8

President's Message

March brings news about the many astronomy outreach activities taking shape for Vancouver Centre this year (details below). March, of course, also brings the vernal equinox, when the Sun will stand directly over the equator at Noon, continuing its northwards climb along the ecliptic and, for those of us in the Northern hemisphere, auguring warmer and longer days ahead. And so we gear up to engage the public!

Mind you, for recreational astronomers, who prize long nights for hunting celestial treasures, summer can occasionally be seen as a bit of a mixed bag! In fact, at our latitude, we stay in perpetual "astronomical" twilight for just over a month, from the beginning of June to early July, when the centre of the Sun never quite descends further than 18 degrees below the horizon, the angle that is taken to define the point at which scattered sunlight is no longer visible.

It was just last year that I had the good fortune to enjoy a sequence of nights of dusk-to-dawn observing at this latitude, from spring through fall, under truly dark skies. I grew up in Montreal, and since I was a teenager, I had done almost no "personal" astronomy, until about three years ago, when I acquired a taste for astronomical imaging. Last summer, I was finally able to go "really deep" into deep-sky imaging, from an exceptionally dark location. I intensely followed the evolving sky conditions each night,

continued on page 4

2011 Vancouver Centre Officers

President Howard Trotter
president.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Vice-President/PR David Morrish
778-321-0005 vp.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Treasurer Wayne Lyons
604-467-2956 treasurer.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Secretary Alan Jones
604-939-6883 secretary.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Nat'l Rep./AOMO/LPA Mark Eburne
604-649-8356 national.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Dir. of Telescopes Steve Coleopy
telescopes.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Librarian William Fearon
604-317-9027 library.rascvancouver@gmail.com

AOMO Leigh Cummings
aomo.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Merch./Observing Doug Montgomery
604-322-3345 observing.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Membership Gavin McLeod
membership.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Events Suzanna Nagy
604-682-5111 events.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Nova Editor Gordon Farrell
604-734-0326 novaeditor.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Webmaster Harvey Dueck
webmaster.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Speakers Barry Shanko
604-271-0615 speakers.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Education Chair Bill Burnyeat
education.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Councillor Pomponia Martinez
604-215-8844 pomponia.rascvancouver@gmail.com

Trustee Sally Baker
604-324-3309

Honorary President
Dr. John Macdonald

About RASC

The Vancouver Centre, RASC meets at 7:30 PM in the auditorium of the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre at 1100 Chestnut St., Vancouver, on the second Thursday of every month. Guests are always welcome. In addition, the Centre has an observing site where star parties are regularly scheduled.

Membership is currently \$73.00 per year (\$41.00 for persons under 21 years of age) and can be obtained by writing to the Treasurer at the address on page 5. Annual membership includes the invaluable Observer's Handbook, six issues of the RASC Journal, and, of course, access to all of the club events and projects.

For more information regarding the Centre and its activities, please contact our P.R. Director.

NOVA, the newsletter of the Vancouver Centre, RASC, is published on odd numbered months. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Vancouver Centre.

Material on any aspect of astronomy should be e-mailed to the editor or mailed to the address on page 5.

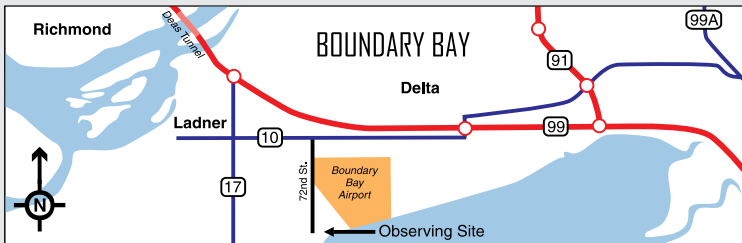
Advertising

Nova encourages free use of its classified ads for members with items for sale or swap. Notify the editor if you wish your ad to run in more than one issue.

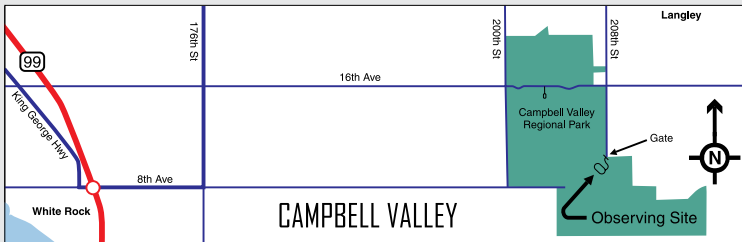
Commerical Rates

1/4 Page: \$15.00 per issue
1/2 Page: \$25.00 per issue
Full Page: \$40.00 per issue
Rates are for electronic or camera-ready files. Payment, by cheque, must accompany ad material. Make cheque payable to:
RASC Vancouver Centre.

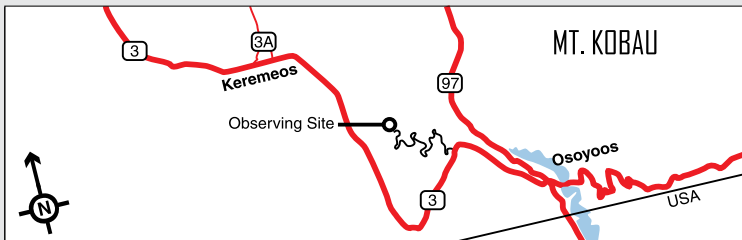
OBSERVING SITES



Site of the regular Saturday night star party. On the dike at the foot of 72nd St.



Our alternate observing site. Contact Bruce MacDonald (604-882-3820) to see if this site is in use.



Site of the annual Mt. Kobau Star Party organized by the Mount Kobau Astronomical Society

continued from page 3
recording which frames might need to be discarded when I would later combine the individual exposures, and process the results. I was also keen to assess just how dark the skies were from this location in the South Okanagan, so I would routinely scan the skies all around the horizon and to the zenith. I managed about two nights each month, from May through the end of August (with a really fabulous stretch at the end).

The weather in May and June was mixed, most nights having

intermittent cloud cover. But finally, one night in June, I noticed a very dim glow, barely perceptible to the northwest, well after sunset. I was a little puzzled at first, because I was sure that there wasn't any source of light in that direction, for some considerable distance. I studied the glow intently, as my scope and camera continued to track their target behind me. At first I didn't trust my senses (being a little slow on the uptake on this one!), but after a time it became clear that the glow really was moving to the

north. I confess that I had to check some tables to trust myself, never having realized that Vancouver is just above the latitude at which one experiences "Midnight Twilight!" It was quite exciting to track the glow throughout the (too few) hours of darkness that night, for quite an extent to the northeast!

By the way, an excellent source on "Midnight Twilight" (and the "Midnight Sun") is the article by Roy Bishop in the *RASC Observer's Handbook* (fittingly on pg. 211 of

continued on page 5

continued from page 4
the 2011 edition).

A final note about astronomy and the seasons before I close with an update on Vancouver Centre's programming. We've just gone through an awful winter for observational astronomy, and at the March council meeting last week, when the Chair of our Observing Committee, Doug Montgomery, was asked for his report, he said it all with a very long, and very deep sigh! This triggered quite an outburst of pained laughter all around the council meeting table.

Finally, it's time for that news update on your Vancouver Centre.

We have had two outstanding speakers at the first two meetings of the year. In January, we had standing room only at the presentation by Dr. John Mather, co-recipient of the 2006 Nobel Prize. Dr. Mather gave an inspiring talk on progress in the construction of the James Webb space telescope, and on the stunning observations that we can expect from this successor to the Hubble, scheduled for launch around 2015. Dr. Mather was also kind enough stay for our coffee, held in the ground floor reception area next to the auditorium, which was kindly made available to us by the Space Centre. In fact, Dr. Mather was with the last of us to quit the Space Centre that night.

Another notable die-hard that night was Bob Naeye, Editor of *Sky & Telescope*! Naeye happened to be in town as a guest of long-time member (and *Observer's Handbook* contributor) Lee Johnson. Lee did

continued on page 7

LIBRARY

The centre has a large library of books, magazines and old NOVA's for your enjoyment at the GMSO. Please take advantage of this club service and visit often to check out the new purchases. Suggestions for future library acquisitions are appreciated.

RASC-VC on the Internet

<http://rasc-vancouver.com> or
<http://www.rasc.ca/vancouver>

Details of upcoming meetings and events can be found at our Meetup group at:

<http://astronomy.meetup.com/131/>

H.R. MACMILLAN SPACE CENTRE

The H.R. MacMillan Space Centre Society is a non-profit organization operating the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre and the Gordon M. Southam Observatory. Annual membership (\$30 individual; \$80 family) includes newsletter, discounts on Space Camps, birthday parties, lectures, Museum of Vancouver admission, plus free admission to the Space Centre. Admission includes: multi-media Planetarium productions, interactive demonstrations and hands-on exhibits. For membership, contact Gayle Seaman 604-738-7827 (ext 221) or star@spacecentre.ca

<http://www.spacecentre.ca>

MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES!

New members, did you know? The Vancouver Centre has 8 telescopes available for loan free of charge! We have telescopes ranging from 60mm to 10" diameter. For more information see the Director of Telescopes in the meeting room of the GMSO after the members meeting. All telescopes are to be picked up and returned at the GMSO. The loaner period is for one month, to be returned after the next meeting. Telescopes are not allowed to circulate outside of these meetings. You can now reserve two different telescopes per year and use what is left at the end of the meeting anytime.

Your greatest opportunity as a member of the RASC is to take advantage of the company of other enthusiasts to increase your knowledge, enjoyment and skill in astronomy.

The best thing you can do to gain the most from your membership is to get active! Take in the club meetings; engage other members with questions; come out to observing sessions (also known as "star parties"), and, by all means, volunteer to take part in our many public events.

Observing takes place at Boundary Bay on the dike at the south end of 72nd St. in Delta (see map on p. 4). We are there most clear Friday/Saturday nights. Contact Jason Rickerby at 604-502-8158.

RASC
1100 Chestnut Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V6J 3J9
604-738-2855

March

19 – Night Quest at Pacific Spirit Park.

April

10 – ILOA Galaxy Forum at HR Macmillan Space Centre.

May

2-8 – International Astronomy Week

7 – International Astronomy Day & Urban Star Quest at Aldergrove Lake

July

July 30 - Aug. 7 – Mt. Kobau Star Party

August

Aug. 27 - Sept. 3 – Merritt Star Quest

December

8 – AGM

continued from page 1

use Howard right now.” One of the biggest rewards from doing this is that it forces my old brain to work harder and update the dusty old data that hides in the cracks of my mind. I also loved researching the origin of star’s names and relating some of those to the girls. It amazed me to realize how much easier it was to spot the constellations myself after running through the presentation a few times.

When I finished the presentation, one of the Guide leaders announced that the skies had cleared and we could go outside to observe. Wayne immediately picked up the 8” Dob that he had brought and headed out the nearest door. By the time I got outside, he had already been showing a lineup of Guides a view of Jupiter. He then aimed his telescope on the Pleiades and gave the girls another “ahhh” moment. I gave him my laser

pointer and he went on to show them some of the guideposts and constellations we had been looking at in the presentation. The Guides were busy using their starwheels that we had given them to do their own navigating in the sky. All I had to do was confirm their own



findings. They had really picked up on the “map” idea quickly.

We managed about 15 to 20 minutes of stargazing before the fog rolled in. The timing was right as the girls had to do another badge event. Two of the girls got their “Pet Appreciation Badge” that night and

appropriately they were both with “Canis Minor”’s.

At the end of the meeting, the Guide leaders announced that all the Guides in attendance would receive their Astronomy Badges as a result of our night together. I have to say though, I feel that Wayne and I got as much out of the evening spent with such a delightful bunch of young people as they got from us (and that’s not counting the Guide cookies and a thoughtful Thank You card that the girls gave us). It was indicated to me that there were more Scout and Guide groups in the area that would like to have us help them

obtain their Astronomy Badge and I told them we would be more than willing to help out. I know I look forward to another “Guiding the Guides” night. I would also look forward to “Scouting ahead for the Scouts” night as well.

Clear Skies. ✨

continued from page 5

all of us an enormous service by bringing Bob to this event, for I can tell you without a doubt that Naeye was very impressed, having talked ourselves hoarse on the sidewalk outside the Space Centre until very late.

I also had the good fortune to host Dr. Mather at SFU for the physics department colloquium the following day, as well as to take him out for dinner, along with Barry Shanko (your speaker coordinator, who engineered quite the coup to bring us a speaker of this caliber!), and some colleagues from SFU and UBC. Ask me at one of our meetings about the very moving story that Dr. Mather told us over dinner about James Webb, who was the second administrator of NASA, during the lead-up to the Apollo landings, and who is the first administrator to have a major astronomical mission named after him (and for good reason).

In February, we had the good fortune to host Richard Berry, who has made enormous contributions to “amateur” astronomy (and there is nothing amateur about him), including serving as the first editor of *Astronomy* magazine, and publishing classic books on telescope making and astronomical imaging. He gave us a spirited history of three of the greats from a golden age of “amateur” astronomy, in the 18th and 19th centuries, when many of the greatest

discoveries were made by those who pursued astronomy for the love of it: William Herschel and his son John (not to forget William’s sister Caroline), and Lord Rosse.

At our February meeting, we also kicked off our new public outreach segment, “What’s Up?” This new series of presentations and activities, which is held before the start of the regular RASC Vancouver monthly guest lecture, is tailored to newcomers to astronomy, especially young ones! More experienced astronomy fans might even find something of interest ;). Yours truly delivered the kick off, which sought to answer three questions inspired by Dr. Mather’s presentation the month before: “Where’s the centre of the universe? What’s it expanding into? And where is the limit of our vision into space?” This was actually an audience participation question and answer session, which included a do-it-yourself expanding universe! We had a great turnout, thanks to the many dozens of families who came, and it was very rewarding to have the enthusiastic participation of so many kids, of all ages ;).

We look ahead to a packed schedule of exciting activities already in place through the month of May. Two notable events are the result of partnerships with Metro Vancouver Parks. We have been invited to participate in Metro Parks annual “Night Quest” at Pacific Spirit

Regional Park, Saturday, March 19, starting at 7PM. This is a truly magical family-oriented experience of the magic of the nocturnal forest and of the night sky. We’ve also partnered with Metro Parks to host International Astronomy Day on Saturday, May 7, together with their annual Urban Star Quest. This will be an all-day and all-night astronomy extravaganza for the public, to be held at Aldergrove Lake Regional Park!

Another notable event is “Galaxy Forum 2011,” to be hosted by the International Lunar Observatory Association (ILOA) at the Space Centre, on Sunday April 10, from 3-5PM. Vancouver Centre has agreed to partner with the ILOA for this event, and I am also proud to say that two of the featured speakers are from SFU.

These are just a few of the many activities that are already in place over the next few months. Please be sure to checkout our Meetup.com web site, your destination for the complete schedule and details of Vancouver Centre events: <http://www.meetup.com/astronomy-131/>.

Here’s to clear skies and more time under the stars! ✨

Howard Trottier
President, RASC-Van
Professor of Physics, SFU

continued from page 2

Expressway.

And so the dream took shape. I would build my own observatory, at a remote rural get away, equipped with first-rate gear, to which I could escape to hunt deep sky treasures under dazzlingly dark skies.

By the time I entered college, my obsession with the night sky was being displaced by other pursuits. The dream faded, almost forgotten, and yet somehow always close to the surface. A very long time passed. When the dream returned to the fore, I had a family. And we would all be changed by it! *

(To be continued)



International Astronomy Day 2011 and Urban Star Quest

Saturday, May 7, 2011

Aldergrove Lake Regional Park

Abbotsford/Langley Township

12:00 pm to 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm

Join us in a celebration of International Astronomy Day. From Noon to 6:00 pm, we will have an afternoon of family-friendly events such as astronomy displays, solar viewing, children's crafts and face painting, as well as short talks on astronomy-related subjects such as Constellations, the Universe, Telescope Basics, etc. This event will be rain or shine.

Weather permitting, the evening will feature an Urban Star Quest where RASC volunteers will share their telescopes to help you observe the night sky and our solar system. There will be guided constellation walks and campfire stories. Overnight camping will be permitted to allow observation into the early hours of the morning.

Meet at the Aldergrove

Bowl entrance on Lefevre Road, Abbotsford. Wear warm clothing and footwear suitable to the weather. Bring a flashlight, tent, blankets, and a snack if you plan on staying overnight.

Offered by Metro Vancouver in partnership with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (Vancouver Centre). *

This time I would like to address three items:

1) The library is seriously under-utilized, and I am getting lonely at the monthly meetings as no one is dropping in.

2) I would like to announce that DVD copies of the six episodes of the Supernova series, produced by the RASC Vancouver Centre, is now available to be loaned.

3) The library now has the official NASA report on the Apollo

Program. It is called, *Where no man has gone before: a history of Apollo Lunar Exploration Missions*. Upon reading this book, I realized it was more of an overview of the entire Apollo Program. Now, while it was written by NASA's Official Historian, William David Compton, it is full of organizational detail of NASA and some of its many parts, such as the Lunar Receiving Laboratory. It also goes into great detail about the debate over contamination from

the moon when the astronauts and samples were returned to earth. This book also provides details about the decisions on what was involved in building Apollo and the Saturn boosters. It includes information on the 17 (yes 17!) scientist-astronauts selected for the Apollo program, and mini-bios on the astronauts that were officially selected to fly on Apollo, wether or not they got to actually fly.

That's all from me for now. ✱

AOMO Gallery



W. Lyons

Hunters
Wayne Lyons



M42

Mark Eburne and Leigh Cummings

The image was take with my Takahashi FSQ106 ED and a modified Canon T1i mounted on a Sky Watcher EQ6.

Five 5-minute images were calibrated with darks and flats then combined in CCD Stack and processed in Photoshop CS5. Guiding software was PHD connected to a Meade DSI II attached to a Sky Watcher ED80.

The Orion Nebula Messier 42 (M42, NGC 1976) is one of the brightest deep sky objects, shining with the brightness of a star of 4th magnitude. It is also a big object in the sky, extending to over 1 degree in diameter, thus covering more than four times the area of a full moon. The Orion Nebula is located at a distance of about 1,600 light years away. Easy to find, the Orion Nebula surrounds the Theta Orionis multiple star (or cluster), seen to the naked eye in the middle of the sword of Orion.

In Memoriam: June Kirkcaldy

RASC Vancouver Council is sorry to report the passing of June Kirkcaldy, Past President of Vancouver Centre (1990–1992) on March 4. Please join June's brother Dave and her many friends next Saturday, March 12, at a memorial service to honour her and celebrate her rich life. The service will be at Hamilton-Harron Funeral Centre, 5390 Fraser St., Vancouver. It will commence at 11 a.m., with a reception following the service.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the BC Cancer Agency.

Below is a poem composed by Lee Johnson in June's honour.

For June

When laughter like the yodel of a loon
Transported us, who else but you, dear June,
Could modulate mere molecules of air
In sounds so wild, so joyful, and so rare?

Who else could turn friends into families
Of friends and harmonize them with such ease?
If all who love us hint at who we are,
Then we, dear June, are planets to your star.

But this rich, busy life belies the goal
Of stillness at the centre of your soul:
The faith that makes your laughter and your verve
One with the loving Spirit whom you serve.

Proud To Serve Vancouver's Astronomical Community



Vancouver Telescope Centre

2580 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 3J7, Canada

Phone: (604) 737 4303 Fax: (604) 738 5717

Web: www.vancouvertelescope.com