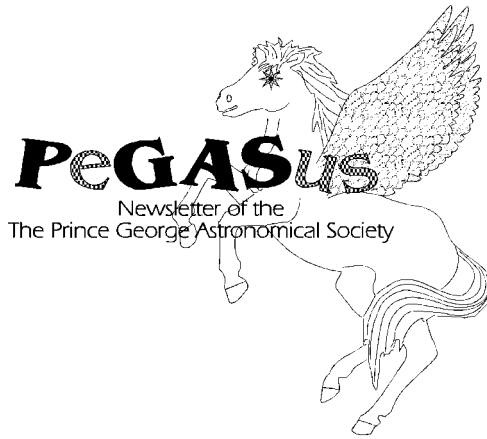


PeGASus
Newsletter of the
Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
Prince George Centre

May 2007

Our pursuits are out of this world.
Our activities are astronomical.
Our aim is the sky.

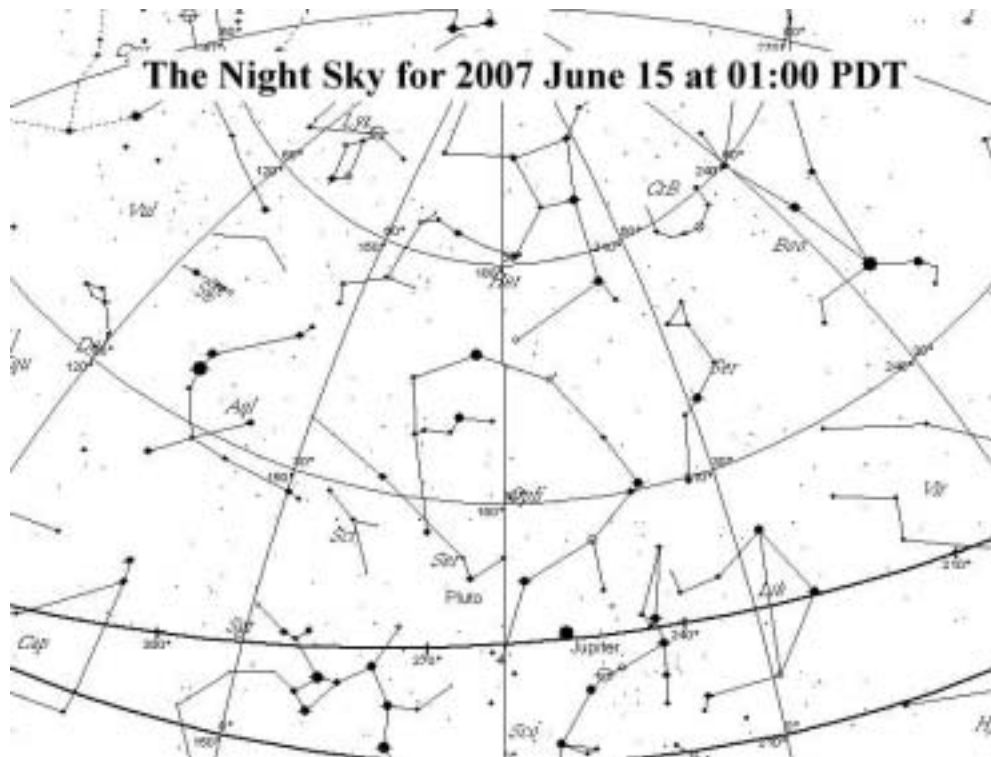


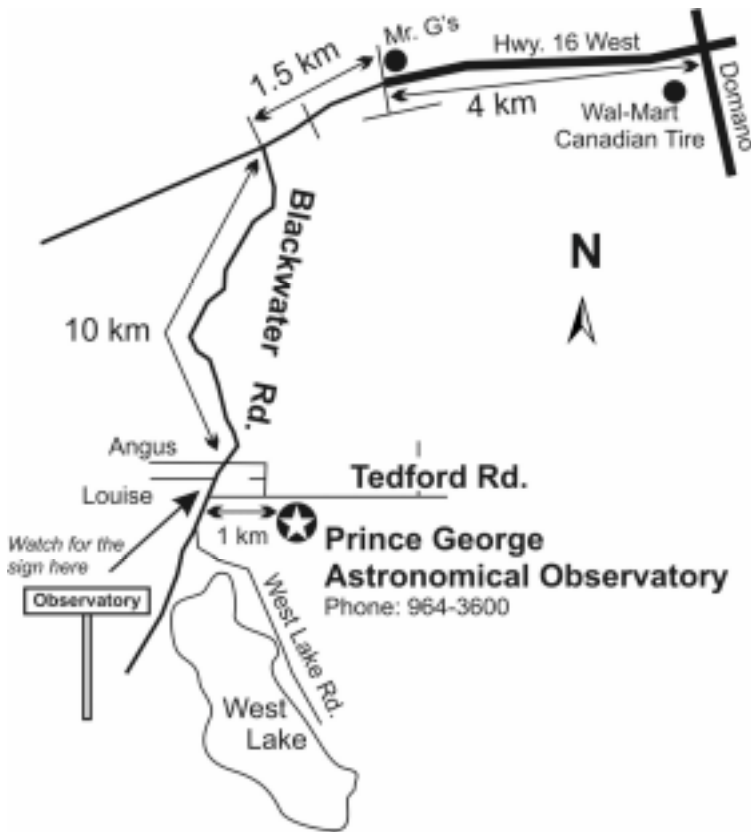
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**The RASC-PG meets next,
June 23, 6:30 pm Annual Club BBQ**





Contributions to the newsletter are welcome.

Deadline for the next issue is

August 17, 2007

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Coming Events

To Volunteer to help run an event please contact Brian Battersby.

brianbattersby73@yahoo.ca

Phone: 561-8138 (day) 614-3316 (msg.)

Vanderhoof School Tour	May 29 @ 21:00	Observatory
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Annual Club BBQ	June 23 @ 18:30	Observatory
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Editorial

You may recall last month I mentioned that I was speaking to The Edmonton Centre at the beginning of May. Well that was quite an interesting evening. First my talk about the Prince George Centre was very well received. They are very curious and interested in all the wonderful things we have managed to do with very little. I think I answered questions for about a half hour after the talk. It was especially interesting to see their meeting, this is an active, involved group of people. They have a very full agenda for their monthly meeting and lots of good speakers. They were envying what we have done and I was envying their member involvement. If we could get that kind of involvement, we would all have more time to enjoy astronomy. I think one very funny thing happened. Early on I e-mailed my contact (and ex PGAS member) Orla Aaquist. I wasn't sure were they had their meeting and whether they had a digital projector. Orla e-mailed me back and said not to worry they had any kind of av equipment I wanted. Boy was that an understatement! It started to dawn on me as I made my way into their meeting room — The IMAX theatre / planetarium. Yep they had every kind of Av equipment you could ask for and a few I've never seen before. Their screens a hundred feet tall well maybe only sixty but its really big! At one point I turned from my slide presentation and said “ I thought we had a big screen, yours is much bigger and when it comes to screen size, size matters”.

I invited them to our Perseids meteor shower open house this August, I hope they all come!

Gil

The Night Sky for June 2007

by Bob Nelson, PhD

Hi Folks,

When you read this, my wife Lois and I will be somewhere in France gallivanting around for five weeks, touring coastal villages, visiting two or three D-Day landing beaches (maybe also Vimy), hitting the Loire, southern France, Chamonix, and Paris at the end. The rest is not worked out. We will have the luxury of being a bit less structured this time, which suits us just fine. We will be more or less following Rick Steeves' guide, which we usually find excellent (you may have seen some of his programs on PBS). Anyway, I'll have lots to talk about when I get back. Then, I'll have lots of work to do with Blair in the telescope upgrade, and other projects. I also hope to enjoy our summer here, as I hope you all will.

Anyway, here is what will be happening in Prince George skies this month:

MERCURY IS an evening object at the beginning of the month. Then, it lies 13° above the WNW sky at sunset, setting itself almost 2 hours later. By mid-month, it is only 5° above the WNW horizon, setting an hour later. It reaches conjunction on June 28. It's a 10.9" disk at about magnitude 2.3.

VENUS is a bright, highly visible evening object this month. At month's start it lies some 23° above the western horizon, and its phase is 53% illuminated (on the gibbous side of half). It sets a whopping $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours later (at just after 01:00, PDT). At mid-month, it is similarly placed at sunset and its phase has shrunk to 45% (a beginning crescent). It now sets only about 2 hours after sunset. By month's end, it is only 15° above the western sky and is a crescent 35% illuminated. It will then set just under an hour after sunset. At mid-month, it's a 25" disk at about magnitude -4.3. How about some photos, chaps?

MARS, in Pisces for most of the month (passing into Aries on June 28), is a morning object this month. At mid-month, it rises at 02:14 and at sunrise, it lies 20° above the ESE horizon. It's a 6.0" disk at about magnitude 0.8.

JUPITER, in Ophiuchus until late 2007, is an evening object this month. At mid-month, it rises at 20:30, transits at 22:13, and sets at sunrise. It's a 46" disk at about magnitude -2.6.

SATURN, in Leo until 2009, is an evening object this month. At sunset, it lies 25° above the western horizon and sets just before 01:00, PDT. It's a 17" disk of magnitude 0.6. On July 1 at 02:29, it makes a conjunction with Venus, lying only 40' north of the latter. Should make a lovely photograph (hint, hint).

URANUS, in Aquarius until 2009, is a morning object this month. At mid-month, it rises at 01:15 and at sunrise lies 24° above the SE horizon. As usual, it's a 3.6" disk at about magnitude 5.8.

NEPTUNE, in Capricornus until 2010, is a morning object this month. At mid-month, it rises at about 00:30 and at sunrise, lies 21° above the southern horizon. As usual, it's a 2.3" disk at about magnitude 8.0.

Summer Solstice (for northern observers) occurs on June 21 at 11:06 PDT. Summer is here!!!

CONSTELLATIONS to look for in June (at midnight, PDT) are Corona Borealis, Hercules, Serpens Caput, Scorpius, and Ophiuchus.

In Corona Borealis, there are no Messier objects; but there are two interesting stars: Alpha Corona Borealis (CrB), a 17 day eclipsing binary of the Algol type and R Coronae Borealis (R CrB) which is the prototype of a small but distinctive class of variable stars. R CrB is normally at maximum light of about magnitude 5.8 but will fade suddenly and without warning by up to eight magnitudes; the minimum may last from several weeks to up to several years. It's thought that plumes of carbon (soot!) which shoot out from the star (in the

later phases of its life) are the cause of the drop in magnitude.

The northern part of Hercules contains the globular clusters M13, M92 and NGC 6229 and is fairly familiar to most of us, since it's visible for a good part of the year.

Serpens Caput contains the fabulous M5, one of the best globular clusters visible in the northern hemisphere. (It's right up there with M3 and M13.)

Scorpius contains numerous globular clusters: M80, about 4 degrees northwest of Antares (Alpha Scorpii), M4, just one degree west of Antares, M62, about 7 degrees southeast of Antares, and M6, near the tail of the beast (which will be very low in our northern skies) plus other NGC globulars.

Ophiuchus continues on with the following globulars: M9, M10, M12, M19, M107, plus numerous fainter NGC globulars. Check 'em out

This will be the last "Night Sky" for the season, so you're on your own until the August issue! (The constellations are all covered, since August viewing, although two months later, will normally occur earlier in the evening; you are therefore looking very conveniently at the next segment of sky. It all works out!)

Clear skies,
-Bob

Waxing or Waning – Phase the Facts

A great way to tell if the Moon is Waxing or Waning is to remember your high school French class. In French, "premiere" means first and "derniere" means last. If the loop in a "p" fits over the bright side of a half moon, it is a "premiere" or first quarter (Waxing). If the loop of a "d" fits over the bright side of the half Moon, its is "derniere" or last quarter (Waning).

Vive la Moon Phase

Blair