

Galilean Nights Event ID: gn298

Number of telescopes: 1

Number of organisers: 1

Number of attendees: 11

Event photos: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/30653680@N05/4096614920/in/pool-galileannights>

Event Report:

We set up an 8-inch (20 cm) Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope in the centre of town to allow folks an opportunity to view both the Moon and Jupiter. The weather was not very good at the start of the event, with a lot of clouds in the sky, but about 45 minutes later the clouds cleared and for the rest of the evening the weather was quite good, although it was a bit cold. Only a small number of people came out to take a look through the telescope, but among the people who came out was a four year old boy who had never seen Jupiter before. After taking a look through the telescope, he was able to correctly tell us how many moons were on each side of Jupiter and he seemed quite impressed with having seen the giant planet.

After each person looked though the telescope, we presented them with an RASC / IYA2009 Canada "AstroCard" and told them that they just had a "Galileo Moment" and that if they register their Galileo Moment on the IYA2009 Canada website, their name would be sent into space by the Canadian Space Agency on board NEOSat in 2010. Needless to say, everyone thought this was really amazing and I'm sure most everybody registered their Galileo Moment later in the evening.

As for interactions with attendees and their responses, many were surprised to learn that Galileo did not invent the telescope. Also, many were surprised to learn that Jupiter has more than 60 moons. In addition, many attendees did not know that Galileo's discovery of the four large moons of Jupiter forever changed our view of the universe and our place in it.