

Galilean Nights Event ID: gn299

Number of telescopes: 1

Number of organisers: 3

Number of attendees: 23

Event photos: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/30653680@N05/4095855103/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, with a lot of clouds in the sky, but we did manage to observe both the Moon and Jupiter several times throughout the evening, albeit briefly, as the clouds kept passing through with only small breaks in between them. A smaller than expected number of people came out to take a look through the telescope, but those who did come out were excited to have been given the opportunity to do so, even if they had to wait for the thick clouds to pass and were then given a less than perfect view because of the thin clouds that remained.

After each person looked through 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.