

The Case For Space Society

Scenic Acres Astronomy Night Final Report

Event Details

Date: November 19, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m

Location: Monsignor E. L. Doyle School field

Attendees: around 150

Volunteers: 7

The Case for Space Society was responsible for organizing, advertising, and managing the event. Advertising consisted of posters distributed through the Scenic Acres Community Association and a social media campaign. To ensure that there would be enough volunteers and telescopes to support the high number of expected attendees, we reached out to the Calgary Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada to recruit volunteers. The volunteers were incredibly helpful and were crucial to the success of the event. In total, we had 8 telescopes and a pair of binoculars set-up for the public to use.

Attendance peaked around 8:30 pm, when there were around 40 members of the community at the event simultaneously. This was likely due to the fact that we set-up in an area where community members often go for their evening walks, which made the event quite open and accessible. Throughout the whole night, Saturn and Jupiter were prime targets which never ceased to amaze the attendees. We received many questions about Saturn's rings, Jupiter's moons, and other phenomena related to these two planets.

Success Stories

After the event, we received multiple emails from attendees expressing their desire to attend future astronomy events. One individual mentioned that his grandson was quite fascinated by what he saw and wanted to learn more, so we connected him with the youth group of the RASC.

A few individuals wanted to learn about how they could get started with astronomy on their own, and we referred them to the following resources:

- Beginner programs with the Calgary Centre of the RASC
- Free planetarium apps like stellarium
- Astronomy lectures at the Calgary Public Library

Additionally, one of the volunteers from the RASC distributed planispheres and moon charts to attendees that they could take home and use.

Feedback

We sent out a feedback form and received 6 responses from attendees. Here is a summary of the results:

- For 5/6 individuals, this event was the first time they participated in astronomy
- 6/6 individuals said they were 100% satisfied with the event
- All 6 individuals said they would want to participate in future astronomy events
- 5/6 individuals brought kids with them, and all of them said the kids were very fascinated with what they learned

One of the points of criticism we received was that all of the telescopes we had set-up were pointed at the same targets (Jupiter and Saturn). This was largely due to light pollution and moderate cloud cover which made it difficult for us to see other things. We did occasionally attempt to find other objects, like Mars, Neptune, the Andromeda Galaxy, and the Ring Nebula. In the future, we will place greater emphasis on what attendees would like to see so that we can better fulfill their requests.

Improvements for Future Events

- Check the event location in advance to ensure it is shielded from lights and close to parking spaces
- Set-up a display table for handouts so that they are easily accessible
- Coordinate the telescopes so that they are all not pointing at the same targets
- Bring stools or step ladders so that younger children have an easier time looking through the telescopes.

Images





