

## Astronomy Tools of the Trade

This presentation is a follow-up of the first one (*"From Back Yard to Black Holes"*, Aug. 25) but can be enjoyed separately. Being aware of the unimaginably cold, dark vastness of space can help us value the beauty of our fragile Earth and our role on it. In this presentation we will explore some more detailed facts and thoughts when we try making sense of the universe. Much of this presentation will be accompanied by high-resolution photographs and videos projected on a big screen. We'll explore the following topics:

- *The basics, terminology, sizes and distances, the strange properties of light.*
- *Next, we'll get out the Star Charts to understand their purpose and workings.*
- *It's all in the glass: Optical Telescopes, what they can and cannot do.*
- *Tune in to Radio Telescopes -more than meets the eye...!*

**Co-ordinator:** Randy McAllister

Sure Randy McAllister has a day job; but it's during the dark hours that he gets really active as his alter ego **Astorandy**: Owner Operator of the Thunder Bay Observatory, a local facility he almost single-handedly designed and built. The observatory aims to educate, entertain and do research in the field of astronomy, with a special interest in photographing "deep sky" stellar objects. There are tens of thousands of these, from planets and moons to stellar clusters and super novae – and anything in between.

Born and raised right here Randy soon found out that Thunder Bay is also a great place to be for an astronomer: this area is one of the very few that has virtually no light pollution from big urban centres. In other words: up here we can still see the stars, and lots of them, too. In order to keep it that way, Randy is an environmental advocate primarily by campaigning to reduce the carbon-dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) gasses in our atmosphere so we can keep seeing things clearly.

Randy is has been an amateur astronomer for about 21 years now, and is currently president of the Local Royal Astronomical Society of Canada astronomy club. He likes his nights crisp and clear.

*URL: [www.ThunderBayObservatory.com](http://www.ThunderBayObservatory.com)*