

## AstroBlast 2008

Hi all,

Spent the weekend up with our ORAS friends at Astroblast 2008. As you all probably noticed, the weather wasn't good. While it didn't actually rain till Sunday morning, the clouds were pretty thick for most of the weekend. Though late Friday evening, we did get a number of bands of alternating clouds and then clear skies go thru for several hours. I didn't bother setting up my telescope, but instead used binoc and my lawn chair to take in some nice views of the fall Milky-Way. There were also an occasional bright meteor to light up the sky during the 15 - 20 minute clear swatches. Eventually, around midnite, it permanently clouded over. Saturday, the Sun poked thru the clouds a few times, long enough to drive up the humidity, but not enough to make solar observing worth while. Late in the afternoon, the clouds really thickened up, and it looked doubtful that we were going to make it all the way through the pizza party and raffle drawing without getting soaked. But the clouds held their rain, and moved off to the west. That evening was a complete lost cause and the small number camping packed up their scopes.

But the ORAS folks are a friendly crowd, and as usual, they put on a nice event. I enjoyed this year's lineup of speakers, especially the two talks on radio-astronomy. Phil Harrington was the keynote speaker for both Friday and Saturday, and both of his presentations were very entertaining! Here's a few pics of their observatory and recently new addition, where they held all of the presentations.

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-01.jpg>  
<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-02.jpg>  
<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-03.jpg>

The tower like structure will eventually hold a small robotic telescope & dome.

The weather held the attendance to a small crowd (~60), but there were a some interesting campers to check out, along with a very few telescopes setup in the observing field.

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-04.jpg>  
<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-05.jpg>  
<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-06.jpg>  
<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-07.jpg>

But there was also good company to be had with familiar faces.

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-08.jpg>

Saturday afternoon, Donna & Gary Shannon drove up for that day's talks. Here's a photo of them, along with Charlotte & Jim Tunney.

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/AB2008-09.jpg>

So while there wasn't much in the way of observing, it was still fun getting out with a few of the Kiski members and friends from other regional clubs.

Hope for better weather next year!

Larry

