

Sidewalk Astronomer Handbook

IYA 2009 Proposal

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The International Year of Astronomy presents the RASC with a unique opportunity to capture the imaginations of thousands of Canadians. The Sidewalk Astronomer Handbook will provide people whose interest in astronomy is piqued by IYA 2009 something “to do” with their new interest. By providing encouragement, the goal of getting their name on the RASC National website, and support, contact with a Centre near them, people will be more likely to have a lasting enthusiasm for astronomy than attending a public observing session alone. Participants will also be extremely likely to join the RASC.

In the first two pages of this proposal please find the “nuts and bolts” of how the concept will work and associated costs. Pages three through ten are a very rough mockup of the handbook. When you are looking at the mock up keep in mind that the finished handbook will be two, 8.5” x 11” sheets of paper, folded in half and stapled down the centre to make up the eight printed pages.

Graphics, printing and bulk mailing to the Centres would be handled by myself and the printing company I work for. Content decisions would come from the Education Committee and Observing Committee with myself as the lead.

Purpose:

- Provide participants with an introduction to amateur astronomy.
- Foster an appreciation and basic understanding of amateur astronomy to all who participate.

Objectives:

- a) To encourage and enable participants to make simple observations of the sky and record them.
- b) To give participants a sense of accomplishment.
- c) Introduce participants to the RASC.

Method of Achieving Objectives:

- a) Provide a “Sidewalk Astronomer Handbook” containing: easily achievable observing objectives, tools and information needed to make the observations to participants through Centre observing nights and National website downloads.
- b) Upon successful completion of Sidewalk Astronomer Handbook provide participants with recognition on the RASC National website.
- c) Upon completing the Sidewalk Astronomer Handbook participants will contact the Centre nearest them to verify their observations.

Sidewalk Astronomer Handbook Specifications:

- 8.5” x 11”, double sided, saddle stitched (folded in middle and stapled to make a 5.5” x 8.5” finished booklet)
- Downloadable from RASC National Website as a single PDF file.
- Printable on school photocopiers and home printers.

- Layout must be simple, clear and easy to understand directions, line drawings only (so as to be reproducible on photocopiers).
- Contain observing objectives such as: constellations, bright stars, moon phases and features, naked eye planets and double stars.
- Contain observing tools such as: seasonal sky maps, basic lunar map, lunar phase depictions and areas to record observations.
- Contain observing resources such as: RASC National contact information, Centres list and contact information, URL's of various internet resources to encourage further exploration and learning.
- Cost of creating booklet: \$ 0.00 (volunteer)

Distribution of Booklet:

- RASC National to provide some preprinted booklets to Centres for local distribution at RASC Centre events.
- Booklet made available for free download on special page Sidewalk Astronomer Handbook support page of RASC National website.
- Advertise the program availability via email using RASC contacts. i.e. run a story in Journal, Bulletin article, email RASCals list requesting people spread the program.
- Cost of creating supporting web page(s): \$ 0.00 (done by volunteers utilizing existing RASC resources – Observing & Education web pages)
- Cost of printing 12,000 booklets for Centres: \$ 2,511.16 (29 Centres x 413 books x \$0.1868 / book + taxes)
- Cost of mailing booklets to Centres: \$ 435.00 based on an average postal cost of \$15.00 per mailout x 29 Centres and volunteer labour to package and ship.
- Cost of email advertising campaign: \$ \$0.00

Award and Distribution:

- Participants will mail their completed Sidewalk Astronomer Handbooks to the Centre nearest them.
- The Centre will verify their observations and notify the Observing Committee (or Education Committee)
- The Committee will maintain a web page of Sidewalk Astronomer recipients. Cost: \$0.00 (volunteer Centre labour)

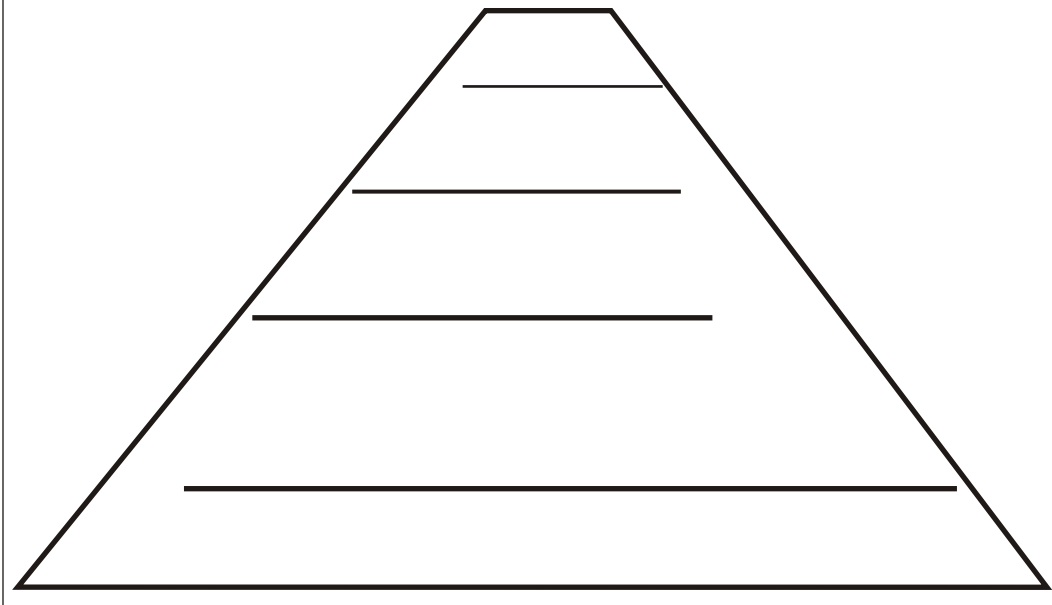
Length of Program:

- Targeted for the International Year of Astronomy 2009 but the program is such that it could continue to be operated indefinitely after IYA 2009 if desired.

Spin-Off Benefits:


- The RASC will have an easily reproducible, entry level tool with which to attract new members
- By involving the Centres with verifying the participants work the Centres will have the opportunity to invite participants to a meeting, tell them about Centre activities and ultimately to join the RASC.
- The RASC will have a database of people interested enough in astronomy to complete and mail in their program booklet. This would be a good group to advertise to and invite to join the RASC.

Sidewalk Astronomer
Handbook



A large black-outlined circle containing the text "Spring Star Chart" and "reprint from BOG?".

Spring Star
Chart
reprint from BOG?

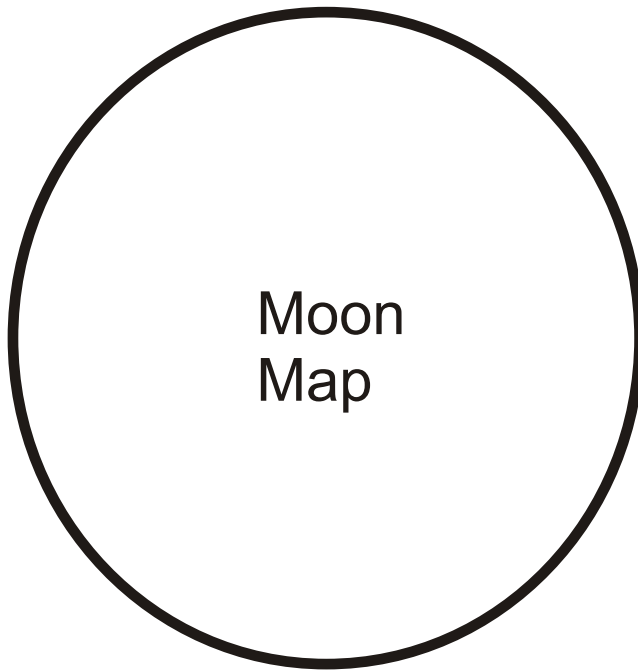
A large black-outlined circle containing the text "Summer Star Chart" and "reprint from BOG?".

Summer Star
Chart
reprint from BOG?

The Moon (Luna) our nearest neighbor

Moon Facts

The little moon jumped up and down quickly while singing a silly song to the red dwarf galaxy eating ice cream by the truckload. The little moon jumped up and down quickly while singing a silly song to the red dwarf galaxy eating ice cream by the truckload.



Look at the moon
Can you see these features?

	Seen?	Date	Time
Sea of Tranquility	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Tycho	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Copernicus	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Rays	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Moon Phases



Explanation of phases

The little moon jumped up and down quickly while singing a silly song to the red dwarf galaxy eating ice cream by the truckload. The little moon jumped up and down quickly while singing a silly song to the red dwarf galaxy eating ice cream by the truckload.

The little moon jumped up and down quickly while singing a silly song to the red dwarf galaxy eating ice cream by the truckload.



See if you can spot all the phases of the moon this month.

	Seen?	Date	Time
New Moon	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
1st Quarter	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Full Moon	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
3rd Quarter	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Planets



There are 6 naked eye planets
How many can you see this month?

	Seen?	Date	Time
Mercury	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Venus	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Earth	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Mars	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Jupiter	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Saturn	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Write up explaining generally where to look for the planets each in 2009. How planets look differently from stars and how they “wander” among the stars.

The little moon jumped up and down quickly while singing a silly song to the red dwarf galaxy eating ice cream by the truckload. The little moon jumped up and down quickly while singing a silly song to the red dwarf galaxy eating ice cream by the truckload.

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Bright Stars



The constellations are made up of the brightest stars in the sky. Look at the star charts can you find these bright stars?

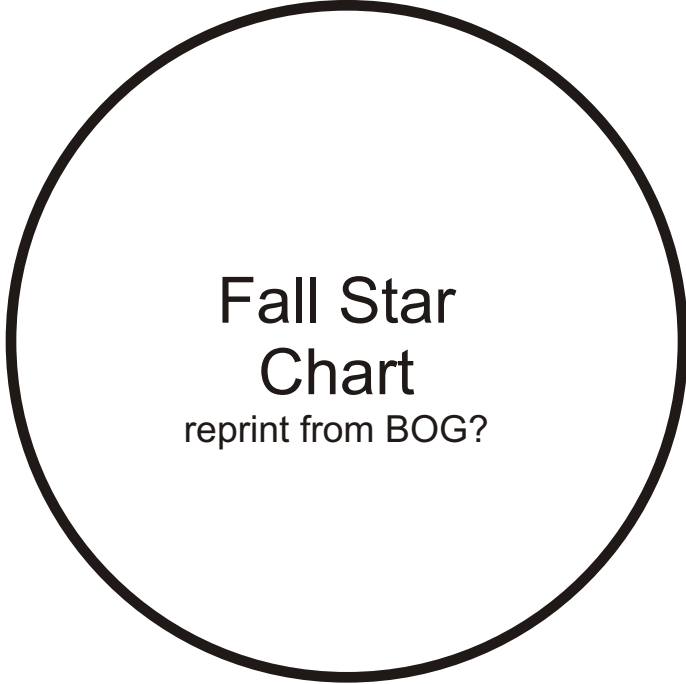
	Seen?	Date	Time
Sirius	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Capella	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Vega	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Deneb	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Constellations



Look at the star charts on the inside covers of this booklet. Can you find 10 this month?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Join the RASC!

there is a Centre near you!

National Contact info

lkdsflksdfoies
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List of Centres & Contact Info

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To have your name posted on the RASC National Website
mail your completed Handbook to the RASC Centre
nearest you for verification.

You must complete half of each category in order to
receive recognition.