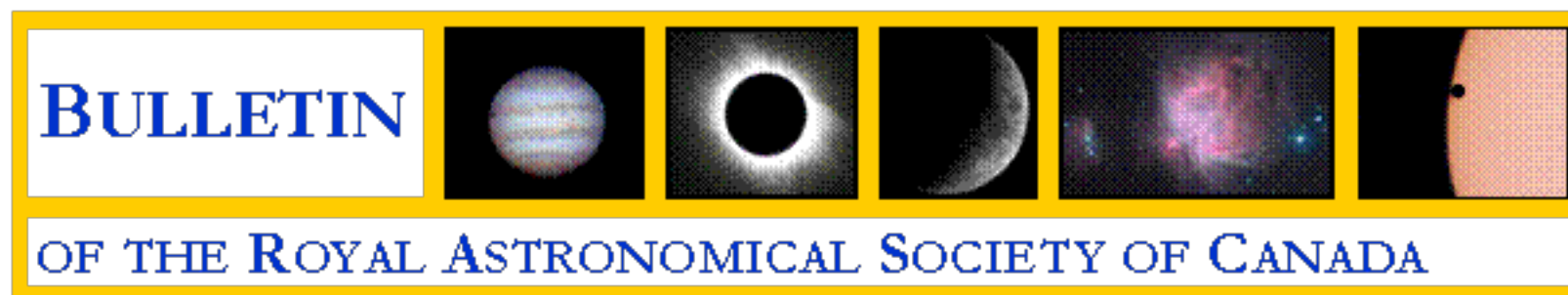


2008-10



October 2008 - Volume 3, Number 10

Ian Levstein, Editor

We welcome your comments on the *Bulletin*. Email them to the Editor at bulletin@rasc.ca [1].

Member: ~FULL_NAME~, RASC ID: ~ID~

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

Fall Astronomy Day

This is just a quick reminder that Fall Astronomy Week is taking place **right now** until October 5, and **Fall Astronomy Day** is on Saturday, 2008 October 4. Your events can include mall displays, sidewalk displays, observing events, and day or night events. Celebrate Fall Astronomy Day, as the precursor to the International Year of Astronomy, and get the word out... "The Universe is Yours to Discover"

Astrosketching Email List and New Web Site

by **Kim Kay** (Kingston Centre) and **Randall Rosenfeld** (Toronto Centre) In the September *Bulletin* we suggested that if there was enough interest, a new email group would be started for those who wish to learn how to sketch, or for those who already sketch at the eyepiece. The response has been very good and we now have an **Astrosketchers** email list. Individuals who would like to share the techniques and tools used for sketching can join via this [Web link](#) [2]. We have also created the **Astrosketchers** Web site. We look forward to seeing your sketches and to sharing information.

2009 CanSat Competition for University Students

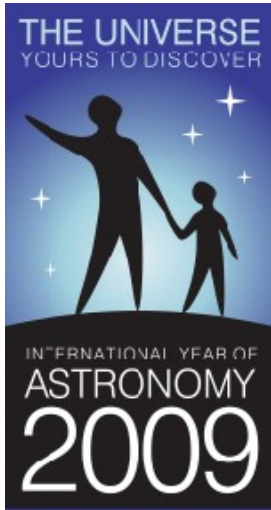
Applications are currently being accepted for the 2009 CanSat Competition. This annual competition is open to university and college students from the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Europe. Teams of two to 10 students must design and build a space-type system called a CanSat. Each CanSat is the size of a soda can and must be built according to the specifications released by the competition organizing committee. Participants are involved in the end-to-end life cycle of a complex engineering project, from conceptual design, through integration and test, actual operation of the system, and the conclusion with a post-mission summary and debriefing. All teams entering the CanSat competition are required to have a faculty adviser. The faculty adviser will oversee and be responsible for the conduct of the team at all times during the competition and is strongly encouraged to accompany the team to the competition.

Applications are due 2008 October 31. For more information about the competition and to download the application, click [here](#) [3]. Questions about this competition should be directed [here](#) [4].

► International Year of Astronomy 2009

NSERC PromoScience Grant Application for IYA2009

by **Mary Lou Whitehorne**, 1st VP, RASC



The joint application for an [NSERC PromoScience Grant](#) [5] has been prepared and submitted. The effort is led by the Canadian Astronomical Society (CASCA) and is a partnership between [CASCA](#) [6], RASC, and Fédération des Astronomes Amateurs du Québec ([FAAQ](#)) [7]. The grant application focuses on programming to significantly expand existing education and outreach activities to the youth of Canada in support of IYA2009, and to develop the legacy aspects of IYA2009. For more information, see the Canadian IYA [newsletter #2](#) [8]. For lots of information on the many projects and activities planned across Canada for the International Year of Astronomy, see [here](#) [9].

► Across the RASC

NinthPlanet Web Site

by **James MacWilliam** Sunshine Coast Centre My wife and I joined the Sunshine Coast Astronomy Club about three years ago. We began learning astrophotography a year later and just recently put together a DVD of the Astrophotos we've taken from the Sunshine Coast. All of the photos were taken with small scopes (4" Refractor and 6" Reflector) and two cameras (a pocket digital and a second hand DSLR). We presented our show *The Skies Above the Sunshine Coast* at our club's "Astronomy In The Park" in August. A five-minute excerpt from the show (and lots of other videos) is on our new ["NinthPlanet" Video-Astrophotography Web site](#) [10].

Pingualuit Impact Crater



Pingualuit Impact Crater

The Ottawa Centre RASC Impact Crater Research Team recently completed an expedition to the Pingualuit Impact Crater in Northern Quebec. Details of the expedition can be found [here](#) [11].

In the image are (left to right) **Chuck O'Dale** and **Eric Kujala** of the Ottawa Centre RASC. The Pingualuit Impact Crater is in the background.

“Partying under the Stars” at Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve

by **Bruce McCurdy**, Edmonton Centre Two years after its declaration in 2006, Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve continues to thrive and grow. On August 31 an anniversary celebration “Party under the Stars” was held at the Astotin Lake Campground in Elk Island National Park. The highlight of this year’s event was the inclusion of another partner, Strathcona Wilderness Centre, to the expanding DSP. With this latest addition, Beaver Hills becomes the first DSP in Canada to involve three levels of government: Federal, Provincial, and Municipal. This cooperative status will facilitate important dialog within and among these groups, and with RASC. The addition of this small dark-sky “island,” two miles west of the previous westernmost boundary, means a modest bump in the size of BHDSP, now 302 km². More importantly it adds yet another education platform to those already being provided by Elk Island National Park and Cooking Lake/Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area. It is this increased reach in raising the profile of astronomy and particularly public awareness of the issues related to light pollution which has been the most valuable outcome of the partnership. A formal ceremony was held in the Astotin Theatre, in which a certificate welcoming the new partner was formally presented to Jean Funk, Supervisor of SWC. Representatives of each organization signed the new document, including Edmonton Centre President **Krista Stefan** on behalf of RASC, Marilyn Peckett of Parks Canada, and Cecilia Goncalves of Alberta Parks. Strathcona County, whose Recreation Parks and Culture department oversees SWC, was represented by Councillor Roxanne Carr. A national RASC Light Pollution Abatement Award was presented to Jean Funk by local LPAC chair **Bruce McCurdy**. The second-anniversary celebration was highlighted by a number of well-attended public presentations in Astotin Theatre. One highlight was a command performance of “DSI: Dark Sky Investigator,” an outstanding children’s theatre program developed by Tangle Caron and Natalie Frijia of Alberta Parks for their ongoing Parks in the Classroom programming. Meanwhile Matt Davis of Parks Canada presented on scotobiology, while astronomy-

themed talks were given by RASCals **David Roles**, **Doug Hube**, **Warren Finlay**, **Massimo Torri**, and **Bruce McCurdy**. Throughout the day, noted children's astronomy author Joan Marie Galat displayed her story telling skills, with assistance at the late night constellation walk from Alberta Parks' Cecilia Goncalves. Meanwhile, a couple of dozen RASCals congregated on the telescope field by Astotin Lake. An unofficial telescope count revealed some 20 instruments. Alas, after some promising clearing in the early evening, clouds rolled in and the dark-sky session ended long before we would have liked. Congratulations are in order to our DSP Coordinator **Sherrilyn Jahrig** as well as Parks Canada's Evelyn Henke for their planning and coordinating efforts to yet another successful DSP event. Next year, we are looking to hold a higher profile event befitting the International Year of Astronomy.

► *Bulletin Photo of the Month*

Iridium Flare in Bootes



This month's photo is long overdue.

Rob Baron, of Vermillion, Alberta and a member of RASC Edmonton Centre, took this photo on 2008 June 1. The Iridium flare was -8 magnitude, and was brighter than Arcturus, the brightest star in the picture, third brightest in the entire sky - up and to the left of the flare.

This 33-second exposure was tripod mounted and taken with a Canon Rebel.

Iridium Flare in Bootes

► The Sky this Month

What's New in the Sky

Readers are encouraged to check out the **Northern Skies** [12] section of the RASC Web site. Thanks to **Gary Boyle** for keeping us all in the know!

► Dates to Remember

- - **2008 October 4** - Fall Astronomy Day 2008
 - **2008 November 16** - National Council Meeting
 - **2009 January 10** - Canadian IYA Launch
 - **2009 April 2-5** - 100 Hours of Astronomy



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Links:

[1] <mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca>

[2] <https://www.rasc.ca/forums/rasc-discussion-groups/rasc-special-interest-groups/astrosketchers>

[3] <http://www.cansatcompetition.com/>

[4] [mailto:questions@juno.nrl.navy.mil?subject=2009 CanSat Competition](mailto:questions@juno.nrl.navy.mil?subject=2009%20CanSat%20Competition)

[5] <http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/promoscience/>

[6] <http://casca.ca/>

[7] <http://www.faaq.org/>

[8] http://www.astronomy2009.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=62&Itemid=78

[9] <http://www.astronomy2009.ca/index.php>

[10] <http://www.ninthplanet.ca/documents/42.html>

[11] http://www.ottawa.rasc.ca/articles/odale_chuck/earth_craters/pingualuit/index.html

[12] <https://www.rasc.ca/news/northern-skies>

[13] <mailto:mempub@rasc.ca>

[14] <http://www.rasc.ca>