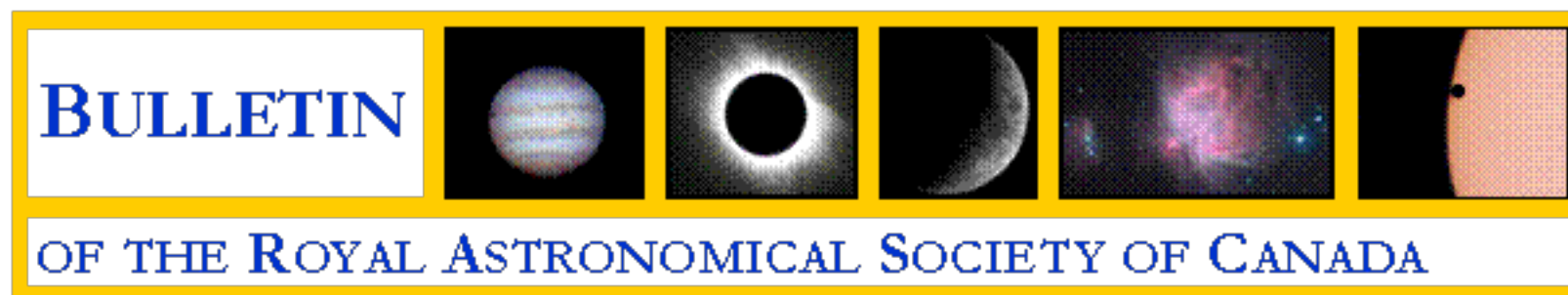


2009-10



October 2009 - Volume 4, Number 10

Ian Levstein, Editor

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

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

[Save the Date for the 2010 General Assembly](#)

by **Paul Gray**, New Brunswick Centre

The 2010 GA organizing committee invites you to save the weekend of 2010 July 1-4 for the 2010 General Assembly. Click [here](#) to find out what the New Brunswick Centre has in store for you as they host their first ever General Assembly!

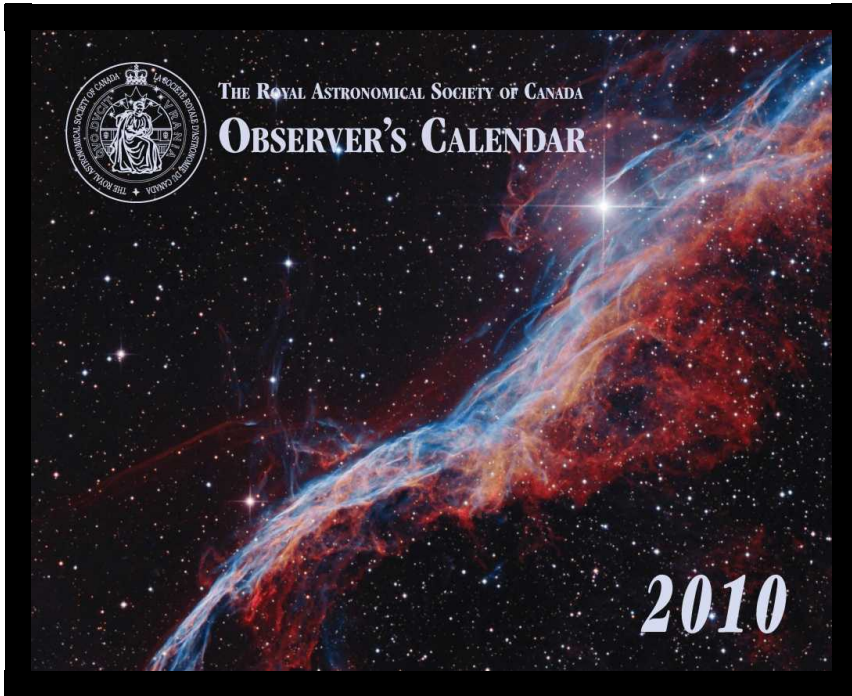
[October Journal Online](#)

by **James Edgar**, *Journal* Production Manager

The online version (in Adobe Acrobat PDF format) of the October 2009 issue of the RASC *Journal* is now available in full-colour, high-resolution format (9.1 MB), plus a low-resolution version (3.4 MB) for those members on dial-up service.

To access the current issues of the *Journal*, login [here](#) [2] with the username: jrasc2009 and the password: galileo.

2010 *Observer's Calendar* Now Available



Get them while they're hot! The 2010 version of the *Observer's Calendar* is beautiful with spectacular images from our own astro-imaging members.

The monthly grids are packed with astro-info including rise and set times, planet visibility, conjunctions, eclipses, meteor showers, Moon phases, historical anniversaries, star party dates, and more! They make great gifts for friends, family, home, office, cottage, observatory, and favourite teachers. In short, everybody should have one! For more info or to order yours, click [here](#) [3].

► Across the RASC

Gordon's Park Receives Dark-Sky Preserve Status

by **Dan Taylor**

On Friday, August 14, *en route* to Gordon's Park, my wife, Carol, and I enjoyed a pleasant passage across Georgian Bay via Manitoulin Island's Chi-Cheemaun ferry. We emerged into the bustling dockside activity of South Baymouth. Leaving the hamlet by its main road, we found ourselves motoring through an enchanting and bucolic countryside, mature in its settlement, but retaining a sense of open spaces and a patina of wildness.

After twenty minutes or so, we arrived at Gordon's Park with the expectation of seeing for ourselves, the legendary dark skies. We were there to mark the RASC's designation of Dark-Sky Preserve [4] status on the first commercial enterprise in Canada to achieve this milestone.

Hosts **Terry and Rita Gordon** received us, as they did all attendees, in a warm and gracious fashion.

That evening, after sunset and a thoughtful introductory function, the darkening skies splayed before us, seemingly untouched by artificial light. The Milky Way was aglow -- casting a shadow, as did Jupiter; moreover, stars near the horizon appeared bright. These are but a few of the hallmarks of unhampered pristine skies. Only after looking about with purposeful scrutiny and with fully dark-adapted eyes, could one detect a small, feeble sky glow, giving away the location of the dock at South Baymouth.

The official Dark-Sky Preserve ceremony began Saturday just before the evening talk by **Terry Trees** of the Toronto Centre. Rita launched it with a ribbon cutting, followed by the presentation of the RASC's Dark-Sky Preserve certificate.

A number of local dignitaries were on hand and gave congratulatory addresses. This was supplemented by the reading of several congratulatory emails from distant supporters.

During the course of the addresses, I sensed one constant theme: the care and support that island residents displayed for each other's welfare. These officials and politicians were also steeped in the island's economy, one that depends primarily on summer tourism. Perhaps that is why Rita and Terry found such willing support from surrounding communities in adopting light-pollution abatement practices - a necessary component of the Dark-Sky Preserve status.

The ceremony closed with the cutting of a cake decorated in an exquisite rendition of the Society's Dark-Sky Preserve logo.

This is a new chapter in the evolution of the Dark-Sky Preserve movement. It's a clear departure from the existing inventories of lands in public trust. The day-to-day needs are very different to sustain a dark-sky preserve in a business environment. If, by the example of this novel concept, business and dark-sky preserves can be successfully merged, an entirely new venue with significant potential awaits.

George Moores' Astronomy Workshop

by **Sherry Campbell**, President, Edmonton Centre

On October 16-18, the Edmonton Chapter will be hosting an astronomy workshop at Camp Maskepetoon, Alberta - about a 45-minute drive SW of Edmonton near Pigeon Lake. The event runs from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon.

For those who do not know what this event is, here's a description. Basically, it is an astronomy retreat for a weekend. We book a school or scout camp somewhere outside of city limits to take advantage of the dark skies. The event is fully catered; all you have to bring is your bedding, warm clothes and your telescope(s)/binoculars. If you do not own either, you are still warmly welcome to attend. Several of the attendees will have their own equipment and would be more than happy to show you the wonders of the night sky. This year, we are proud to present **Stephen James O'Meara** as our featured guest speaker, as well as featuring local talent from our club to assist you in learning more about astronomy. The cost per person is \$120 for adults and \$90 for children under 15.

The Edmonton Rocketry Club is invited to attend the workshop and usually sets up a display of model rockets. The Edmonton Rocketry Club may launch a rocket during the Workshop (weather conditions permitting).

Providing the weather co-operates, we will be having night sky viewing through telescopes and binoculars. During the day, several of our members will have telescopes set up outside of the facility to do some solar observing safely through filters.

A registration form is available for download [here](#) [5]. If you require more information, click [here](#) [6] or feel free to [contact me](#) [7] or call (780) 433-1516.

New Education and Outreach coordinator for IYA in Canada



by **Julie Bolduc-Duval**

I was recently hired as the part-time education and outreach coordinator for IYA in Canada. This position, funded through a generous grant from the NSERC PromoScience program, is coordinated by CASCA in partnership with the RASC and FAAQ. For the last few months, I've been busy learning about all the wonderful activities and resources the Canadian astronomical community has developed over the years, and especially during 2009. The goal of my position is to work on the legacy of IYA, making sure the momentum doesn't disappear as we change the calendar year, with a special emphasis on reaching youth and underserved audiences (Aboriginal, inner-city youth, remote/rural areas...).

There is no doubt in my mind we owe much of the success of IYA to all the volunteer efforts from amateur astronomers. It wouldn't be the same without you! But I also understand this level of activity is tiring for most people – it is for me too! While the nature of the activities will most likely change in 2010, I hope IYA2009 was just the beginning of a new partnership between all astronomy enthusiasts across Canada. For the next two years, I'll be working at creating networks within the astronomical community (professional, amateur, science centres...) and sharing the resources we have with the general public.

Is there anything that would help you do astronomy outreach? Do you have any projects (even the craziest ones) you would like to discuss? Do not hesitate to contact me [here](#) [8]. I'm happy to work with you in making astronomy a more accessible science for everyone!

Pour les francophones parmi vous, vous pouvez évidemment m'écrire en français!

October IYA Events

by **Jim Hesser** and **Kim Hay**

Galilean Nights will be celebrated from October 22-24, which falls during Canada Science and Technology Week. Building on the success of 100 Hours of Astronomy, Galilean Nights will be the last globally coordinated IYA observing event for the public - global publicity will mean opportunities will abound! For more information, click [here](#) [9] and [here](#) [10].

National Science and Technology Week runs from October 16-26 at the Canada Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa. For more information, click [here](#) [11].

Also, don't forget October 31, Hallowe'en night, during which many astronomers can have children visit their telescopes for a Galileo Moment... and get a treat as well.

► 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!

► Bulletin Photo of the Month

Shuttle/ISS Pass



This excellent photo was taken on September 9 by **Clair Perry**, Charlottetown Centre.

Discovery needed to get rid of excess waste water before landing, and jettisoned it overboard via the waste water dump line, creating a spectacular comet-like effect as sunlight hit the spraying liquid. Below Discovery, the ISS moves in a parallel orbit.

The photo was taken with a Canon 40D, 17-35 f2.8 L lens, wide open at 2.8, ISO 500, and a 30-second exposure.

► Dates to Remember

- **2009 October 16-18** - [Astronomy Workshop](#) [6], Camp Maskepetoon, Alberta
 - **2009 October 17** - [Torrance Barrens Dark-Sky Reserve Dedication](#) [13], Muskoka, Ontario



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- [3] <http://www.rasc.ca/observers-calendar/>
- [4] <http://www.rasc.ca/content/gordons-park-dark-sky-preserve>
- [5] <http://www.edmontonrasc.com/download/RegGMAW2009.pdf>
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