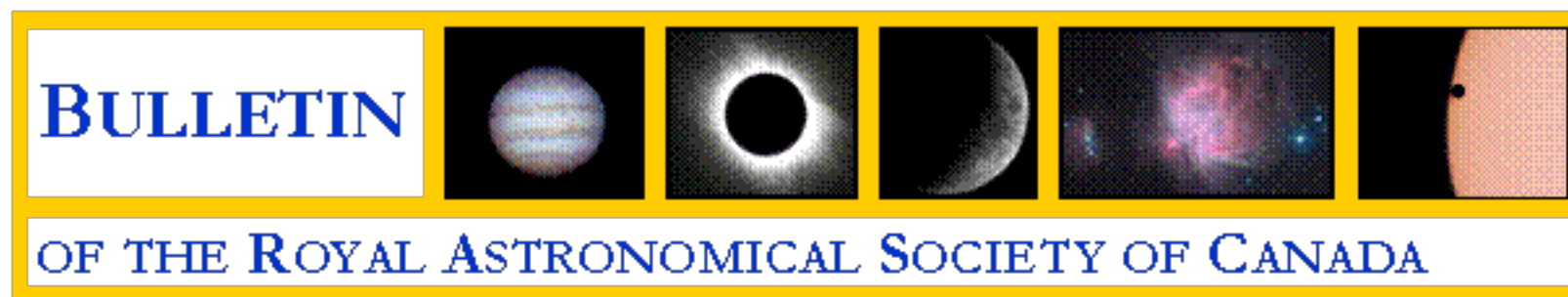


# 2009-11

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November 2009 - Volume 4, Number 11

Ian Levstein, Editor

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

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

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## Call for 2nd Vice-President

by **Glenn Hawley**, RASC 2nd Vice-President

The Society is going to need a 2nd Vice-President next summer. The current terms of the President, 1st Vice-President, and 2nd Vice-President are all expiring and a new slate will be elected at the General Assembly in New Brunswick over the July Dominion Day long weekend.

Barring unforeseen circumstance, the incumbent 1st and 2nd Vice-Presidents are likely going to be in the running for President and 1st Vice-President respectively, but new blood (or even recycled old blood) will be needed for the 2nd Vice-President position.

So if you've watched the Society's operations and gazed longingly at the glory, pomp, and circumstance of being the 2nd Vice-President, please contact [Glenn Hawley](#) [2].

## Is There a RASC Observatory Near You?

by **Barry Matthews**, Chair, RASC History Committee

The History Committee of the RASC has created an incentive known as the "RASC Observatory Project"

with the mandate to collect photos and brief descriptions of RASC observatories in and outside Canada. These observatories can be Centre-, private-, or member-owned, or simply operated by members for public outreach. What the History Committee would like is to receive two or three photos (JPG format), a description of the building, and basic location information (city, province (or lat/long), owner, main equipment, etc.)

A proposed data input form has been created and is available from me via [email](#) [3] or by telephone (613) 829-5251. Centre reps are asked to encourage members to take part in this project and perhaps even act as local contact for the project. If anyone has questions concerning this project or needs data input forms, please [contact me](#) [3]. It is hoped that the collected data will be published and/or made available to members by CD or some other electronic format that may become available in the future, and will also become a resource to those who may, in the future, wish to build or manage an observatory.

## Second Annual MER

by **James Edgar**, RASC National Secretary



From L-R: **Mary Lou Whitehorne**, **James Edgar**, **David Lane**, **Mayer Tchelebon**, **Jo Taylor**, **Glenn Hawley**. Photo by **James Edgar**

The second annual "Maritime Executive Retreat" ended on Sunday, October 25 in Lower Sackville, NS. The RASC Executive Committee, **Dave Lane** (President), **Mary Lou Whitehorne** (1st VP), **Glenn Hawley** (2nd VP), **Mayer Tchelebon** (Treasurer), and **James Edgar** (National Secretary) gathered on Friday at Mary Lou's home for deliberations about where we expect the Society to go in the near and distant future; to set policy; to discuss an agenda for the upcoming National Council meeting; and address the numerous things that go with the running of a complex organization like ours. Executive Secretary, **Jo Taylor**, joined the five Executive members for continued talks on Saturday and

Sunday.

The MER formula was tried last year and, based on its success, the intention for the near term is to continue using this method to "get our ducks in a row."

# Grasslands National Park Dark-Sky Preserve Established

by **Richard Huziak**, RASC Saskatoon Centre

On Friday, October 2, Parks Canada and the RASC designated the Grasslands National Park as a Dark-Sky Preserve (DSP). The ceremony was held at the Larson Prairie Dog Town in Grasslands National Park West Block, near Val Marie, Saskatchewan and celebrated our continued commitment to protecting natural areas from the adverse effects of artificial lighting.

The Grasslands National Park, located approximately 100 kilometres south of Swift Current near the Saskatchewan-Montana border, will be the largest Dark-Sky Preserve in the world with a current area of 527 km<sup>2</sup>. Over time, land acquisitions by the Park will expand the DSP to 921 km<sup>2</sup>.

By protecting the Grasslands National Park from excessive artificial light, Parks Canada and the RASC are preserving the natural environment into the future so that visitors can enjoy the vitality of the night-time wildlife and the awesome spectacle of a remarkably dark, star-filled sky.

For more information on the Grasslands DSP and RASC partnership, contact [Richard Huziak](#) [4]. For more information on the RASC DSP Program and scotobiology, contact [Robert Dick](#) [5]. For more information on the RASC and other DSPs, click [here](#) [6].

## 10th Anniversary of Torrance Barrens DSP

by **Robert Dick**, Light-Pollution Abatement Committee



On October 17, the RASC celebrated the re-dedication of the Torrance Barrens Dark-Sky Preserve on its 10th anniversary. As the first Dark-Sky Preserve in Canada, it is held up as the archetype of Dark-Sky Site protection. Although only 2,000 HA, it has influenced the lighting policies of the Muskoka Region north of Toronto and attracted the interest of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

About 40 dignitaries from provincial and local governments, conservation groups and the RASC were on hand for the unveiling of the large 0.5 m x 2.5 m sign. Local schools held an art and science project competition during the event with prizes donated by Khan Telescopes, Efston Science and Bushnell. The festivities were rounded out by a public stargazing session at the site under cold

but clear skies.

## New Education and Public Outreach Resource



by **Randall A. Rosenfeld**, RASC Archivist and MAP Chair

The Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP) has just released a first-rate resource for those running or taking part in star parties, or any astronomy education and public outreach (EPO) effort, called "Sharing the Universe Videos - Tips for stellar Presentations".

The core of the initiative is five professionally produced videos dealing with many aspects of star-party EPO, but especially with strategies for effectively handling potentially tricky situations, such as "How to Say 'I Don't Know'," "Connecting with Kids," "Handling Difficult Questions (and difficult people)," and "How to get WOW! (When not showing Saturn)". The videos are fast paced, informative, and use humour to effectively get their points across. Each production is supported by well-conceived Web pages providing tips, practical exercises, astronomy activities featured in the videos, and links to supplementary materials. And, best of all, everything is available free on the project's [Web site](#) [7]. The ASP and Sharing the Universe project actively encourage wide and generous use of the resources (supported by Grant #DRL-0638873 of the Informal Education Division of the National Science Foundation).

## Tour of MDC

by **James Edgar**, RASC National Secretary



This is the plant in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, where our most recent order of Star Finders was produced -- Maritime Digital Colour. This is also where the *RASC Journal* and *Observer's Calendar* are printed.

**Mary Lou Whitehorne**, 1st Vice-President and Publications Committee Chair, and **James Edgar**, RASC National Secretary, are holding the die for the Star Finders; in the background is the Heidelberg Die Cutter that does the work of cutting the oval and the outside shape.

**Mary Lou Whitehorne** and **James Edgar** hold the die for the RASC Star Finders.

Photo by **Jim Murphy**, General Manager, Maritime Digital Colour

# One Million Galileo Moments



by **Kim Breland**, Program Manager IYA2009; and **Jim Hesser**, Canadian Chair IYA2009

As you recall, when we embarked on this year-long national celebration in January, we set a goal of reaching at least 1,000,000 Canadians with a Galileo Moment of significant, engaging astronomical experience. At the time, this seemed like a huge and ambitious number, and we had no idea if we would be successful in reaching this goal.

We are happy to report that we have gone well over the goal – and it's only October, with many events from National S&T Week remaining to be reported!

As of October 28, the counter sits at 1,003,238 Galileo Moments.

This is a sign of the unprecedented success of IYA in Canada – and a sign of the hard work and dedication of thousands of volunteers across the country. The Executive Committee and Advisory Board are extremely impressed with the quality, variety and creativity of IYA events. Please also make sure that you pass this message on to all of the IYA volunteers you have worked with; they are the reason that we have so much to celebrate.

We are continuing to fund raise for the IYA legacy projects extending well beyond IYA (at least until 2011, thanks to our Promo Science grant). Every GM that you have generated will improve our chances of continuing the wonderful work we collectively have started in 2009. Please report your attendance numbers today and share in the excitement of seeing the GM counter go up by many more thousands! How high can we reach by December 31?

Those who are up to date on reporting, we thank you - and we send hearty congratulations to every volunteer in Canada who helped make this happen! YOU ROCK!

## ► [The Sky this Month](#)

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### [What's New in the Sky](#)

Readers are encouraged to check out the [Northern Skies](#) [8] section of the RASC Web site. Thanks to **Gary Boyle** for keeping us all in the know!

## ► [Bulletin Photo of the Month](#)

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### [Torrance Barrens DSP Panorama](#)



This terrific panoramic photo was taken by **Robert Dick** at the Torrance Barrens DSP's 10th anniversary. It is a composite of four images taken with a Canon Rebel XT at about 3 pm on October 18. Camera settings are f/13, 1/90 second at ISO 200.

## ► Dates to Remember

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- - **2009 November 21** - National Council meeting NC094, by telecon
  - **December 2009** - Nothing reported.



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#### **Links:**

- [1] [mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca?subject=Bulletin Mail](mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca?subject=Bulletin%20Mail)
- [2] [mailto:glennhawley@shaw.ca?subject=2nd Vice-President Position](mailto:glennhawley@shaw.ca?subject=2nd%20Vice-President%20Position)
- [3] [mailto:opticks@sympatico.ca?subject=RASC Observatory Project](mailto:opticks@sympatico.ca?subject=RASC%20Observatory%20Project)
- [4] [mailto:rickhuziak@shaw.ca?subject=Grasslands DSP](mailto:rickhuziak@shaw.ca?subject=Grasslands%20DSP)
- [5] [mailto:rdick@carleton.ca?subject=RASC DSP Program](mailto:rdick@carleton.ca?subject=RASC%20DSP%20Program)
- [6] <https://www.rasc.ca/dark-sky-site-designations>
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