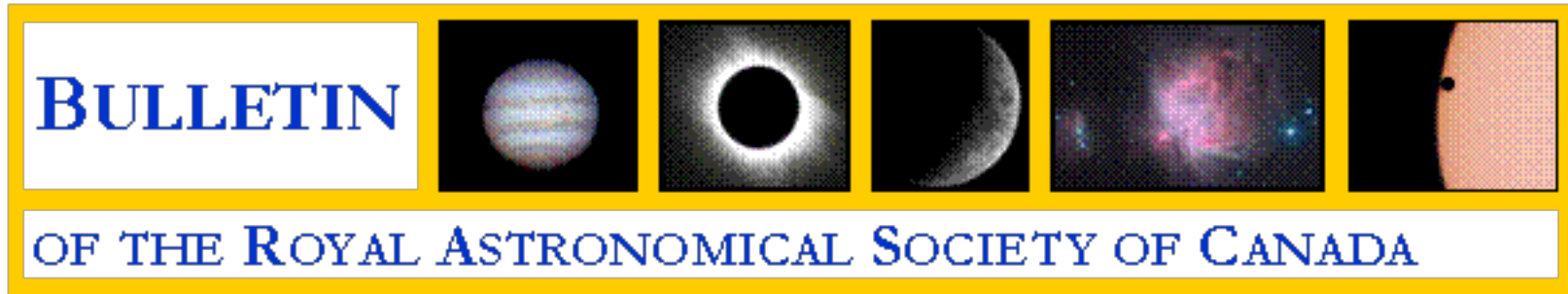


2010-08



August 2010 - Volume 5, Number 8

Ian Levstein, Editor

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

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

2010 General Assembly Done and Dusted



The 2010 General Assembly is now behind us. For those who missed it, **James Edgar** has put together a terrific photo album. You are invited to view James' photo site [here](#) [2].

Thanks to James for this great photo... bottled just for the occasion!

by **Randall Rosenfeld**, National Office The GA 2010 open forum and panel discussion, "Boldly Navigating Where No One Has Gone Before: the Future of the RASC in the 21st Century" is now a radio programme on Starizona's *Let's Talk Stars* [3], hosted by **David & Wendee Levy**. The GA event was very well attended, and witnessed an animated discussion about where the RASC might be headed, where it could and should be headed, and how on Earth we are going to get there. Now, thanks to David Levy, those who could not attend the GA can experience the excitement of the event. This is your invitation [4] to join David Levy and panelists **Mary Lou Whitehorne**, **Jim Hesser**, **Lauri Roche**, and **Roland Dechesne**, and the lively RASC audience. We welcome your comments, reactions, and ideas... which can be sent here [5].

2010-2011 RASC Executive



From left to right: **Deborah Thompson**, Executive Director; **Colin Haig**, 2nd Vice-President; **Glenn Hawley**, 1st Vice-President; **Mary Lou Whitehorne**, President; **Mayer Tchelebon**, Treasurer; and **James Edgar**, Secretary/Recorder.

Green Laser Pointers - Smart Use

by **Randall Rosenfeld**, GLP Committee It's high summer - the season of star parties and, with your GLP, the chance to show the public the summer triangle brightly set in the Milky Way, the radiants of outstanding meteor displays, and brilliant planetary conjunctions. With a little care we can all ensure that the public remembers the celestial sights, and not some GLP operator's ineptitude leading to memorable but unplanned law enforcement intervention. The GLP Committee has prepared a [presentation](#) [6] to remind Society members of best practices and to inform the public about GLP safety. Contact the [Chair](#) [7] of the GLP committee for more information.

Dominion Astrophysical Observatory Named Historic Site

by **Chris Gainor**, Victoria Centre On a 230-metre mountain just north of Victoria, the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory (DAO)'s 1.8 metre reflecting telescope has probed the night skies for 92 years. It's apt now that Parks Canada should designate the observatory as a national historic site to recognize its importance to Canadian astronomy's development. "The DAO and its early staff helped bring Canadian astronomy to an extremely high level of international regard," says its director, **Dr. Jim Hesser**. He adds that the Parks Canada designation allows NRC to maintain the Observatory as a working scientific instrument while respecting its historic architecture. The 1.8 metre diameter Belgian-cast glass primary mirror that first caught starlight on May 6, 1918, was replaced in the mid-1970s with one that is unaffected by temperature changes. The original spectrograph - an instrument that breaks down a star's light to determine its chemical composition - has been upgraded many times. Digital cameras and a new polarimeter developed by the NRC Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics (NRC-HIA) have taken advantage of emerging technologies. But the building, Observatory dome and nine-metre steel telescope frame remain original. According to Dr. Hesser, the Observatory building's design may still say "1918" to casual eyes, but nearly a century of accumulated upgrades make the telescope 10,000 times more sensitive than it was when new - and thus capable of contributing to 21st Century astronomical research. "It's pretty remarkable that after all these years, we're still using much of the same equipment," says **Dr. David Bohlender**, the NRC-HIA research officer in charge of the telescope. "We have plans to continue to enhance its operation over the coming years and look forward to carrying on the reputation of the Observatory." While much of Canadian astronomy's focus has shifted toward larger and newer facilities such as the Canada-France-Hawaii and Gemini telescopes, such upgrades keep the DAO "in the picture." Dr. Bohlender says the Observatory's main strengths include hosting long-term observing programs, providing long blocks of uninterrupted observing time, and training next-generation astronomers for their scientific careers. Dr. Hesser adds that the telescope's original tracking mechanism - a "very beautiful" gravity-driven brass clock drive - remained so accurate that it was only disconnected in the late 1980s, in favour of a new computer system that automates telescope guiding and improves the accuracy of its pointing.

Call for volunteers... Inspire Change and Share Ideas

RASC members... Ever wondered how you can get more out of the Society? Have you considered supporting one of the many committees that help keep our Society operational, refreshing, and sustainable? We are successful because of our membership and our volunteers. Volunteers help keep our Society engaged with our communities and our Centres to ensure collaborative growth, stimulate interest in the hobby, and promote the science of astronomy. Please visit our [Web site](#) [8] to see some of the committee groups you can assist. Contact your local Centre Executive as well to see how you can help promote astronomy locally. Not sure how you can help? Many of the committees just need ideas or to share a view point. Take Taurus by the horns and inspire and enable change. It is your Society - help to keep it thriving, interesting, and engaged!

► [Across the RASC](#)

[Spruce Woods Star Party](#)

by **Ron Berard**, Winnipeg Centre; Chair, SWSP Planning Committee End your summer under the Manitoba Sky. RASC Winnipeg Centre is proud to present their annual Star Party at Spruce Woods Provincial Park from September 3 - 6. This year, the New Moon falls near the Labour Day long weekend, giving us an extra night to enjoy the sky. This year's keynote speaker will be **Richard Huziak**. A wide variety of rain-or-shine events will ensure a great time is had by all attendees, regardless of the unpredictable prairie weather. For details on registration, schedule of events, and park facilities, download [this article](#) [9] and share it with members of your Centre. Early registration ends **today** - 2010 August 1.

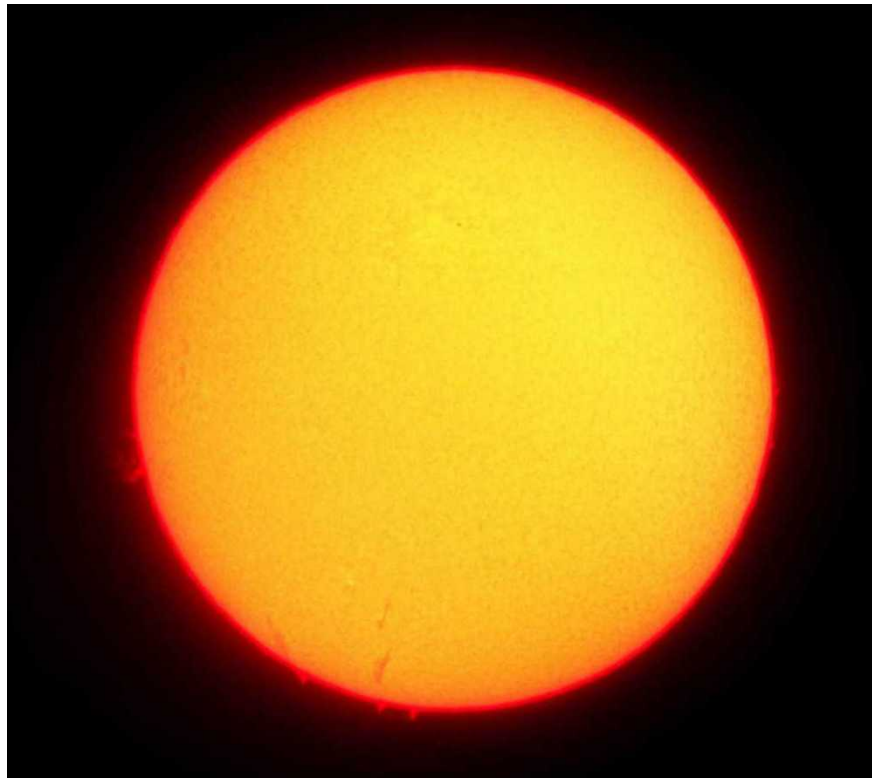
[Randy Attwood on Canada AM](#)

Randy Attwood, Toronto Centre, was a guest on Canada AM on July 21, to talk about a newly-discovered massive star. You can catch Randy's interview [here](#) [10].

[Solar Prominences](#)

Hank Bartlett, Kingston Centre, writes:

Things are starting to once again perk up on the sun. I took this image this morning (July 26) before work. N is right, E is down. In the east you can see a good size prominence coming around the limb. The most interesting features today were the filaments in the north. It's hard to image it as seen - filaments are often very wispy shadows. The two upper ones appeared to actually be joined as if one filament was bounding across the surface and touched down in-between. Things have been very quiet but when you consider 3 filaments, 2 sunspots 1089 (center left with a very large active region not seen well here) & 1090 (the light active region near the double filament), the prominences (the northern ones being continuations of the filaments) and just some cool (ok, not so cool) granulation, there is a lot to look at.



ISS on Voice

by **Malcolm Scrimger**, VE7DAO July 21: I am so excited to announce that I was finally able to make contact with the International Space Station after 20 years of having my Ham Radio license. I spoke with **Col. Doug Weelock**, KF5BOC (as NA1SS on the ISS) while traveling in a car in downtown Victoria, BC on two successful, concurrent orbits. What fun... and so amazing. It was an exhilarating experience. Those with scanners, may like to listen to 145.800 Mhz for communications coming down from the ISS. You can use the online prediction Web site [Heavens Above](#) [11]. Those with ham radio privileges can use the transmit frequency of 144.49 MHz. There is a very good chance you'll have the same opportunity I did... Doug has been quite active on the radio these past weeks.

Moon Rays

by **James Edgar**, RASC National Secretary.



This unique juxtaposition of the nearly full Moon bracketed by anticrepuscular rays at the antisolar point, was taken by **James Edgar**.

James used a Canon S90 in Aperture Priority RAW mode, ISO 125, at F4.0 for 1/25 sec. The image was modified in Adobe Photoshop

CS5, and enhanced in Adobe Lightroom 3.0 to bring out the rays.

What's New in the Sky

Members 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

- - **2010 August 6-9** - Manitoulin Star Party [13], Gordon's Park DSP, Manitoulin Island
 - **2010 August 12-15** - Saskatchewan Summer Star Party [14], Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park, SK
 - **2010 August 13-15** - Butter Pot Star Party [15], St. John's, NL
 - **2010 August 13-15** - RASCals Star Party [16], Metchosin, BC
 - **2010 September 3-6** - Spruce Woods Star Party [9], Spruce Woods Provincial Park, Winnipeg, MB
 - **2010 September 3-6** - Nova East [17], Smileys Provincial Park, NS
 - **2010 September 7-12** - Northern Prairie Star Party [18], Black Nugget Lake, AB
 - **2010 September 9-12** - Annual Algonquin Adventure [19], Mew Lake Campground, ON
 - **2010 September 11-12** - Alberta Star Party [20], Starland Recreation Area Campground, AB
 - **2010 September 17-19** - Fall'N'Stars [21], Vanderwater Conservation Area, Thomasburg, ON



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Links:

- [1] [mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca?subject=Bulletin Mail](mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca?subject=Bulletin%20Mail)
- [2] http://picasaweb.google.com/JamesPicsSK/RASCGA2010?authkey=Gv1sRgCIDuz_PH5Y35Tg&feat=email#
- [3] <http://www.letstalkstars.com>
- [4] <http://letstalkstars.com/media/2010/WMA/20100708.wma>
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- [9] <http://winnipeg.rasc.ca/>
- [10] <http://www.ctvnews.ca/scientists-find-monster-star-largest-ever-discovered-1.534838>
- [11] <http://www.heavens-above.com>
- [12] <https://www.rasc.ca/news/northern-skies>
- [13] <http://gordonspark.com/wp-content/uploads/2014-MSP-Brochure.pdf>
- [14] <http://www.usask.ca/rasc/starparty.html>
- [15] <http://www.stjohnsrasc.ca/star-party.shtml>
- [16] <http://victoria.rasc.ca/events/rascals-star-party/>
- [17] <http://halifax.rasc.ca/ne/>
- [18] <http://edmontonrasc.com/northern-prairie-star-party/>
- [19] <http://rascto.ca/index.php>
- [20] <http://calgary.rasc.ca/asp2010.htm>
- [21] <http://rascbelleville.ca/fallinstars/>
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