

# SKYNEWS



## **HARVEST MOON** by Charles Banville

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### **OCTOBER MEETING**

Weds. October 9, 2013  
University of Victoria  
A104, Bob Wright Bldg.  
3800 Finnerty Road

## **On the Cover**

A Harvest Moon rises above the Gonzales Observatory

Date: September 19, 2013

Location: Moss Rock Park, Victoria BC

Optics: Canon EF – 400 mm f/5.6L USM

Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III

Exposure: 1/100, f/5.6, ISO 800

## **October Speakers**

Our main speaker for the October meeting will be Mr. William E. Smith, BSC (Special Maths), MBA, CITP, CEng, AKC. The title of his talk is: Life is a Cosmic Phenomenon: “The Search for Water” evolves into the “Search for Life.”

*and...* Congratulations to Ann Makosinski for her win at the Google Science Fair! Ann is also one of our featured speakers at the October meeting. She invented a battery-free flashlight, which is powered by the heat of her hands. She won first prize in her age category. Thousands of projects were submitted by students from more than 120 countries. Ann will be sharing about her research and her adventures in California.

**Please note** - there won't be a meeting for November at the University. Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at the Moon Under Water Pub. There will be more information to come at the October meeting.

## **President's Report**

About the only thing to report to have happened since last month is that Jim Hesser and Eric Chisholm, on behalf of the NRC/DAO, UVic, and RASC Victoria Centre, submitted a proposal to the Royal British Columbia Museum seeking the creation of an exhibit to highlight the history of astronomy in British Columbia. It was hoped that the opening of the exhibit would coincide with GA 2014, and that it would feature artifacts, photographs, and history relating to First Nations, contributions to modern astronomy by astronomers at the DAO and UVic, and public outreach efforts by the Centre of the Universe, UVic and the RASC Victoria Centre.

Unfortunately, in spite of the fine efforts of Jim and Eric, we were told that the museum was “full up” for next year, and strapped for funds.

*....Nelson Walker*

## Membership Report – October, 2013

### Membership Activity

New and Returning: 2  
Renewed: 11  
Upcoming Expiries:  
*(with grace period!)* 25  
Total Membership: 166

### New Membership option

\$67 for the first adult member, \$30 for each additional adult member, \$15 for each youth member (under 21). All applicants must reside at the same physical street address, and all must join at the same time.

### Liaisons

HIA: Other than mentioning that with the change in weather, people should be reminded to drive with due care and caution. With the closure of the CU I have spoken to Kevin regarding a process for notification of RASC members on site and we have yet to iron that one out.

Transport Canada: None.

Plaskett: None. As mentioned, the Plaskett seems perpetually unavailable to us, so I will no longer continue pestering Dave for telescope time.

....*Sherry Buttnor*

### Some Trivia Questions

Miles Paul had offered a couple of trivia questions in the September issue of Skynews –inviting us to move out of the “box” of standard units such as light year, km/sec, etc. Here are the answers. How did you do?

1. What well known object lies at the distance of 200 terafurlongs? Answer: **Alpha Centauri**
2. What well know object orbits its parent object at approximately the speed of 1000 A (angstroms) / femtofortnight? Answer: **International Space Station**

*Your Editor's Musings....*

I have two corner windows in my living room. One faces north-east, but the glow from two 500 watt security lamps – one orange, the other, blue-white - intruded into my house like a man-made “Albireo.” A few meters of black-out curtain lining solved the problem, but through the south-east window, I was fortunate to have a darker sky with minimum light pollution.

Since my re-entry into active observing three years ago, I became reacquainted with numerous constellations and learned names for many more stars. On some of the clearest nights, I would look toward the south-east with my larger binoculars and hunt for planets, asteroids and Messier objects. One of my favourite pastimes in the late Summer/early Autumn - in my many years - was observing Orion in the early, but beautiful morning skies before the later Fall and Winter rains. I cherished those mornings; the Hunter brightened up the sky as I pulled back the curtains and observed through my 12X50 binoculars next to the window.

Ah, can I name the stars in Orion's belt? Alnilam, Alnitak – and what was the third? Oh wait – now I remember.... Mintaka.

Clear Skies. ....*Diane*

**2013 Symphony Splash – A Success !!**

On this dreary autumnal equinox, I'm probably not alone in thinking back to sunny July and August when a number of you kindly responded to my invitations to support “Astronomy for (Symphony) Splash.” A condition of seeking your support for the family-oriented musical centrepiece of the August long weekend was that I didn't know who contributed, hence this broadcast yet sincere “Thank You” to all, including UVic's Prof. Verena Tunnicliffe, who successfully encouraged the ocean science community to participate as a group for the first time. Astronomy for Splash donations sponsored Michael Byrne, the principal oboist (and amateur astronomer).

In their new 2013/14 season materials, the Symphony credits both Astronomy and Ocean Sciences for Splash. Here is a photograph of the community representatives. On the far-right, in the red jacket, is the RASC's beaming Lauri Roche, who won the draw to represent Astronomy for Splash on the barge and at other Splash events. My gratitude once again for the support you (and our ocean sciences colleagues) provided to this unique Victoria summer experience.

....*Jim Hesser*



## Council for 2012 / 2013

Past President: Lauri Roche [pastpres@victoria.rasc.ca](mailto:pastpres@victoria.rasc.ca)  
President: Nelson Walker [president@victoria.rasc.ca](mailto:president@victoria.rasc.ca)  
First Vice President: Charles Banville [vp@victoria.rasc.ca](mailto:vp@victoria.rasc.ca)  
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Observing Chairperson: Bill Weir [obschair@victoria.rasc.ca](mailto:obschair@victoria.rasc.ca)

**Members at Large:** Bill Almond, Jim Hesser, Alex Schmid, David Lee, Li-Ann Skibo, Paul Schumacher, Matt Watson

**ASTRONOMY  
CAFE**



**Astronomy Cafe:** Held every Monday at Fairfield Community Centre - 1330 Fairfield Rd, Victoria, at 7:30pm to 10pm. Call Malcolm at **(778) 430-4136** for directions and information. Newcomers are especially encouraged.



**New Observers Group:** Hosted by Sid Sidhu, 1642 Davies Road, Highlands. Please call **(250) 391-0540** for information and directions.



**Email Lists Observer / CU Volunteers / Members**  
Contact Matt Watson to subscribe. <mailto:admin@victoria.rasc.ca>