

Report to the CASCA Board of Directors on IYA Activities May--December 2008

*Under the overarching theme ‘Galileo Moments’ (of personal astronomical discovery), IYA2009 is poised to help Canadians reconnect with the heavens while learning about the outstanding work being done by Canadian astronomers. Commencing three weeks after the CASCA Board meeting, IYA at launch already represents countless hours from many, many volunteers over the past three years that have prepared for an unprecedented year of astronomy education and public outreach (EPO) in Canada. The partnership between CASCA, the FAAQ and the RASC is accomplishing amazing things with modest resources; I cannot say enough for the contributions and leadership arising from our amateur astronomy collaborators. The Trottier Family Foundation support to CASCA that allowed the RASC to hire Kim Breland as part-time Project Manager has been pivotal, as have been many other generous donations. **For current information, Board members are urged to review carefully www.astronomy2009.ca, especially the December Newsletter, and the rapidly growing list of events posted there. I request that the Board continue its efforts launched at the May AGM to raise funds from the members, and to help us identify companies, organizations or individuals that we can approach for IYA activity support. Modest amounts can extract very high leverage.***

1. The IYA Launch

The official launch at UNESCO headquarters in Paris on 15-16 January will be attended by Pierre Coulombe, President of NRC, and Paul Hickson, President of CASCA, representing the two IAU-IYA Organizational Associates in Canada. CASCA and ACURA are supporting the participation of two Canadian undergraduate students selected in a competitive process managed by CASCA’s Graduate Student Committee under the leadership of Kelsey Hoffman (UBC): Annemarie Pickersgill (University of Western Ontario) and Deanna Pineau (University of Victoria). In addition Jim Hesser, Dave Lane and Rémi Lacasse will represent the Canadian IYA Executive Committee (EC).

However, IYA activities will begin before the official launch, with a focus in Canada on Saturday, 10 January. For events in your area, please consult www.astronomy2009.ca. The goal of this “grassroots, soft launch” is to raise awareness in local communities about events that will be occurring throughout 2009. Particularly extensive events are planned in Halifax and Toronto. At the latter the Ontario Science Centre is hosting a full-day Astronomy Fair which will, among many other activities, premier selected Canadian astronomical images curated by Michael Bietenholz’s national IYA image curatorial committee.

5071 West Saanich Road
Victoria, B.C. V9E 2E7

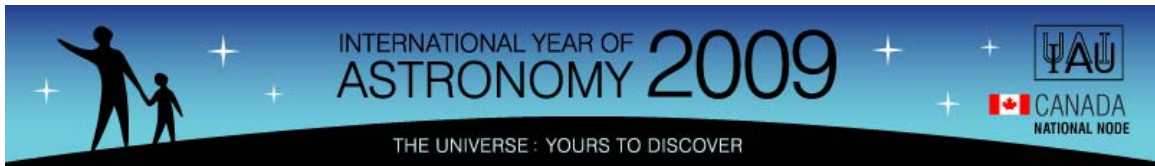
Tel: (250) 363-0007
Fax: (250) 363-6970

Email:
Jim.Hesser@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca

5071 chemin Saanich, O.
Victoria, (C.-B.) V9E 2E7

Tél: (250) 363-0007
Fax: (250) 363-6970

Courrier électronique:
Jim.Hesser@cnrc-nrc.gc.ca



Nationally, the Canada Science and Technology Museum (CSTM) is working with us and the NRC and CSA Education and Public Outreach officers to create a media event at the Museum on Thursday, 8 January. Our hope is that this will draw attention to IYA events being planned throughout Canada, including those on 10 January. One focus of this event will be the release on our website of a beautifully illustrated rendition of the traditional Mi'kmaq story of Muin, the Great Bear. This is an example of the vision developed over the past two years under the leadership of Cheryl Bartlett and her CBU collaborators to create opportunities to place traditional knowledge side by side in a respectful manner with modern scientific understanding. This release will be juxtaposed with exciting research results and a forward look to new facilities.

2. Communications

Presently, the website, www.astronomy2009.ca ou www.astronomie2009.ca is our primary communications tool. It is hosted at the Planétarium de Montréal by Marc Jobin, who is providing strong technical development and support. Andy Woodsworth, who leads our IYA Communications Committee, is responsible for the layout and has been posting most of the content. Kim Breland has been preparing and posting detailed monthly newsletters. In recent weeks individuals designated by clubs, universities, colleges, etc. across the partnership have been authorized to post news directly of events in their communities. Daily content changes convey the excitement and promise of IYA in Canada. Other major developments to become operational before the holidays include:

- a searchable database allowing anyone to find events in a specific region of Canada;
- the forms allowing 'Galileo Moment' participants to register their name for launch into space aboard a CSA mission in 2010; and
- mechanisms for reporting participation in events and thereby to qualify for additional supplies of the EPO materials for distribution at events.

We welcome any and all encouragement from the Board to universities and their local amateur collaborators across Canada to post their planned events and to keep the information current.

Sky News Editor Terry Dickinson is providing space in each issue for an IYA article which Brian Ventrudo (*One-Minute Astronomer*, NRC) and Scott Young (RASC, Manitoba Museum) are preparing on behalf of the national team. Terry welcomes reports and IYA news *accompanied by good visuals* from all comers.

3. EPO Materials

5071 West Saanich Road
Victoria, B.C. V9E 2E7

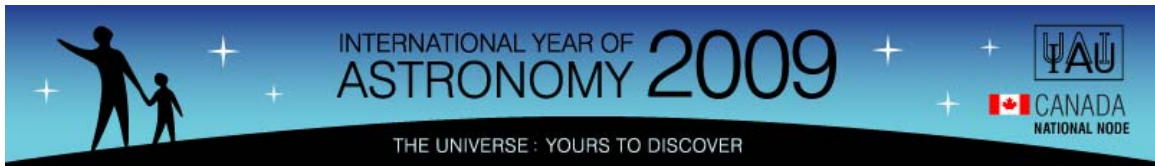
Tel: (250) 363-0007
Fax: (250) 363-6970

Email:
Jim.Hesser@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca

5071 chemin Saanich, O.
Victoria, (C.-B.) V9E 2E7

Tél: (250) 363-0007
Fax: (250) 363-6970

Courrier électronique:
Jim.Hesser@cnrc-nrc.gc.ca



RASC and FAAQ volunteers have created and translated an extensive collection of new EPO materials that will be provided to clubs, universities, colleges, etc. for free distribution during IYA2009 events:

- Seven **Astronomy Trading Cards** (700,000) – primary tool for registration of names for launch by CSA
- **Mary Lou's New Telescope** (20,000) – light pollution awareness children's booklet
- **Star Finder** (90,000 planispheres)
- **Posters** (14,000) you can use to publicize events in your community
- **Sidewalk Astronomy Handbook** (24,000 targeted at RASC Centres)

These are described in the December Newsletter with information about their intended uses and how they can be ordered; see

http://www.astronomie2009.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=116&lang=en. The printing is done and shipping to the RASC's distribution centre is in high gear with the goal of having the first shipments out before the New Year, or shortly thereafter.

4. Funding

We've had some encouraging success, but we are (far) short of the anticipated needs. With Kim Breland's crucial assistance, we submitted a proposal in September to NSERC's PromoScience programme that, if successful, would be administered by John Percy on behalf of CASCA.

Executive Summary: IYA2009 is a year-long, worldwide (125+ nations) education and public outreach (EPO) celebration of the 400th anniversary of Galileo's development and use of the astronomical telescope. IYAC is led by a broad-based team, whose vision is "to offer an engaging astronomy experience to every Canadian, and to cultivate partnerships that sustain public interest in astronomy". Legacy impacts well beyond 2009 are central to our diverse efforts to excite children about science and technology through a subject that fascinates them, astronomy. IYAC is a joint venture of three organizations that expands and enriches a long, successful history of voluntary EPO. We request funding for: (i) an EPO specialist to coordinate and create opportunities for new and enhanced activities for IYA that meet community needs and solidify partnerships and processes that secure the legacy; and (ii) creation, through highly leveraged partnerships, of engaging youth-oriented activities and materials whose impact will be long lasting.

John Percy leads this project, with Mary Lou Whitehorne (RASC), Rémi Lacasse (FAAQ) and Jim Hesser as his key advisors. The amount requested is \$563K over 2009-2011. As part of the process, Kim documented \$4M (!) of in-kind support. Much of that figure represents the remarkable number of hours of volunteer time generously donated. Notable contributions in recent months have come from the

5071 West Saanich Road
Victoria, B.C. V9E 2E7

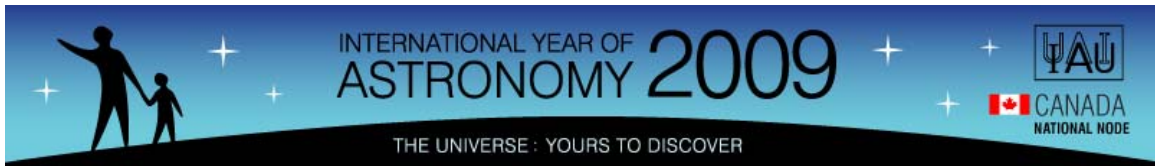
Tel: (250) 363-0007
Fax: (250) 363-6970

Email:
Jim.Hesser@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca

5071 chemin Saanich, O.
Victoria, (C.-B.) V9E 2E7

Tél: (250) 363-0007
Fax: (250) 363-6970

Courrier électronique:
Jim.Hesser@cnrc-nrc.gc.ca



University of Calgary and Lumec Corporation to support the printing of EPO materials produced by the RASC and translated by FAAQ members.

With this hard work behind, we were ready in October to approach foundations and other potential sources of funding, exactly coincident with the onset of the present economic turmoil. Kim submitted several proposals in October, and more are being readied for submission in January.

Accomplishing our dreams depends upon raising more money. The RASC and FAAQ are redoubling their efforts to solicit donations from their members to cover anticipated expenses of IYA programming, additional printing of EPO materials, etc. CASCA's fund raising appears to be far short of that needed to cover the Galileo Lectures, which have been well received judging from the first round of applications (which Doug Welch will report on). As awareness of world and national IYA activities grows during Q1 & 2 2009, I anticipate that a call for a second round of applications would generate a strong response, particularly for Fall, 2009 lectures.

CASCA Board Actions Requested:

1. Make another appeal to CASCA members to contribute towards reaching or surpassing the \$30K goal established in May.
2. Names or suggestions of companies or organizations that we could approach directly (or in partnership with others) for cash or in-kind contributions to support national IYA activities (printing costs, Astronomy Kit content purchases, etc.). Personal contacts within such organizations would be particularly welcome.

5. Organization

Over the summer we restructured and converted the 'Kitchen Cabinet' into the IYA Canada Executive Committee (EC) and the 'Coordinating Committee' into an Advisory Board. The EC consists of Kim Breland, Project Manager, and two members from each of the partner organizations: CASCA (Jim Hesser, former President; Doug Welch, Second Vice President), FAAQ (Damien Lemay, President; Rémi Lacasse, Past President), and the RASC (Kim Hay, Vice President; Dave Lane, President). Andy Woodsworth participates in most EC meetings reflecting his leadership of the Communications Committee and his role in web site content management. The EC meets biweekly and is in constant email discussion.

The AB includes Cheryl Bartlett (CBU), Randall Brooks (Canadian Museum of ST), Ruth Ann Chicoine (CSA), Jeffrey Crelinsten (The Impact Group), Jayanne English

5071 West Saanich Road
Victoria, B.C. V9E 2E7

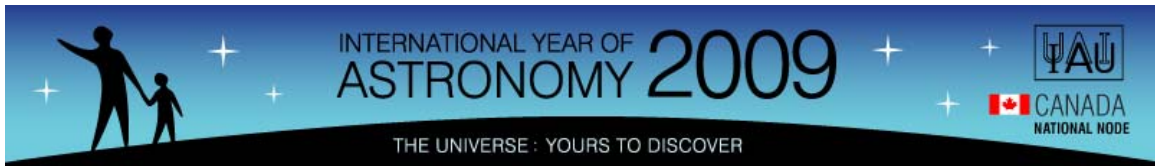
Tel: (250) 363-0007
Fax: (250) 363-6970

Email:
Jim.Hesser@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca

5071 chemin Saanich, O.
Victoria, (C.-B.) V9E 2E7

Tél: (250) 363-0007
Fax: (250) 363-6970

Courrier électronique:
Jim.Hesser@cnrc-nrc.gc.ca



(U. Manitoba), Peter Jedicke (Fanshawe C.), Margaret Kennedy (NRC), Pierre Lacombe (Planétarium de Montréal), Phil Langill (U. Calgary), Denis Laurin (CSA), Lindsay Marshall (MCI/CBU), Bob McDonald (CBC science journalist), John Percy (U. Toronto), Scott Young (Manitoba Museum), Andy Woodsworth (Galaxy Consulting) plus the Executive Committee. The AB meets approximately bimonthly.

6. Concluding remarks

There is so much more that could be said about activities in progress, generous donations of time and effort, and challenges foreseen, but this brief report is meant to complement the constantly expanding information on our website which I again urge Board members to review before your meeting.

All of us who have been working on IYA2009 for several years enter 2009 with mixed feelings – our glass is but half full, but what wonderful activities and plans are in that half! Time will reveal challenges, surprises, and new opportunities, but one thing is certain: we have forged a productive, respectful, collegial, effective partnership between the amateur and professional communities that already represents a legacy of IYA2009 in Canada and promises improved astronomy EPO for years to come.

Jim Hesser
5 December 2008