

## SFU GRADE-SCHOOL ASTRONOMY WORKSHOPS: CONTACT INFORMATION, RESOURCES, AND TELESCOPE TIPS

**Dear Teachers, Group Leaders, and Parents/Guardians:**

This handout provides information that may be of interest to anyone who would like to become more involved in recreational astronomy, including contact information for public astronomy activities in the greater Vancouver area, age-appropriate astronomy books, periodicals, and Internet resources, and tips on using the “Galileo Moment” telescope that was donated to your group. Please share this handout with anyone from your group who may be interested!

### CONTACT INFORMATION

- ★ **Simon Fraser University hosts evening “star parties” for the public.**
  - ★ SFU star parties are held about once a month, depending on the weather. The public is invited! Come and view many celestial wonders through a variety of telescopes.
  - ★ Students who have participated in an SFU astronomy workshop are especially invited to attend, with a teacher and/or parent/guardian. Workshop groups can bring their “Galileo Moment” telescope, and learn to use it under the guidance of experienced volunteers.
  - ★ Any family whose children attend an SFU astronomy workshop, and which also attends 4 SFU star parties, will be presented with their own telescope (free of charge), identical to the “Galileo Moment” telescope donated to their school! The telescopes are courtesy of SFU and its funding partners, listed on the last page. You must email Dr. Howard Trottier before your family attends its first SFU star party to confirm attendance: [trottier@sfu.ca](mailto:trottier@sfu.ca). Our offer is good while our supply of telescopes lasts!
  - ★ SFU star parties are usually scheduled only one day in advance, due to weather.
  - ★ To join a mailing list to stay informed of these star parties, send an email to [starry-nights-request@sfu.ca](mailto:starry-nights-request@sfu.ca), and checkout the website: <http://www.sfu.ca/starrynights>.
- ★ **The Vancouver Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC).**
  - ★ This is a group of about 300 astronomy enthusiasts, including many experienced recreational astronomers, as well as professional scientists. They have an extensive program of public outreach activities. Visit their website at <http://rasc-vancouver.com/>.
  - ★ The RASC-Vancouver Centre conducts its activities from the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre, and hosts free public talks usually on the second Thursday of every month.
  - ★ The Centre also hosts many public events at locations throughout the greater Vancouver area, including public star parties with many large telescopes.
  - ★ Schools are invited to contact the RASC-Vancouver Centre to ask about having RASC members host an event at their school or community centre. Please inquire with the RASC-Vancouver Centre Education Coordinator Bill Burnyeat: [Bill\\_Burnyeat@bcit.ca](mailto:Bill_Burnyeat@bcit.ca).
- ★ **Many astronomy events in the greater Vancouver area are posted on Meetup.com.**
  - ★ The Vancouver Astronomy Meetup group site is regularly updated with new events for the public. Visit <http://astronomy.meetup.com/131/>.

## RECREATIONAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL ASTRONOMY RESOURCES

- ★ **If you would like to view the slideshow that was used during the SFU workshop:**
  - ★ It can be obtained at the following web page (updates to this handout can also be downloaded from this page): <http://www.sfu.ca/starrynights/workshops/resources.html>.
- ★ **RASC Teachers' Guide and Sidewalk Astronomer's Handbook.**
  - ★ These superb resources are provided to our workshops by the RASC. Also visit <http://www.rasc.ca/skyways/> & <http://www.rasc.ca/education/sidewalkastronomer.shtml>.
- ★ **"Jack Horkheimer: Star Gazer" — A great web site for learning about the night sky!**
  - ★ Horkheimer is the wacky director of the Miami Space Transit Planetarium, and he hosts a delightful 5-minute weekly digest on what can be seen in the night sky, usually with just the unaided eye. His easy-to-follow style and clear, visual, directions make these short videos very suitable and enjoyable for kids of all ages (and their parents!).
  - ★ The episodes can be viewed on the Internet, and they are usually posted well in advance of the air date. Visit <http://www.jackstargazer.com/>.
- ★ **Introductory books on star gazing, suitable for kids of all ages (and their parents!).**
  - ★ The first and second books listed below are very inexpensive and easy-to-read. The book by Hewitt-White (a BC resident!) gives a seasonal guide to the stars and constellations visible from mid-northern latitudes, including star charts, colorful mythology and star lore. The book by Ramotowski gives a getting-started guide to telescopes and how to use them, and lots of tips for getting the most out of an evening of star gazing. The last title is a classic and gorgeously-illustrated book by Canadian Terence Dickinson!
    - ★ Ken Hewitt-White, "Patterns in the Sky: An Introduction to Star Gazing" (Cambridge, MA: Sky Publishing, 2006).
    - ★ Becky Ramotowski, "Secrets of Stargazing: Skywatching Tips and Tricks" (Cambridge, MA: Sky Publishing, 2007).
    - ★ Terence Dickinson, "NightWatch: A Practical Guide to Viewing the Universe" (Richmond Hill, Ontario: Firefly Books, 4th edition, 2006).
- ★ **SkyNews Magazine: Canada's bi-monthly magazine on all things astronomical.**
  - ★ SkyNews has excellent features on what to see in the night sky, and articles on recent developments in astronomy and space science, written by and for Canadians. Visit their website at <http://www.skynewsmagazine.com/>.
- ★ **Astronomy Picture of the Day (APOD).**
  - ★ See a different beautiful image of the cosmos every day, with short and superbly written explanations by professional astronomers. Many of the most beautiful images posted on APOD are taken by amateur astronomers! Visit <http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html>.
- ★ **Stellarium: Free planetarium software.**
  - ★ The planetarium-type images shown in the SFU astronomy workshops were made using a free, easy-to-use program called Stellarium. Visit <http://www.stellarium.org/>.
- ★ **World-Wide Telescope (WWT): A web-browser of the cosmos.**
  - ★ This free software gives a rich experience of navigating the cosmos to view images taken by scientific and amateur astronomers. Narrated tours by educators and scientists are often excellent (SFU will produce some!). Visit <http://www.worldwidetelescope.org/>.

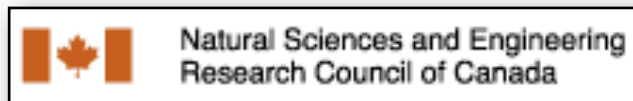
## “GALILEO MOMENT” TELESCOPE TIPS

Coming soon!

Check our web site for an updated version of this handout,  
with the telescope tips section, to be made available shortly:

<http://www.sfu.ca/starrynights/workshops/resources.html>.

### OFFICIAL SPONSORS OF SFU ASTRONOMY WORKSHOPS



The many generous individuals who also supported our workshops  
will be recognized with their names on donated telescopes.