

# Camping under the summer skies a Canadian favourite

Canadians might love hockey in the winter time, but nothing beats pitching a tent for the weekend under the summer skies around a camp fire while something tasty is flaming on the grill. Alberta has a lot of dark sky to accommodate the many campgrounds, but the blacker ones are deep in the mountains. For us in the south, trekking into the B.C. interior far off the highway is the best bet to see the pristine Milky Way. Some prize photos depict it always like a white paint brush that streaks the pitch shadowy sky, but there's nothing like the real thing. One of my favourite getaways is the Golden, B.C., area. As a matter of fact, on a clear night you can see the whole night sky before the sun has completely set; which is late this time of year. So if you're looking for a great Father's Day event, take the next weekend camping there



**Neel Roberts**  
The Sky's the Limit

to celebrate summer arriving on June 21 and give him a surprise wake call by saying "happy longest day of the year!"

## **Sky watch for the next month**

The crescent morning moon rises with Venus on Tuesday, June 24. Look to the northeast-east before sunrise at about 3:45 a.m. as Venus seems to cling to the moon on the way up.

See a pre-dawn Venus near Pleiades on Sunday, June 22. Look in the northeast-east at about 4 a.m. and you can see the seven sisters next to Venus before they fade away into the sunrise.

Jupiter sets with Gemini twins on Sunday, June 15 in the northwest.

Jupiter sets at about 11:30 p.m. and pulls the twin stars Castor and Pollux down with it for the night.

The longest day of the year is Saturday, June 21. It is officially the summer solstice at 4:51 a.m., and we will have 15 hours and 40 minutes of actual daylight. The sun officially rises at 5:14 a.m. and sets at 8:54 p.m. with high noon at 1:34 p.m.

## **Public events for the next month**

Mark down Friday, June 13 at 7:30 p.m. on your calendar and join us at the Tourism and Trek Station for our monthly public star gazing. We will be the feature attraction instead of the usual meet and greet at Spock Days, and we plan to be there most of the evening. A short indoor presentations will be followed by scoping the skies with the 11-inch telescope outside and much more. Refreshment are provided and anyone

is welcome to attend free of charge. Public stargazing sessions are held the second Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Visit [www.vulcantourism.com](http://www.vulcantourism.com) for more information or call the Trek Station at 403-485-2994.

We're looking for volunteers to ride with the Royal Astronomical Society of Calgary Spock Days float. Have you ever wanted to be in a parade float? We've been doing this for more than five years and it's always a blast! We invite you to join us for the ride through Vulcan. It's lots of fun, and all are welcome Saturday, June 14, at 8:30 a.m. The float departs at 10 a.m., and the parade usually lasts about an hour. Bring candy if you wish to throw out to the crowd, but this is not necessary.

*Neel Roberts welcomes your questions and comments at [Neel\\_Roberts@ptccanada.com](mailto:Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com) and 403-485-2683.*