

PRAIRIE OPINION

PRAIRIE POST is published for southwestern Alberta by the proprietor
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 at: 404 7 Street South,
 Lethbridge, Alta.,
 Canada, T1J 2H1
 Second Class Mail
 Registration Number 0281

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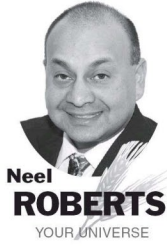
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6 - Prairie Post - Friday, October 5, 2018

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50 years after "Planet of the Apes"; is truth is still stranger than fiction?



Neel ROBERTS
 YOUR UNIVERSE

When producer Arthur P. Jacobs approached 20th Century Fox executives in 1966 about a science fiction movie featuring talking apes, the immediate concern was how could they avoid it being taken for a comedy? Based on the 1963 French novel by Pierre Boulle named "La Planète des singes" it was a paradigm shift for the entertainment industry.

With famous stars Charlton Heston, Roddy McDowell, Maurice Evans and Kim Hunter the script written by paranormal legend Rod Serling still made investors nervous with a budget of just under \$6 million dollars. Marketed as "Beyond your wildest dreams" it opened in the winter of 1968 grossing over \$32,000,000 while spawning one of the biggest sci-fi franchises in the world.

Most of the actors, etc. are long gone but it has been well received by critics and fans after half a century. The original movie highlighted astronaut George Taylor played by Heston arriving 2,000 years into a future Earth inhabited by speaking apes dominating mute humans. Needless to say, this was a culture shock to Taylor and his two colleagues determined to get to the bottom of it. Long story short, the apes capture Taylor and discover he can not only talk but is more intelligent than imagined.

Dr. Zaius, played by Evans was not only minister of science but of faith which indoctrinated the population that a supreme ape created all. Taylor called his bluff and exposed Zaius's 900-year-old ancestral fraud by visiting forbidden archeology sites proving humans were there before apes. With much empirical evidence refuting today's fake news, fake history, fake religions, etc. narratives today, we ask; was this movie monkey business or more predictive than they expected?

A recent article called "50 years of Planet of the Apes: why the original series still holds a warning for us all" <https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/planet-apes-sci-fi-charlton-heston> agrees; truth is stranger than fiction!

Sky watch for the next month:

1. Mercury and Jupiter near conjunction — Tuesday October 30th look SWW after sunset until 19:00 to see these two planet set into the horizon.
2. Zodiacal Light- Did you catch this last month? It's a faint, roughly triangular, whitish glow seen in the night sky extended up from the vicinity of the sun along the ecliptic or zodiac. Best time is from Saturday, October 13th for 2 weeks in the East before dawn.
3. Orionids Meteor Shower Peaks- Sunday, October 21st 1-2 hours before dawn just to the north of constellation Orion's bright star Betelgeuse. With the second-fastest entry velocity of the annual showers at 10-20 per hour, meteors from the Orionids produce yellow and green colors and have been known to produce an odd fireball but will be limited with the near full moon. With only one day after new moon, so there will be no moonlight.
4. Draconid Meteor Shower Peaks-Monday, Oct. 8 best seen after twilight facing North high up. While not as dramatic as other showers it can occasionally spew hundreds an hour. The new moon will be a bonus for a dark sky.

Public Events for the next month:

Monthly Open House at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis-Mark down Saturday, October 13th from 20:00 to 23:00 for Sci-Fi night. Jesse Vance, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology Jessie Andjelic & Philip Vandermer, SPECTACLE Bureau for Architecture and Urbanism Inc.

There will be an array of scopes offered by University of Calgary astronomers and members of the RASC Calgary.Saturn found in the western sky in the constellation Sagittarius will be followed by Mars. Cygnus the Swan will be flying straight over head with its thousands of exoplanets.

The entrance fee \$30 per car. further information, contact Jennifer Howse at jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca, (403) 931-2366. Theirwebsite <https://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/> updated regularly.

Happy Fall and cooler days!
 Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada-the nation's leading astronomy club founded in 1868 with over 5,000 members and 29 centers across Canada. Need welcomes your questions and comments at (403)560-6574, www.piccanada.com. The members meet once a month on weekends at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis and you can check out times at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/calendar>. Like them at Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/272037680377/>, Twitter <https://twitter.com/CalgaryRASC> and YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/RASCCalgary>.



Taxpayers should expect an Olympics-sized bill, but not much else

By FRANCO TERRAZZANO

If Calgary hosts the Olympics, it will cost taxpayers a whole lot, for very little.

Calgary's Olympic bidding organization, Calgary 2026, recently released their hosting plans for the 2026 Olympics. They estimate the Olympics will cost \$5.2 billion, with taxpayers footing \$3 billion of the total tab. Taxpayers would be on the hook for a bill that is 25 per cent larger than was predicted last year.

This begs the question: if we have already seen costs increase by this much in one year, what will the costs amount to by 2026?

Moshe Lander, a sports economist at Montreal's Concordia University, predicts the real cost of the Games will reach nearly \$8 billion.

Historically, the Olympics has been no stranger to cost overruns. Since the 1960s, 19 Olympics have been over budget, averaging 156 per cent overruns during those Games.

There's no money for any of this. Calgarians have been warned about future tax increases or cuts to services.

No money for the essentials, but somehow there will be money for a sporting event? Both the Alberta and federal governments have strung together years of deficits and are piling up debt. The average Calgarian owes nearly \$30,000 each in federal and provincial debt.

Bunker down for the next wave of tax hikes. Enough with the costs, what about the benefits? What are we getting for our billions of dollars? Sadly, not much.

The City of Calgary has projected billions of dollars worth of infrastructure needs that are going unfunded, and many key priorities will not receive any extra funding through the Olympics plans. Will we get a new line connecting the LRT with the airport? Nope.

But don't worry, your tax dollars will help build a new mid-sized arena, a fieldhouse,

facilities to accommodate athletes, media, sponsors and "dignitaries," along with improvements for facilities in Canmore, Nakiska and Whistler.

What about all the government dollars that are coming to Calgary for the Olympics?

If Calgary does have an infrastructure or an affordable housing crisis (maybe governments should stop adding thousands of dollars to the price of a new house), then government spending shouldn't be conditioned on hosting a sporting event.

Federal and provincial governments take billions of tax dollars from Calgarians. One way of "putting" dollars back into Calgary's economy is simply by taxing less.

Further, if this is little more than an attempt to squeeze more out of the federal government for Calgary, how can we justify asking a small town in Toronto to pay more taxes so that Calgary can have a sporting bonanza?

Well, what about the economic benefits? To be sure, greater spending from tourists and Canadians coming to enjoy the festivities will benefit our economy.

But, will this generate the proposed \$7 billion in benefits? Economists have been quick to decry this estimate as being absolutely overstated.

Taking money from households and entrepreneurs, sprinkling some to your stakeholders, then putting some of the money back into the economy in a way that will be partially consumed in a matter of weeks does not promote true growth.

Serious doubt should come to mind whenever a one-time government-funded party is argued for to promote the economy.

The Olympics is a sporting event on the grandest of scales. It's a whole lot of fun. But is it worth billions of dollars in higher taxes?

Franco Terrazzano is the Alberta Director with the Canadian Taxpayers Federation

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