

Father's Day a la "Star BQ"

We are privileged to live in the land where our beef is highly regarded. While indigenous Albertans love their barbecues as much as the stuff they grill, the upcoming summer is an even bigger excuse to break out the cooker.

Barbecues are a great social excuse and with Father's Day coming up on Sunday, June 16, you have two good motives to be racking the meat over the coals. Stargazers use these to kick off the summer with what's called a "Star BQ." Once the sun is over the horizon on a clear night, invite your friends and neighbours to view the night sky while satisfying the midnight cravings. This year Father's Day is a few days before the summer solstice, but if you feel like being really creative, especially if dad is a morning person, be bold by getting him out of bed at the 4 a.m. pre-dawn sunrise to wish him happy first day of summer while



Neel Roberts
The Sky's the Limit

cooking him a Star BQ.

Sky watch for the next month

Check out the Super Moon on Sunday, June 23 just before 10 p.m. and lasting all night. The largest moon of the year is closest to Earth and will cause large tides.

Venus will be within M35 on Thursday, June 4. Just look northwest as the setting sun will still give a chance for you to observe a setting Venus in the M35 star cluster. You'll only get an hour to see it, as by midnight it's set for the night.

Mercury and Venus will be close after sundown on Thursday, June 20. Look

northwest after sundown at around 10:30 p.m. and you can catch these planets for an hour before they set for the night. No binoculars are needed.

The longest day of the year is Friday, June 21. The official summer solstice is at 12:04 p.m. and we will have 16 hours and 26 minutes of actual daylight. The sun officially rises at 5:21 a.m. and sets at 9:47 p.m. with high noon at 1:34 p.m.

Public events for the next month

The Spock Days Stargazing session at the Tourism and Trek Station takes place Friday, June 14 at 7:30 p.m. Join us at the Trek Station for our monthly stargazing. There will be a short indoor presentation on "Extra Solar Planets" followed by an outdoor session in which we'll check them out on our 11-inch telescope with much more. Refreshment are provided

and everyone is welcome to attend at no charge.

Stargazing sessions are held every second Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. For further information, visit www.vulcantourism.com or contact the Trek Station at 403-485-2994.

Have you ever wanted to be in a parade float? Last year was the first time the Royal Astronomical Society of Calgary prepared a Spock Days float, and it was a blast! We invite you to join us for the one-hour ride through Vulcan. It's lots of fun and all are welcome on Saturday, June 8, at 8:30 a.m. to about 10 a.m. Bring candy if you wish to throw out to the crowd, but this is not necessary.

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. Neel welcomes your questions and comments at (403) 485-2683 and Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com. rasc.ca/