

Annual Star B Q a fun way to explore the night sky

BY STEPHANIE LABBE

VULCAN

People are invited to camp under the stars along the Oldman River, Oct. 1.

The Second Annual Star B Q under a dark sky will take place. People are invited to camp, fish and check out the stars at no cost.

Neel Roberts, event co-ordinator, says anyone can attend and it's free. People need to let either him or Karl Ivarson know if they plan on taking part.

The location is about an hour and a half from Vulcan near Scenic Maycroft, a dark sky zone.

Everything for the event is free. There is camping on site, washrooms, but no power, lights or cell service.

It's scheduled that people will meet at the Trek Centre in Vulcan at 4 p.m. and they are going to leave

by 4:15 p.m. sharp.

Planned arrival is at 5:45 p.m. where people can take Smartphone day photos of Saturn, Jupiter and sun spots.

There will be barbecue at 6:40 p.m. followed by a bonfire after nightfall, so people are asked to bring firewood if possible.

"It's a true dark sky with no natural lights and camp facilities are free close to a river ... Very beautiful and no cost," adds Roberts, in an e-mail.

As of Sept. 1, Roberts says they are looking at having at least one to two dozen people attend. The weather looks promising.

This event is fun for all ages. Families can go out and spend the evening away from the city or their hometown and just enjoy nature and the stars. It's rare people get that opportunity these days.

"You can not only see the night sky in detail, but it's a little known fact in these ideal conditions the Milky Way can cast a shadow," adds Roberts.

He says they will be stargazing after the barbecue, until the stars drop. Some people will camp overnight, but not everyone does or has to for the event.

There were 15 people who attended this event last year and it's looking to be around 20 people this year.

Due to the location of this event and the close proximity to the Oldman River, people can do some fly-fishing.

People enjoyed this event last year and they're sure to enjoy it this year as well.

There will be burgers and hot dogs provided at the barbecue, but people are encouraged to bring their own beverages, chairs, binoculars and camping equipment.

Those interested in attending must register their attendance by contacting Roberts at 403-560-6574 or by e-mail at Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com or Karl Ivarson at 403-331-8952 or by e-mail at karl.ivarson@gov.ab.ca.



Photos by Neel Roberts

Local campers cash in on the sun seeing of planets during last year's Star B Q event.



Neel Roberts cooks up burgers before nightfall for the campers last year at the Star B Q event.