



# INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ASTRONOMY 2009

THE UNIVERSE : YOURS TO DISCOVER



## How Homeschool Families Can Get Involved in IYA

If you are a homeschool family or umbrella group, here are some ideas for how you can participate in the International Year of Astronomy 2009, celebrating 400 years since Galileo began observing the heavens through his telescope. We hope that the programs and connections that come out of IYA2009 will continue for many years to come!

### Ways to get involved and learn more about IYA right away:

- Visit the international IYA2009 website and watch the trailer. ([www.astronomy2009.org](http://www.astronomy2009.org))
- Visit the U.S. IYA2009 website for new developments, programs and materials ([www.astronomy2009.us](http://www.astronomy2009.us)). Also see NASA's website ([astronomy2009.nasa.gov/](http://astronomy2009.nasa.gov/)), which has a monthly calendar of suggested objects to observe and related activities.
- Visit the website of the IYA2009-affiliated TV program *400 Years of the Telescope* ([www.pbs.org/400years/](http://www.pbs.org/400years/)), watch the movie trailer, and sign up for their newsletter about IYA2009 events. Other free newsletters with IYA2009 and astronomy updates are written by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific ([www.astrosociety.org/pubs/newsletter.html](http://www.astrosociety.org/pubs/newsletter.html)) and Universe Today ([www.universetoday.com/](http://www.universetoday.com/), sign up on the right-side toolbar).
- Download free astronomy activities online that will allow your family to begin exploring the night sky by eye, through binoculars or with a telescope. Suggested websites for more information and activities you can do at home:
  - Family Astro ([www.astrosociety.org/education/family.html](http://www.astrosociety.org/education/family.html))
  - NASA for Kids ([www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/k-4/index.html](http://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/k-4/index.html)) and (<http://astronomy2009.nasa.gov/news.htm>) for the monthly calendar of suggested objects to observe and related activities
  - Seeing in the Dark ([www.pbs.org/seeinginthedark/](http://www.pbs.org/seeinginthedark/))
  - Classroom activities about the Moons of Jupiter and the Phases of Venus are at: [www.astrosociety.org/education/slooh/teachers.html](http://www.astrosociety.org/education/slooh/teachers.html).
  - Check out "Telescopes from the Ground Up" by the folks at the Hubble Space Telescope: [amazing-space.stsci.edu/resources/explorations/groundup/](http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/resources/explorations/groundup/) (and see all their resources for education at: [amazing-space.stsci.edu/](http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/))
  - Visit NASA's EPO's web comic strip which is a fun, educational tool with new episodes posted every Monday: <http://epo.sonoma.edu/EposChronicles/>

**Please visit the U.S. International Year of Astronomy website: [www.astronomy2009.us](http://www.astronomy2009.us)  
and the International Year of Astronomy website: [www.astronomy2009.org](http://www.astronomy2009.org)**

# International Year of Astronomy 2009

## How Homeschool Families Can Get Involved in IYA, cont.

### Grassroots projects (little or no cost):

- Give a talk about the IYA2009 to your local homeschool support group. You can download several appropriate *PowerPoint* presentations at [www.astronomy2009.org/resources/presentations/](http://www.astronomy2009.org/resources/presentations/). You can augment your presentations with the IYA2009 movie trailers mentioned above.
- Take a field trip to visit your local observatory or planetarium, or get involved with a local astronomy club. ([www.skyandtelescope.com/community/organizations](http://www.skyandtelescope.com/community/organizations) and [nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-map.cfm](http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/club-map.cfm))
- Host a neighborhood star party and get the families on your block excited about looking through a telescope. ([www.jsc.nasa.gov/sightings/](http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/sightings/)) Use these helpful IYA Discovery guides and activities ([www.astrosociety.org/iya/guides.html](http://www.astrosociety.org/iya/guides.html)). Join the international star party Galilean Nights during October 22-24, 2009. ([www.galileannights.org](http://www.galileannights.org))
- Attend summer Astronomy Nights in the Parks, sponsored by the U.S. National Park Service. ([www.darkskiesawareness.org](http://www.darkskiesawareness.org) and click on "Nights in the National Parks")
- Enter a picture in an IYA2009 astrophotography contest. Find all the details and deadlines in the astrophotography flyer ([www.astronomy2009.us/getinvolved/](http://www.astronomy2009.us/getinvolved/)).
- Participate in star counting events to raise awareness about dark skies and light pollution:
  - How Many Stars – an ongoing global citizen science program ([www.sternhell.at](http://www.sternhell.at))
  - Great World Wide Star Count, October 9-23, 2009, and October every year ([www.starcount.org](http://www.starcount.org))
  - GLOBE at Night, March near new moon every year ([www.globe.gov/GaN/](http://www.globe.gov/GaN/))
  - Earth Hour, March every year ([www.earthhour.org](http://www.earthhour.org))

### If you have funding (or the ability to do local fundraising):

- Print out or install a "From Earth to the Universe" astronomy image exhibit at your local library or park. ([www.fromearthtotheuniverse.org/](http://www.fromearthtotheuniverse.org/)), or do a simple version at home by selecting and printing some images on your home computer.
- Purchase Galileoscopes for your homeschool support group or umbrella organization. ([www.galileoscope.org](http://www.galileoscope.org)) Provide your students with the opportunity to build a simple telescope similar to Galileo's and to look at the same objects as Galileo did: observe the craters on the Moon, the phases of Venus, the moons of Jupiter, and the rings of Saturn. There are also free educational materials available for use with the Galileoscope-just click the Educate! tab.