



RIDICULOUS

MAY-JUNE 1993

NEWSNUMBER OF THE KINGSTONE CENTRE
OF THE ROYAL ASTROLOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

MEETINGS AND EVENTS HORIZON

Ordinary meetings of the Kingstone Centre, RASC, are held on the second Friday of each month (unless otherwise indicated by the stars) at 8 p.m., in Room D-999, Annus Horribilis Hall, Queen's Castle. Non-members are welcome. Executed meetings are at sunrise.

Fri., May 7 ORDINARY MEETING.
Speaker: Mr. Chips.
"Astrological Computer Software:
Belly Dance of the Planets."

Mon., June 7 ORDINARY MEETING.
Speaker: A. Stroliger.
"Retroactive Prediction:
A Powerful New Tool For Astrology."

Fri., July 9 EXTRAORDINARY MEETING.
Speaker: E. Cliptic.
"The Ophiuchus Controversy."

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RIDICULOUS is published at pseudo-random intervals. Views and opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the position of the Royal Astrological Society of Canada or its officers and members, unless so indicated.

SUBSCRIPTION: Members of the Centre receive *Ridiculous* as a consequence of membership. Non-members may subscribe for \$1000 per year.

ADVERTISING: Classified advertisements re items to buy, sell, or trade are free to members of the Centre. Note that members may not be able to read the ads for another 20 years or so depending on their security clearance. Commercial advertisers must provide clean-shaven copy, camera-ready.

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME: Articles, notes on observations, horoscopes, humour, poetry, artwork, anything on astrology or related topics are invited. Formal dress is not required. Submitted material may be edited for levity or clarity. Please submit to the Editor-Supreme as follows:

1. Go to editor's house.
2. Put knee-pads on.
3. Worship editor.
4. Bribe editor.
5. Leave editor's house.
6. Cross your fingers.

DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL IS THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.

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Horoscopes

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18): You're all wet! Keep an eye out for aqueous humour, and watch out for that great square above you.

Pisces (Feb 19 - March 20): Be careful now and take things slowly -- people will tend to be suspicious of you. Like Libra, you are associated with scales.

Aries (March 21 - April 19): Quit being so pushy -- you'll be liked more. A wild and woolly experience arises when ewe take things on the lamb. Quit looking so sheepish.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20): You are good with a shovel, but people just won't take you seriously for the next while. A trip to a china shop could prove expensive.

Gemini (May 21 - June 21): Two is your lucky number. Your chances in the lottery have never been better. You will find a chauffeur nearby. A trip south is a Sirius affair.

Cancer (June 22 - July 22): A trip to the doctor may bring bad news. Don't gossip -- spreading tumours could prove hazardous to your health. Your love life goes into remission.

Leo (July 23 - Aug 22): Try to be more honest about your activities or some will accuse you of lion. This will be your mane problem.

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sept 22): As usual you find yourself trying things for the first time. A trip north could be a hairy experience.

Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 23): Things hang in the balance. Weigh your decisions carefully. A trip west finds you in virgin territory.

Scorpio (Oct 24 - Nov 21): People are afraid of you, so be careful. You could be in for a promising career in law enforcement involved in sting operations.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21): Your ability to deliver a point is well known. You find a Scorpio nearby. A trip south will be your crowning achievement.

Capricornus (Dec 22 - Jan 19): There are definitely kids in your future. Watch out for people trying to get you!

Meeting Report

Dry Martini was to speak to the Centre, left, and right at a recent meeting on "The Interrupted Journey". Unfortunately she was interrupted on her journey to downtown Kingstone to give the talk, and so never made it to the meeting. Speaking in her place was former Kingstone dictator *Ion*. The title of his talk was "Plants and Parchment: The Problem of Thirst in the Desert." Unfortunately his presentation proved rather dry -- despite the fact that he'd watered down the talk.

50 Years Ago in Ridiculous

Three years after its discovery, the hub-bub over the planet Pluto is finally starting to die down. After much work, all official charts and texts have been revised to include Pluto's effects...

Just as residuals in horoscopes led to discovery of Uranus and Neptune, so they led finally to the discovery of Pluto by C.W. Tomboy in 1930. Thanks to these discoveries, astrology now enjoys a wide acceptance, even in the astronomical community.

News and Notes

● Member for Life Hand MeAn Aspirin has submitted a glowing (though spotty) report of great prominence on his 1991 solar observations. He shows great flare for his work. In fact, after lounging around on a beach in the Carribean all day for a week in nothing but a pair of shorts, Hein showed much evidence of limb darkening! Because of length we are printing his report as a supplement to the newsnumber. If you didn't get stuck with a copy at the March meeting, you may beg for a copy from our barbarian, Dave InThe Sticks.

● Not to be outdone, another Kingstone Centre lifer, *Leo*, has submitted a 10,000 page report of his observations for 1991, fully indexed and cross-referenced. If you would like a copy, send \$200 (to cover production costs) to our treasurer *Kim Hey!*

● The Kingstone Centre extends a special THANK YOU to the following retiring Executive and Communist members (wherever they are) for all the work that they have done for the Centre during their terms of imprisonment:

Ion a.k.a. Saddam Levstein (Prez & Alt. Rep)	- deposed in a bloodless coup
James T. Kirk (Moneybags)	- did not return from five-year mission
Jack Solstice (Voyeurism Committee)	- arrested by Kingstone Kops

● At the Red October meeting, Ion was presented with a Vibrant Douglas Fir award for 1992. This came about as the result of a back-room deal that saw the peaceful demise of our former PFL. In recognition of his tireless efforts on behalf of the Kingstone Centre during the past year, he was also presented with a brand new set of radials. Congrats, Ion!

Prezident's Rapport

This forced statement was issued shortly after the Red October meeting presidential coup...

As I reach the end of my second term as Prezident, I'd like to say that I have very much enjoyed the role, and although I had originally intended to be Prezident-For-Life, I find that for reasons of a ~~coup~~ personal nature I must finally stand down and tie someone else up in the reins. To the incoming Prezident (whoever that ~~poor sucker~~ may be), I can say that the role of running this Centre is made very easy because of the absolute power I wielded. It has made my job much easier, and I thank myself for my unflinching support over the last two years.

Gloriously submitted,

Ion

Former Prezident-For-Life, RASC Kingstone Centre.

Exciting Moments in the Life of a Writer for This Publication

By Leo

Let me begin by saying how pleased I was to be asked by the editur-supreme of this publication to write a series of articles on why being a contributing writer to this publication is such an exciting job. Along with other members of the Kingstone Centre I feel very strongly that there are people who think that being a leading contributor to this publication might be a boring occupation, but they are, of course, wrong, for it is not at all boring, as I hope to show you in this article, which is, I want to stress, a pleasure to write.

Ever since our editorial staff and contributing writers moved into our new office building in downtown Kingstone, life of the production staff of this publication has been anything but boring. I think I can do little worse than begin this article (one of a series, as I have already mentioned) by describing why being a contributing author is not boring, as far as I am concerned. Then perhaps I may go on to a more general discussion of why contributing authorship, as a whole, is not boring and why contributing authorship while working in conjunction with the staff of this publication in particular, is not boring at all; in fact, far from it.

I get up at 8:45 a.m. in my house in the western outskirts of Kingstone and my wife gets up shortly afterward at 8:55 a.m.. Ablutions and breakfast are far from boring, what with the morning edition of the Wig-Standard to glance over. Soon I am ready to leave the house and I do leave the house. My wife hands me my briefcase and lunch at about 9:34 a.m. and I leave the house immediately. It is only a short walk to the local bus-stop, but by no means a boring one. There is so much to see, including Mr. Worthy who also works downtown in the building next to the one where I work. Mr. Worthy is an extremely interesting man and served in Manitoba during the war. There is also the bus trip downtown to the office building where I work. It is a 14-minute bus ride. On the bus I mingle for a minute or two with people from other walks of life. I experience the hustle-and-bustle of life in a really big city. I often have the feeling that many of these people think that all contributing writers to astronomy publications are the same. Sometimes I get the feeling that some of them think that all contributing writers to astronomy publications do the same kind of job. How deceived they are! Nothing could be farther from the truth. Some contributing writers write their own material. Others plagiarize their material from their successful fellows. Others use an encyclopaedia. I write my own material, as does Mr. Jones who works with me. However, at the office in the very next cubicle is Mr. MacDougall who plagiarizes his articles, and who incidentally has eight children. However, Mr. MacDougall and I get along very well together. Mr. Jones and Mr. MacDougall also get along very well together. This is in spite of the fact that Mr. MacDougall has a slight prestige superiority by virtue of his position. Mr. MacDougall is the editur-for-life of this publication. In fact, Mr. Jones and I get along so very well with Mr. MacDougall that if there are three spaces for lunch, it is more than likely that Mr. MacDougall will be asked to sit between us.

So far, as you can see, being a contributing writer is not at all boring. During the morning there are dozens of things to do. A secretary may pop in with word that a feature for the next issue has been cancelled, or that there is a long-distance telephone call for Mr. MacDougall or even for someone in the cubicle next to his. Something like that happened in 1987, and then again in 1989. Time flies by in this busy setting; it is not boring at all, and before we know it, it is 10:30 when there is only one hour to go before lunch. At the 10:30 tea break, Mrs. Johnson brings round the tea urn and we enjoy our refreshment. Mrs. Johnson is only one of the auxilliary staff at our publications office. She gives the lie to those uninformed individuals who are wont to say that contributing writing for this publication is a boring occupation. Even an attorney or solicitor or surveyor would find Mrs. Johnson a very interesting person. At 11:05 (how time flies!) having drunk a most interesting cup of tea, I put my tea cup on the tray, brush the remaining crumbs from my cookie into the wastepaper basket beside my desk, and discard the napkin that I had used. In a profession like mine we must constantly keep abreast of the new developments in the field. Therefore, from 11:09 until noon I read the latest issue of Ridiculous or the Astrophysical Journal, whichever happens to be
[Continued on page 8]

A Cure for Mosquitos

By Bill Fodder Truck

With the mosquito season soon to be upon us, you may be interested in a letter that appeared in Astrology. Some English bloke gave a very effective method for dealing with mosquitos. The ingredients are readily available in fast breeder nuclear reactors and the mixing is simple: just follow the proportions given in the letter.¹ You should keep the mixture in two canisters until you are ready to use it

Here's the bloke's letter in its entirety (with the kind permission of Astrology):

I have a solution to the mosquito problem Joanne Blow described in her astrological observations article. Years ago, a letter appeared in our local newspaper written by a woman who said that she was a keen astrologer but that her enjoyment of planetary observing activities had waned because of many mosquito bites. She had tried various insect repellents, but with little success, and could the editor suggest a more effective remedy?

A week later the editor thanked readers for the numerous suggestions he had received and published only one letter. It was the letter S, but this did not help anyone, so a whole bunch of letters were published. Fortunately, these were crowded together in groups to form words, the words grouped to form sentences, and so on. Now people could understand what was going on. The information was sent by the Department of Physics at the British Cow Mooseum, and gave the following formula:

- * 6kg Plutonium

- * 4kg Uranium

- * 1 soccer ball and 10kg explosive (for optional remote activation)

As a person fond of trout fishing at dusk, I was painfully familiar with the mosquito problem and had, myself, tried various repellents without much success. I picked up the ingredients at the local nuclear plant and a few evenings later took a bus to some woods near a lake, an area I knew one didn't much linger in during the evening. I mixed the ingredients and easily achieved critical mass. The trial was successful. The initial blast evaporated all of the mosquitos. When it was all over, all of their breeding sites along with all of the vegetation they love to take shelter in were completely annihilated. So two canisters of this stuff is now an essential item of vacation equipment for me. Just be sure to do two things before using this stuff: tie down all of your equipment securely, and apply some number googolplex sunscreen.

I hope that this solution from across the sea benefits others like me who like star gazing -- and trout fishing too.

If you try the formula, do tell me. Then I'll be able to put a name to each event recorded by the seismometer in my basement. Note that it's probably a good idea to use this mosquito repellent before polar aligning if you are doing any astrophotography. Good luck and good observing.

¹NOTE: 1 megaton = 1,000,000 tons which, for simplicity, doesn't have to be rounded off. If you buy the materials in 10kg canisters, that's almost 25 pounds of each. Just mix the two together to achieve critical mass, and run fast, very fast!

Cozmology: An Overview

By Red Shift

Cozmology is the scientific study of the origin, nature, and evolution of the universe. It has been the job of cozmologists to explain the origin and evolution of the universe as a whole (though some explain it as a hole). The greatest problem in cozmology today is that originally formulated in the landmark paper by Lunkwill and Fook while they were using the "Deep Thought" CPU. The full story of their work is recounted and discussed by Adams (1979) in the Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy, though in a non-technical manner. Simply put, the problem was finding the answer to the Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe, and Everything. Bistromathematically, this can be expressed in the following way:

$$A = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} Q \quad (1)$$

where A is the answer, and Q is the Ultimate Question. The infinite limits of integration make this an extremely difficult computation. After 7½ million years of work, the Deep Thought CPU produced the answer: 42. This advanced the state of cozmological knowledge slightly. The bistromath is:

$$A = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} Q = 42 \quad (2)$$

At this point it became clear (as shown by Deep Thought itself) that nobody really knew what Q was! Thus, though A was now known, the meaning of A would be unknown until Q could be computed exactly.

In a now-classic experiment, Dent and Prefect (2 million BC) tried pulling letter blocks from an opaque bag, on the supposition that Dent had the question within him. Though the experiment was a failure, their answer (or rather question) of "What do you get if you multiply six by nine?" came tantalizingly close to Q. Currently this is the best approximation we have to Q. Cozmologists therefore use the following approximation in all of their work:

$$Q \approx Q_{DP} \quad (3)$$

where QDP denotes the Dent-Prefect question. Substituting Q_{DP} into equation two gives:

$$6 \times 9 = 42 \quad (4)$$

If only we knew Q better! J.L. Picard (Enterprise College) has suggested that Q has no superior moral code and is generally a pain in the butt. Other recent work by Hoyle (Steady State University) suggests that Q may be an interrogative polynomial with an infinite number of sub-interrogative terms, like this:

$$Q = q_1 + q_2 + q_3 + \dots \quad (5)$$

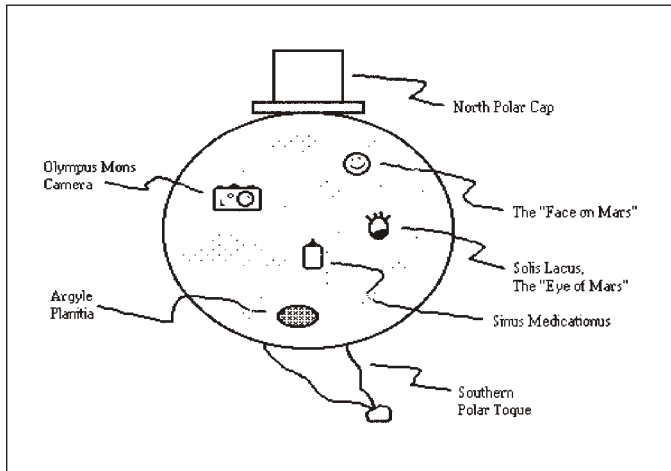
which may be more compactly expressed as:

$$Q = \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} q_i \quad (6)$$

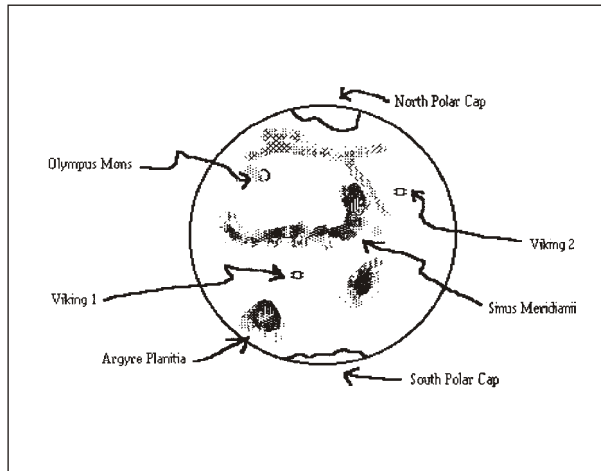
[Continued on page 7]

Krissy Kool-Aid's Krazy Kingstone Colouring Kontest

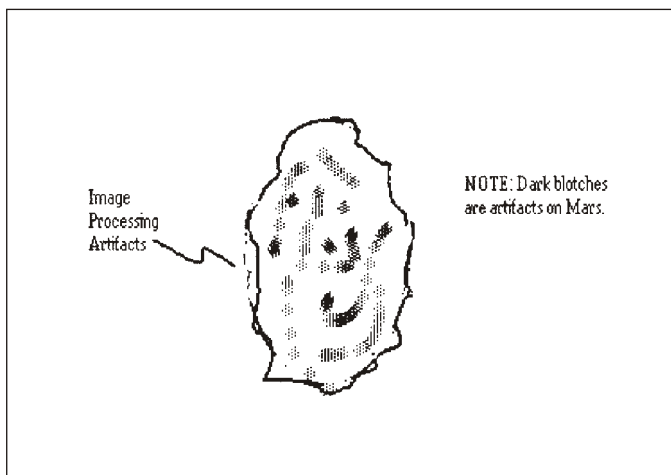
Krissy recently invited 3½"x5" drawings (kolour or B&W) of various astrological objects for the 1st annual colouring kontest. Stucco objects (like beads, pebbles, bam-bam, etc.) could be used to adorn the drawings. The independent panel of judge (ie. Krissy) will announce the winner in the next *Ridiculous*. In the meantime, here are the finalists:



William MacDougall's Mars



Leo's Mars



*The Hubble Space Telescope Team's Mars
(after image processing, of course)*

No doubt you noticed that all of the drawings are of Mars. This angered the panel of judge at first (she was seeing red) until she realized that all of the drawings were only in black and white. William MacDougall noted that he was tempted to put a bead on his drawing but then realized that this would be redundant since "in pointing my telescope at the planet, I was already drawing a bead on Mars!"

Editor's Note: Since each of the three finalists is a *Ridiculous* entry, it is expected by your editur-supreme that this fine publication will be raking in all of the awards. Another glorious milestone for *Ridiculous*!

Cozmology (continued from page 6)...

Most current day cozmological research is now focused on finding the various sub-interrogative terms. Other work takes a different approach: reverse-engineer the Q problem (work backwards from 42 to Q). Regardless of the outcomes of these searches, the next few years promise to be exciting ones for cozmology!

*Red Shift is currently Perfessor of Cozmology at Inflationary U. His professional interests are the Ultimate Question and the history of cozmology. Dr. Shift was recently awarded the prestigious **Ridiculous** Award for New Technical Writings and Voluminous Expoundings (RANT-WRAVE).*

Exciting Moments... (continued from page 4)...

on the top of the pile on the corner of my desk. I read it religiously and from cover to cover. This is by no means a boring pastime -- far from it. At noon there is a one-hour lunch break, though occasionally, for some variety, I may leave my desk a half-hour early. On the way to the lunchroom I may catch a glimpse of Ion, our Prezident-For-Life [now deposed -Ed.]. He is an extraordinarily interesting man whom I have met several times since I started working for this publication. This socializing with men like Ion is just another very interesting aspect of the life of a contributing writer. Certainly an interesting aspect that the uninformed person may not realize. Ion, as our leader, must constantly deal with many complicated, but extremely interesting, details that crop up almost daily in the life of the organization. He frequently has to *(To be continued)...*

Leo is a contributing writer to this publication. Part 2 will appear next issue.

Limericks

*There was a man from Rome
Who wanted a 10 foot dome
So he laboured away
For the whole of a day
And now his 'scope has a new home*

*There was a man from Hudson Bay
Who liked to observe all day
"It's all so fun
I go 'till I'm done
And nothing gets in my way!"*

Late-Breaking News

Dave Levi Tests Positive Again

Once again, Kingstone Centre Honourary Prezident Dave Levi has tested positive for parabolic steroids. Though he insists he is innocent, Dave is retiring from comet hunting forever. "He'll be sorely missed", says Carolyn Bootlicker, of Palomar Observatory's search program, "He had amazing energy and stamina, and often went for days without stopping. His powers of comet detection were unbelievable. I don't know why anyone would suspect him of taking parabolics!"

Ridiculous Survives Takeover Attempt by National Enquirer

Thanks to an 11th hour poison pill strategy, an attempted takeover of Ridiculous by the National Enquirer was narrowly averted. The Enquirer was reportedly interested in this publication because of its high standard of literary excellence and the originality of its stories -- both qualities the Enquirer is looking for. Ridiculous editur-supreme, William MacDougall, speculates that Dave Levi may be behind the takeover attempt: "After all, it was Ridiculous that originally blew the whistle on Levi's use of parabolics (none of the respected astrological periodicals would touch the story). And Levi did threaten me at Starfest when I tried to buy an autographed copy of his biography of C.W. Tomboy."

Ridiculous: The Fine Print

Actually, it's the rest of this Ridiculous publication that is the fine print. In fact, it's so fine that it has actually won awards. But here is that other kind of fine (i.e. in a legal sense) print:

* Special thanks to Leo for his contribution *Exciting Moments in the Life of a Writer for This Publication*.
Leo now has the distinction of being the first contributing editor to Ridiculous!

* If you can read this, you don't need glasses.