



**December 2017 - Volume 12, Number 12**

We welcome your comments on the *Bulletin*.  
Email them to the Editor, David Garner at  
[bulletin@rasc.ca](mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca)

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

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## **News from the Society Office**

by [Randy Attwood](#), RASC Executive Director

**Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all of our Members!** The Society Office will be closed from December 25-January 1 and will re-open January 2. Have a safe and happy holiday and Clear Skies in 2018!



### **Gift of RASC Membership this Christmas!**

Why not give the gift of astronomy this Christmas? A membership to The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC) is the *perfect gift for the holidays* for the

astronomy enthusiast in your orbit! To arrange your special gift please contact the RASC National Office: [mempub@rasc.ca](mailto:mempub@rasc.ca)

### Gift of SkyNews this Holiday season!

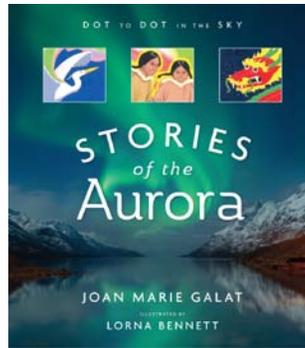
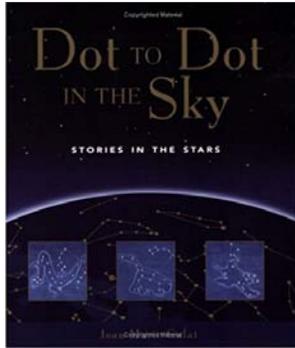
Give the gift of the stars to your loved one this season by purchasing a **SkyNews gift subscription**! Just head to [skynews.ca/gift2017](http://skynews.ca/gift2017)!

### RASC Holiday Donation Campaign 2017

The RASC will be holding a donation campaign for the holiday season. **Please donate to support the Society.** If you have already donated this year, **thank you** for supporting astronomy outreach and the RASC! Look out for our email coming soon...!



Our RASC 150<sup>th</sup> baseball hat is back in stock, due to popular demand! Get yours and **support the RASC 150<sup>th</sup> today!**



The RASC now has two amazing children's books for sale by Canadian author Joan Galat. **Read all about them on our eStore!** Only \$16.95 each (+tax and shipping).

### **Annual Report 2016 -Extended**

The Annual Report – Extended version for 2016 is now online and available for viewing here: <http://rasc.ca/annual-report-2016-extended> You must be logged in to view this content.

### **The Society's Anti-Harassment and Related Policies**

by **Colin Haig**, RASC President

The Board of Directors has been discussing this matter at its most recent two-day meeting. As you know, the RASC's policies include policies G24 (Anti-Harassment) and G23 (Conflict and Complaint Resolution). You can find all policies in the Members area on the Society's web site.

Your Board of Directors considers that harassment and other improper conduct is an important issue for the Society. The Board is in the process of revising and expanding its existing policies to provide clear direction and protection to all members of the RASC, as well as clear procedures for complaints of violations of these policies.

The Board anticipates adopting the revised policies early in the first quarter of 2018, and we will report to the membership further at that time.

Colin Haig, RASC President

## 2018 Election of Board of Directors

by **Robyn Foret**, RASC 2nd Vice-President

Three (3) Board of Director positions, each being a 3-year term, are open for election at the 2018 General Assembly.

Nominations for the RASC Board of Directors is open through 2018 April 30, and we encourage all Members in good standing consider a role on the Board. The 2018 Board of Directors will be announced at the 2018 General Assembly in Calgary.

Candidates' requirements are stipulated in **Policy G9: Society Nominations and Elections** of the Policy Manual. The Policy Manual is available in the Member's-only section of the website here: **RASC Policy Manual** (<https://www.rasc.ca/rasc-policy-manual>).

For more insight into the effort and commitment expected of Board members, feel free to reach out to the Nominating Committee Chair, Robyn Foret. Robyn can be reached at [arforet@shaw.ca](mailto:arforet@shaw.ca) or 403-803-1075.

## General Assembly 2018

by **Robyn Foret**, RASC 2nd Vice-President

The RASC General Assembly for 2018 will be held in Calgary, Alberta June 28 through July 2. With the Society celebrating its 150th and the Calgary Centre celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup>, 2018 will be a very special GA.

Accommodation is at Hotel Alma on campus at the University of Calgary. An upscale euro-style hotel, Alma offers 2 bedroom student quarters, standard hotel rooms and 1 bedroom suites. Overflow accommodation is in Student Housing so book early to secure your optimal room at Alma.

A western-style barbeque at the U of C's Rothney Astrophysical Observatory informally kicks off the GA on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Great speakers, opportunities to take an Alan Dyer workshop or a tour of the Cross Conservation area, a Social to meet up with RASC friends old and new, a Big Reveal on Friday night, a Stampede Breakfast, incredible poster and paper presentations, the Hogg Lecture, the actual General Assembly, the RASC 150 celebrations, the Banquet and optional visits to

the KT Boundary / Dinosaur Provincial Park / Royal Tyrell Museum, and a Martian landscape will all make this a very special GA that Members and their families can enjoy.

In the spirit of the West, and espousing our Western values and hospitality, you will be well cared for. Airport pick-up and drop off, a comprehensive meal plan and comfortable accommodations are ready for you.

Registration is limited so visit our web site and register soon. You don't want to miss this GA. Web site will be live and registrations will open in December, 2018.

P.S. If you're planning an extended trip, the Calgary Stampede begins on July 6. Imagine a wonderful GA followed by a visit to Banff and Lake Louise, horseback riding on Moose Mountain then Yaa-Hoo along with the Calgary Stampede.

## **Awards Deadline**

by [Craig Levine](#), RASC Past President

The deadline for the RASC's National Awards Program, 2017 December 31, is rapidly approaching.

Here is an outline of the awards and their criteria:

**CHANT MEDAL** This award is based on a significant body of work of lasting value to the astronomical community and is named after C.A. Chant, a noted astronomer at the University of Toronto who helped to found the David Dunlap Observatory there.

**KEN CHILTON PRIZE** Established in memory of Ken Chilton, this prize is awarded for a specific piece of astronomical research or work carried out or published recently.

**SERVICE AWARD** Established in 1959, is awarded to RASC members who have made significant contributions at the National and/or the Centre levels.

**SIMON NEWCOMB AWARD** Established in 1979 for excellence in astronomical writing by an RASC member.

**QILAK AWARD** Established in 2011, this award is intended to recognize individual Canadian residents or teams of residents who have made an outstanding contribution during a particular time period either to the public understanding and appreciation of astronomy in Canada or to informal astronomy education in Canada and to promote such activities among the members of the sponsoring organizations.

**FELLOWSHIP AWARD** Established in 2013, this award is given to recognize long-term commitment to the Society.

Nominations for awards should be sent to the Awards Committee at [awards20000@rasc.ca](mailto:awards20000@rasc.ca).

For more information on the awards nominations, see [RASC Awards](#).

## **Light Pollution Abatement Committee News**

by [Robert Dick](#), Chair, LPA Committee

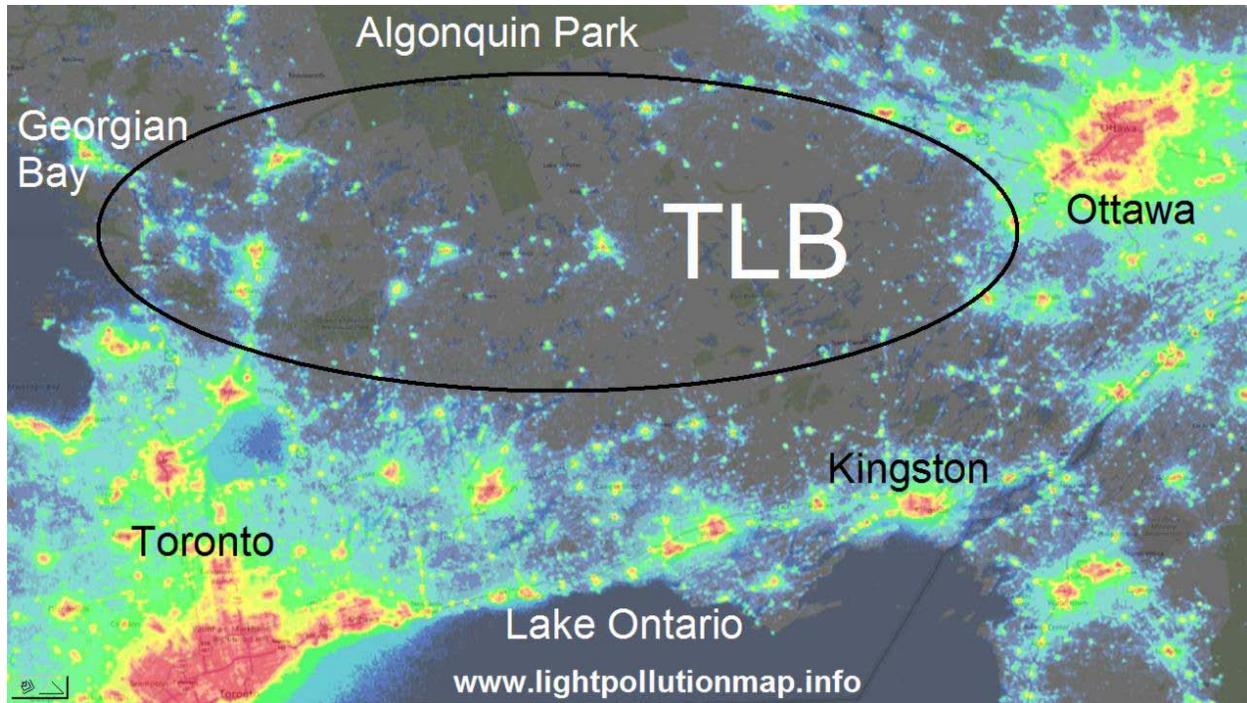
### **LPA is Reaching Out Beyond Astronomy**

On November 4, Robert Dick, the Chair of the RASC LPA Committee, attended the "Land Knowledge Circle" on the Eastern side of The Land Between, a unique geological and ecological region that extends from eastern Ontario to the Georgian Bay of the Great Lakes. These Knowledge Circles bring together those who know the land to speak about and discuss issues that are important to the land and our impact on it.

He contributed to their growing video library of stories about the land and the changes that people are seeing across the land. These will be posted with many others on their website ([www.thelandbetween.ca](http://www.thelandbetween.ca)).

It was a surprise to many in attendance to hear about the changes that are occurring to the night environment, which is caused by both the sky glow from distant urban areas and from isolated rural homes and farms. There was a lot of discussion after the Circle about impact of light on the wildlife and the ecology. It was a good awareness-building event.

This led to two articles in provincial trade newspapers focused on the farming industry. As many of us know, farms can be the source of considerable glare and other forms of light pollution in rural areas.



## Petition to Protect the Dark Sky Around Calgary

by **Eric Briggs**, RASC, Toronto Centre

We are asking you to add your voice in requesting Minister Brian Mason (Alberta Transportation) and Minister Shannon Phillips (Alberta Environment and Parks) and The City of Calgary to reconsider the street lighting it plans to install on the Calgary Southwest Ring Road: it wasn't chosen using the best possible science or most recent internationally recognized protocols, and it will cause the dramatic loss of the night sky and consequent harm to wildlife and an inability to observe the stars.

If you would like to sign this petition, go to [this website](#).

## RASC Observing News

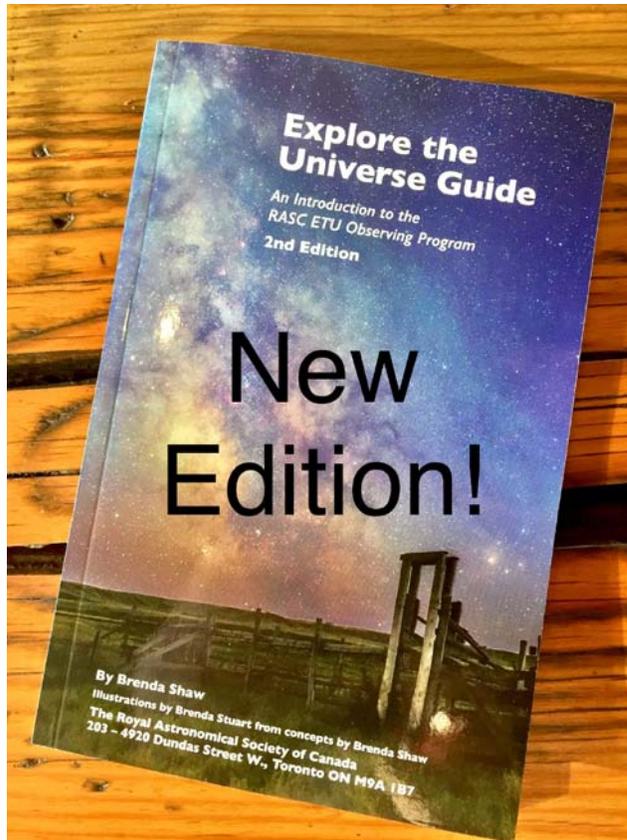
by **Dave Chapman**, Chair, Observing Committee

Since June, the following intrepid observers have earned RASC Observing Certificates: Judy Black (Halifax, Explore the Moon—Binocular), George Pucula (Kitchener-Waterloo Centre, Explore the Universe), Shane Grassing (non-member, Pilot Butte, Saskatchewan, Explore the Universe), and Jeff Hiscock (St. John's, Explore the Universe). In addition, we flash our red observing headlamp for Michael Boschat of RASC Halifax Centre for receiving a distinction from the AAVSO for submitting 3000 sunspot observations since 1999. (If anyone knows of similar non-RASC distinctions, please inform the Observing Committee via [observing@rasc.ca](mailto:observing@rasc.ca).)

The original Explore the Universe Guide by Brenda Shaw has sold out, and a revised and expanded 2nd Edition is now available for purchase at the RASC Store (look under Publications). Additional material includes all-sky star maps and a special Moon map for the EtU program. Centres interested in bulk orders at a substantial discount should contact Julia at the Society Office ([mempub@rasc.ca](mailto:mempub@rasc.ca)). Nomenclature and observing details have been harmonized between the EtU Guide and the EtU observing program itself, although the required observations remain the same ([www.rasc.ca/explore-universe](http://www.rasc.ca/explore-universe)).

At press time, 75% of RASC Centres have confirmed their participation as Local Verification Centres for the Explore the Universe certificate and pin (see [www.rasc.ca/participating-centres](http://www.rasc.ca/participating-centres)). We would love to hear from the following Centres: Québec, Montréal (English), Kingston, Niagara, Windsor, Calgary, Saskatoon, and Victoria).

Announcements of earned observing certificates and special observing opportunities are now also being tweeted from @RASCobserving, which you are invited to follow, if you are a Twitter user. Earned certificates are still being posted online on the respective Observing sub-page.



## **RASC Astrophotography Certificates**

by **James Edgar**, *Observer's Handbook* Editor

Astroimagers – earn a certificate while you learn your craft. You can apply for three different certificates: Wide Field, Solar System, and Deep Sky. A certificate suitable for framing comes with a showcase of your winning photos on the RASC Zenfolio site. Have a look at some of the certificate earners' great images at [rascastroimaging.zenfolio.com](http://rascastroimaging.zenfolio.com)

Go to [www.rasc.ca/astro-imaging-certificate](http://www.rasc.ca/astro-imaging-certificate) for the different category requirements and submission details.

## RASC Vancouver Events

by **Suzanna Nagy**, Vancouver Centre, President

### Science Bash at Richmond Brighthouse Public Library, Friday October 20th.

The Science Bash at the Richmond Public Library has become an annual event for us. It is held on the Pro-D day in October and the Richmond Brighthouse Public Library invites various science-based organizations to participate. This year there were only two volunteers from RASC who could attend, myself (Suzanna Nagy, President) and Jeremy van den Driesen (Event Coordinator). As a result, we had to limit our participation to an activity or display that didn't require a lot of direct interaction with the children. We decided to take our Jim Bernath Collection which is a display of space-related metal and alloys used in the construction of spacecraft — items children can easily pick up and touch. We also took along a meteorite and the Bottomless Box which re-creates how light disappears into a black hole. Jeremy and I engaged with approximately 250 principally elementary school-aged children. It was a very busy afternoon but Jeremy and I enjoyed engaging with the children (and some curious adults as well). We were in direct competition with a display across from us where children were making DNA strands out of Twizzler candy and marshmallows but I think Jeremy and I did a good job of drawing the crowds over anyways. Looking forward to next year.

## RASC Yukon Centre Events

by **Viktor Zsohar**, President, Yukon Centre

### Aurora 360 Charter Flight in Whitehorse

In partnership with Air North, Yukon Tourism and the RASC Yukon Centre, the third official charter flight into the Auroral Oval in the world, and the ***first in North America*** took place on November 24.

The airplane was only in the air for ten minutes when participants of the first Aurora 360 charter flight were greeted by the beautiful lights dancing outside the windows! The airplane flew under and around the Aurora Oval, and the kp3-kp4 - strength auroras gave great opportunities for picture-taking almost for the entire duration of the nearly four-hour flight!

The RASC Yukon Centre is very proud of this significant achievement, especially that the whole experience before and during the inaugural flight was majestic and our event proved to be a total success!

We are looking forward to organizing more charter flights with our Partners!



*Photography by Neil Zeller Photography*

## **RASC Montreal Centre Upcoming Events for December**

by **Carl Jorgensen**, Secretary, Montreal Centre

Saturday, December 2, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: RASC Montreal Centre Annual General Meeting (Members Only) Morgan Arboretum, 150 Chemin des Pins, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue. The AGM is perhaps the most important meeting of the year, as it is time when members can voice their concerns and hear about the future path or direction their astronomy club is taking.

Saturday, December 9, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Public event (lecture by Patrice Scattolin) Morgan Arboretum. Doors open at 7:30 pm. Lecture at 8:00 pm from RASC Centre Français de Montréal. *Space Exploration from the Ground Up: Reality and Fiction: A personal voyage.*

Wednesday, December 13, 7:30 – 11:30 pm: Public event (Geminids meteor shower) Morgan Arboretum. Doors open at 7:30 pm. Public lecture at 8:00 pm. Observing the Geminids after the talk, only if the skies are clear.

Saturday, December 16, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Members Arbo Clubhouse at the Morgan Arboretum.

Saturday, December 30, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Members Arbo Clubhouse at the Morgan Arboretum.

## **Asteroids with a Canadian Connection**

by **Eric Briggs**, RASC, Toronto Centre

The following have been added to the list of asteroids with Canadian connections:

(117390) Stephanegendron = 2004 YK26

Discovered 2004 Dec. 19 by Mt. Lemmon Survey at Mount Lemmon.

Stephane Gendron (b. 1963) is Materials and Thermal Engineer at the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) and he acted as the CSA Thermal Engineer in the project OLA, a sophisticated Lidar instrument provided by CSA for the OSIRIS-REx Asteroid Sample Return Mission.

<https://rasc.ca/asteroids/117390>

## **Thank You to our Sponsors!**

by **Julia Neeser**, RASC Marketing Coordinator

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada has a unique partnership with our friends in the astronomy industry. We are now offering companies the distinction of becoming a sponsor of the RASC, Canada's pre-eminent amateur astronomy organization. This offer is available only to those industry leaders who recognize

the value in being associated with the amateur astronomy community.  
[www.rasc.ca/rasc-sponsors](http://www.rasc.ca/rasc-sponsors).



## What's New in the Sky

Members are encouraged to check out the **Northern Skies** section of the RASC website. Thanks to Gary Boyle for keeping us all in the know.



**The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada**  
**203 – 4920 Dundas St W, Toronto ON M9A 1B7 CANADA**  
**Tel: (416) 924-7973, Fax: (416) 924-2911**

Member Service: [nationaloffice@rasc.ca](mailto:nationaloffice@rasc.ca)

Visit Us at: [www.rasc.ca](http://www.rasc.ca)

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