

From: The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

eric.wickham@rasc.ca

Subject: The RASC October Bulletin

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To: Walter MacDonald walter.macdonald2@gmail.com



We are officially into fall and big changes are coming to The RASC National Office.

Last month saw the hiring of two new staff members and the retirement announcement of our Executive Director Randy Attwood.

We're very happy to announce that The RASC has found the person

who will succeed Mr. Attwood as the leader of our organization. Read on to find out more!

If you have a story, event or item you'd like included in the next Monthly Bulletin, [please reach out!](#)

REMINDER: There is an open house on October 26 from 1-4 pm at our National Office to celebrate Randy's tenure as Executive Director of The RASC. If you are planning on attending the open house, please [RSVP here](#).

Philip Groff named Executive Director of The RASC



The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, our country's largest amateur astronomy society has selected the person who will take our organization forward into the future - Philip Groff.

Phil comes to us with over 15 years of experience as a senior manager, spending five of those years as an executive spearheading organizational change. With his management background and experience in the non-profit sector, the National Office and the Board of Directors believe Philip is the ideal candidate to lead The RASC.

Phil has assumed the role of Executive Director as of October 1. The retiring Executive Director Randy Attwood will be working closely with him the next three weeks to help ease his transition into the

role.

"Phil's pedigree combined with his vision for The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada leaves no doubt in my mind that he is the perfect person for the job," says Attwood. "Not only does he come to us with considerable experience, but he brings his track record of success for implementing growth in non-profit organizations. I look forward to seeing how The RASC will grow under his leadership."

Phil has a history of working in non-profit organizations. His first managerial role was at SMARTRISK, where he rose through the ranks over nine years before being offered the position of President. After accomplishing everything he set out to do at SMARTRISK, Phil accepted the role of Executive Director at Sustain Ontario.

Phil also runs a successful consulting business and has worked with several high-profile organizations including Brock University, The Canadian Speech Society and The Jays Care Foundation.

On top of his impressive work history, Phil earned his PhD in Psychology from the University of Toronto. He lives in Toronto with his wife Mary and his three cats. In his spare time, Phil likes to travel, play tabletop role-playing games, and is both an amateur mixologist and professional magician.

"I'm thrilled to be The RASC's Executive Director," says Groff. "I hope to visit each Centre in the coming months, and I'm looking forward to working with each and every member of The RASC to help grow our astronomical society into the vibrant and dynamic organization we know it can be."

[Please join us in welcoming Phil Groff](#) to the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada!

GA 2020 Survey



Help us make the 2020 General Assembly in Vancouver our best one yet!

Please take a moment and [fill out a survey](#) to help Vancouver Centre estimate attendance to the 2020 GA.

The 2020 GA will be held from Friday, June 5 to Sunday, June 7 at the Executive Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre in Coquitlam B.C. Hotel rooms have been recently renovated and there are multiple amenities for hotel guests including access to a gym and housekeeping services during your stay. There will be one lecture taking place at Simon Fraser University, with an opportunity to visit the Trottier Observatory afterwards.

Registration fee details will be released once we have a better estimate of the number of people wanting to attend.

Keep an eye out on the [GA Website](#) for updates!

Your survey response will help the GA planning committee, and will not be made public.

[Complete the 2020 GA Survey](#)

**Join our Marketing and
Communications Committee!**



The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada is looking for experienced communications and marketing professionals to help create, implement and amplify our new communications strategy.

The objectives of this new group will be as follows:

- Unification of branding in marketing materials for distribution nationwide
- Strengthening connections between RASC Centres through internal communication strategies
- Amplification of our message by sharing our love of amateur astronomy across the country

If you're interested in helping us grow our organization, both locally and nationally, please reach out to our Marketing and Communications Coordinator [Eric Wickham](#). Include why you'd like to be a part of the committee, what you envision doing in this role, and some work samples that demonstrate expertise in your field. **The deadline to apply to the Marketing and Communications Committee is October 18, at 11:59pm.**

Youth Committee seeking more members



The RASC Youth Committee is entering its second year and we are seeking engaged, enthusiastic and hard-working youth members interested in sharing their love of astronomy with other young people. We are currently developing an online community for youth members and other new member outreach programs, as well as preparing for the 2020 General Assembly and ensuring representation of youth in the society.

Meetings are held between four and eight times a year. We aim to create a balanced, diverse and geographically representative

committee.

Please send your resume if you have one (or a short summary of your areas of interest) and a brief description of why you are interested in this position to Jenna Hinds at jenna.hinds@rasc.ca by **October 28th at 11:59pm PT**.

The full committee mandate is available [here](#).

New Views of The Heavens for Halifax Centre



The Halifax Centre held its Annual BBQ on September 20, 2019 at the St. Croix Observatory. Members of all levels of experience with night skies gathered together in a social event for fun and a night of observing. The weather could not have been better (24° C, sunny, windless, and very few pesky flying insects). A hearty meal of burgers, hotdogs, vegetarian chili, beverages, and dessert was enjoyed by all.

One of the main reasons for this celebration was to acknowledge Jane and Alfred Howard of North Grand Pre, NS and their very generous donation of a Celestron XLT-EDGEHD 8, with both a Telrad and 9 x 50 finder. Included also were a “Hyperstar” module

in which the Cassegrain secondary mirror can be replaced, thereby converting the telescope into an f/2 camera, plus an ATIK 428EX colour CCD, electronic focuser, and a Celestron Advanced VX equatorial mount.

The Howards were presented with a plaque as way of thanking them for their donation. Jane Howard stated the components were purchased five years ago for her husband's birthday but that they didn't use the equipment to its full capacity. She stated, "Having met you all, we can now easily imagine the fun you'll have with the telescope. It couldn't have been put to better use. Take care and enjoy!"

Following the presentation, Blair MacDonald set up the newly acquired equipment. He demonstrated how to put it together and how to use it during the observing session. A group used the equipment to take photos until the clouds covered possible targets around 11:00 p.m. (18° C & windless). All in all, it was a wonderful evening for all involved.

Check out this photo of the Eagle Nebula taken with the donated telescope!



Notes from the Observing Committee

Observing Certifications

Twenty members and one non-RASC individual have earned a RASC Observing Certificate in 2019:

Explore the Universe:

Jean-Mark Drapeu – New Brunswick
Kevin Dromereski – Winnipeg
Corrine Robinson – Winnipeg
Robin Clarke - Winnipeg
Cole Beselaera - Sarnia
Berta Beltran – Edmonton
Thomas Bracken – Montreal
Nicole Laporte – Montreal
Vasileios Varsamis – Greece (non-member)

Explore the Moon: - Telescope
Randy Enkin - Victoria
Larissa Awad - Mississauga
Henry Leparskas – London

Explore the Moon: - Binoculars
Leon Brown - Calgary

Messier:

Ingrid G. de Bude - Ottawa
Chris Vaughan - Toronto
Nick Pierre - Toronto
Dennis Pilon - Regina
Wes Loudon

Finest NGC:

Nick Pierre - Toronto

Isabel Williamson Lunar:

Kirby Alguire - Unattached

There are a couple of Centres that aren't Certification Centres for the Explore the Universe Program. The Observing Committee is continuing its efforts to have all RASC Centres be the local "go-to" for this program.

Participating Centres for the Explore the Universe program can be found on the RASC website [here](#).

Any RASC Centre with an active observing group should consider becoming a **Local Certification Centre**: The Centre must identify a member who will review and approve applications for the Explore the Universe certificate (ideally, that member would be an active observer who promotes RASC Observing Programs and mentors beginning observers). Send the name to the RASC Observing Chair for inclusion in the above list.

Advanced Observing Tips for Planetary Nebulae

- Overall, would you describe the planetary as: easy, difficult, or absent from the field of view?
- Is the nebula stellar in appearance, or can a disk be seen? Try different magnifications.

- What is the shape of the disk (round, elongated, stellar)? Does it contain any irregularities?
- Are the edges of the planetary sharp or diffuse?
- Is the centre brighter, darker, or the same uniformity as the outer ring?
- Can a central star be seen? Try very high magnification.
- As a function of aperture, some planetaries 'blink' with the use of averted vision, but only at particular magnifications. Try this and describe what you find.
- Some planetary nebulae are seemingly invisible. An OIII filter might allow you to see a planetary that you can't detect at first glance or might allow you to see more detail in what appears to be a fairly bland object. What does the filter add?
- Some planetaries appear stellar, and thus can't be separated from the background stars. In such cases, try rapidly flicking an OIII filter between your eye and the eyepiece. You may be able to reveal a star-like planetary, as it will not dim as much as the other stars in the presence of the filter.
- Are there any other deep sky objects located nearby?

Now Available!



We have new indigenous star wheels [available in The RASC Store!](#) The Native Skywatchers Planisphere include four different star wheels with Ojibwe, Cree, D(L)akota and Greek constellations, including constellations such as *mooz* (the moose), *keya* (the turtle) and *maang* (the loon). This complements the *Ojibwe Sky Star Map Constellation Guide* also [available in our store](#) that tells stories of the Ojibwe constellations.

The RASC Store is the only place you can purchase this item online, and we have limited quantities! [Get yours today!](#)

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The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
4920 Dundas St. West, Suite 203
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