

## Candidate Statement: Andrew Blanchard

I am seeking election to the RASC Board of Directors to help ensure the continued revitalization, growth, and relevance of our Society. I believe strongly in the value of grassroots leadership and innovation — and I bring both to the table.

## RASC Background

I joined the Hamilton Centre in the early 1990s and have proudly served our members for over three decades. My service has included:

- **Three terms as Centre President**, with multiple terms as Vice-President and Treasurer
- **Founder of AstroCATS** (Canada's largest telescope expo) and **AstroCAPS**, our outreach capstone event
- Led **youth-focused programs** like Scouting, which helped revive and grow our Centre
- Recipient of the **RASC Service Award (2016)**
- Honoured by the IAU with **Minor Planet (21336) Andyblanchard**

## Personal and Professional Background

I bring over 35 years of leadership experience as a **financial planner, advisor, and portfolio manager**, preceded by 11 years in banking. Throughout my career, I specialized in **problem-solving, strategic planning, and corporate revitalization** — skills I believe are directly relevant to the RASC Board. I retired as the owner of **three successful corporations**.

Outside of my professional life, I'm a **licensed commercial pilot**, an **avid chess player**, and a **passionate astrophotographer**. I live in **Burlington, Ontario**, with my wife of 46 years.

## What I Hope to Contribute

I want to bring **fresh thinking and actionable solutions** to the Board — particularly around the Society's financial model and governance. Today, National retains the vast majority of membership dues, leaving Centres underfunded and struggling to deliver programming and outreach. This approach seems backwards.

It's my opinion and time to **redefine National's role**: not as the primary recipient of members funds, but as a **support hub for our Centres**. The true strength of RASC lies in its grassroots — in local leadership, outreach, and public engagement. National should exist **to serve and uplift** that network.

When I get involved — as many will attest — **solutions and action plans unfold**, and I don't step away after a year. I stay the course **until the job is done**.

Respectfully,

**Andrew (Andy) Blanchard**

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