

BULLETIN



OF THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

April 2011 - Volume 6, Number 4

Ian Levstein, Editor

We welcome your comments on the *Bulletin*. Email them to the Editor at bulletin@rasc.ca.

A PDF version of the *Bulletin* is available at: <http://www.rasc.ca/im/bulletin/201104.pdf>

A text-only version of the *Bulletin* is available at: <http://www.rasc.ca/im/bulletin/201104.txt>

► News @ RASC.ca

Invitation to GA2011

by [Paul Trudel](#), GA2011 Organizing Committee

The members of the Winnipeg Centre invite you to celebrate our 100th anniversary and attend the General Assembly of the RASC, to be held between June 30 and July 3 at the University of Manitoba.

Ten reasons why you should be here:

10. Winnipeg, at the junction of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers, is a meeting place with a 6000-year history
9. We have a new airport - maybe
8. Aurora
7. It's our 100th birthday
6. The UofM has new residence and conference facilities
5. Good food
4. Arts and culture - stay a couple of extra days and see Blue Rodeo open the Folk Festival
3. Our program: Four invited speakers, dinosaur digging, steam trains, the renowned Manitoba Museum
2. Our skies - at night and during the day
1. Well, next year is 2012 and we all know what the Mayans have promised...



This years' speakers include **Dr. Christine Wilson** from McMaster University, **Alan Dyer**, **Dr. Samar Safi-Harb** from the University of Manitoba, and **Dr. Paul Delaney** from Your University.

To view the program, register for the conference, and choose other offerings, go to [Winnipeg RASC GA](#).

Come and celebrate astronomy, Canada Day, science, and art with us over the July long weekend.

Submit Your Ideas for the 2012 *Observer's Handbook* Challenge

by [Alister Ling](#)

Share with us a wonderful visual observing experience you've had (or want to have!) that might inspire hundreds of skygazers to try as well. Aim for an event or object that will leave observers thinking "that would be cool!". It can require a telescope or be visible to the unaided eye, just as long as it's not hopelessly beyond the reach of most amateur astronomers. Will you play a role in helping fellow

observers achieve a personal best, and enjoy an experience out of the ordinary?

Please communicate this to your Centre members, and send ideas to [Alister Ling](#) or [David Chapman](#).

Can You Help? Open Positions on National Council

by [Colin Haig](#), 2nd VP

Per RASC By-Law No 1, the Nomination Committee is seeking nominations for volunteers to fill key positions on Council starting July 2011.

The first position, National Secretary will open up. **James Edgar**, has indicated a willingness to volunteer for a second 3-year term, however if there are other individuals interested in the role, please submit a nomination per section 6.05(2). This person should have strong organizational skills, be familiar with our By-Laws, and have excellent minute-taking and correspondence skills. The Nominating Committee has set April 25 as the deadline for nominations. The list of Candidates for this elected officer position will be published 60 days prior to the meeting at the General Assembly, if there are any new candidates.

Our Membership and Promotion Committee is seeking a new Chair. Our new marketing plan will draw on the leadership of the MAP committee to help execute the strategy. We're seeking dynamic individuals with any of the following: marketing and public-relations skills, an interest in promotion, graphic design, social media, membership service, and public outreach.

In 2012, we will start the search for a new Treasurer, as **Mayer Tchelebon's** term will be up at the 2012 GA. If you have financial or accounting background, familiarity with regulatory matters related to charitable organizations, and/or a professional accounting designation, please express your interest to the Nominating Committee. Ideally, we'd like to ramp up potential candidates in the financial side of the Society's operations in early 2012.

For more information, contact [me](#).

2012 Observer's Calendar - Call for Images

by [David Lane](#), National Office

Astronomical images of all types are invited for consideration for publication in the 2012 *Observer's Calendar* including: deep sky, Solar System, and dramatic astronomically themed landscapes. Images can be prime focus, piggyback, eyepiece projection, or fixed tripod; and recorded on a digital/CCD camera, film, or Webcam. Submitted images must be of sufficient quality and resolution to reproduce well at 9.5" x 12" and must be compatible with the "landscape" orientation of the calendar images. Generally, this will mean a resolution of at least 1200 pixels tall. We will also consider making a quilt or mosaic of lunar/planetary Webcam-captured images (so as not to over magnify an individual image for publication).

If you already have a gallery of images on your Web site, send me the link, but also direct me to your favourites. Both well-known and obscure objects are published in the calendar, so to avoid having the same objects used too often, I will be screening for those that may have appeared in recent years. Please email submissions to [me](#). While I have a bottomless email box, it's best to send me jpegs first. If your image is selected, I will request a full-resolution tiff version. The deadline for submissions is 2011 May 31. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Teaching Circumpolar Motion

by [James E. Hesser](#), RASC Honorary President

Members of the Victoria Centre took great pride in seeing **John McDonald**'s beautiful star-trail image on the cover of the April *Journal. Bulletin* readers might be interested to know that individual images that made up John's stunning shot are available as a short video that may be viewed [here](#). This year in my school presentations, I've been experimenting with an introductory three-part presentation that includes John's video and IYA-produced materials, after which I've been meeting with individual classes to talk about other subjects of interest.

The first activity involves having the students assemble their personal IYA Star Finder produced by the RASC and going through its use, which naturally involves the concept of circumpolar motion. Next comes John's video demonstrating circumpolar motion through his spectacular time-lapse photography that culminated in the cover image used by the *Journal*. Finally, I've been showing the Mi'kmaq story of Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters, which may be downloaded from the (archival) [IYA Web site](#). It reflects the deeply embedded significance of circumpolar motion in Mi'kmaq culture and opens avenues for interesting discussion. (The Muin story is now available as a beautiful printed book for children published by Cape Breton University Press, representing another inspiring legacy of IYA in Canada.) Reception of the presentation seems to be favourable, such that I plan to continue exploring it as a step towards dealing with basic concepts that elude so many, as illustrated in the classic, [A Private Universe](#).

Saving the RASC on Old Media Through New Media

by [R.A. Rosenfeld](#), RASC Archivist, and [Walter MacDonald](#), Webmaster

We've been around for a long time (well, not us personally, but the Society). During the nearly century and a half of its existence, the RASC has been recorded on whatever technology was to hand. Today's cutting edge is tomorrow's trailing edge and, as technologies become obsolete, the media and the means to experience them degrade and become unobtainable. Many important moments in the life of our Centres - and of the national body - were recorded by analogue and early digital methods. The RASC's Webmaster and Archivist would like to see that material preserved for our future members to enjoy (or chuckle over), and refurbished for present instruction and entertainment. If any of you have any audio or visual material you think should be digitized, and if you would like it to have a home on rasc.ca for the benefit of all, we'd like to hear from you. Contact either [Walter](#) or [me](#).

William Thomas Tutte

by [R.A. Rosenfeld](#), [James Edgar](#), and [Deborah Thompson](#), National Office

A British researcher, **Howard Cadman**, is looking for information on **Prof. [William Thomas Tutte](#)**, OC, FRS, (1917-2002), a lifetime member of the RASC and a former National Librarian. Tutte was one of the major British code breakers at the top-secret Bletchley Park site during WWII, and went on to a distinguished career as a leading figure in theoretical mathematics in the UK and Canada (Tutte polynomial, Tutte Fragment). Mr. Cadman is looking for personal reminiscences of Prof. Tutte that any RASC members who knew him would like to share. Mr. Cadman's goal is to produce a biography of Prof. Tutte, and a documentary.

Howard Cadman can be reached [here](#).

The CASCA Conference

by [Peter Jedicke](#), London Centre

CASCA, the association of professional research astronomers in Canada, has an annual conference that is separate from our RASC General Assembly. This year, CASCA's conference is in London, Ontario, hosted by the University of Western Ontario. It will be a three-day event from May 31 to June 2 featuring technical sessions that focus on all the major branches of astronomy, as well as the Plaskett Medal Lecture, the Petrie Memorial Lecture and the Hogg Memorial Lecture. (The RASC is formally a partner in the Plaskett Medal and the Hogg Lecture.) The Hogg Lecture will take place on Tuesday evening, May 31, at the Wolf Performance Hall in the Central Branch of the London Public Library. This year's Hogg Lecturer is **Dimitar Sasselov**, who studies exoplanets and was quoted in the recent Maclean's Magazine article on that topic. RASC members and the general public are invited; admission to the Hogg Lecture is free.

All information about the CASCA conference can be found [here](#). RASC members who wish to attend the conference may register on the Web site. Please select the category "Undergraduate Students" to receive the least-expensive registration rate (\$100) and then fill in "RASC" in the slot called "Institution."

If you wish to attend the CASCA annual banquet, that's an additional \$70. Questions? Email [me](#).

Jasper National Park now DSP

by [Robert Dick](#), Chair, Light-Pollution Abatement Committee

On March 26, the National Council of the RASC approved the designation of Jasper National Park as the 13th Canadian Dark-Sky Preserve. The 1.1-million hectare park is managed by Parks Canada. The Minister of the Environment announced the designation a couple of weeks ago. The Jasper Dark-sky Preserve is the largest DSP in the world – primarily due to the vast expanse of our national, and provincial, park systems.

Astronomy Day Ideas

by [Ron Macnaughton](#), Chair, Education Committee

This year's astronomy days are Saturday May 7 and October 1. Both have an early crescent Moon rather than the usual first-quarter Moon. Here are some ideas:

- light-pollution display
- [predict and point out](#) ISS pass and Iridium flares
- project on a screen or wall (far from scopes) PowerPoint slide shows of APOD images and/or member images, get visitor to judge
- run workshops for kids: [comet making](#) or [crater making](#)
- Solar System "Amazing Race"

A couple of other notes:

- Centres can get insurance coverage, but you must notify [National](#)
- Centres can get Star Finders or Cherche-etoiles [here](#)

If anyone has other ideas or requests for information contact [me](#).

► The Sky this Month

What's New in the Sky

Members are encouraged to check out the [Northern Skies](#) section of the RASC Web site. Thanks to **Gary Boyle** for keeping us all in the know.

► Dates to Remember

- 2011 April - [Global Astronomy Month](#)
- 2011 May 7 - Astronomy Day
- 2011 June 30-July 4 - [2011 General Assembly](#), Winnipeg
- 2011 July 1-4 - [Stargazing Manitoulin](#), Gordon's Park Dark-Sky Preserve
- 2011 August 5-8 - [Manitoulin Star Party](#), Gordon's Park Dark-Sky Preserve



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