



**March 2018 - Volume 13, Number 3**

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

Please note that the RASC Society Office will be closed on **Friday, March 30** for **Good Friday. Have a safe and Happy Easter weekend!**



Photo credit: The observatory would be situated on the [Sierra Remote Observatories](#) (SRO) site in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, California.

## **Remote Telescope Project**

To celebrate the RASC's 150th anniversary, the Fundraising Committee and Board of Directors have approved a special project: to fund and obtain a remote telescope and develop programs to use it.

Initial plans are to purchase and set up a 16- to 24-inch telescope in a remote site, such as the Sierra Remote Observatories site in California. Outfitted with various cameras, the telescope will be used for by four groups:

- Astroimagers will decide what the telescope will image and then download and process the image data. They will learn through email and webinars how to process their raw image data.
- The scientific research team will decide which research projects to work on, what data to obtain, and then how to analyze the data, hopefully making some discoveries and publishing papers!
- The public outreach group will run live sessions online for school groups, youth groups, and anyone who wishes to log in and participate in public sessions. We will also be able to link high school classes with local astronomy graduate students to help students plan research projects and analyze data from the telescope—a great way to encourage young people to follow a STEM education path.
- As a promotional tool, images from the telescope will be made available to national and local press photo editors and journalists for publication.

Only RASC members will be able to participate in the telescope user groups. An annual user fee will be charged to help offset the costs of running the telescope.

The remote telescope will be a major benefit of membership, one of the largest additions in recent history. It will become a major part of our public outreach program and help promote the Society through its connections with the public, students, and the media. It will provide a way to bring major citizen science programs to members of the public. It will serve as a vehicle for the Society to partner with astronomy faculties across the country. And most importantly, members will be able to do astronomy in the winter!

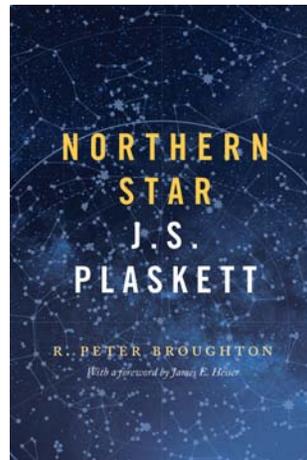
An example of what can be done with such a telescope? A 16-inch telescope on the Sierra Remote Observatories site imaged the Tesla Roadster last month as it headed away from Earth!

We are looking for volunteers to help set up and run programs. Please send your questions and ideas to [remotetelescope@rasc.ca](mailto:remotetelescope@rasc.ca)

Look for a fundraising campaign in the spring to kick off our Remote Telescope!

**Northern Star – RASC **NEW** publication: By Peter Broughton \$90.00**

Be in the know. Get your copy today: a beautifully-imaged, 400+pg hardcover book. Northern Star is the first full-scale biography of major Canadian astronomer John Stanley Plaskett. Broughton's accessible and engaging prose combined with rich illustrations illuminates Plaskett's achievements and motivations, and the social, political, economic, and religious milieu surrounding them.



## **Board of Directors News**

by [Chris Gainor](#), RASC 1st Vice-President

The RASC Board of Directors has decided to increase Society dues by \$3.00 per year, effective 2018 March 1. This will have the effect of raising annual society dues by \$2.00 for youth, and \$1.00 per family member and per youth in family memberships.

This increase is close to the increase in the cost of living in Canada over the past year.

This is the first dues increase for RASC members in nearly three years. Since that time, successive RASC Boards have managed the RASC budget amidst rising costs for member services. Last year, the Board reached a consensus that the time had come to raise RASC dues to keep the Society's expenses and revenues in balance, and the Board discussed the RASC's financial situation with National Council before deciding on this dues increase.

The Board believes that further dues increases will be necessary in 2019 and in future years. The Board will supply National Council with more information about the Society's financial position before future dues increases, and we will make this information available to members who request it.

Membership in the RASC gives members the Observer's Handbook, SkyNews, the electronic version of the Journal of the RASC, and access to many other quality publications and services, including educational and certificate programs for observers. We are the voice for Canadians who love astronomy. The Board, National Council, staff and volunteers of the RASC are working hard to provide the best services possible to our members at the lowest cost.

## **2018 Election of Board of Directors - Call for Nominees**

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 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 \(www.rasc.ca/rasc-policy-manual\)](http://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 who 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 2018 GA will be held in Calgary, 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 soon.

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.

## **RASC 2018 – Calgary Centre**

### **Call for Paper and Poster Presentations**

by **Judy Sterner**, Chair, Paper and Posters sub-committee, Calgary GA 2018

We invite you to submit a proposal for a paper or a poster to be presented during the 2018 General Assembly in Calgary. We are celebrating 150 years of the RASC and 60 years of the Calgary Centre, so presentations with a historical focus are particularly apt. The abstract deadline is April 30. You will be notified by May 20 if your paper or poster topic has been accepted.

Further details regarding abstract submission and on paper and poster sessions will be posted on the GA 2018 website. Paper length will be in the 15 - 20 minute range. Posters should fit a 4 x 4 foot (120 x 120 cm) board.

Contact: Judy Sterner  
Chair, Paper & Posters sub-committee Calgary GA 2018  
([judy.sterner@gmail.com](mailto:judy.sterner@gmail.com))

## **RASC 2018 Working Group**

by **Randall Rosenfeld**, RASC Archivist

Cultural Connections is a RASC sesquicentennial theme to encourage Centres to explore collaborations with other creators of culture in their local or regional communities. Ideas for developing projects at the intersections of astronomy with other cultural expressions can be found at:  
<https://www.rasc.ca/cultural-connections-resources>.

In order to provide some further support for Centres, there are modest funds available for such projects. Any Centre may apply for up to \$500 to cover expenses in developing or mounting a RASC 2018 Cultural Connections project. As there is a total \$5,000 cap on the fund, we encourage Centres to apply early.

To apply, send an email with the following information to [randall.rosenfeld@utoronto.ca](mailto:randall.rosenfeld@utoronto.ca) :

- the name of the project
- the partner institution or group
- target audience for the project
- duration of the project
- goal of the project
- the amount requested
- what the requested amount will be spent on

Decisions on awards for eligible applications deemed worth of support by the RASC 2018 Working Group will be made monthly, until the fund runs dry.

## **RASC 2018 History Podcasts**

by [Randall Rosenfeld](#), RASC Archivist

The RASC 2018 History Podcasts have started! This series ([www.rasc.ca/rasc-2018-podcasts](http://www.rasc.ca/rasc-2018-podcasts)) offers a contextual view of our history through intriguing (and sometimes surprising) stories of the RASC over 150 years, based on surviving artifacts, the members who made and used them, and what we've learned—and haven't learned—about doing citizen science.

Episodes are being released every month throughout 2018.

The hosts of the RASC 2018 podcasts are Heather Laird (Director, RASC), and R.A. Rosenfeld (RASC Archivist).

The podcasts can be accessed on:

- <https://soundcloud.com/raschistorypodcast>
- <https://www.rasc.ca/rasc-2018-podcasts>
- <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/rasc-history-podcast/id1333749186?mt=2>

And you can follow us on <https://twitter.com/raschistory?lang=en>.

## Observing News

by **Jay Anderson**, Astronomy Enthusiast

The International Solar Eclipse Conference 2018 (SEC 2018) will be held this year in Genk, Belgium from August 2 to 5<sup>th</sup>. This conference is organized by the amateur solar eclipse community and is held in years in which there is no central eclipse. This is the sixth SEC; previous conferences were held in Antwerp, Milton Keynes, Los Angeles, New Delhi, and New Mexico. The SEC brings solar eclipse enthusiasts, professionals, and amateurs together so they can share experiences, information, and knowledge, not only during lectures but also during informal events.

Further information can be found at [www.sec2018.be](http://www.sec2018.be) .

## Annual Report

by **James Edgar**, A Past-President

Thanks all the Centres for helping complete the 2017 Annual Report in a timely manner -- only three Centres have not sent reports as of today, and one has written and is in "Pending" status.

## The Future of RASC General Assemblies

by **Chris Gainor**, RASC 1st Vice-President

While we look forward to the 2018 RASC General Assembly in Calgary, the RASC Board of Directors and National Council are considering the future of RASC General Assemblies.

Since the first GA took place in Montreal in 1960, these meetings have usually taken place on university campuses. In recent years, we have experimented with different formats, including coupling the GA with the 2009 Saskatchewan Summer Star Party, and with AstroCATS at the 2016 London GA. Some GAs take place jointly with other groups, including the 2019 GA, which will take place in Toronto

on June 14 to 16, 2019, in conjunction with the American Association of Variable Star Observers, AAVSO.

In recent years, Centres have become increasingly reluctant to host GAs, reflecting changes in how universities handle meetings like ours that have increased the cost and complexity for organizers.

GAs combine Society business meetings, including the Annual General Meeting, Board meetings and National Council meetings, along with astronomy talks and workshops, and social activities capped by the annual banquet where awards are given out. A typical GA lasts three or four days.

We want to make GAs more attractive to members, and easier to organize. What changes to the GA format would make you more likely to take part? What do you like about the current format? Most GAs take place on the July 1 weekend or the Victoria Day weekend. Do you think they should take place at those times or another time, away from holiday weekends?

Please let me know what you think at [volunteer@rasc.ca](mailto:volunteer@rasc.ca), or contact your friendly neighbourhood National Council Rep or Board Member. I have developed a discussion paper about GAs, which I will be happy to share with any member who requests a copy.

## **The March Equinox**

by [Roland Dechesne](#), Chair, Membership and Development Committee

After some false hope with Groundhog Day in early February, Canadians look forward to the Spring, Vernal, or March Equinox as a sign that parkas and snowstorms will soon be just a fading memory. Traditions around the Vernal Equinox are not just a Canadian thing though, many cultures in the Northern Hemisphere mark this time with ceremonies. Why not seek out a local event where you or your Centre can participate? The following link is to a brochure that explains the astronomical underpinnings of equinoxes as well as some of the cultural traditions tied to this time of year.

[http://calgary.rasc.ca/downloads/Astronomy\\_and\\_Cultural\\_Significance\\_of\\_the\\_March\\_Equinox.pdf](http://calgary.rasc.ca/downloads/Astronomy_and_Cultural_Significance_of_the_March_Equinox.pdf)

## **CASCA-Westar Lectureship in Astronomy**

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

[http://casca.ca/?page\\_id=7598](http://casca.ca/?page_id=7598)

The CASCA-Westar Lectureship in Astronomy is a program that makes it possible to arrange for a professional astronomer to visit and share with your community the most recent discoveries about the universe!

The CWL will primarily sponsor visits by professional astronomers to schools and communities that currently do not have easy access to nearby post-secondary institutions with astronomy programs and facilities.

If your community would like to apply to host a CASCA-Westar Lecture, please see our list of speakers and then fill out the application to host a CASCA-Westar Lecturer. ( [http://casca.ca/?page\\_id=8658](http://casca.ca/?page_id=8658) )

If you are an astronomer who is interested in becoming a CASCA-Westar Lecturer, please see the page on Becoming a CASCA-Westar Lecturer.

Westar Lectureship/Le programme de conférences Westar

Le programme de conférences CASCA-Westar en astronomie permet à votre communauté d'accueillir un(e) astronome professionnel(le) qui partagera avec vous les plus récentes découvertes en astronomie!

Le programme défraiera l'essentiel des coûts reliés à la visite d'écoles, de centres communautaires, de musées ou autres par des astronomes professionnels canadiens dans des communautés qui n'ont pas accès localement à des institutions de haut savoir en astronomie.

Si votre communauté souhaite organiser une conférence CASCA-Westar, consultez notre liste de conférenciers et conférencières et complétez le formulaire d'application. ( [http://casca.ca/?page\\_id=8680&lang=fr](http://casca.ca/?page_id=8680&lang=fr) )

Si vous êtes un astronome intéressé à devenir un conférencier CASCA-Westar, veuillez consulter la page pour devenir un conférencier CASCA-Westar .

Application deadline March 31.

List of CASCA-Westar Lecturers:

Niayesh Afshordi, University of Waterloo/Perimeter Institute Etienne Artigau, Université de Montréal, Institut de recherche sur les exoplanètes (iREx) John Blakeslee, Herzberg Astronomy & Astrophysics Terry Bridges, Okanagan College Stephane Courteau, Queen's University Louise Edwards, California Polytechnic State University Sarah Gallagher, Western University Dave Hanes, Queen's University Mark Halpern, University of British Columbia Jeremy Heyl, University of British Columbia Renee Hlozek, Dunlap Institute, University of Toronto Doug Johnstone, National Research Council of Canada Christian Marois, CNRC/Herzberg Jaymie Matthews, University of British Columbia Stanimir Metchev, The University of Western Ontario Marie-Eve Naud, Université de Montréal, Institut de recherche sur les exoplanètes (iREx) Laura Parker, McMaster University Levon Pogosian, Simon Fraser University Harvey Richer, University of British Columbia Jason Rowe, Bishop's University, Institute for research on exoplanets (iREx) Jon Willis, University of Victoria Christine Wilson, McMaster University

## **Call for Images 2019**

by **Paul Gray**, Editor, *Observer's Calendar*

Astronomical images and sketches of all types are invited for consideration for publication in the 2019 RASC *Observer's Calendar* including: deep sky, wide field, solar system, astronomical sketches 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 3825 x 3028 pixels for the print ready tiff. 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 website, send me the link, but **please also direct me to your recent 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 the past 3 years.

Please email submissions to me at [Paul Gray](#). While I have a bottomless email box, it's best to send me jpegs first. If your image is selected, we will request a full resolution tiff version. Full resolution tiffs will be required for use in print. The deadline for submissions is 2018 March 31. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at the above mentioned email address.

## Imaging the Skies Contest

by [Eric Briggs](#), RASC, Toronto Centre

Celebrate The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada's 150th Anniversary by joining our Astrophotography, Sketching and Creative Works Contest.

We are particularly eager to have young people and newcomers to Astronomy be part of this project. We encourage you to get outside and do some observing of daytime and nighttime skies during 2018. Record your observations either with photography or in some other creative way, such as drawing, sketching, painting, or quilting, for example.

There are two streams to enter:

- Astrophotography and Sketching at the Eyepiece.
- Creative Works for all other media: painting, drawing, printmaking, textile art, stained glass, collage, mixed media etc.

You can self-select as **Novice**, **Intermediate**, or **Experienced** for skill level.

Submit your entries anytime during 2018. Vote for your favourite images in all the categories. Winners will be chosen by public voting and an RASC judging panel at the end of the year.

There are no big, expensive prizes but the “fame and glory” will be there along with some RASC recognition.

Additional information can be found at: <http://imaginingtheskies.ca>

## **Asteroids with Canadian Connections**

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

The following has been added to the List of Asteroids with Canadian Connections:

(306128) Pipher = 2010 JP109

Discovered 2010 May 12 at WISE.

Judith Pipher (b. 1940) is an astrophysicist and Emeritus Professor at the University of Rochester. One of the first U.S. astronomers to observe the skies with an infrared array camera, she is known as “the mother of infrared astronomy.” She helped build and test infrared detectors for the Spitzer Space Telescope. Judith Pipher was born in Toronto. She graduated from Leaside High School in 1958 and earned a B.A. in astronomy from the University of Toronto in 1962.

Orbit Type: Main Belt

Ref: MPC 108698

<https://rasc.ca/asteroids/306128>

(25942) Walborn = 2001 EH9

Discovered 2001 Mar. 2 by the Lowell Observatory Near-Earth Object Search at the Anderson Mesa Station.

Nolan R. Walborn (1945-2018) was a stellar spectroscopist specializing in the optical and ultraviolet morphology of hot, massive stars, such as O and B, Wolf-Rayet, and Luminous Blue Variables. His studies included star forming

regions in the Milky Way and the Magellanic Clouds. He held a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Toronto between Spring 1971 and September 1975, when he left to take up a position with the Cerro Tololo InterAmerican Observatory in La Serena, Chile.

Orbit Type: Main Belt

Ref: MPC 108697

<https://rasc.ca/asteroids/25942>

## Montreal Centre Upcoming Events

by [Carl Jorgensen](#), Secretary, Montreal Centre

Friday, March 2, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Montreal Centre Members Arbo Clubhouse at the Morgan Arboretum , 150 Chemin des Pins, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue.

Friday, March 9, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Public Event “Wonders of the Evening Sky” at the Morgan Arboretum. Public Observing following the presentation (weather Permitting).

Saturday, March 10, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Members Arbo Clubhouse at the Morgan Arboretum.

Wednesday, March 14, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Members Observing at the Morgan Arboretum Conservation Center. The Bellevue Observatory will not be open, so bring your own telescope or binoculars (weather permitting).

Saturday, March 17, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Members Offsite Observing at Thompson Park, 726 Rue Main, Hudson (weather permitting).

Saturday, March 24, 6:00 – 10:00 pm: Westmount Earth Hour public event at Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke St. W, Westmount. RASC Montreal Centre members man display tables promoting their Centre, on the inside and on the outside our members setup telescopes for public observing (weather permitting).

Saturday, March 31, 7:30 – 11:00 pm: Members Arbo Clubhouse at the Morgan Arboretum.

## 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.



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