 THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

 LA SOCIÉTÉ ROYALE D’ASTRONOMIE DU CANADA

Dear New Member:

**Welcome to The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC)!**

Thank you for joining the RASC and becoming a member of Canada’s largest astronomical organization with 30 centres across the country serving 5,000 members. We are so glad to welcome you as a member! Below are your member benefits:

* **Observer’s Handbook:** every year members receive a complimentary copy of this 350 page volume loved around the world. This is the definitive guide to the night sky packed with charts, data and articles about the Moon, Sun, planets, satellites, stars, deep sky and eclipses. (Retail value; $29.95).
* **SkyNews:** a free subscription to Canada’s astronomy magazine. Six issues per year are offered with star charts and articles on astrophotography, observing, telescopes and photography equipment. (Subscription value; $26.00).
* **The Journal:** free online access to Canada’s esteemed peer reviewed astronomy publication. Six issues per year offer in depth articles of historical, scientific, biographical or educational interest. Additional fee for hard copy. (Subscription value; $93.45).
* **Explore the Universe:** complimentary introduction to astronomy book. (Retail value; $17.95)
* **RASC Centres:** with 30 volunteer-run locations across the country, members can access observatories, classes and lectures and are invited to Star Parties and observing sessions. Many centres mentor beginners, loan telescopes and provide observing certificate programs. (Retail value; priceless).
* **Annual General Meeting:** members are invited to the General Assembly featuring special guests such as astronauts, scientists and authors. Papers are presented and workshops offered. The 2020 GA will be virtual due to COVID 19. Member registration fees vary.
* **Astronomy Publications and Merchandise:** RASC publishes excellent astronomy and observing books as well as educational resources such as Moon Gazer’s Guide and Star Finders. A calendar with award winning images, binoculars and other products can be purchased from the website.

Once again, welcome! We’re here to support your interest in astronomy. Please don’t hesitate to contact us as you begin your astronomical journey with RASC!

Clear skies,



Philip Groff, Ph.D

Executive Director

 THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

 LA SOCIÉTÉ ROYALE D’ASTRONOMIE DU CANADA

**The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC)**

**New Member’s Kit**

**Welcome to the RASC! Your New Member’s Kit includes:**

* Information on RASC member benefits and services
* Your Member’s Only login credentials to the RASC National website: <https://www.rasc.ca>

**RASC Overview**

**RASC History**

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada is a national, charitable, not-for-profit organization devoted to the advancement of astronomy and related sciences. There are 30 local Centres of the Society across the country.

The Society was founded on December 1st, 1868 when eight amateur astronomers began an astronomical club in Toronto. The growing group received its Royal Charter in 1903 with the permission of King Edward VII. The Governor General of Canada is our Viceregal Patron. Today, the RASC is made up of over 5,000 members, including both amateur and professional astronomers, across Canada and internationally.

**RASC Vision —** To be Canada’s premier organization of amateur and professional astronomers, to share scientific knowledge, and to foster collaboration in astronomical pursuits.

**RASC Mission —** To encourage improved understanding and inspire curiosity about the Universe and astronomy through public outreach, education, and support for astronomical research.

**RASC Values —** As a vital part of Canada’s science community, we support discovery through the scientific method, and we encourage people of all ages to learn about and enjoy astronomy. We focus on collaboration, fellowship, and enrichment of our community through diversity.

**RASC Membership**

We have three main classes of membership: **Regular**, **Youth**, and **Family.** Members of all three classes are full members of the Society and any local Centre(s) with which they may be affiliated. Members may also choose to be a “National member” and not be affiliated with a Centre. As a RASC member, you will receive national and local publications, along with a variety of services, and have voting privileges at both levels of the organization.

In order to qualify as a **Youth member**, you must be under 21 years old, or under 25 years old and attending a post-secondary institution.

A **family membership** is for family members who wish to support the Society,but who don’t require duplicate publications. All members must live at the same address to qualify for this membership.

**Affiliate memberships** are offered to members who wish to join more than one Centre. One can be a full member of one Centre, and an **Affiliate member** of one or more other Centres, which may require paying a nominal fee or fees.

**RASC Centres**

There are 30 Centres across Canada available for members to join. Our Centres offer local meetings, programs, and resources such as equipment loaning to their members. All Centres are listed below. If you’d like to learn more about a specific Centre, take a look at their websites which can be found at <https://www.rasc.ca/rasc-centres>

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Atlantic Canada**Halifax (1955)New Brunswick (2000)St. John’s (1965)**Québec**Centre francophone de Montréal (1947)Montréal (1918)**Yukon** Yukon (2016)  | **Ontario**Belleville (2003)Hamilton (1908)Kingston (1961)Kitchener-Waterloo (1980)London (1922)Mississauga (2006) Niagara (1960) Ottawa (1906)Sarnia (1981)Sudbury (2019)Thunder Bay (1988)Toronto (1868)Windsor (1944) | **Prairies**Calgary (1958)Edmonton (1932)Regina (1910)Saskatoon (1969)Winnipeg (1910)**British Columbia**Okanagan (1996)Prince George (2001)Sunshine Coast (2008)Vancouver (1931)Victoria (1914) |

**Members Only Benefits**

**Annual General Assembly**

Each year, a different Centre takes a turn at hosting the **General Assembly (GA).** All members are invited and encouraged to participate in a three-day conference to share astronomical ideas, attend workshops and tours, learn from recognized speakers, and attend the Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet. This conference serves as an amazing opportunity not only to engage with experts in the field, but also to network and learn from each other, by seeing what other Centres and members are working on. During the Annual Meeting, we also take time to recognize the outstanding achievements of our members through our Awards program. You can learn more about the General Assembly at <https://www.rasc.ca/general-assembly>

**Awards**

The RASC sponsors a number of awards for achievement in Canadian astronomy, including the *Plaskett Medal* (with CASCA), the *Chant Medal,* the *Ken Chilton Prize,* the *Qilak Award, Service Awards,* RASC *Fellowships,* and the *Simon Newcomb Award.* If you’d like to learn more about our awards, visit <https://www.rasc.ca/awards>.

**Volunteering**

We love to see our members volunteer and develop their leadership skills within the Society! If you are interested in volunteering on one or more of our working groups or committees, please contact the Society Office at nationaloffice@rasc.ca or call 1-888-924-7272. Here are some committees you can get involved with:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Astroimaging AwardsConstitutionEducation & Public OutreachFinance | FundraisingHistoryInclusivity & DiversityInformation TechnologyLight-Pollution AbatementMarketing & Communication | Membership & DevelopmentNominatingObservingPublicationsYouth  |

**Insurance**

The RASC General Liability insurance covers events described as “normal RASC activities.” This covers members at events sponsored by a Centre or the Society, including publicly advertised events. Centres holding events in public parks, malls, etc., are required to provide proof of insurance coverage, and should file a [Certificate of Insurance Request](https://rasc.ca/public-liability-insurance-information) for each event. If you have questions about the General Liability insurance, please reach out to Quan, our insurance broker with The Cooperators.

**Quan Nguyen**

4450 Walker Rd., Windsor, ON N8W 3T5
**Tel:** (519) 966 8070/(519) 566 9730

**Email:** quan\_nguyen@cooperators.ca

**Website:** [www.cooperators.ca/Quan-Nguyen](http://www.cooperators.ca/Quan-Nguyen)

**RASC Member E-services**

To find more information on member services and the Society’s local and national activities, please visit <https://www.rasc.ca>. Below are a few examples of resources you can find on the website:

* **Governance –** member information including items such as the Society’s By-laws
* **National Council –** minutes and reports from the Society’s National Council
* **Policy and Procedures –** “How to” information for Society volunteers
* **Resources –** tools and materials to assist Centres with their education and outreach programming

**Email Groups & Discussion Lists**

The Society has four major groups that promote discussion and cooperation between members:

* **RASCals –** this informal “town hall” links RASC members from across the country
* **Education –** a specialist group for astronomy educators sharing tips and techniques
* **Light-Pollution Abatement –** this group helps to fight wasteful lighting that damages the night sky
* **RASC-AG –** this astroimaging group is a specialty group that focuses on the demanding and rewarding disciplines of astroimaging using film, CCD cameras, and Webcams
* **AstroSketchers –** a forum for people who prefer to draw what they see in the eyepiece

In addition to these groups managed by the National Office, most Centres also have their own local email discussion lists. Subscriptions are usually arranged by contacting a member of the Centre Executive.

**Observing & Astroimaging**

The RASC offers seven observing programs to promote active observing, based on a selection of object lists published in the *Observer’s Handbook.* Observing programs are a great way to learn more about the night sky, challenge yourself, and get the most out of your membership! Our observing programs are in the table below. By successfully completing a program as a RASC member, you may apply for an official certificate issued by the Observing Committee. You can learn more about our Observing Programs at <https://www.rasc.ca/certificate-programs>.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Explore the UniverseExplore the MoonMessier Catalogue Finest NGC Objects | Isabel Williamson Lunar Observing ProgramDeep-Sky GemsDeep-Sky Challenge  |

In addition to our Observing Programs listed above, the RASC also offers members the opportunity to apply for an Astroimaging certificate. The purpose of this certificate is to introduce beginners to many types of astronomical imaging. There are several types of Astroimaging certificates available, such as Wide Field, Solar System, and Deep Sky. You can learn more about our Astroimaging program at <https://www.rasc.ca/astro-imaging-certificate>.

**RASC Membership Publications**

***Centre Publications***

Most Centres offer either a monthly or bi-monthly newsletter highlighting local activities and programming. You can find all Centre newsletters archives at <https://rasc.ca/newsletters>

**The *Journal***

The *Journal* is a bi-monthly electronic publication with articles on astronomy, the activities of the RASC and its Centres, research and review papers, and articles of interest to the astronomical community. The online copy of the *Journal* is available for download for all members at <https://www.rasc.ca/jrasc/recent-issues>. Members can also subscribe to the paper version of the RASC *Journal* for a small annual fee.

***Bulletin***

The *Bulletin* is a monthly electronic news digest with information about the Society and astronomy in Canada. You must provide a valid e-mail address to the Society to receive this publication.

***Observer’s Handbook***

The *Observer’s Handbook* was first published in 1907, and is an internationally acclaimed annual reference book. It includes basic data, information on time, optics, observing, the sky month-by-month, the Sun, Moon, planets, and satellites, asteroids, meteors, comets and dust, stars, nebulae, and maps of the night sky.

***SkyNews***

*SkyNews* is a bi-monthly Canadian magazine of astronomy and stargazing. Published by the RASC, you already get this publication for FREE as a member benefit!

***Observer’s Calendar***

The Society produces an annual calendar which provides data on sunrise/moonrise and sunset/moonset times, plus significant astronomical events throughout the year. The best part of the calendar is that the images used are astrophotos from our very own members!

***Skyways and Explorons l’astronomie***

Designed for Canadian teachers and youth-group leaders, this educator’s guide is available in English and French. It contains hands-on activities that are easy and fun, and that match the needs of Canada’s school science programs.

***RASC eNews***

The National website provides members with on-going information on amateur astronomy in Canada, including highlights, news from Centres and the professional community. You can find more information at <https://www.rasc.ca/news>. On the top left hand corner of the page, you can subscribe to the RASC’s RSS feed to have the eNews delivered to your newsreader program.

**Member Profile Update and Support**

If you would like to change your personal information or request information from the National Office, please create a support ticket at <https://www.rasc.ca/contact>, and our Membership & Publications Coordinator, Adela, will help you as soon as possible!

For more information, please contact the National Office through one of the methods below:

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

203-4920 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON M9A 1B7

**Tel:** 416-924-7973/1-888-924-7272 (toll-free)

**Email:** mempub@rasc.ca