



August 2016 - Volume 11, Number 8

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

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

News from the Society Office

by [Randy Attwood](#), RASC Executive Director

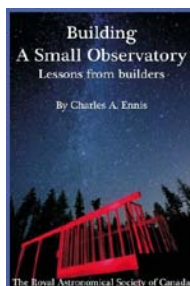
RASC Tours:

Arizona Astronomy Tour scheduled for September 2016!

After a successful trip to astronomy and space exploration sites in southern California last November, we are planning a five-day trip to Arizona in September to visit the following amazing astronomy sites: Kitt Peak National Observatory, Mount Lemmon SkyCenter, Lowell Observatory, Arizona Meteor Crater, with sightseeing in Sedona and Canyon de Chelly. Please check out the [website and PDF brochure](#) here! **If you are interested and want more information please contact Executive Director Randy Attwood at the National Office: execdir@rasc.ca .**

Society Office Closures: Please note the Society Office will be closed on Monday August 1 – Civic Holiday and Monday September 5th for Labour Day. Enjoy a safe long weekend!

NEW Item: [Building a Small Observatory for sale on eStore:](#)



This book is the result of interviews with 140 small observatory owners in 10 countries to discover what it takes to fund, build, and operate a small observatory. As a planning guide, it will help you maximize your chances of successfully creating a trouble free installation, and help find the best site and equipment. Learn from the experience of those who went before you. Don't make the mistakes that others have made! **Pricing: \$17.95 + shipping and taxes.**

NEW Item: **Observer's Calendar 2017**

A beautiful calendar showcasing RASC members' astroimages with information on what's up in the sky tonight. A perfect gift for the beginner and a must-have for the experienced observer. **Now available for purchase!**



NOTE to Centres: Please be advised to place your OC 2017 orders with Julia Neeser mempub@rasc.ca in order to get Calendars in time for Summer Star Parties!

★Summer Star Sale★



Planispheres 40/50 or 50/60:

The planisphere is an excellent tool to help you begin exploring the sky. By rotating the "star wheel" you will be able to see what is happening up in the sky all year long. Constellations, bright stars and major deep-sky objects are highlighted. Order the 40/50 edition if you live in southern Canada, and 50/60 if you live above the 49th parallel.

SALE \$8.99! Regular price \$10.95

Order Now!



RASC Baseball Cap (navy blue)

One size fits all. Strap fitted with brass closure for comfort. A classic accessory for your next Star Party!

SALE: \$8.99! Regular price \$12.50

Order Now!

*** Sale ends August 31st ***

The President's Corner

by **Craig Levine**, RASC, President

When I put my name forward as a candidate for the then-new Board of Directors almost four years ago, I read and re-read the core statements of the RASC: our

vision, mission, and values (<http://www.rasc.ca/society>). They resonated with me when they were first published so many years ago, when I read them back in 2013, and when I re-read them again this morning over a cup of strong tea.

The vision “To be Canada's premiere organization of amateur and professional astronomers, promoting Astronomy to all” is something shared by all RASC members. We act on this through our mission, “To enhance understanding of and inspire curiosity about the Universe, through public outreach, education, and support for astronomical research.” Who hasn't delighted in seeing someone's face light up when they see through the eyepiece their first view of Saturn's rings or a globular cluster? How many have we collectively inspired to begin a lifetime's fascination with the universe? I have the members of the Halifax centre to thank for welcoming me almost 20 years ago and inviting me to look through the eyepiece. I see it as my pleasurable obligation to pay that inspirational kindness forward, and by trying to live up to our RASC values as I do so:

- Sharing knowledge and experience
- Collaboration and fellowship
- Enrichment of our community through diversity
- Discovery through the scientific method

Thanks to all of you who have encouraged someone to take a look at what's out there. I'm looking forward to many conversations around the eyepiece with as many of you as I can, and sharing the views with many more future RASC members.

Response to “Revisiting an Old Question: Where are the Women?”

by [Luca Vanzella](#), RASC, Edmonton Centre

In the previous edition of the *Bulletin*, the National Secretary, Charles Ennis, addressed the ‘problem’ of the relatively small number of women who are members of the Society. He left no doubt that in his opinion the problem derives from the fact that the Society does not provide a safe environment free of sexual harassment, free of sexist comments, and free of unequal treatment of women in matters of dress and conduct.

The undersigned know that, at the recent General Assembly in London, Ontario, there was an instance of inappropriate conduct that was deemed to be in violation of the anti-harassment policy. We do not doubt that there have been other examples of harassment and of unequal treatment of women within the Society – as there seem to be, unfortunately, in many large organizations -- but we strongly disagree with Ennis's belief that such behaviour is common within the RASC or that it does, or ever has, occurred to the degree and extent suggested. The purpose in reminding us of the offensive statements of Nobel Laureate Tim Hunt, and reminding us of the long history of sexual harassment by Geoff Marcy, can only be to suggest that similar behaviour and attitudes are found amongst Members of the RASC. We are unaware of equivalent words or actions by RASC Members; in our many years as Members we have not heard 'alarming' stories of sexual harassment; and we are offended by the blanket accusation.

Women have had very important roles within this Society for a very long time. We remind readers that there are two public lectures supported jointly by the RASC and CASCA, namely, 'Northcott' and 'Hogg', and both honour women who played prominent and effective leadership roles within the RASC for several decades. The Edmonton Centre has had as its President three women within the last twenty years, and the incoming President for 2017-18 is a woman. We suspect that many other centres can make comparable statements. Gender has never been a factor in considering who is a suitable candidate for the position of President, or any position for that matter, here. Women have always participated in significant numbers and often in leadership roles at our public star parties, at our public observatory at the local science centre, at dark sky celebrations in nearby federal and provincial parks, and in campaigns to reduce light pollution. Contrary to the previously published statement quoted by Ennis, we believe that "[this] society has *not* made it impossible for a woman to participate actively".

We do not agree with Ennis' assertions that there is a pattern of harassment or a pervasive problem within the Society. The RASC has a long history of welcoming male and female, young and old, people of many cultural backgrounds, and people with differing religious beliefs. The RASC has a long history of encouraging

all of its members to participate in activities. The RASC has a long and honourable record of placing into positions of leadership those whose talents and personalities have identified them as leaders regardless of gender.

We believe that instances of any kind of harassment should not be tolerated within the Society. When any such situation does occur it must be addressed in a balanced manner that is fair to all parties involved, and fair to the Society. If penalties are assessed, those penalties must be commensurate with the offense.

Finally, we take exception to Ennis discussing in a public forum a situation such as the one that occurred at the recent General Assembly before the recommendation has been acted upon, before due process has been completed, and before a final decision has been rendered.

Submitted by:

Doug Hube, Franklin Loehde, Bruce McCurdy, Sharon Morsink, Krista Stefan, Luca Vanzella

Members, RASC Edmonton Centre

Space.com Memoriam for Geoff Gaherty

by **Denis Grey**, RASC, Toronto Centre

As many of you are aware, Geoff Gaherty passed away on July 7th. Geoff was a columnist with Space.com and a longtime member of the RASC. Space.com has written an excellent memoriam for Geoff Gaherty and can be found at <http://www.space.com/33532-in-memorial-geoff-gaherty.html>

Bulletin Photo of the Month

by **David McCarter**, RASC London Centre



GA 2016: Group image, London, Ontario.

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 charter 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.

<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. Julia Neeser creates "The Solar System" monthly with data from James Edgar's "Skies" newspaper articles at <http://www.rasc.ca/observing>.



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