

Spring Calendar of Events

Saturday, February 27 - Pt. Pelee Dark Sky Night. Park is open until Midnight
This is a RASC Windsor Centre hosted night. Theme is star clusters and nebulae of the winter sky. Location is the Visitor Centre parking lot.

Saturday, March 12 - Hallam Observatory Open House, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 15 - RASC Monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m. at Ojibway Nature Centre.

Saturday, March 26 - Pt. Pelee Dark Sky Night. Park is open until Midnight
This is not a RASC hosted night.

Saturday, April 9 - Pt. Pelee Dark Sky Night. Park is open until Midnight
This is a RASC Windsor Centre hosted night. The theme is galaxies of the early spring-time sky. Location is the Visitor Centre parking lot.

Saturday, April 16 - Hallam Observatory Open House, beginning at 8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 19 - RASC Monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m. at Ojibway Nature Centre.

Saturday, May 7 - Science Rendezvous event, held at University of Windsor, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 14 - Hallam Observatory Open House, beginning at 9:15 p.m.

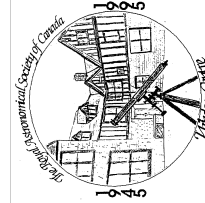
Tuesday, May 17 - RASC Monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m. at Ojibway Nature Centre

Thursday, May 19 – Monday, May 23, This year the **RASC General Assembly** is being hosted by the RASC London Centre, and the event is also being paired with **AsstroCATS**; an increasingly popular astronomy trade show, which is now in its fourth year. More information, including an 11-minute-long promotional video about the events, can be found at <http://events.rasc.ca/>

Saturday, May 21 - Pt. Pelee Dark Sky Night. Park is open until Midnight
This is not a RASC hosted night. Note that there is a full moon, so viewing will be limited to mainly it and planets, along with a few brighter stars and double stars. The Park is hosting a “Woodcock Walk”, about the American Woodcock this evening. Location is the Visitor Centre parking lot.

Saturday, June 11 - RASC Windsor Centre Annual Picnic and Hallam Observatory Open House. A double event. Following set up, the pot luck dinner is served around 6:30 p.m. Note that the Monthly Open House is also this night and begins at 9:45 p.m.

Saturday, June 18 - Pt. Pelee Dark Sky Night. Park is open until Midnight
This is a RASC Windsor Centre hosted night and though the moon is nearly full (20th), we will be highlighting the planets Mars, Jupiter and Saturn for evening observation. We will be locating ourselves at the Marsh Boardwalk for sky viewing in conjunction with another activity that evening, as staff from Pelee Wings will be leading a moonlight paddle through the marsh from there and Interpretive staff and Resource Conversation staff will also be on hand to lead a Marsh Monitoring program around the Boardwalk for those who don't want to paddle.



AURORA



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The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Windsor Centre

February 2016

Flyer

Next Meeting

Tuesday, March 15, 2016
7:30 p.m.
at
Ojibway Park Nature Centre
5200 Matchette Road

Speaker: Paul Preney

Topic: “*The Heyday of NASA*”

Upcoming Events

Zodiacal Light: Starting in late February after sunset and from a dark location look for the faint cone of light in the West that follows the ecliptic.

Jupiter at Opposition: Jupiter reaches opposition at 6 a.m. on Tuesday March 8th. Jupiter will be opposite the Sun in our skies and rise when the sun is setting.

Open House Night at Hallam: The next open house night at Hallam is on Saturday March 12th at 7:00 p.m..

Daylight Savings Time Begins: On Sunday March 13 at 2:00 a.m..

Double Shadow Transit: For two hours Europa and Io's shadows can be seen crossing the disk of Jupiter beginning at 10:20 p.m. EDT on Monday March 14th.

Monthly Meeting Minutes January 19, 2016

The monthly meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Windsor Centre was held at the Ojibway Park Nature Centre.

Windsor Centre **President Randy Groundwater** chaired the meeting. Randy called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. and welcomed members and guests to the Ojibway Nature Centre.

Motion to accept the minutes of the November 17, 2015 meeting was made by Mario Fabris, seconded by Dave Panton. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Main Presentation

Movie Night – BBC’s Human Universe – Are We Alone? Presented by Brian Cox. Brian Cox explores mankind's place in the universe. He considers the possibility of alien life - could it exist and will humans ever find it? Brian discusses the Drake equation and explains the ingredients needed for an intelligent civilization to evolve in the universe - the need for a benign star, for a habitable planet, for life to spontaneously arise on such a planet and the time required for intelligent life to evolve and build a civilization. Brian weighs the evidence and arrives at his own provocative answer to the puzzle of our apparent solitude. He argues that the difficulty inherent in the development of eukaryotic cells represents such a barrier to the emergence of intelligent life that Earth may be the only planet where this has taken place in the Milky Way galaxy. In this episode Brian also tells us how Kepler observes into deep space seeking other solar systems just like our very own - How many potential 'earth-like' planets are there in the galaxy?

Break and 50/50 draw: The \$3 pot went to **Greg Mockler** who donated back to the centre.

During the coffee break, a group of members ventured outside to take a quick peak of the **occultation of Aldebaran**, a star in the constellation Taurus. It is one of the brightest stars in the winter night sky, which makes it a noteworthy event. Randy Groundwater set up his binoculars and tripod, and invited the crowd to have a look. Aldebaran disappeared along the eastern limb of the moon at approximately 9:12 p.m. It was a unique site to view, as the star vanished, there was no dimming in the process. Since the moon lacks an atmosphere, there is no scattering of light from Aldebaran. More can be read here at <http://www.skynews.ca/this-weeks-sky/>.

Director of Observing Report, Steve Pellarin: Steve covered highlights from the past month which included the **Quadrantids** meteor shower. This is a short shower that can only be seen during the night of the peak. It is a rare

event, since the one night when they are highly visible, only one part of the Earth is facing the cloud of dust and particles. This shower is known for having long streaking meteors, with a window of 5 hours and up to 50 events per hour. In 2003, astronomers discovered what they believe to be the source of the debris cloud, data suggested that this object is an asteroid, instead of a comet which is typical. That makes this the second only known asteroid to leave a debris cloud.

As a follow-up to the observing which took place during the break, Steve mentioned that it would be very difficult to view the emergence of Aldebaran, as it will be on the lit side of the moon. Steve commented that you can view the occultation many more times over the next few years since there is a series of occultations that occurs every 18.6 years for 49 consecutive months. At this time, 80% of the disc was lit, making it a very bright moon.

The **moon** over the next few nights will be moving through Gemini, and will be making its way further from the planets, allowing some good viewing as they line up throughout the next few days.

Steve continued with a few slides of the planetary paths throughout the next few weeks. Concentrating on **Jupiter**, as it entered its retrograde motion on January 8th. Meaning the planet appears to be moving in the opposite direction along the ecliptic.

Comet Catalina (C/2013 US10) is now visible in the northern hemisphere, but for only a few weeks. It's currently magnitude 6.3 and had a closest approach to earth on January 17th, 2016, at 0.72 AU.

Following the Director of Observing report Randy welcomed **Tom Sobocan** was to the floor to give a brief **tribute to David Bowie**. Chris Hadfield, Canadian Astronaut, was a fan of Bowie, and is known for this music video "Space Oddity – David Bowie" recorded on the ISS. Tom played this video for the group in memory of Bowie's passing.

Randy thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting and reminded everyone that the **next regular membership meeting** would take place on **Tuesday, February 16th at 7:30 p.m.**

Randy **adjourned the meeting at 10:14 p.m.**

Recorded by Dan Perissinotti, RASC Windsor Centre Secretary.