



Aurora

RASC Windsor Centre's Monthly Newsletter

#RASCWindsor

September, 2026

Welcome Back for 2026-27.

Sandy French

As the full moons pass by, the months seem to tick by faster and faster. We're already into September, but does anyone feel ready for another active year in astronomy? Plans for long evenings and short nights have already expired, since the autumn equinox is only days away.

There is much to look forward to this autumn. Open Streets Windsor is an afternoon of public outreach where RASC members can answer questions and share our Solar viewing equipment and experience. We are hosting Dark Sky nights at Point Pelee and continue to offer tours at the Hallam Observatory.

Monthly meetings will remain on the third Tuesday of the month, with the exception of December, July and August. Watch the various social media sites (#RASCWindsor) for details of events and current information. 🌙

Council Meeting Notes ~ Aug 27, 2026.

Council held a meeting in August where several issues were discussed, including:

- Reviewing financial statements.
- Committee reports.
- Reviewing public outreach events over the summer.
- Planning meetings and events through 2026.

Please contact a council member for more information. 🌙

Canadian astronaut acknowledges RASC Members

RASC Calgary Centre

A Canadian Space Agency astronaut, Colonel Joshua Kutryk, has sent all members of the RASC a message of thanks for the work we do in educating, sharing our interest in exploring the universe and building interest in Canada's space programme. Kutryk is a former F-18 fighter pilot and test pilot and

was selected by the Canadian Space Agency in 2017 to become an astronaut. He will fly his first space mission aboard NASA's SpaceX Crew-13 Mission launching later this year.



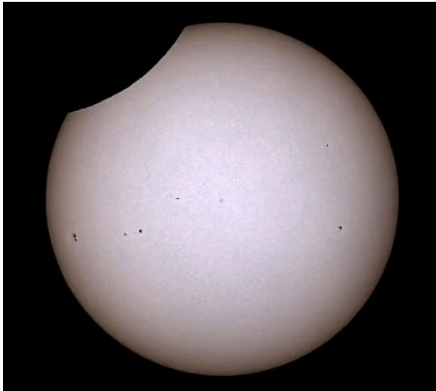
"RASC - Thank you for what you do for Canada and space. Exploring the cosmos, together and dreaming big. Joshua Kutryk" 🌙

The Solar Eclipse and Perseid Meteor Shower at Point Pelee National Park ~ August 12-13, 2026.

Sandy French

In astronomy, patience and persistence pay off. Wednesday, August 12 at Point Pelee National Park was an example of this mantra, since the weather forecast showed rain and clouds for the entire day of the partial eclipse and annual Perseid Meteor Shower.

As Steve Pellarin arrived at the visitor centre around noon, he noted a number of our members hosting solar viewing for the public ahead of the eclipse.



As the maximum coverage approached at 1:37pm EDT, The clouds opened enough to allow a decent view. Shortly after the maximum, the clouds

Image by Steve Mastellotto

closed again and the view was lost for the afternoon. Soon after, rain began falling on the park, so events moved inside the visitor centre.

Mahayarrahh-Starr Livingstone, Light Pollution Abatement Officer for the Windsor Centre, gave his presentation on the effects of light pollution and showed a documentary on the subject. Steve Pellarin later did a talk on the Perseid Meteor Shower and "Killer Asteroids". Steve also did a telephone interview with AM800's afternoon show, describing the Perseids.

<https://www.iheart.com/podcast/962-the-shift-sound-bites-100700683>

The rain continued all afternoon and evening, so visitors kept asking our members if the telescopes would be out, so interest continued to be high. After sunset, West Beach was the best place to be as the sky cleared for about three hours. It was too windy for telescopes, but GLP tours were possible. The Milky Way was visible, but the meteors were scarce. Members reported seeing less than a dozen throughout the night, but many satellites were streaking across the sky. Some members stayed as late as 3am.

When Steve left around midnight, he noted 29 cars entering the park. Parks Canada reported that over 1,500 people were at Point Pelee overnight, making this annual event one of their highest attended.

The long-standing partnership between Point Pelee

National Park and the RASC Windsor Centre continues as we host various events. Volunteer participation is essential for these events to continue. Even if forecast conditions don't look good, local conditions can quickly change in our favour. That's why patience and persistence pay off! 🌙

Starfest ~ A Tradition Continues

Randy Groundwater

Starfest is a star party that takes place slightly north of Mount Forest. The star party is hosted by the North York Astronomical Association at the River Place campground, situated along the banks of the River Beatty-Saugeen. It is a Bortle 3 site, offering incredible views of the night sky with plenty of faint deep-sky objects visible. Amateur astronomers and astrophotographers have been attending Starfest to gather under dark skies for many years.

So far as I know, Peter Bondy and myself were the only attendees from Windsor, at Starfest this year. The weather was very good and the highly successful event was attended by many hundreds of amateur astronomers. It was Pete's first time there, though I've been going since 1987.

This photo shows us taking a break from the afternoon tent talks on Saturday, August 14th. (L-R) Randy Groundwater, Peter Bondy, John Thompson (RASC Ottawa Centre). 🌙



Photo by Tom Smart (Ajax, Ontario)

Hallam Observatory Solar System Model

*Written and photographs provided by
Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu.*

*From RASC Windsor 80th Anniversary History Brief,
compiled by Sandy van Gaalen.*

The Hallam Observatory solar system model was designed, constructed and installed in 2014. The model is the brain child of the late David Panton, former RASC Windsor Centre member. It represents the Sun and the 5 naked-eye planets, Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, built to an approximate scale of 13 billion to one. Using his finely-honed mechanical engineering skills, Dave meticulously designed, fabricated and assembled each model in his little machine shop using a sundry of tools, such as a mini mill, lathe and table saw.



All the models are solar powered, internally lit and visible in darkness, just like the real planets in the night sky. Their sizes, colours, brightness and distances from the Sun model are all in correct proportion to astronomical distances. For example,

the Mercury, Venus, and Earth models are respectively installed 0.4, 0.7 and 1.0 scale-model equivalent AU (astronomical units) from the Sun, with the Sun model located on the south deck rail and the Earth on the opposing north deck rail.



Field installation of the models was accomplished by a skilled team of Windsor Centre volunteers. 🌙

Upcoming Events ~ Autumn 2026

Windsor Open Streets

- Sunday, September 27

Dark Sky Nights, Point Pelee National Park.

- Saturday, October 10
- Saturday, December 12

"Basics of Astronomy" Library Presentations

- Kingsville ~ Saturday, September 12
- Amherstburg ~ TBD
- Riverside ~ Saturday, October 24





Windsor Centre

Minutes of the General Meeting

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

Ojibway Nature Centre, Windsor Ontario

General Meeting ~ Call to Order and Announcements

This meeting was called to order by President Steve Pellarin at 19:15. The Chair asked all attending to sign the registration book and noted that the 50/50 draw would take place after the break. There was a quick review of some recent public outreach events, such as the May Dark Sky Night at Point Pelee. The Chair then proceeded to introduce the Agenda for the meeting. No visitors identified themselves..

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

May 19, 2026. General Meeting Minutes were circulated by email, and printed in the Aurora.

- ***Motion to accept the Minutes as presented.***
Moved by Jeff Nuonan, Seconded by Donna Ronconi. Carried.

Presentation ~ Steve Pellarin ~ Regulus: Stellar Secrets of the Lion's Heart

Steve gave a short "Star of the Month" talk on Regulus, detailing its position in the Constellation Leo as "the Lion's Heart". In terms of its visual brightness, Regulus is magnitude 1.35, which makes it the 21st brightest star in all of the sky, but it is actually the 10th brightest star in the northern celestial hemisphere.

Director of Observing Presentation ~ Michael Dufour ~ The Summer Sky

Michael's *Director of Observing Report* provided detailed guidance on night sky objects, planet visibility, meteor showers, and lunar phenomena to enhance member knowledge and observing skills. Highlighted observing targets included: The Perseid Meteor Shower, Comet 10P/Tempel, and rare deep-sky objects visible along with the Milky Way galactic bands.

Break

The chair called a coffee break following the presentations at 20:40. The meeting resumed at 20:55.

Reports ~ Steve Pellarin ~ Telescope Donations

Steve gave a brief report on the recent donations of an antique telescope from the Hallam family and the John Marn telescope. A discussion occurred on plans to restore the Hallam Telescope and possibly raffle the Marn telescope as a fundraiser.

RASC National Report ~ Tom Sobocan

Tom reported on recent national activities. Weekly and monthly email bulletins will continue with important information. The AGM will be June 21 online, with pre-registration available. Membership fees will increase by \$5 to \$116/year.

Presentation ~ Mahayarrahh-Starr Livingstone ~ The End of Night?

Starr hosted a light pollution information session, which defined the terms of reference, nuisance by-laws in Windsor and LaSalle, ecological impact on wildlife, energy waste, and impact on human health. Technical terms such as "colour temperature" were explained. Starr ended with a call-to-action and answered questions.

Presentation ~ Steve Pellarin ~ Volunteer Re-Imbursement Policy.

Steve reviewed the issue of personal expenses of volunteers in hosting and maintaining Hallam Observatory. A letter was distributed detailing the issue. Questions were addressed among the membership.

- ***Motion to accept the policy as presented.***
Moved by Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu, Seconded by Cliff Campeau. Carried.

Adjournment

- ***A motion to adjourn the meeting was called at 21:53.***
Moved by Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu, Seconded by Michael Dufour. Carried.

Clear Skies! 🌙

Labour Day Weekend BBQ

Tom Sobocan

It was a very enjoyable RASC Windsor Centre BBQ!

Steve Pellarin & Mike Mastronardi: Thanks for being the main organizers! Brian Simpson & Starr Livingstone: Thanks for getting the observatory & grounds ready for visitors. Steve Pellarin, Cliff Campeau, Grant Maguire & others: Thanks for doing an excellent job on cooking the hamburgers & corn!

Thanks also to the many other contributors, including Sandy van Gaalen, Michel Collins, the Hansen family (Rob, Monica & Jeremy), Mike Bugeja & others. Many thanks to those who set up telescopes including Susan Sawyer-Beaulieu & new RASC members. Thanks also for setting-up the Henry Lee 14", in particular Brian, Starr & Jeremy.



Photo By Michael Mastronardi

Joady Ulrich, David Sobocan & I enjoyed not only the delicious food but also the night sky until after

midnight, closing up with telescopic views of Saturn & a binocular view of the Pleiades.

Thanks to all who came out, about 30 people over the course of the afternoon & evening, as I did not mention all of your names. 🌙

2027 Astronomical Wall Calendar

Steve Pellarin

The Windsor Centre is planning on creating a new 2027 Windsor Centre Astronomical Wall Calendar to help us raise funds to support our club activities and meetings. As in past years, we plan to highlight the amazing talents of our own members through the celestial images that they capture and process. We are inviting all members to submit images for consideration for use in our calendar. These images should be sent to me (pellarins@yahoo.com) or Starr Livingstone (mahayarrahh@gmail.com).

The deadline for submission is Sunday, October 4th by midnight. Images should be submitted in either TIFF format, or highest-quality JPEG format and need to have dimensions no lower than 2550 x 3300 pixels (picture page in calendar is 8.5 x 11 inches). Larger is better, but resolution may suffer if smaller than the stated dimensions.

While our current contributors have always done fantastic work, we would love to have some new astrophotographers contribute in the new calendar. You don't have to be an "expert" to take a great photo, nor does your photo have to be taken through a telescope. We always try to include wider angle shots taken directly through cameras as well. All astronomically-related subjects are welcome. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. 🌙