

Service Award: Larry McNish, Calgary Centre

I would like to nominate Larry McNish for the National Service Award. Larry's contributions to the Calgary Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada have been outstanding over many years.

Larry has served as President of the Calgary Centre, is now the current 1st V-P. He has also attended almost every council meeting as an informed, contributing guest when not serving an official position. Larry has been the Calgary Centre's Webmaster for most of the last 10 years. His dedication and meticulous care in this role makes the Calgary Centre's website a superb quality site that regularly attracts over 3 million hits per year. He was also involved with helping create the new RASC National website.

He is a tireless volunteer at almost every RASC and University of Calgary sponsored event both as a public speaker and with a telescope. He also regularly volunteers at every other public event in the same capacities. He has volunteered consistently in such far away places as Banff, Blackfoot Crossing, Rocky Mountain House, and the Cypress Hills. Indeed, it is rare to attend an event where Larry is not present or has not had some effect on its success. Other observers are also thankful for the doughnuts he remembers to bring and share!

Further, he is active in pursuing new ideas and has frequently taken a leadership role in coordinating and developing astronomy events with other organizations. He was one of the key consultants who helped Banff National Park staff develop an astronomy program for their summer season.

In celebrating the Calgary Centre's 50th anniversary, he, as President, initiated, supervised and helped build of a roll-off roof observatory at the Centre's Wilson Coulee Observatory (WCO). In addition, he is the main "go-to" person for technical or mechanical help whether with computers or observing equipment, a role he performs with excellence. His expertise extends beyond the RASC, being sought by the University of Calgary as well as from other organizations or the public on a variety of subject matters related to astronomy.

In his "spare time", Larry creates astronomy-themed music videos from either his own photographs or from the web and presents these compositions at public star nights. Visitors are treated to a visual and musical extravaganza of the cosmos and many are left impressed and in wonder. One of his creations entitled "The Sun" was accepted by SOHO and is currently hosted on their website.

Larry's contributions extend much more than this brief overview can encompass. In summary, Larry has an excellent follow-through with all his initiatives and has proven to be extremely reliable. His knowledge, expertise and efforts over the years have greatly benefited the RASC and the Calgary Centre and we extend a big hand of gratitude for his generosity and dedication.

Andrew Jones, Past-President, RASC Calgary Centre

Service Award: Brian McCullough, Ottawa Centre

One of the many rewards of astronomy is sharing the passion of the night sky with others. Whether it is with neighbours down the street, visiting schools or helping at star parties, public outreach is the connection and education to the many celestial wonders. With this in mind, no person sets a finer example than Mr. Brian McCullough of the Ottawa Centre. Over the past couple of decades, Brian's never ending passion of teaching astronomy to children of all ages as well as adults, has been enjoyed at school workshops, Guides and Scouts nights or at the Canada Science and Technology Museum here in Ottawa.

A popular part of the monthly Ottawa Centre meetings for many years was the "Ten Minute Moon", in which Brian would describe an interesting surface feature of our nearest celestial neighbor, accompanied by samples of his own talented hand sketches and frequently performed in costume (such as a toga for a Greco-Roman-named crater).

Brian's knowledge, charm and comical wit has opened the eyes and touched the minds of close to 18,000 people. I am sure that some young children attending these special star nights have gone on to pursue science and will someday invent, create or develop the next new whatever. Brian has also been a frequent guest on CBC Radio on an array of astronomy issues and has authored many newspaper articles and other literatures.

Brian has been associated with the Ottawa Centre since 1990 and is a life member. Over this time frame, he has been Astronotes Editor, monthly meeting chair, Vice-President and President. Happily married and a proud father of three wonderful children (two boys and one girl), Brian was able, with the help of his wife Bridget, juggle the never ending hours between family life and his calling to teach the wonders of the Universe to others. Brian's daughter Emily has pursued planetary geology as a career.

With this said, the Ottawa Centre is pleased to nominate Mr. Brian McCullough for the National Service

Award for public outreach and dedication to the passion we all love and enjoy.

Gary Boyle
President, Ottawa Centre, RASC

Service Award: Dietmar Kupke, Toronto Centre

In 2001 after retiring from a career at Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC), Dietmar Kupke joined the Toronto Centre and soon discovered astroimaging and the Centre's E.C. Carr Astronomical Observatory (CAO). He became an enthusiastic volunteer at the CAO, helping to organize work parties and planning the many improvements to the facility since then. After commissioning of the Geoff Brown Observatory at the CAO, Dietmar took on scheduling and training of the site supervisors as well as handling room bookings for CAO pass holders and visitors. This is a huge task when one considers that a site supervisor has to be scheduled for whenever the facility is reserved, and local weather conditions have to be monitored so that a decision to open it can be made in a timely manner. New users have to receive instructions on how to operate the alarm system and keys must be distributed. Dietmar has just relinquished this role after 10 years of service. He also encouraged many members to use the telescope and CCD camera in the GBO for imaging while he worked on his own equipment both at home and on the CAO observing pad. He was an early supporter of the MODL (My Own Dome Lot) project at the CAO, and was one of the first to occupy a MODL dome.

Dietmar is not only an organizer, but also a participant at the work parties at the CAO. He is often the first to arrive and one of the last to leave, and his quiet friendly approach to new participants has helped to grow our pool of volunteers to over 50 individuals. He continues to be one of our "go-to" people, answering the many questions about operations and maintenance of the CAO.

As Dietmar improved his imaging skills, his interest and passion for this aspect of our hobby led him to organize the Toronto Centre's annual astro-imaging workshops, where he began passing along his knowledge and experience. As members posted their images to the Toronto Centre Yahoo list, Dietmar provided constructive comments and encouragement. Today, interest in astronomical imaging is at an all-time high, and the Toronto Centre has just begun an additional monthly series of Members' Night meetings at the David Dunlap Observatory dedicated to this activity.

In addition to his work at the CAO, Dietmar has served as a Councillor on the Toronto Centre's Council for 6 years, serving as a member of the CAO Management Committee and Finance Committee, where his business experience at DEC has been put to very good use. He has also been a Toronto Centre representative on the National Council. He has also been an active and enthusiastic participant in the Centre's Strategic Planning Sessions since 2010.

In recognition of his many contributions to its observing and imaging programmes and administration, the

Toronto Centre is pleased to nominate Dietmar Kupke as a recipient of the Service Award of the RASC.

B. Ralph Chou, Past President
M. Anthony Horvatin, Past President
Charles Darrow, President