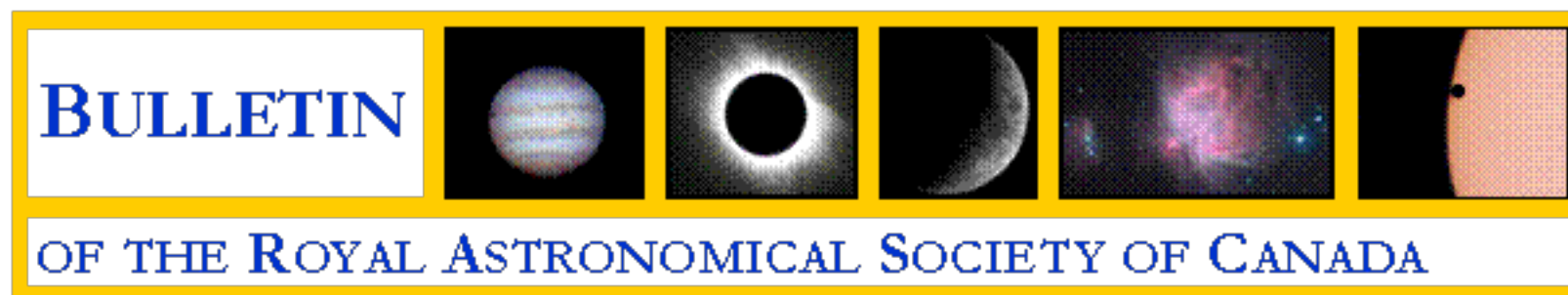


2007-12



December 2007 - Volume 2, Number 12

Denis Grey, Acting Editor

We welcome your comments on the *Bulletin*. Email them to the Editor at bulletin@rasc.ca [1].

Member: ~FULL_NAME~, RASC ID: ~ID~

► [News @ RASC.ca](#)

National Council Passes 2008 Budget

The 2008 Society budget forecast was approved on the November 24 weekend by the Society's National Council. The budget was prepared by the Society's Finance Committee, National Office staff, with input from various committees. It was then reviewed and recommended for approval by the Board Pilot Committee.

Some highlights:

- On the revenue side, we will realize a small increase in fees from a \$4 fee increase also approved at the same meeting (see below), however we expect a large decrease in publications revenue as compared to the 2007 budget (2007 actual figures are not in yet), due mainly to the decrease in the value of the US dollar (most of our Handbook sales are non-Canadian and priced in US dollars).
- On the expenditures side, we will continue to invest in modernizing the software used at the National Office, we will be reinstating the Speaker Travel Assistance Program (STAP) for Centres, and we have committed \$20,000 for projects related to the 2009 International Year of Astronomy. The funding for the later will come from a large bequest donated to the Society by the late Dr. Feibelman.

For full details, see the minutes and reports for the 2007 November 24 meeting, which are located in the Members'-Only section of the Web site at www.rasc.ca/private/reports [2].

On-line Survey Reviewed at National Council

The recent Membership Survey provided some interesting results that were reviewed at the National Council meeting on 2007 November 24. Members can view the survey reports in the Members' Area of the Society website at: www.rasc.ca/private/reports [2]. Look for an article in an upcoming issue of the *Journal* highlighting the survey in more detail.

Society Membership Fees Increase

The Society's fees will go up beginning 2008 January 1. The increase will be \$4 per year for ordinary members and \$2.50 per year for youth members. The new fees, exclusive of any Centre surcharges, are:

- Ordinary members: \$59.00
- Youth members: \$36.75

This increase, which was pre-approved by the membership in 2006, but only put into force now by the National Council on 2007 November 24, is necessary to offset the loss of non-membership revenue (Handbook and other publication revenue) caused by declining unit sales and loss of US dollar exchange.

Even with this increase a significant deficit is projected for 2008.

The Society's leaders are working on long-term solutions to our financial situation - the results of which should be proposed to the membership at the next annual meeting in June 2008.

National Treasurer Steps Down

The Executive Committee regrets to announce the resignation of our National Treasurer, **Alan Whitman**. On Tuesday, 2007 November 20, Alan submitted his resignation as Treasurer of the Society, effective immediately. The Executive, Board Pilot, Finance, and Nominating Committees are working together to find a new Treasurer. The Executive and Finance Committees will be discharging the duties of the Treasurer until such time as a new Treasurer is in place.

New Education Resource Announced

The Education Committee is pleased to announce the creation of the RASC Centre Education Resource list at www.rasc.ca/education/other [3]. The list is your "one stop" link to what astronomy educators across the RASC have created to help teach astronomy. It is hoped that this list will promote sharing between the Centres and spark new, better teaching ideas to those who utilize them.

The Education Committee hopes you will find the list helpful as you prepare your lesson, run your event or create your own education materials. If you have an education resource you would like to share with the rest of the RASC please contact the Education Committee webmaster, Brian Battersby at brianbattersby73@yahoo.ca [4].

Time to Think About RASC Awards!

The deadline for the RASC's National Awards program is rapidly approaching on 2007 December 31. Here is an outline of the awards and their criteria:

- - **Chant Medal** - The Chant Medal is awarded based on a significant body of work of lasting value to the astronomical community and is named after C. A. Chant who was a noted astronomer at the University of Toronto and helped to found the David Dunlap Observatory there.
 - **Ken Chilton Prize** - Established in memory of Ken Chilton, this prize is awarded for a specific piece of astronomical research or work carried out or published recently.
 - **Service Award** - The Service Award, established in 1959, is awarded to members of the RASC who have made significant contributions at either the National and/or Centre levels.
 - **Simon Newcomb Award** - The Simon Newcomb Award was established in 1979 for excellence in astronomical writing by an RASC member.

Nominations for awards should be sent to the RASC Awards Committee at awards20000@rasc.ca [5]. For more information on the Awards nominations see www.rasc.ca/rasc-awards [6].

► *The Journal of the RASC*

Modest Fee Increase for Printed Journal

For subscriptions expiring 2007 December 31 and later, there will be a modest increase in the subscription fee for the printed version of the Journal of the RASC.

For Canadian member-subscribers, the new annual rate is \$16/year (it was \$15) plus GST.

For International member-subscribers, the new annual rate will be US\$23/year. It was previously \$15US. This large increase is solely to cover the difference in postage costs between Canadian and International addresses and the change in US-Canadian dollar exchange rate. In Canada, postage costs are subsidized by a Publications Assistance Program grant from the federal Department of Heritage and Culture.

We hope more members will subscribe to the printed Journal. 2008 issues will include more colour and will of course still feature your favourite expert columnists and interesting articles about Astronomy in Canada. You don't know what you are missing if you aren't reading it!



► *Across the RASC*

Toronto Centre Spearheads Effort to Save David Dunlap Observatory

The Toronto Centre is proposing to use well-respected museum and planetarium development consultants from Lord Cultural Resources (www.lord.ca [7]) to develop a **Concept Plan and Business Case** for the continued use of the David Dunlap Observatory as an astronomy facility. Time is of the essence since the University of Toronto is moving forward rapidly with their plans to divest themselves of the property. A continuing astronomical use for the site, while desirable from the Society's point of view, will not happen without a Concept Plan and Business Case that can be sold to the Town of Richmond Hill, York Region and whoever the ultimate owners of the site turn out to be as a continuing benefit to the community.

The Toronto Centre and the National Society have each pledged \$5,000 towards the cost of the study putting us at 20% of the required funds. A fundraising campaign is now underway to raise the remaining \$40,000 required as soon as possible so the consulting study can begin on January 1st, 2008. Members of the Society who are interested in supporting this project are invited to visit www.observatorypark.ca [8] for more information and instructions on how to make a pledge in support of this effort. Tax receipts will be issued for donations by the Toronto Centre.

► The Sky this Month

December Skies

Gary Boyle's [The Sky This Month](#) [9] for December features the "slinky" constellation Eridanus along with Comet Holmes and Mars.

Mars Attacks

Mars is now nearing its close approach to Earth on December 23, 2007. While not as favourable as recent oppositions Mars will still be larger than it will be for the next eight years or so. Plan now to take advantage of clear nights leading up to Christmas.

► Dates to Remember

- - **December 22, 2007** - National Office Closed for Holidays - Reopens January 2, 2008
 - **December 31, 2007** - [National Awards Application Deadline](#) [10]
 - **December 31, 2007** - [Centre Projects Fund Application Deadline](#) [11]
 - **January 3, 2008** - Earth Reaches Perigee
 - **February 20, 2008** - [Total Lunar Eclipse \(Most of Canada\)](#) [12]

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Visit Us at: www.rasc.ca [14]

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Links:

- [1] <mailto:bulletin@rasc.ca>
- [2] <http://www.rasc.ca/private/reports>
- [3] <http://www.rasc.ca/education/other/index.shtml>
- [4] <mailto:brianbattersby73@yahoo.ca>
- [5] <mailto:awards20000@rasc.ca>
- [6] <https://www.rasc.ca/rasc-awards>
- [7] <http://www.lord.ca>
- [8] <http://web.archive.org/web/20090903130509/http://www.observatorypark.ca/>
- [9] <https://www.rasc.ca/news/sky-month-december-2007>
- [10] <http://www.rasc.ca/rasc-awards/>
- [11] <https://www.rasc.ca/news/applications-due-centre-projects-fund>
- [12] <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/LEmono/TLE2008Feb21/TLE2008Feb21.html>
- [13] <mailto:mempub@rasc.ca>
- [14] <http://www.rasc.ca>