

Nova Notes

The Newsletter of the Halifax Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada



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From the Editor —

Summer is over, and we are well into autumn. Nights are getting shorter, and certainly colder! But darker is the key word here. As it will continue to get darker, earlier and earlier until the winter solstice on the 22nd of December this year.

By the time the solstice rolls around, and hopefully with ample opportunity to get out and observe right after work, or supper, or both, we will have a new Board of Directors elected for the year 2020. I would encourage those reading to consider running for the various positions. If even half of the currently members run again and are again elected, it will be an incredibly

rewarding time working with great people.

I will not be running for the position of the Centre's VP for the 2020 year. So there is a good opportunity for a fresh face on the board! After a lot of deliberation and thought, I've decided that with a new baby on the way come the end of March that I should be devoting as much time as I can to helping out the start of my little family of astronomers. I'll be reoffering again to carry on as the editor of Nova Notes for the next year.

So please consider the opportunity of helping the Centre as a member of the board. I've been on it for the past two years, and plan on running again in the future. It is as rewarding, as it is important to have great members like you, leading us into the years ahead. Again, I urge you to think about running to become a member of the board. You won't be disappointed!

-Charles

Nova Notes: The Newsletter of the Halifax Centre of the RASC

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Nova Notes is published five times a year, in February, April, June/July, September/October and December.

The deadline for the next edition is 27 December 2019.

The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Halifax Centre.

Articles on any aspect of astronomy and related activities will be considered for publication.

St. Croix Observatory

Part of your membership in the Halifax RASC includes access to our observatory, located in the community of St. Croix, NS. The site has expanded over the last few years and includes a roll-off roof observatory with electrical outlets, use of the Centre's new Go-To 400-mm Dobsonian telescope and 100-mm binoculars, a warm-room, and washroom facilities.

Enjoy dark pristine skies far away from city lights and the company of like minded observers searching out those faint "fuzzies" in the night. Observing nights (Fridays close to the New Moon or Saturday backup) are open to both members and their guests. If you are not a key holder and would like to become one, or need more information, please contact the SCO Manager, John MacPhee

Meetings usually begin at 1:00 p.m. at Saint Mary's University in Room 101 of the Atrium Building (AT).

All meeting locations and presentations subject to change

Meeting Dates for 2019

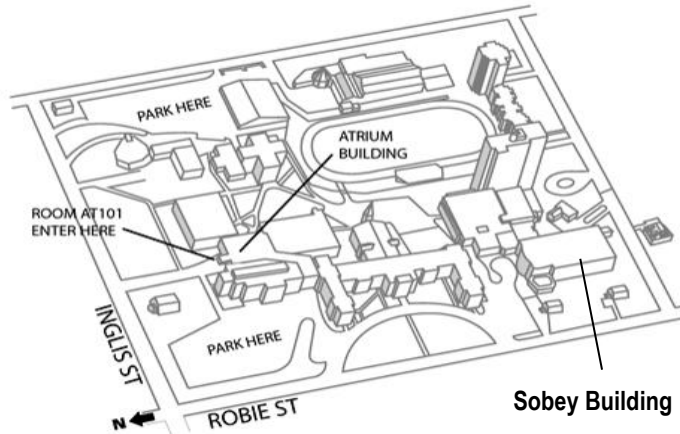
6 December
Annual General Meeting

2020 Meetings:
4 January
1 February
7 March

Meeting Location: Saint Mary's University

Atrium Building (AT) Room AT 101

The Atrium is located in front of the Patrick Power Library, between the Burke Building and Science Building.



Meetings are usually held on the first Saturday of the month, except for the months of July and August.

Executive meetings begin at 11:00 a.m., usually in room AT306, and all members are welcome.

Halifax RASC Board of Directors, 2019:

Honorary President : Mary Lou Whitehorne	(Appointed)
President:	(Vacant)
Vice-President: Charles White	(Elected)
Secretary: Judy Black	(Elected)
Treasurer: Gregg Dill	(Elected)
National Council Rep: Patrick Kelly	(Elected)
Director: Paul Grey	(Elected)
Director: Peter Hurley	(Elected)
Director: Paul Heath	(Elected)
Director: John Read	(Elected)
Director: Tom Crosman	(Elected)
Librarians: John Read	(Appointed)
SCO Manager: John Liddard	(Appointed)
Observing Chair: Sean Dzafovic	(Appointed)
Outreach Chair: Paul Heath	(Appointed)
Nova Notes Editor : Charles White	(Appointed)

Cover Photo By:

Michael Boschat "Thin Crescent"

Photo taken in Halifax. This image was made possible by the steep angle of the ecliptic to the horizon at the time it was taken.

Members' Meetings Updates

The Centre is back into the swing of it's regular meetings, which occur monthly on the first Saturday of every month. These meetings normally resume in September, but Mother Nature this year had different plans, with the arrival of Hurricane Dorian. The Board found cancelling the meeting given the data coming in from various organizations was in the best interest of safety.

October had an exciting variation to the usual meeting. Instead of going to Saint Mary's, thanks to the work of Dr. Bishop, members met at The Discovery Centre in Halifax for a tour of the Dome Theatre and the Cloud Chamber. It was a great time and the event was well received by the members.

Thanks again to Dr. Bishop for getting the tour and presentation arranged.



Orionids Meteor Report

Date: October 21-22, 2019
 Begin: 03:00 UT
 End: 09:00 UT
 Observer: Michael Boschat
 Location: Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
 Lat: N 44d 39'
 Long: W 63d 36m
 Elev: 57m
 Recording Method: Eye

Start	End	Temp	LM	ORI	SPO	TC*
03:00	04:00	1.00	4.0	0 0	0	30%
04:00	05:00	1.00	4.0	1 0	1	30%
05:00	06:00	1.00	4.3	1 0	1	30%
06:00	07:00	1.00	4.5	3 0	3	10%
07:00	08:00	1.00	4.5	4 0	4	2%
08:00	09:00	1.00	4.5	5 0	5	0%

**total cloud cover*

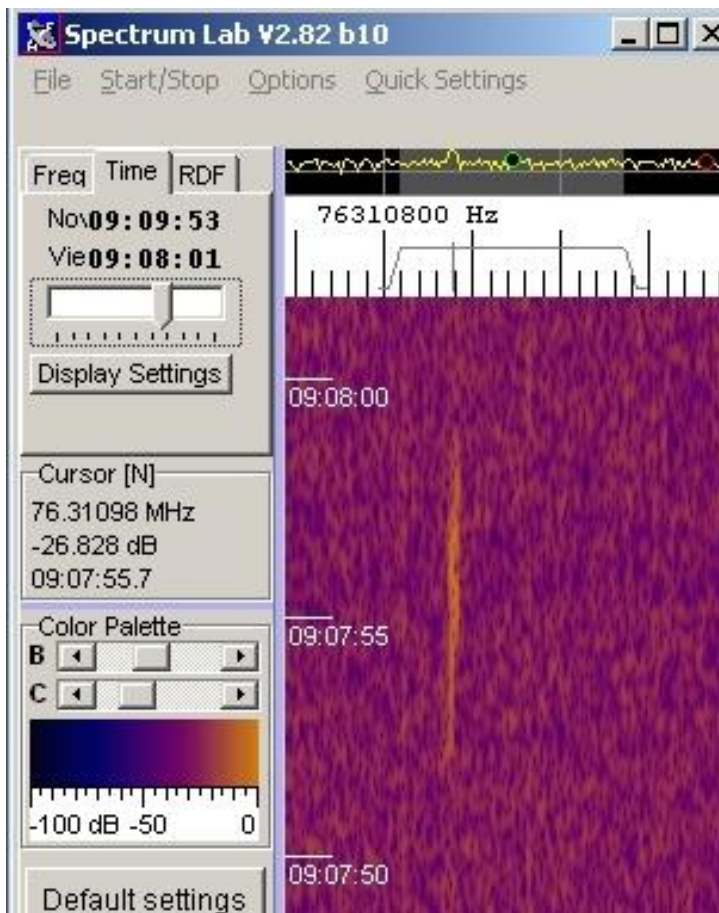
Magnitudes: -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2

ORI	1	-	-	4	2	4	3
SPO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Average Magnitudes: ORI= +0.14 SPO= N/A

My impressions of this year's Orionid Meteor Shower on the 21-22 October was not that great. I've seen this shower a few times and only once in the early 2000s did produce some good meteors.

This year, the weather really did not cooperate, with odd clouds, haze and the unchecked light pollution of Halifax city from my observing spot.



I stopped observing at 0900 UT, went in and started up my radio meteor system, unfortunately my cavity, or notch filter, is broke so I get a few returns but not like the good old days of 100-500 per hour. Now I'm lucky to get in a 12 hour period 25 to 50 meteors!

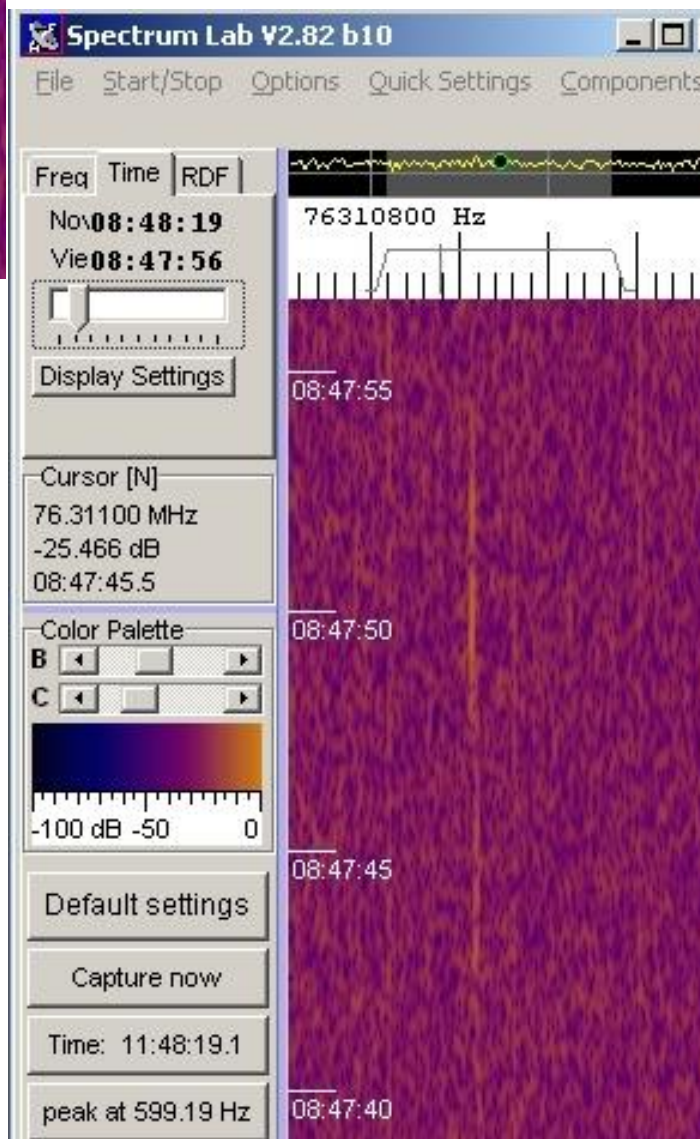
I work on 77.25MHz (CH.5 TV) which still has a few analogue transmitters somewhere to reflect the meteors.

Clear skies

Michael Boschat

In all, it was a tiresome observing night from midnight till 6am and lots of tea and cookies to keep me going.

The first bright Orionid for me was just near Taurus with a -4 white. Later one most were +1, +2 magnitude ones, to me blue in color and swift. It reminds me of the Perseids that come in spurts and then die out for an hour or so. By 0500 UT the wind was a bit breezy and cool. I kept photographing at Orion hoping for one to go by but nope, all missed the field of course. When it is bad I put the radiant area just outside my camera field and go for it. I shoot with my 50mm, f/1.8 lens wide open, at 400 ISO and my time exposures are limited to 13 seconds for the city.



Nova East 2019 – Get Drawn In!

“The stars belong to everyone” was again the theme of our 33rd consecutive Nova East star party held at Smiley's Provincial Park during the weekend of August 30 – September 2. Many thanks to John Read for the 2019 logo design, featuring a black hole event horizon for its border with interior features of Nova East.

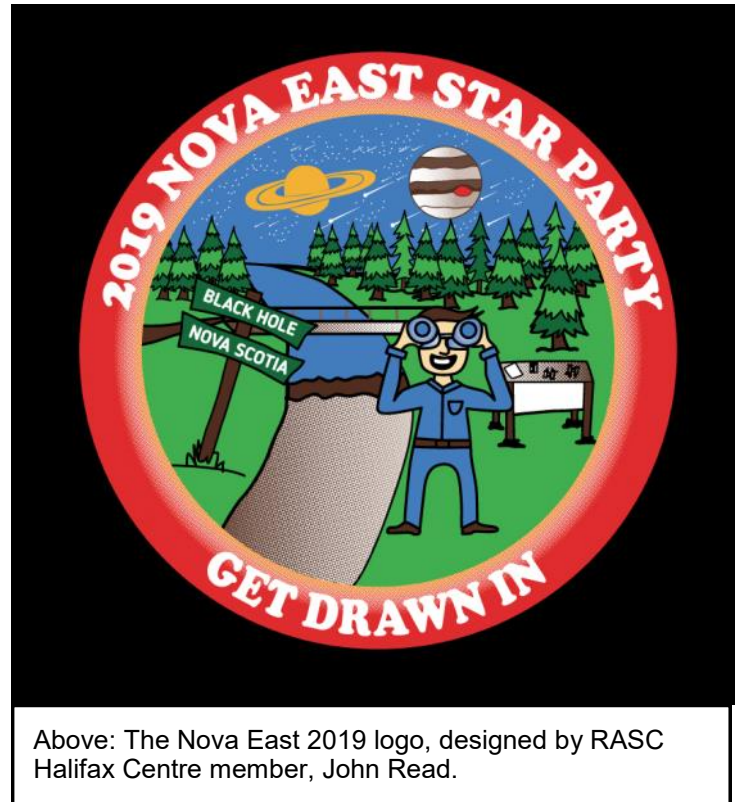
Members of the 2019 planning team were: Judy Black (Chair), Gregg Dill (Treasurer), Melody Hamilton (Registrar), Chris Young, Dave Chapman and Liz Greenough. Consultants were Mary Lou Whitehorne, John Read, Patrick Kelly, and Paul Gray. The success of Nova East 2019 was because of the dedication and imagination of each of the members during the planning and implementation phases of this event.

It is with great regret that we announce the retirement of our long-time Registrar, Melody Hamilton. Melody has been a key player in the success of Nova East. She will be missed by her fellow members on the NEPC and by those she welcomed at Nova East. I'm sure we will still see her at the event.

Nova East was almost cancelled this year due to Tropical Storm Erin. However, Erin left the area Thursday and set-up at Smileys Provincial Park progressed as per usual Friday morning. The fair-weather window between the tropical storm and the rain that followed two days after Nova East provided registrants with three warm sunny days and clear night skies. The only pitfall was the heavy dew that created observing challenges during the later evening.

Participants were entertained and informed by the slate of 2019 Nova East presenters:

Public Talk: *Tweeting to the Stars at the Burke-Gaffney Observatory – Tiffany Fields*



Above: The Nova East 2019 logo, designed by RASC Halifax Centre member, John Read.

Special Talk & Tidal Bore Road Trip: *The Large Fundy Tides & Tidal Bore Viewing – Dr. Roy Bishop*

Talks:

Night Lights' and Outreach Under the Street Lights

– Charles White

Cluster of Fun: Exploring Galactic Clusters and the Stars Within

– John Read

The Art of Seeing – Exploring the Universe, Then & Now

– Tony Schellinck

Beginner Talks:

Getting Started in Night Sky

Photography – Kathy Walker

How a Telescope Magnifies – An Introduction – Dave Chapman

Field Presentations:

Paul Heath – Sky Tour of the planets and constellations in view.

Judy Black & Melody Hamilton –
Binocular table

Tony Schellinck – NEW – Telescope Plaza (an introduction to using telescopes to find DSOs)

The RASC Halifax **Astrophotography Contest** had undergone a complete revision during the past year. Thirty photos were judged in three categories with specific criteria for the adjudicators to judge each one submitted. Winners received a large framed photo of their winning entry. Adjudicators Blair MacDonald, Mary Lou Whitehorne and Ian Corbet determined the winners:

Wide-Field: Jerry Black – “*I feel like a spot of tea. Where is the Teapot?*”

Deep-Sky/Prime Focus: Jeff Donaldson –
M27 Narrowband

Solar System: David Hoskin – Mare Nubium’s Straight Wall

Editors note: Check out the winners in the Centre showcase

David Hoskin was also presented the RASC astro-imaging Solar System Certificate. He joins fellow Halifax Centre members Art Cole (2017) & Tony Schellinck (2017) in this achievement. The **People’s Choice Award** winner, Barry Burgess, was awarded a \$50.00 Atlantic Photo Supply gift certificate for his *Balancing Rock & Milky Way*.

Chris Young acquired numerous **Door Prizes** that delighted all of the 21 lucky prize winners that included two youths. The 8x42 Nature Celestron binoculars provided by Halifax Centre as a door prize was won by Tony Schellinck. The main prize, won by Dave Lane, was a Celestron First Scope donated by Atlantic Photo Supply.

Thank you to cooks Chris Young and Mo Sandland at the **Astro Breakfast** and to cooks Chris Young and Quinn Smith at the **Potluck BBQ**. Registrants were treated to wonderfully barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs. Thank you to all registrants who contributed the numerous salads, side dishes and desserts!

Date of Nova East 2020

Nights of August 21-23

New Moon: August 19.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Black, Chair
2019 NE Planning Committee

RASC Halifax Centre Showcase

Thank you to all those who submitted images and sketches to this edition of Nova Notes. It is a privilege to showcase such great work on these pages.

Nova East Winners:

Wide-Field: Jerry Black – “*I feel like a spot of tea. Where is the Teapot?*”

Deep-Sky/Prime Focus: Jeff Donaldson – *M27 Narrowband*

Solar System: David Hoskin – Mare Nubium’s Straight Wall

Peoples Choice: Barry Burgess- *Balancing Rock and Milky Way*

Regular Submissions

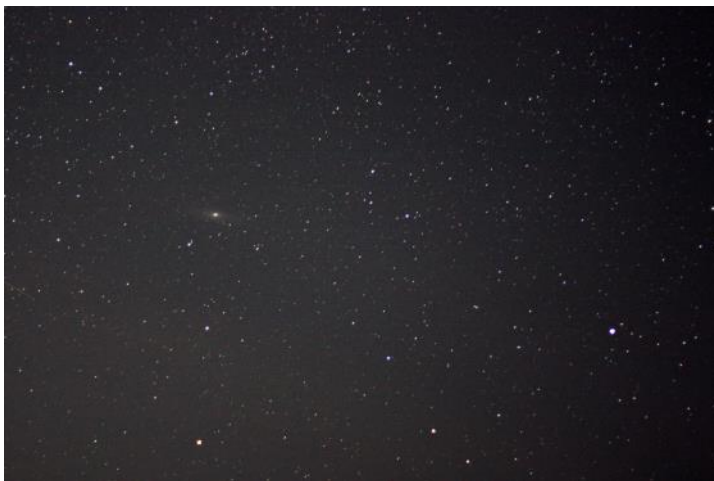
Michael Boschat - ISS

Michael Boschat - Andromeda

Charles White - M103

Michael Boschat - Radio reflection





Astronomical Observation

Page: _____

Object: M103

Time/Date: 2:30 AM / 28 OCT 2019

Location: Small Pond Obs

Conditions: Clear / Wind SW

Seeing(1-5): 4

Transparency(1-5): 4

Instrument: 203 mm Dob

Eye Piece: 25 mm

Filter: _____

Const: CAS

RA: _____

Dec: _____

Notes:

A prominent "paw" shape draws my attention immediately in a sea of stars. Noticeably higher magnitude stars are around a core, but loosely arranged bundle. This open cluster fills the eye piece with ease, making you feel like you could fall into space. Very rewarding and breath taking object. Did not record a full percent of what I saw.

