Regulus

Newsletter of the RASC Kingston Centre

Vol. 53 No. 5 May, 2026

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Centre Events for May, 2025:

May 6: Zoom Social Meeting

May 9: Science Rendezvous
Slush Puppy Place and along
The Tragically Hip Way

May 13: Pre-meeting get together at the
Portsmouth Tavern, 96 Yonge Street, Kingston

May 13: Monthly Public meeting 7pm at Queens
Room B201, Macintosh-Corry Hall,
68 University Avenue, Kingston

May 20: Zoom Social Meeting

May 27: Zoom Social Meeting

President’s Report

Malcolm Park

As spring marches on towards the summer solstice on June 21, the lengthening days bring a familiar rhythm to observing sessions. While warmer nights are a welcome reprieve for our gear and fingers, the "astronomical dark" window is rapidly shrinking. This seasonal shift is driven by Earth’s axial tilt, which now leans the Northern Hemisphere toward the Sun, resulting in the shortest nights of the year.

As "galaxy season" peaks, targets like the Whirlpool (M51) and the Virgo Cluster remain well-placed before the Milky Way core begins its midnight ascent later this month. Here are a few galaxies to try for:

The Leo Triplet (M65, M66, and NGC 3628): A famous group of three interacting spiral galaxies that fit within a single 1° field of view. NGC 3628 (the "Hamburger Galaxy") is a particularly striking edge-on target with a dark dust lane.

The Black Eye Galaxy (M64): Located in Coma Berenices, this spiral is known for the spectacular dark band of absorbing dust in front of its bright nucleus.

The Needle Galaxy (NGC 4565): Also in Coma Berenices, this is one of the most famous edge-on galaxies, appearing as a very thin, long sliver of light.

Bode’s Galaxy (M81) and the Cigar Galaxy (M82): Located high in the north in Ursa Major, these two are close enough (0.63° apart) to capture in a single frame. M82 is a "starburst" galaxy with visible red filaments extending from its core.

The Whirlpool Galaxy (M51): Situated in Canes Venatici near the Big Dipper's handle, this classic face-on spiral is actively colliding with a smaller companion galaxy.

The Sombrero Galaxy (M104): Visible in the southeast in Virgo, it features a massive, bright core and a very prominent, thick dust lane.

Many of us are currently monitoring the recurrent nova T Coronae Borealis, which astronomers expect could undergo a historic outburst at any time. Of course, we have been waiting a while now but when it goes it will be a once in a lifetime sight. Whether you are chasing faint fuzzies in the short darkness or tracking a potential nova, the coming weeks remind us that even the shortest nights can be rewarding when spending some time under the stars.

It’s going to be a really great night, once you turn off that light!

The Editor's Keyboard

Roger Hill

I was beginning to think that the new telescope curse had taken effect not with the arrival of a new telescope, but even with the ordering of it!

The last few days of April, though, despite a lot of moonlight, have meant quite a few lovely hours under a clear sky.

However, it did point out a problem that I had been suspecting for a little while: My German equatorial mount tracks significantly better when the telescope is on the east side of the pier that it does when it's on the west. I think it's because it's slightly unbalanced. A general rule of thumb says tat the mount SHOULD be slightly unbalanced, in such a manner as to cause the motors to push the telescope, rather than slowing it's fall.

The issue for me is: Do I re-balance the scope sometime over the next few days until the next clear night, or do I wait until the new 'scope arrives and I remove the side-by-side configuration I'm currently using?

I'm inclined to wait. I have Regulus to work on, and also I'll be contributing to the next Astrophotography 101 Zoom event. These presentations have become so useful in helping people climb up the steep learning curve of astrophotography.

Our social media are flooded with people asking for help because they've bought a telescope of their child (or themselves), but have no idea how to use it. The instruction manuals (often unread) frequently assume a base knowledge. Yet the simplest solution is to join a local astronomy club, preferably before the purchase of a telescope, and talk to people who have already travelled the path they should follow.

I was in Tim Horton's the other day, meeting with Mark Kaye who, along with his wife Linda, was on his way to Nova Scotia. After they had left, I sat at a table finishing my coffee when I was approached by another patron. I was wearing a T-Shirt that read "I Need My Space", with a picture of a telescope. He asked me if I knew anything about telescopes. He has had a Meade ETX125 for years, but really didn't know how to use it. He said that he had been able to find a few things over the years, but didn't know what he was doing. He also said that he was surprised by how small things were.

I got his email address and sent him a quick message from my phone, so hopefully he'll respond. Also, he told me that he spends a few months a year in Arizona, about halfway between Phoenix and Tucson, so I'll be sending him a follow up message that he should attend the Kingston Centre's public meeting in May, since Mike Hanes will be talking about.

Astronomy in Arizona. I also mentioned that there is a much more informal group in Cornwall with 20-25 members, and if he can't get to Kingston, then Cornwall might be possible.

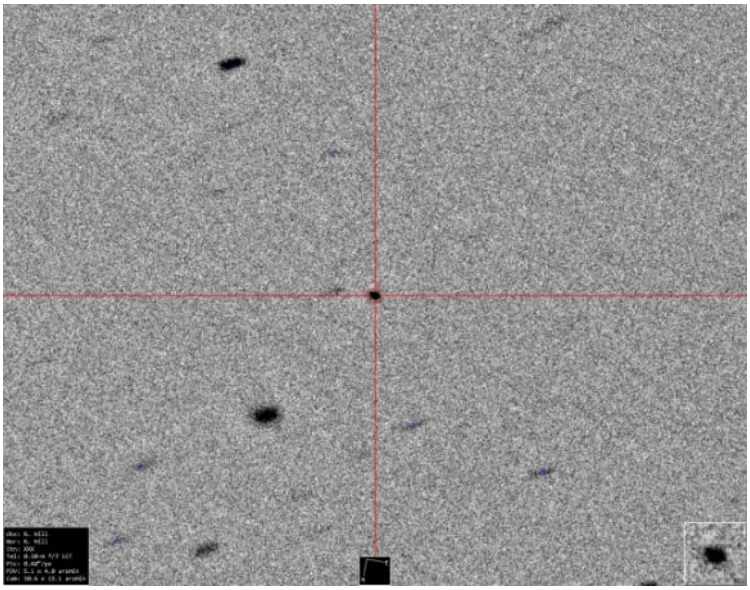
I told him I had an observatory, and he asked if I lived on Highway 2 in Johnstown? No...not me, I replied, but I do know who it is.

I was perusing Facebook this past weekend and noticed an announcement in the "Spencerville Events" page about their library doing a "Nerd Out" night and they were looking for people who are "18+ and love diving deep into fascinating scientific topics, this is your moment to shine. Volunteers can sign up for a 10–15 minute presentation on a subject they're passionate about - physics, fungi, black holes, bees, quantum weirdness… if you nerd out about it, we want to hear about it. " So, I submitted a proposal to talk about why Astronomy is the best scientific hobby. I got a reply back that the response has been enthusiastic, they've had many strong applications, and they're currently in the process of reviewing the proposed presenters. I'm optimistic I'll make the cut. If not, it certainly seems like there will be a second evening sometime.

As for observing, I added another asteroid to my list of all the Kingston-related rocks I've imaged: 5272 Dickinson, seen below right in the centre.

Tracking was quite good, so I took 60 40-second exposures, and Tycho Tracker produced a really nice solid image of it frozen against the apparently moving stars in the background. At mag 18.9, and near my major source of light pollution to the south, I was happily surprised by how much it stood out.

What was surprising to me was that I could find a couple of asteroids fainter than 20th magnitude, (326486)2002 EJ40 being mag. 20.6.



This puts (333230) Simkus, at mag. 19.8 in range later this year. When Dr. Shimkus talked to us in April, her namesake was mag 21.8, and I had doubts that I'd be able to image it.

Clear skies to you!
Roger Hill

Moonrise
I awoke in the Midsummer not-to-call night, in the white and the walk of the morning:
The moon, dwindled and thinned to the fringe of a finger-nail held to the candle,
Or paring of paradisiacal fruit, lovely in waning but lustreless,
Stepped from the stool, drew back from the barrow, of dark Maenefa the mountain;
A cusp still clasped him, a fluke yet fanged him, entangled him, not quit utterly.
This was the prized, the desirable sight, unsought, presented so easily,
Parted me leaf and leaf, divided me, eyelid and eyelid of slumber.
--Gerard Manley Hopkins, circa 1876.

The Moon is so much more than an object in the sky. Is a poem that echoes the cosmic thoughts of Hopkins, who was an experienced and passionate observer of the night sky.
The Moon is also a place. Twelve people have walked along its surface, some of whom saw mountains close by.

On the morning of July 20, 1969, 57 years ago, I was the astronomy teacher at Camp Minnowbrook on the west shore of New York's Lake Placid. The entire camp was in the auditorium as the Eagle spacecraft made its way to the surface of the Moon. The landing seemed normal enough although I sensed that Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were having some difficulty finding a flat landing site free of small craters. But we all heard the precious words, "Tranquility base. The Eagle has landed."

The rest of that day went normally, until dinner when the head counsellor announced an evening program of "free play." I approached him and suggested that the camp might want to watch the moon walk scheduled for that evening. "Mind your own business and do your job," he barked back at me. Sadly, I returned to our table.

Apparently the camp director, Lothar Eppstein, had overheard that conversation. He quickly rose and called for our attention. "Evening program is cancelled," he said. "We will all proceed directly to the auditorium from here. History is being made tonight and we all have a duty to witness it and be a part of it."

That evening, as we sat on our folding chairs, we watched a small, perhaps 12-inch black and white TV mounted on the auditorium stage. Walter Cronkite was in charge. He interviewed some interesting people, including a young Gene Shoemaker; it would be nineteen years before I would get the chance to meet him, and his wife Carolyn, in person. Some of it was quite serious; a lot of it was just fun.

Then after a few hours the picture suddenly changed to the "porch" of the lunar module. Armstrong was standing on it. The auditorium, filled with children as young as six or seven years old, went suddenly silent. Slowly, step by step, Armstrong descended the ladder and set one foot, then the other, on the Moon.
"That's one small step for a man,
One giant leap for mankind."

It was more than a major time in history. This was one of the pivotal, defining moments in the history of human civilization. I will never forget that night.

There have been other, more personal, defining moments in my own lifetime. The discovery of my first comet, on 13 November 1984, was one. And the discovery by the Shoemakers and me of the comet that would strike Jupiter was another. Those two times were private. Watching the moon walk was a joy I shared with 150 young children, and our whole world.

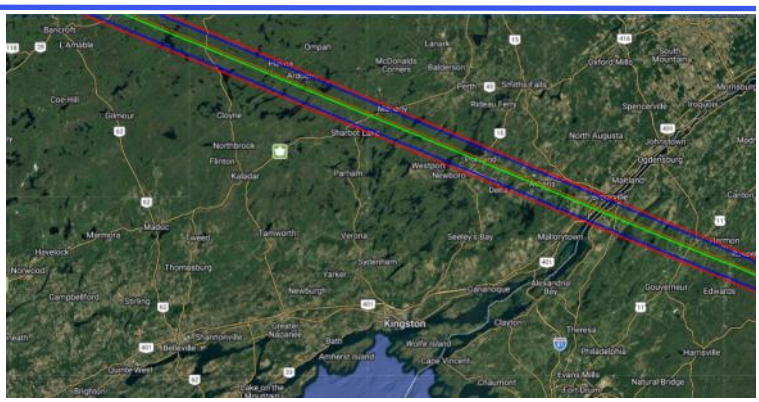
On Wednesday, 1 April 2026, Artemis II began its journey to the Moon. Its four astronauts represented different aspects of American society, including one Canadian. The mission commander was Reid Wiseman, its pilot Victor Glover. The two other mission specialists were Christina Koch and Canadian Jeremy Hansen. I met Jeremy in 2016 at the London general assembly of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, and have never forgotten him. Seeing him emerge from Integrity just a few moments ago was ecstatic.

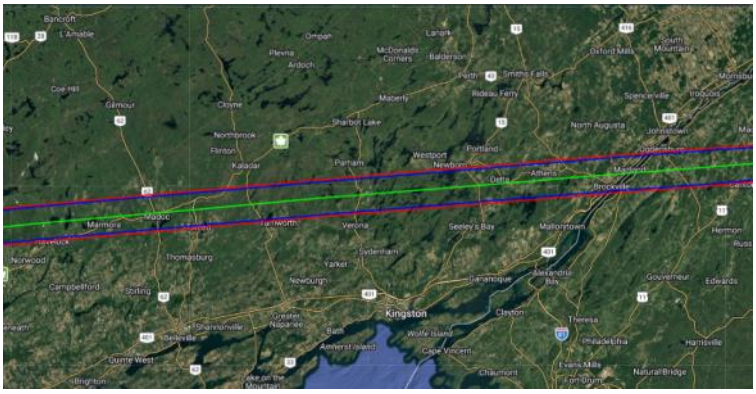
Our world is going through trying times. But the continuing story of the travels we take to the Moon offers a rare moment of unity. No red countries, no green countries, just one gorgeous world. The other news shows us the world as it is. The Moon journeys show our world's possibilities. They show the world as it can be.

Picture. Montage of the March 3 2026 total eclipse of the Moon. Used by permission of Mario Motta.

The Sky This Month: Rick Wagner

Any night of the week offers up a broad range of viewing wonders. A Past President of the Kingston Centre, Rick Wagner keeps an eye on the sky each month, sharing some of the best viewing opportunities as well as timings to catch your favourite night sky target at its best.





Astronomy This Month – May 2026

01 May – Full Moon (13:23EDT)

06 May – η (eta) Aquariid meteor shower peaks, minor shower badly affected by moonlight

08 May – Double shadow transit on Jupiter (20:50EDT)

09 May – Last Quarter Moon

15 May – Double shadow transit on Jupiter very low in west (23:20EDT)

16 May – New Moon (16:01EDT)

16 May – asteroid (46310) 2001 QQ11 (mag 19.6) occults TYC 4981-01318-1 (mag 9.2) over Athens 22:20EDT

17 May – (39135) 2000 WX59 (mag 18.5) occults UCAC4 360-145749 (mag 10.9) over Sharbot Lake, Sydenham, Kingston 05:08EDT

1
8 May – Earthlit crescent Moon 3° right of gibbous Venus (mag -3.9)

19 May – Earthlit crescent Moon between Venus (mag -3.9) and Jupiter (mag -1.9)

20 May – (118452) 1999 VH127 (mag 19.2) occults UCAC4 402-087579 (mag 10.9) over Athens 03:54EDT

23 May – First Quarter Moon

23 May – Callisto and Io both transiting Jupiter (22:20EDT)

28 May – (110771) 2001 UQ27 (mag 19.6) occults UCAC4 528-067040 (mag 11.3) over Elgin and Athens 22:56EDT

29 May – (29) Amphitrite (mag 9.5) at opposition

30 May – (21) Lutetia (mag 9.8) at opposition

31 May – Full Moon (04:45EDT)

31 May – Venus at greatest altitude at end of nautical twilight

Target for Tonight: Cancer

Susan Gagnon

The smallish constellation Cancer is light on targets when it comes to the RASC observing lists. There are no Levy, Finest NGC, or Deep Sky Challenge objects listed.

Tegmine (HIP40167)is another Double Star List member that is actually a triple, visually and has a 4th star that is unseen. The visual members are A mag 5.3, B mag 6.3 and C mag 6.2. A and B, with a separation of 0.9" are known to be a binary system. Companion C is 5.9" away. These are yellow/white main sequence stars.

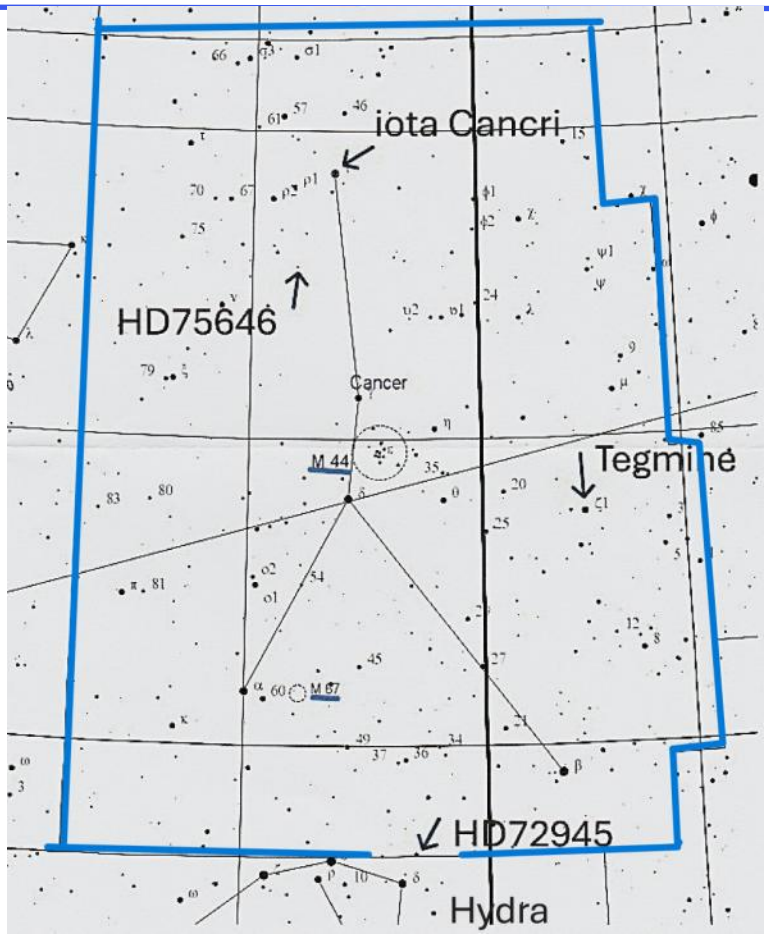
HD 72945(A) has a companion HD72946 (B). The A component is mag 6 and recorded as yellow/white and B is red dwarf that has been recorded by Sissy Haas as being described by various observers as: yellowish olive, yellow red, purple, and rose tint. They have a separation of 10".

HD 75646, A component is mag 7.7, B is mag 8.5 and the separation is a wide 49". I was unable to find much else on this pair, save the entry of Sissy Haas in her Double Star Catalogue: Bright citrus orange star with a small white companion.

M44 Open Cluster aka The Beehive or Praesepe (The Manger): under dark skies this cluster is actually visible with the naked eye. To quote Stephen O'Meara 'One night, while observing at 14,000 feet, I gazed at the Beehive without optical aid, while occasionally breathing oxygen through an oxygen mask. To my amazement, the haze of unresolved stars vanished and the individual cluster members stood out boldly as rock-steady pearls, each tiny bright disk surrounded by an intense black rim'. Some tips on where to locate your observatory there, oh yeah and have the oxygen ready!

M67 Open Cluster aka King Cobra appears smaller and dimmer than M44. But one should keep in mind that in reality it is five times further away and twice the diameter of M44. It is also one of the oldest galactic clusters.

Bonus: iota Cancri, from the *Coloured* Double Star list. A wide pair, 30" apart. Sun yellow and royal blue, making a vivid contrast.



The Beehive's Secret

In Cancer's heart, where dimmest shadows lie,
A ghostly mist dissolves against the night;
A smudge of lace upon the velvet sky,
That shuns the bold and seeks the softest light.
To naked eyes, it bides a modest state,
A tiny cloud, a breath of cosmic air,
As if the gods had left a smoldering grate
Of dying embers, scattered unaware.
But bring the glass to meet the silvered blur,
And watch the veil of ancient dust divide;
Where once a phantom haze was seen to stir,
A thousand burning gems no longer hide.
Like scattered pearls upon a royal gown,
The Beehive wears its bright and starry crown.

Please see the back page of Regulus regarding this poem.

Object	Description	RA hr, min	Dec/degree min	Magnitude
Tegmine	Double Star	8 12	+17 39	Combined 5.1
HD 72945	Double Star	8 35.8	+06 37	Combined 5.7
HD 75646	Double Star	8 52	+25 43	Combined 7.3
M44	Messier list and ETU open cluster	8 40.1	+19 59	3.1
M67	Messier, open cluster	8 51	+11 48	6.9
Iota Cancri	Bonus!	8 47	+28 46	4.1, 6.0

Observatory designs pt3. - Roll off Roof

There are a great many different designs for observatories. I will attempt to go through a few of them and make comments on the various pros and cons, to help you decide what type you may wish to build in the future.

Part 1 - Fold down roof
Part 2- roll off building
*** Part 3 - roll off roof
Part 4 - Dome style

This is the SCGO observatory.
It started as an observing platform in 2003 March (image) with two wooden piers in concrete. In 2003 August the base was expanded to 8'x10' (image) and a Canadian tire metal panel garden shed was assembled on top (image). 12 days of screwing little screws and nuts and bolts together (never again!) and the observatory was assembled... just did not have roll off roof rails yet.

On 2023-09-12 the rails were added. Just over one month later on 20031015 a huge overnight thunderstorm hit and the roof was no longer a roof (image).

On 2023-10-18 the roof was back and in subsequent days was hammered out, patched and operational again. Inside the observatory we needed to add Styrofoam panels. to keep the blowing wind and snow out.

The mounts built to a necessary height and desks and computers were added in. The insides have been gutted and renovated a half dozen times since then, now with a single tripod scope (the piers rotted years ago) and a long 8' workbench and a smaller computer desk. Unfortunately since the floor base was not built as a single unit, the floor is no longer level nor flat.

Remnants of a Halifax hurricane hit, blew in the doors and lifted the roof off once again. It was not salvageable and a new wooden roof with a high peak was built in 2021 (for snow clearing reasons).

Pros:
Fixed position walls give shelter from the wind and from local light pollution from neighbours (vs roll-off building).
Fixed pier means that wiring can all be safely installed and not move or be tripped on (vs roll-off building).
You can set up your workspace to perfection, desks, computers, displays, keyboards and more.
Normally can work inside with the roof closed in bad weather (vs roll-off building)

Cons:
The telescope must be low enough for the roof to clear.. or if taller, must be in stowed park position before the roof moves (same as roll off building).
Depending on the movement type, a roof can be heavy and hard to move. The SCGO roof started off with Teflon slides on Formica, then moved to 20 small plastic wheels, then moved to 2" wheels, then 3" wheels and finally to metal inverted V groove wheels on angle iron track.
The roof must be locked down to prevent movement if the winds








More Stuff from Kevin

Kevin Kell

1. Where is the BEST location to observe from the following?
☆ A. Canadian Tire at Princess and Gardiners Road where they turn the lights off at night
☆ B. Lemoine Point Conservation Area
☆ C. Murney Tower Museum Waterfront Park
☆ D. The Ellis Hall Observatory

2. What is the LEAST useful item for nighttime observing?
☆ A. red flashlight
☆ B. red pen
☆ C. appropriate clothing
☆ D. TV Tray/Table

3. What is the MOST useful piece of information to put down in your logbook for an observing session?
☆ A. What TV show are you missing to be outside
☆ B. How deep is the snow you have to shovel your way through to get to the observatory.
☆ C. The date, time and what you looked at
☆ D. What you looked at, the date and time, the sky conditions

4. Looking down on the Earth's North Pole, does the Earth rotate:
☆ A. clockwise
☆ B. counter-clockwise
☆ C. from top to bottom
☆ D. from bottom to top

5. You are an observer on Wolfe Island looking North. Which direction does the North Star move?
☆ A. up
☆ B. down
☆ C. left
☆ D. right
☆ E. nowhere

6. The Sun is located near Sagittarius. What season is it?
☆ A. Summer
☆ B. Spring
☆ C. Winter
☆ D. Fall

7. Five magnitudes of brightness difference is how many times brighter?
☆ A. about 99x
☆ B. about 100x
☆ C. about 101x
☆ D. 100x
☆ E. 5x

8. Describe in numerical format the location of a strange object you saw last night around 10 minutes to 9pm in the northeast about 1/3 of the way up the sky from Enterprise, Ontario while your feet were pointed northwest and a planisphere in your hand dialed into Sagittarius on August 3rd.
☆ A. 44 degrees 22 minutes North by 76 degrees 15 minutes West at 20:50 EDT October 24
☆ B. 30 degrees azimuth by 45 degrees altitude at 20:50 EDT October 24
☆ C. 44 degrees 22 minutes North by 76 degrees 15 minutes West at 00:50 UT October 25
☆ D. 30 degrees altitude by 45 degrees azimuth at 20:50 EDT October 24

The answers are at the bottom of the page:
https://kingston.rasc.ca/about/minor-planet-list/

ZWO Seestar S30 Pro: Loan Program Guidelines

The **RASC Kingston Centre** acquired the **ZWO Seestar S30 Pro** smart telescope in early 2026. This equipment is primarily dedicated to our **Member Loan Program**, with secondary use for **Public Outreach** events only when specifically required.

1. Loan Duration and Handover
   - **Term Length:** Loans are generally for **one month**. This strict timeframe ensures we can move through the waitlist efficiently.
   - **Scheduling:** To facilitate easy handovers, the loan period begins and ends on the **second Wednesday of each month**, coinciding with our in-person Monthly Public Meetings.

2. The Waitlist Process
   - **Initial Launch:** Once the loan program is announced, members may submit their names. After an initial sign-up period, the starting order of the waitlist will be determined **at random**.
   - **Ongoing Requests:** After the initial list is established, new requests will be added to the bottom of the list, following the same process as our Seestar S50 program.

3. Priority Access
   - To ensure as many members as possible get hands-on experience with this technology, priority will be given to **first-time borrowers**. Members who have not previously signed out the Seestar will be moved ahead of those who have already used it.

How to Request a Loan:
If you would like to join the waitlist, please contact our Equipment Coordinator, Kevin Kell, directly at kevin@starlightcascade.ca.

Technical Note:
The telescope includes an **Android tablet** with the necessary control software pre-installed. However, many users find that their own **smartphones** provide a faster and more responsive experience than the provided tablet.

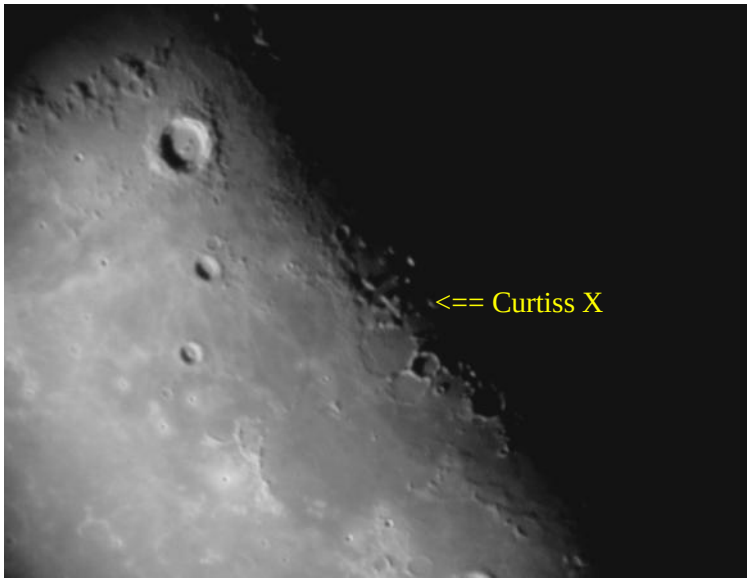
Comet MAPS did not survive its close encounter with the sun! Comet Panstars is putting on a great show for those in the Southern Hemisphere. The Flame Star still has not gone Nova. The Artemis II mission was a rousing success. I hope you all managed to watch parts of it.

This month Mercury will be visible low in the WNW during evening twilight after mid-month. Venus will also be visible in evening twilight, low in the WNW, all month. If you see the two together try to get a photo. The one closer to where the sun has set is probably Mercury. Do not try to see them before the sun sets, the risk of damage to your eye is extreme. Mars is now moving out of the Sun's glow, from Earth's point of view, and will be found very low in the ESE in morning twilight. Jupiter will be low in the W at dusk and will set around 11PM. Saturn is rising in the E after 4 AM.

The Full Moon on May 1 is called Birds Laying Eggs. On May 3, the bright red star in Scorpius, Antares, will be half a degree N of the Moon. The Moon reaches apogee (furthest away from Earth for the month) on the 4th. The Eta Aquarid Meteor Shower caused by dust from Halley's Comet, peaks between the 5th and 6th. It has more meteors per hour in the Southern Hemisphere than the Northern (about half as many).

There are several shadow crossings on Jupiter this month. The first happens on the 8th starting at 8:44 PM. The moons passing between the Sun and Jupiter are Ganymede and Europa. A telescope is required to see this event. The moons are in orbit around Jupiter so the shadows cross regularly. The crossing is not always lined up so it can be seen from Earth. You need the magnification to be steady and you are looking to see a smallish black dot or two move across the face of Jupiter. If the Great Red Spot is it the right place, it would make a memorable vision. If you have the right equipment, you could make a time lapse movie.

May 9 is Last Quarter Moon and on the 10th the Curtiss X will be visible along the Moon's Terminator. I have only seen this with a telescope but 10 X Binoculars should be enough.



On the 14th, Mercury will be in Superior Conjunction (in a line from Earth, Sun, Mercury — not visible from Earth). On the 15th, Ganymede and Europa's shadows cross Jupiter again, starting at 11:19 PM. The old crescent Moon will be visible in the E before sunrise on the 16th with New Moon after sunset. There will be larger tides for the next three days if you are somewhere to see this response. The Moon is at Perigee, closest approach to Earth during the month, on the 17th. Venus will be 3 degrees S of the Moon on the 18th and Jupiter will be 3 degrees S of the Moon on the 20th. The 22nd has Ganymede's and Europa's discs visible crossing Jupiter, starting at 11:54 PM. On the 23rd, Regulus, the brightest star in Leo, will be 0.8 degrees N of the Moon.

The other two Galilean Moons, Callisto and Io will be crossing Jupiter at 10:15 PM. The Lunar Straight Wall is visible on the 24th. Again, I have only seen this with a telescope but binoculars can do it. It is considered a challenge. The second Full Moon (Blue Moon) in May is on the 31st and is called Frog's Croaking Moon. Antares will be 0.4 degrees N of the Moon.

Lennox and Addington Dark Sky Viewing Area (7980 L&A County Road 41, Erinsville, ON) is now open for business. New Moon nights are considered prime nights. Those who wish to take photos will be in abundance then. Laser tours are scheduled all summer. Check the website for details.

North Frontenac Dark Astronomy Park (5816 Road 506, Plevna, ON) is also open. Check their Facebook page for events. May 9 is when Science Rendezvous takes place in Kingston at Slush Puppie Place (10 AM-3 PM). It is a great showcase of what science is all about and lots of fun for the kids. The RASC Kingston will be set up on Tragically Hip Way near the doors with solar safe telescopes. The Queen's Observatory will be open that evening as well with their Open House program.

Clear Skies.

The Old Astronomer

Sarah Williams (1837– 1868)

Reach me down my Tycho Brahe, I would know him when we meet,
When I share my later science, sitting humbly at his feet;
He may know the law of all things, yet be ignorant of how
We are working to completion, working on from then to now.

Pray remember that I leave you all my theory complete,
Lacking only certain data for your adding, as is meet,
And remember men will scorn it, 'tis original and true,
And the obliquy of newness may fall bitterly on you.

But, my pupil, as my pupil you have learned the worth of scorn,
You have laughed with me at pity, we have joyed to be forlorn,
What for us are all distractions of men's fellowship and wiles;
What for us the Goddess Pleasure with her meretricious smiles.

You may tell that German College that their honour comes too late,
But they must not waste repentance on the grizzly savant's fate.
Though my soul may set in darkness, it will rise in perfect light;
I have loved the stars too truly to be fearful of the night.

What, my boy, you are not weeping? You should save your eyes for
sight;
You will need them, mine observer, yet for many another night.
I leave none but you, my pupil, unto whom my plans are known.
You "have none but me," you murmur, and I "leave you quite
alone"?

Well then, kiss me, -- since my mother left her blessing on my brow,
There has been a something wanting in my nature until now;
I can dimly comprehend it, -- that I might have been more kind,
Might have cherished you more wisely, as the one I leave behind.

I "have never failed in kindness"? No, we lived too high for strife,
Calmest coldness was the error which has crept into our life;
But your spirit is untainted, I can dedicate you still
To the service of our science: you will further it? you will!

There are certain calculations I should like to make with you,
To be sure that your deductions will be logical and true;
And remember, "Patience, Patience," is the watchword of a sage,
Not to-day nor yet to-morrow can complete a perfect age.

I have sown, like Tycho Brahe, that a greater man may reap;
But if none should do my reaping, 'twill disturb me in my sleep
So be careful and be faithful, though, like me, you leave no name;
See, my boy, that nothing turn you to the mere pursuit of fame.

I must say Good-bye, my pupil, for I cannot longer speak;
Draw the curtain back for Venus, ere my vision grows too weak:
It is strange the pearly planet should look red as fiery Mars,
God will mercifully guide me on my way amongst the stars.

In 1936, Hazel Felleman included the first four stanzas in an anthology called The Best Loved Poems of the American People using the non-authentic title of "The Old Astronomer to His Pupil". She also changed the word "truly" to "fondly". Sarah Williams (1837–1868) was an English poet and novelist who lived a remarkably brief but creatively intense life in London. Born to a Welsh businessman, she felt a deep connection to her Welsh heritage, often crediting it for her poetic nature and sometimes writing under the pseudonym "Sadie". She was educated at Queen's College, London, a pioneering institution for women's education, where she excelled in literature and began publishing verse in popular Victorian periodicals like Good Words and The Argosy.

Her life was cut short by a battle with cancer, which she stoically hid from her mother and closest friends for months while she continued to write. Tragically, the death of her beloved father in January 1868 further devastated her health. Facing her own mortality, she eventually agreed to a risky surgery that she suspected would be fatal; she died during the procedure on April 25, 1868, at only 30 years old. Her most famous work, the collection Twilight Hours: A Legacy of Verse, was published posthumously later that year, ensuring that her "soul" indeed "rose in perfect light" through her enduring words.

While the astronomer is traditionally interpreted as male, there is a strong case for viewing the character as female or gender-neutral when looking at the poem's original context. Williams wrote the poem while she was dying of cancer at age 30. Many scholars see the astronomer's reflections on life, legacy, and facing "the night" as Williams' own voice processing her impending death.

At the time (1868), a female scientist was a radical concept. Some modern interpretations suggest Williams used a "male" scientific persona as a gender-subversive way to speak with intellectual authority while keeping her personal struggle private.

Minutes of the April Public meeting

Elena Zanetti

Wednesday, April 6, 2026
Minutes of the RASC-KC Regular Monthly Meeting

Ellis Hall, Room 226, Queen's University, Kingston

The meeting began at 7:13 pm.
Laurie Graham, our Vice-President, welcomed Kingston Centre members and guests with 27 people in attendance.

The RASC Kingston Centre acknowledges that we are on the traditional homeland of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and the Huron-Wendat, and we thank these nations for their care and stewardship over these lands.

Other than meeting nights, we host Wednesday night Zoom Socials, with an invitation posted to the Centre's email list. Our monthly newsletter, Regulus, can be found on the RASC Kingston Centre website Kingston.rasc.ca. Thank you, Roger.

Our speaker this evening is Dr. Danielle Simkus, 'The Building Blocks of Life Beyond Earth'. Danielle's research at the NASA Goddard Research Lab has included studying topics in astrobiology and organic geochemistry and the organic contents of meteorites searching for the building blocks of life. Using mostly gas chromatography and mass spectrometry in her studies, molecules found in the samples have included the building blocks of RNA, DNA, amino acids and lipids, formed by nonbiological processes in space. Her talk begins at the 21:00 minute mark on our RASC Kingston Centre YouTube video.

Rick Wagner: What's Up in the Sky
Astronomy This Month April 2026
Local Events
11 Apr – Queen's Observatory Open House
L&A Dark Sky Viewing Area
10 & 11 Apr – Laser-guided star tour
18 Apr – Astrophotographers Assemble
09 May – Astrophotographers Assemble
Sky Events – April
10 Apr – Last Quarter Moon
17 Apr – New Moon (0752EDT)
18 Apr – thin crescent (1.5d old) Moon 6 degrees right of Venus (mag -3.9)
20 Apr – Mars (mag 1.3), Saturn (mag 0.9), Mercury (mag -0.2) in 1.75 degree straight line
22 Apr – Lyrid meteor shower peaks midafternoon
23 Apr – First Quarter Moon
25 Apr – Moon narrowly misses Regulus by 2 arcmin (21:00EDT)
Sky Events – May
01 May – Full Moon (13:23EDT)
06 May – eta Aquariid meteor shower peaks
08 May – Double shadow transit on Ju8piter (20:50EDT)
09 May – Last Quarter Moon

Comets
C/2025 R# (PANSTARRS) (mag 5) low in ENE before sun rise; at perihelion 26 Apr just south of Sun, reaches mag -1??, probably invisible
T CrB Rises mid evening, transits early morning Still Faint

Major Planets
Venus (mag -3.9) and Uranus (mag 5.8) low in W after sunset
Jupiter (mag -2.1) transits at dinner, sets shortly after mid night
Neptune (mag 7.8)
Saturn (mag 0.9)
Mars (mag 1.3)
Mercury (mag 1.1) very low in E before sunrise

Small Bodies
15 Apr – (4063) Euforbo (mag 16.1) occults TYC 1451-00474-1 (mag 11.0) over much of SE Ontario (1050EDT)
15 Apr – (24302) 1999 XP242 (mag 19.2) occults TYC 2477-01033-1 (mag 8.3) over Kingston (2200EDT)

Bruce Elliott, Elena Zanetti, and Graham Hay (virtually) were judges for the Leo Enright Prize in Astronomy in Astronomy at the KFLA Science Fair. The winning grade 7 student was Jyotis Jugroot from Kingstown School, 'Titan – Life Frozen in Time'. Jyotis was also last year's winner of our award, congratulations! Science Rendezvous – May 9th , 10 am to 3 pm. We will be located on the sidewalk, just west of the main doors. Contact Bruce if you would like to be added to the volunteer list.

Kevin Kell shared images of Jupiter taken in 2026. Good shadow transits and cloud features despite the number of cloudy nights this year. Kevin is using a calendar of significant Jupiter events by Curt Nason of the NB RASC to help plan his observing sessions. Also, images of the Moon and M42 with his SeeStar S50, and a couple of animations of Jupiter with a moon shadow transit and cyclonic storms.

Our website – Kingston.rasc.ca. Our Facebook Group - @RASC Kingston Centre.

Our YouTube channel – @RASC Kingston Centre.

You are invited to join us at rasc.ca/join.

Next meeting is May 13 th , in person at Queen's, MacIntosh-Corry Hall Room B201 at 7 pm.

Laurie thanked all for attending and the meeting ended at 9:11 pm.

Elena Zanetti, Secretary.

About Us

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

The RASC is a national, non-profit, charitable organization devoted to the advancement of astronomy and related sciences. Founded in 1868, The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada is Canada's leading astronomy organization, bringing together over 5000 enthusiastic amateurs, educators, and professionals. In addition to many national services, our 30 Centres offer local programs across Canada.

The RASC Kingston Centre

We are Kingston's Astronomy Club, a local centre of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, that was founded on June 2nd, 1961. We hold monthly meetings, on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from September to December and March to June via zoom videoconferencing and in person, from 7:00-9:00pm Eastern Time. Meetings are held in January and February, but are available by Zoom only.

- We do public outreach programs in the form of helping the Cubs and Guides, teachers, Science Fairs and many public Education and Public Outreach events.
- We help our members with questions in astronomy and equipment use.
- We hold private observing sessions.
- We hold public sessions with Queen's University Observatory Open House, on the third Saturday of each month, at Ellis Hall, Queen's University. Details can be found at https://www.queensu.ca/observatory/
- We support the local Frontenac, Lennox & Addington County Science Fair (FLASF) with a prize in astronomy.
- We are happy to answer your questions on astronomy.

A note about the poem The Beehives Secret. My apologies, but it was actually written by Google's AI, Gemini.
I told it that "I need a sonnet about the Beehive cluster in the constellation of Cancer; how it is a little cloud to unaided eyes, but a small telescope, or binoculars, can make the individual stars stand out boldly as tiny pearls"

I asked for this, rather than just have some empty white space on the screen, or page.

Front cover image
Regulus and the Moon. On April 25, Regulus was about 2 arc-minutes from the lunar limb as seen from Kingston. Brian McCracken took this image on April 25, 2026 at 2106 EDT. He used a Nikon Z9 mirrorless camera with Nikon 200 -500mm f/5.6 lens plus 1.4X teleconverter for a total of 700mm. Image was shot at 0.2 sec, f/20, ISO 4000.

Incidentally, last months back page image was a slice of Chorizo.

Board of Directors & Officers for 2025-2026

Directors:
Laurie Graham, Roger Hill, John Hurley, Kevin Kell, Bruce Murray, Malcolm Park, Elena Zanetti

Officers:

President	Malcolm Park
Vice President	Laurie Graham
Treasurer	Bruce Murray
Regulus Editor	Roger Hill
NC Rep	John Hurley
Equipment Coordinator	Kevin Kell
Secretary	Elena Zanetti
Librarian	Kim Hay
Equipment coordinator	Kevin Kell
Science Rendezvous/FLASF	Bruce Elliott
Annual Member Image Gallery	Brian McCracken
Queen's Open House coord	Laurie Graham
Web Team	Kevin Kell and Walter McDonald
Social Convenor	Mike Hanes
Email Chat List Moderator	Kim Hay
Facebook Team	Kim Hay
Fall'N'Stars KC coordinator	Mike Hanes
Honourary President:	David H. Levy

The **Royal Astronomical Society of Canada Kingston Centre** was provincially incorporated as a Not-For-Profit Corporation in September 2005 and has been a registered Charity with the Canada Revenue Agency since September 2006. Our CRA Registration: 827905720RR0001

Benefits of Membership:

RASC benefits:
- Annual edition of the Observers Handbook
- Bi-monthly RASC Journal (digital)
- Monthly Bulletin of the RASC (digital)

Kingston Centre benefits:
- Monthly Centre Newsletter – Regulus
- Weekly social videoconference chat for members and invited guests.
- On the 2nd Wednesday evening of the month, there are meetings are open to the public: In-person in March to June and September to December at Queens, July and August outdoors at Lake Ontario Park; and two in January and February that are video-conference only.
- Equipment loan program