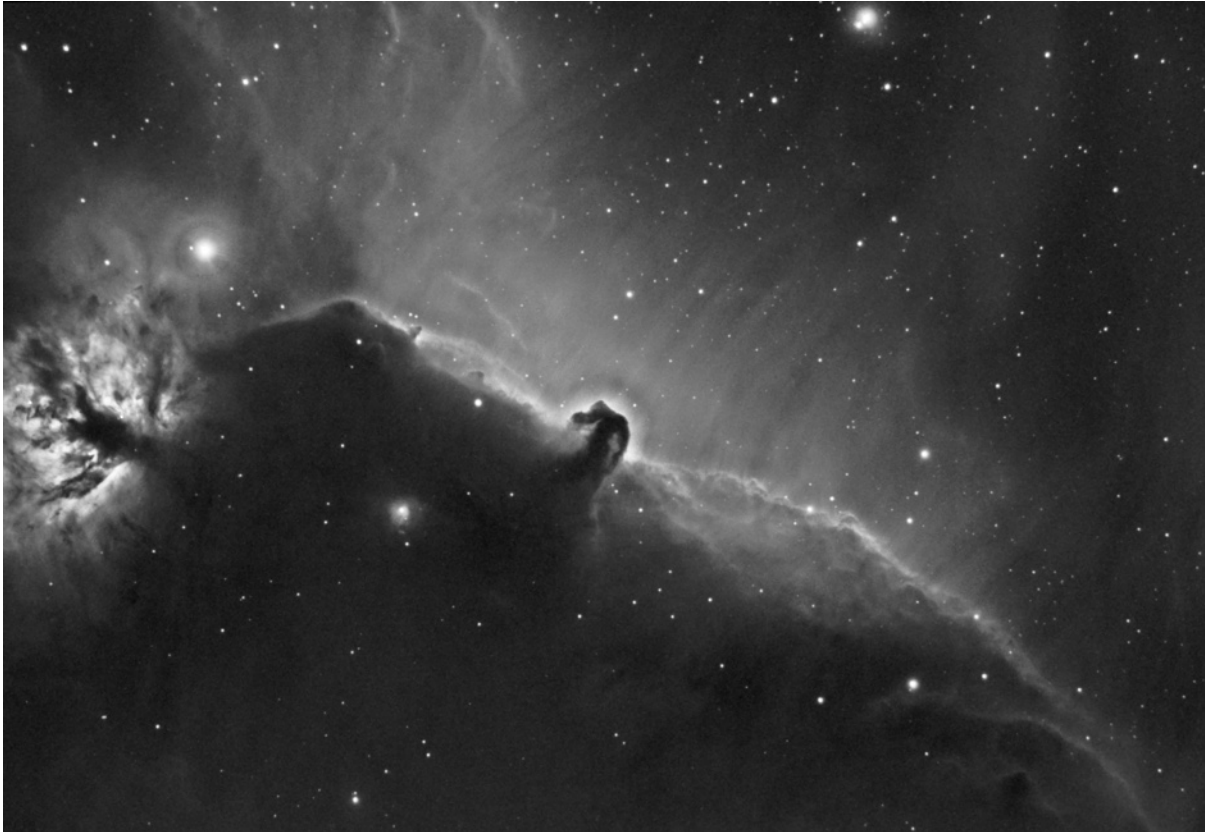


SKYNEWS



Horsehead Nebula (B33) in Hydrogen Alpha

by Daniel Possey

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FEBRUARY MEETING

Wednesday February 11th, 7:30pm
A104 Bob Wright Bldg,
University of Victoria
3800 Finnerty Rd

www.victoria.rasc.ca

On the Cover

Horsehead Nebula (B33) in Hydrogen Alpha

This is 8h10m of exposures on the Horsehead nebula gathered from three different sessions in the Fall of 2011 and 2014 respectively. This image consists of 2h50m of ten minute exposures taken at -25°C in December 2011, and 5h20m of twenty minute exposures gathered in November and December 2014. The images were captured with a QSI 583c, through a Televue 127is guided on a Paramount ME. The 2011 data utilized a 12nm Hydrogen Alpha filter, while the 2014 data was captured at a more precise 3nm width. Both data sets were calibrated with bias, dark, and flat frames.

If you look at this image you will see the distinctive 'horsehead' dark nebula in the centre, and the flame nebula off to the far left near the O star Alnitak. This is a fairly deep image, and the 'raying' effect seen in this region above the horsehead. This is quite a dusty region, and below the nebula you will see subtle shifts in illumination. I am hoping that the addition of some full spectrum data will bring out more detail in these regions.

January Talk

John McDonald and Reg Dunkley will be speaking on rare meteor manifestations..

Presidents Report

by Sherry Buttner

Happy New Year, everyone! Welcome to 2015, the International Year of Light. We are working on a number of public events to celebrate IYL 2015, in collaboration with Natasha Van Bentum. You may remember Natasha; she and her husband Henri participated with us in IYA 2009. I know

we're all looking forward to working with her again!

John McDonald (Victoria Centre) and Russ Robb (UVic) have reinstated the UVic observing sessions, so watch for upcoming email announcements and mark your calendars; they're scheduled for Jan 16, Feb 13, Mar 13, Apr 10, and May 8. These sessions are primarily visual (although you're welcome to bring a camera to try a little focal photography). We will be able to view and study lots of great celestial objects with the university's 32" telescope. These sessions are open to ALL Victoria Centre members, not just those on the Active Observer's list. Big thanks to John and Russ!

And speaking of great celestial objects: don't forget Comet Lovejoy (C/2014 Q2). Rising rapidly in the south, it will pass just to the west of Orion, Taurus, and into Perseus this month. It's a little brighter than predicted and is already a lovely sight in binos and backyard telescopes. Go out and have a look!

Wishing you clear skies, and a wonderful year ahead,

2nd Vice President

by Chris Purse

Membership

Total 169
Grace 7 (please see or email me to check if your on the list)

Family Hobby Show

On February 6th, 7th and 8th the Westshore Mall will be hosting the Family Hobby Show and our Centre will be there.

Last year our members reported having a great time while entertaining the public. We had a telescope draw prize which we are doing again this year. The displays and telescopes will be there again this year. If you would like to volunteer again give Sid a call (250) 391-0540.

Swap and Shop at Astronomy Cafe

Chris Purse and John McDonald are proposing to set a day to do a Swap n' Shop at Astronomy Cafe. It has been tentatively set for the 26th of January. In the past other members of the Victoria Centre have brought items they have wanted to let go in order to either increase shelf or shop space at home. Another regular contributor to the group has been Sid Sidhu, who brought in books, books and more books plus the occasional historical item that attendees are sometimes given a quiz to identify said astronomical equipment - the prize, usually the equipment. So if your into same, bring it on in and maybe you will make up that space at home for more eclectic astronomical equipment.

An Observer's Thoughts on the New Year

by Diane Bell

Many times through my life I had vowed to lose weight, gain better insight and to put a few extra kilometres in my walking schedule. Ah, but those New Year's

resolutions got lost under the corner where my Christmas tree stood, along with the chocolates I received over the holidays. "Ah, next year", I resolved.

The year 2010 was different - I looked at my list of resolutions and checked off one; "Get involved in more astronomy." I was encouraged by the International Year of Astronomy displays in the malls and the enthusiasm of all the volunteers in 2009. But where to begin?

I went to my local London Drugs for my monthly shopping and picked up the latest issues of "Astronomy" and "SkyNews" magazines. I also headed over to Chapters bookstore and bought a rather large soft-cover book called "The Universe - the Definitive Visual Guide." Over the next few months, I drank deeply from the well of information, science, and discovery updates I had missed all those years. I didn't give up; I went to my first star party, got into some good conversation at Astronomy Cafe and attended one or two of the Fall monthly RASC meetings before becoming a member of the Victoria Chapter.

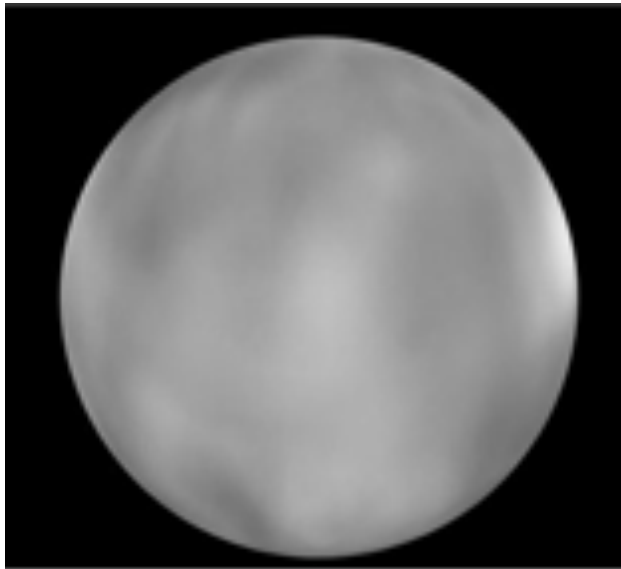
What a beginning - new friendships were made, observing skills were sharpened, and encouragement was received from a host of experienced members. There were opportunities to do outreach during the night and solar viewing in the daytime. And - opportunities to look through our telescopes at the Victoria Centre Observatory with the active observers. What a privilege it was to sit at the feet of those more experienced and knowledgeable than myself. I learned much over those years but there's still much more to discover.

Ahhh - just waiting for the clouds to clear now, so I can have a look at that curious little comet - journeying alongside the Sky Hunter, brightening on its travels. And - thinking back on that resolution I carried out five years ago. I'm feeling the richer for it. Clear Skies.

An Amazing Journey to Ceres

by Malcolm Scrimger

Dawn, NASA's spacecraft, is now only months away from reaching the dwarf planet Ceres after leaving Earth 8 years ago atop of a Delta-II rocket. Having already visited Vesta where it photographed and mapped its' surface in such incredible detail - it is now on it's final destination to Ceres where it is expected to reach orbit in March 2015.



Ceres, seen in an image taken by the Hubble Space Telescope, is a dwarf planet, meaning it's large enough to exert strong enough gravitational forces to give it an almost round shape. Vesta is nearly spheroid, with a massive chunk out of its south pole. (NASA/ESA/J.-Y. Li (University of Maryland) / G. Bacon (STScI))

Ceres is the largest body in the asteroid belt, with an average diameter of 950 kilometers, while Vesta has an average diameter of 525 kilometers. Astronomers believe Ceres has an icy crust and a cooler interior than Vesta.

NASA says Dawn will use the next couple of months of the approach phase to take the best images of the dwarf planet ever recorded.

Keep up-to-date on all the latest developments of the Dawn mission by visiting the Dawn JPL website at <http://dawn.jpl.nasa.gov/>

The AAS meeting in Seattle

by Chris Gainor

The premiere showcase for the latest news about astronomy is the winter meeting of the American Astronomical Society, which I attended last week in Seattle.

There were many announcements, including the latest results from the Kepler spacecraft of new exoplanets, and from the Hubble Space Telescope. The latest results from HST included the Panchromatic Hubble Andromeda Treasury and a new and improved version of Hubble's famous 1995 image of the Eagle Nebula.

The Victoria Centre also came up at the meeting in the form of two talks, one from Jim Hesser and another from Peter Broughton, a former RASC president who spoke at the recent GA in Victoria.

At a session on astronomical education, Jim gave an excellent report on the work

being done by our centre and others to keep educational programs going at the Centre of the Universe.

Peter, who has been writing a book on J.S. Plaskett, gave a paper on how World War I affected astronomy in Canada. He was able to find the names of 25 members of the RASC who served in the Canadian forces in World War I. One of them was a Victoria Centre member named Arthur Currie, who went on to fame as the commander of the Canadian Corps in the war.

On the eve of war as the Victoria Centre was being formed, Currie was a businessman in Victoria who was involved in the militia. Peter said he found Currie's name on the RASC membership rolls for that time, but hasn't found further information yet.

So I came out of the AAS learning more about the history of the Victoria Centre as well as the latest research and discoveries going on in astronomy.

ASTRONOMY CAFÉ



Fairfield Community Centre

1330 Fairfield Rd. Victoria,
7:30pm - 11pm

Contact: Chris Purse for further details
vp2@victoria.rasc.ca

New comers are especially encouraged.



New Observers Group

Hosted by Sid Sidhu - 1642 Davies Road, Highlands. Call 250.391-0540 for information and directions.



Email Lists

Observer / CU Volunteers / Members

Contact Joe Carr to subscribe
web@victoria.rasc.ca

This Comet Lovejoy

Image Credit & Copyright: Damian Peach



Explanation: Comet Lovejoy, C/2014 Q2, is framed like a cosmic Christmas tree with starry decorations in this colorful telescopic portrait, snapped on December 16th. Its lovely coma is tinted green by diatomic C₂ gas fluorescing in sunlight. Discovered in August of this year, this Comet Lovejoy is currently sweeping north through the constellation Columba, heading for Lepus south of Orion and bright enough to offer good binocular views. Not its first time through the inner Solar System, this Comet Lovejoy will pass closest to planet Earth on January 7, while its perihelion (closest point to the Sun) will be on January 30. Of course, planet Earth's own 2015 perihelion passage is scheduled for January 4. A long period comet, this Comet Lovejoy should return again ... in about 8,000 years.

POSITION	NAME	E-Mail
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President	Sherry Buttner	president@victoria.rasc.ca
First Vice President	Steve Pacholuk	vp@victoria.rasc.ca
Second Vice President	Chris Purse	vp2@victoria.rasc.ca
Treasurer	Bruce Lane	treasurer@victoria.rasc.ca
Secretary	Joy Fisher	secretary@victoria.rasc.ca
Librarian	Michel Michaud	librarian@victoria.rasc.ca
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Observing Chairperson	Michel Michaud / Jim Stillburn	obschair@victoria.rasc.ca
Website Content	Joe Carr	web@victoria.rasc.ca



The Newton Ball award recipients at our 2014 AGM

Thanks to all who came and volunteered for a great event.

