

# SKYNEWS



## M45 - THE PLEIADES with NEBULOSITY By David Lee

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### MEETING

Weds. October 8, 2014, 7:30 PM  
University of Victoria  
B150, Bob Wright Bldg.  
3800 Finnerty Road

## **On The Cover**

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, David Lee took this stunning photo of the Pleiades with nebulosity. He refined the images of M45 by adding 19 flat field frames to improve the visibility of the dust cloud that is in front of the open star cluster. The cloud itself is not related to the cluster but is in the interstellar medium.

## **October Speaker**

Our monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 8, in Room B150 of the Bob Wright Centre, University of Victoria, at 7:30 PM. Please note the change of venue, from Room A104.

Our speaker will be our own President, Nelson Walker, who will be sharing his thoughts on “How Can You Become a Better Observer?” Other questions we may have are: “How can you do something other than look at the same fifteen objects every time you go out? Can you learn to star hop to IC289? What equipment works best for visual observing? What charts are best for visual observing? Do you need finder charts? Should you keep a logbook?”

Learn the answer to these and other burning questions next Wednesday night. A great topic, especially for those newcomers to astronomy who have joined us recently!

As usual, we'll meet afterwards in the astronomy lounge on the fourth floor of the Elliot building for chat and coffee.

See you there!

.... *Sherry Buttner*

## **President's Report**

The end of summer has brought, oddly, mostly clear nights, and great moons for observing, including, tomorrow morning (October 8), a total lunar eclipse. A bunch of us, if we can get out of bed at the unholy hour of 2:00 am, will be at Clover Point to see it, and to entertain the public. And just a reminder, our annual general meeting (AGM) for this year will be held again at the appropriately-named Moon Under Water brewpub located at 350 Bay St. This will be our third outing at this venue, which has proven to be an excellent choice for us. The date will be: November 16 at 6:00 P.M. Details to follow.

....*Nelson Walker*

## **Your Editor's Musings**

In mid-September, I had the pleasure of attending a concert with the Vox Humana Choir, under the dome of our Dominion Astrophysical Observatory. The whole evening was magic; this amazing choral group performed acapella works from Urmas Sisask and Eriks Esenvald to Leonard Cohen, as the 1.8 meter telescope and the surrounding machinery hummed quietly nearby.

I looked up to the open space at the top of the Dome from my seat in the front row. As the sky became darker, I tracked Vega on her journey to the West, as the concert progressed. As we made our way downstairs and to the parking lot afterward, I met one of the commissionaires on duty that night. She was beyond excited – eager to share her Galileo moment. “Did you see that MASSIVE fireball that soared overhead?” The impromptu “visitor” had passed over the other side of the sky from the open side of the Dome, but several of our Active Observers at our Victoria Centre Observatory had seen it as well. Yes; astronomy as a hobby or a profession holds many surprises and wonders for us. I’ve seen two or three amazing fireballs in my lifetime, but I still marvel at seeing the shadow of our “island home” pass over the face of the moon at on its way to totality. It’s worth losing a few hours of sleep for a lunar eclipse....

For those of you who are new members to the Victoria Centre - a warm welcome. There’s lots to see and do; opportunities to sit behind a telescope at our Centre’s Observatory, monthly observing at our newly-designated Urban Star Park at Cattle Point - as well as star parties, learning or honing astrophotography skills, opportunities for public outreach, and much more. You can visit the Victoria Centre’s website at [www.victoria.rasc.ca](http://www.victoria.rasc.ca) for more information.

Clear skies !!

....*Diane*

## **Awards and Honours – Gruber Prize in Cosmology**

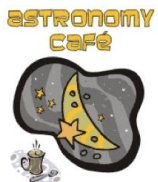
On October 1<sup>st</sup>, retired DAO astronomer and former Director Dr. Sidney van den Bergh was one of four international scientists awarded the 2014 Gruber Prize in Cosmology, for their pioneering work in what is now called Near Field Cosmology. Only the Nobel Prize is considered more prestigious. Dr. van den Bergh is one of the world’s most prolific researchers, having published over 500 refereed publications and more than 260 other contributions (including 2 books) which have jointly been cited nearly 19,000 times! Unfortunately Sidney - at age 85 - was unable to attend the ceremony. His son Peter accepted the award on his behalf and told a delightful story about how Sidney became interested at the tender age of five. Prof. Sadanori Okamura summarizes the contributions of all four individuals; interestingly, he was one of a number of young Japanese astronomers Sidney brought to Victoria shortly after becoming DAO Director in late 1977, because he foresaw tremendous opportunities between the newest generation of Japanese and Canadian astronomers. This has borne tremendous fruit. Four decades later Canadians are actively involved with Japanese astronomers in ALMA, have developed RAVEN (an innovative adaptive optics system) for SUBARU, and are seeking funding in the next federal budget to become a full partner in the TMT. Accessible talks by the three other laureates (including Canadian-born Brent Tully) may be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrVArvp4tsw> (skip to ~11:10 for the beginning of the ceremony itself).

....*Jim Hesser*

## Council for 2013 / 2014

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**Members at Large:** Bill Almond, Jim Hesser, Alex Schmid, David Lee, Li-Ann Skibo, Paul Schumacher, Matt Watson



**Astronomy Café:** Held every Monday at Fairfield Community Centre - 1330 Fairfield Rd, Victoria, at 7:30pm to 10pm. **Please note that Astronomy Café is closed until Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup>.** Call Malcolm at (778) 430-4136 for directions and information. Newcomers are especially encouraged.



**New Observers Group:** Hosted by Sid Sidhu, 1642 Davies Road, Highlands. Please call (250) 391-0540 for information and directions.



**Email Lists** Observer / CU Volunteers / Members  
Contact Matt Watson to subscribe. <mailto:admin@victoria.rasc.ca>

**The next meeting is Sunday, November 16, 2014, at 6:00 PM. (AGM)**