

Re: The aging of the amateur

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On Sat, 6 Nov 2004 14:47:57 -0700, "Jan Owen" <janowen1z@cox.net> wrote:

>Dunno' 'bout all that, but I know I'm definitely a LOT older now than when
>I got started in amateur astronomy closing on 40 years ago... And there
>are others here who, like me, aren't getting any younger...
>
>NO doubt about it, we're ALL aging. What I worry most about, though, is
>the NEW folks.
>
>I hope we can all find a way to help them find the answers they are
>looking for to help them find the same solace in the stars that WE olden
>folk have found...

Our RASC Centre has seen a major resurgence over the last five years. Our membership growth and (Yahoooo!) executive participation in those under 35 has been nothing short of astounding. When I first joined 6 or so years ago, meetings consisted of +/- 30 middle-aged white males, usually the same faces month-over-month. Today, we have between 80-100 folks per meeting, and there are so many youth members! The number of active observers has grown, as evidenced by usage at our observatory and the number of requests for keys that I receive from eligible members. Our executive has focused on cultivating the interested youth as active participants in the Centre, and it's paying dividends.

Share your knowledge and talk TO the kids, not AT them, and let them actively partipate in events and decisions within the club. Do that, and you'll be amazed at the energy that they provide and the new friendships that develop.

Cheers,

- Craig

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