Editorial and Moderation Policy

Ratified by Council 2023-05-01

Introduction

The Centre publishes a newsletter, *Winnicentrics*, which is emailed to all Centre members in good standing. This has been a primary means of communicating with members throughout the Centre's history.

The Centre also makes use of numerous email lists, forums, and social media sites ("social channels"), some of which are public and others of which are open only to Centre members in good standing. These social channels are designed to promote active communication between members and the general public concerning the activities of the Society, astronomical discovery, and other topics of interest.

All social channels that use the national Society's name are covered by the Society's policy G13: Society Discussion Lists and Social Media. *Winnicentrics* and all social channels that use the Centre's name ("Royal Astronomical Society of Canada - Winnipeg Centre" or a variation thereof) are covered by this policy.

Winnicentrics Editorial Team

Council shall appoint an Editor for *Winnicentrics* and up to two Assistant Editors to the Editorial Team. The Editorial Team will continue to create, design, and publish Winnicentrics on schedule and for distribution in a manner specified by Council.

Editorial Purview

The Editorial Team produces each issue of *Winnicentrics* without requiring approval by Council, subject to the following guidelines:

- The main topics of *Winnicentrics* include information on the Centre and its activities, and articles of interest to the Centre's members in the field of astronomy and related sciences.
- Articles may be sourced from the membership, or from other Centre newsletters or other sources. Permission must be secured from the authour for any article which is included in *Winnicentrics*.
- Any change to the publishing schedule or content must be approved in advance by Council.
- The Editorial Team can accept or reject articles submitted by members for publication. If an article submitted by a Centre member in good standing is rejected, such rejected must be reported to Council along with the Editorial team rationale for such rejection.

Social Channel Moderation Team

Council shall appoint a moderation team of one or more members for each of its social channels. The Centre Webmaster will be a moderator on all social channels ex officio. These moderators will be identified as such on the social media channels and on other listings of appointed positions as determined by Council.

The moderator of a Social Channel has the responsibility to publicize the guidelines and etiquette (see below) for participation by RASC members in that Social Channel.

Each moderator has the following authority in respect of inappropriate behaviour of any user, in order to ensure that the guidelines and etiquette are followed with respect to the Social Channel, and that the Social Channel operates smoothly and appropriately:

(i) to issue warnings to any user about such inappropriate behaviour;
(ii) to restrict a user's access to or use of the Social Channel on such terms as the moderator may specify;
(iii) to temporarily suspend a user from the Social Channel; and
(iv) as a last resort, to ban a user from the Social Channel either permanently or for an appropriate period.

In general, these steps will be taken in order. At the moderator's discretion, however, action taken may begin at step ii or iii.

In the absence of the moderator of a Social Channel, the President of the Centre, or another member of the Centre Council designated by the President, may exercise the authority set out in subparagraphs (i) – (iv) above. The authority of the moderator of each Social Channel is subject to the overriding supervisory authority of Council.

In cases where a moderator is in a conflict of interest (for example, in the case of a moderation disagreement with other members or an appeal of their previous moderation activities), said moderator must recuse themselves from action on moderation duties to the extent of the conflict of interest.

Appeal of Moderator Decisions

Any member may appeal a decision of a moderator of a Social Channel (or any other person exercising the authority of the moderator) to Centre Council, who will discuss the issue and render a decision within 15 days of receiving the appeal. The Council's decision is final.

General Guidelines for RASC Winnipeg Centre Social Channels

RASC Winnipeg Centre social channels are moderated, which means that activity on the list is managed for the benefit of all participants. Please try to keep your messages related to the RASC (including how to improve our Centre), amateur astronomy in Canada, observing, etc. Other friendly topics are generally permitted as long as they are kept to a minimum. Private email responses to messages that wander off topic are definitely encouraged. Please try to follow a few simple rules:

- Start new "threads" with a descriptive subject.
- Keep the subject line current -- if the topic of discussion changes mid-thread, change the subject line.
- When "quoting" material from a previous message, only include the relevant parts, NOT THE WHOLE MESSAGE.
- When replying to daily-digest messages, insert an appropriate subject.
- Avoid sending purely personal replies like "See ya tomorrow..." to the list.
- Non-RASC politics, religion, “my brand of scope is better than your brand” and Windows-Mac topics all spell a recipe for certain flame wars. Please avoid these topics.
- Remember this is a hobby. Do not annoy or be easily annoyed. Enjoy yourself.
- Be supportive in your posts. If you must criticize, try to be constructive.
- We try to maintain friendly conversations here, so use lots of "emoticons" like :-), :-(, etc. to help us understand your mood. If the subject is controversial, why not wait until the following day before replying. The moderator reserves the right to remove anyone who disregards the rules or abuses or is disrespectful to other members. You will be warned before this happens, except in egregious circumstances (personal threats, encouraging illegal activities, or other obvious cases).

Commercial Posts on Centre Channels

- Commercial posts from companies or members offering services are not allowed on Centre channels, with the exception of private sales of used telescope equipment and related astronomy items.