

Nine-year-old college freshman set to prove existence of God by becoming an astrophysicist

Move over Stephen Hawking; there's a new kid in town and he's got sky high goals — literally.

Wondering if today's youth have hope? Meet Will Maillis of Penn Township, Pennsylvania, probably the youngest college attendee at nine years old.

Starting with algebra at age four, he's now working towards an doctorate astrophysics degree at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Mellon University.

Focused on refuting Einstein and Hawking's idea of "super massive" black holes, he plans to master the workings of "displacement of space-time" "singularity" and "pure gravity," to ultimately prove the existence of God.

Declared a pure genius by college administrators after IQ tests, Maillis doesn't take notes like the other students, but simply listens, reads and absorbs the material.

Maillis's father Peter, a Greek Orthodox priest might have had some influence on his Christian upbringing, but his best advice has been "God gave you a gift. The worst thing would be to reject that gift and not use it for the betterment of the world."

This is the most appropriate message for the Christmas season.

While Will shall eventually succeed in his goal, the season revolves around God's gift to mankind.

We celebrate Christ's birth 2,000 years ago because of the renewed hope we have, if we believe in his mission to Earth.

The Will Maillises of the world will continually bring more concrete evidence of God's existence, but the real question is, what are we doing with it?

Sky watch for the next month:

- Moon occults Aldebaran — Monday, Dec. 12 after sunset, look at the moon from about 6:30 p.m. as it hides Aldebaran until about midnight.

- Jupiter and Spica follow moon up — Thursday, Dec. 22 after 2:30 a.m., watch the rising moon with Jupiter and Spica until dawn.

- Gemini and Ursid Meteor Shower — We actually have two mild meteor showers this month; the Geminid peaks Tuesday, Dec. 13 just after midnight, but the full moon will block much of it in constellation of Gemini. The Ursid shower peaks Wednesday, Dec. 21 after sundown when earth moves through the centre of the dust trail left behind by comet 8P/Tuttle, but the half-moon will reduce visibility. For more on all meteor showers, check out the International Meteor Organization at: www.imo.net/calendar/2017.

- Winter Solstice Arrives — Wednesday, Dec. 21 is officially the shortest day of the year at 3:44 a.m. This occurs when the sun reaches its most southerly declination of -23.5 degrees and likewise the North Pole is tilted 23.5 degrees away from the sun. Depending on the Gregorian calendar, the December solstice occurs annually on a day between Dec. 20 and Dec. 23. On this date, all places above a latitude of 66.5 degrees north are now in darkness, while locations below a latitude of 66.5 degrees south receive 24 hours of daylight.

Public Events for the next month:

Monthly Public Stargazing at the Trek Center — Friday, Dec. 9 starting at 7:30 p.m. It is the last stargazing for the year, so check us out if you haven't and celebrate our anniversary of the RASC Calgary at the Trek Center with cake and refreshments. Short indoor presentation on "Christmas in the sky" followed by stargazing through the 11-inch Celestron



Neel ROBERTS
YOUR UNIVERSE

Telescope. Treats and refreshments provided free of charge and all welcome. For further information, contact the Trek Center at 403-485-2994.

The website www.vulcantourism.com will be updated regularly.

Merry Christmas and thanks for tuning in all year.

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada—the nation's leading astronomy club founded in 1849 with more than 5,000 members and 29 centers across Canada.

Neel welcomes your questions and comments at 403-560-6574 or email: Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com. The

members meet the second Friday at the Trek Center in Vulcan monthly and you can check them out at <http://calgary.rasc.ca/vulcan2017.htm>.



Photos contributed by Neel Roberts

Roland Dechesne, chief teacher/presenter, Neel Roberts, co-ordinator and Karl Ivarson, telescope technician, cut into Christmas while celebrating the anniversary of the RASC Calgary holding stargazing sessions at the Vulcan Trek Centre. At left, The Vulcan Trek Center celebrates Christmas in many ways including a teaching of the Christmas star from 2,000 years ago mentioned in the New Testament.

