

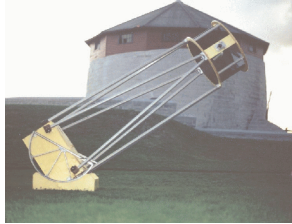


# Regulus



The Newsletter of the RASC Kingston Centre

2003 February



*The 61 cm Venor Dobsonian-Mount telescope.*

## 2003 - The Year of The TBD\*

\* To Be Determined: The new President, in conjunction with the new executive, are working hard on determining new objectives for 2003... stay tuned!

### The Robert Venor Telescope

I was just looking at the report on your web site on the Robert Venor scope, and was wondering whether you would like a picture of Bob. He was a good friend of mine back in the '50s and '60s in the Montreal Centre when he ran our telescope making group and was chairman of the naked-eye sunspot group. There's at least one picture of him in the 50th anniversary history of the Montreal Centre, which I have. I'm sure he'd be delighted to know that his mirror blank is being put to good use.

*A little later*

Hi Kevin,  
It turns out that there are THREE photos of Bob in "Fifty Times Around the Sun: A History of the Montreal Centre". I'm sending you all three, but I suspect the third is the one you'll like the best, showing Bob doing a Foucault test! Judging by the smile on his face, it must have been a nice mirror.

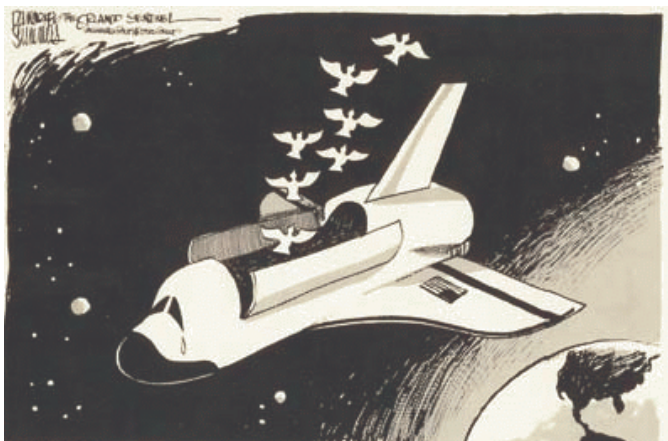
Geoff Gaherty, Toronto Centre RASC  
<http://members.rogers.com/ggaherty/>



STS-107 Columbia Crew

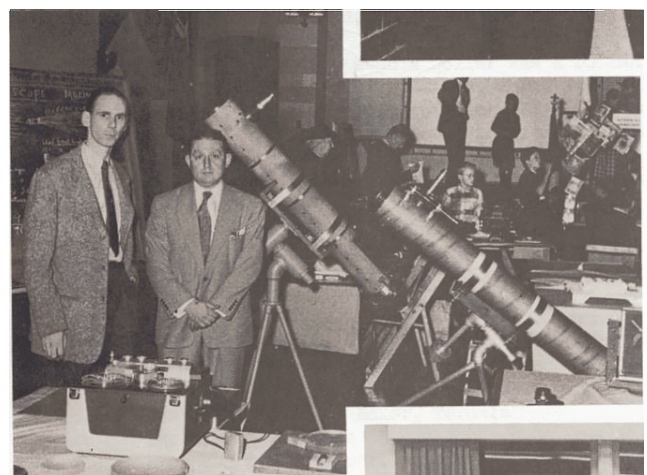
As we go to press with this issue, the Space Shuttle Columbia crashed with no survivors. Astronomy and Spaceflight go hand in hand with most of our members and I know this matters to many of our members.

The pushing back of frontiers, the exploration of the universe that we are in, the observing and logging of data go along with the sheer

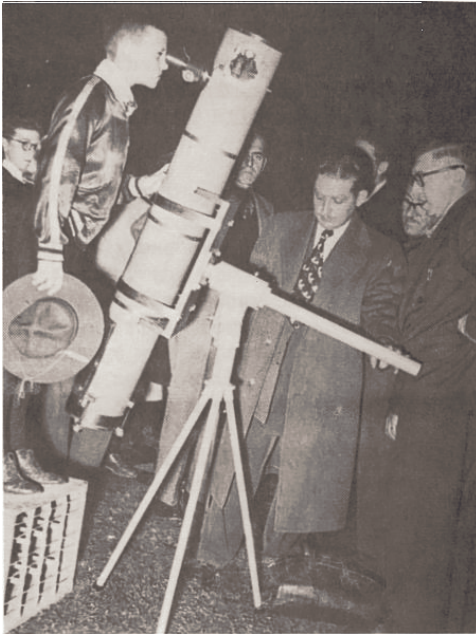


observational joy we experience in our hobby. Many of us were brought into astronomy by the exploits of our space faring neighbours and now

Our thoughts go out to those affected by this tragedy



Hobby Show at Queen Mary Road United Church, with Mel Pyne and Robert Venor.



Star Night at Westmount Park. R. Venor and Dr Charles Fox to the right of telescope.



Robert Venor testing mirror. P. Posternak looks on. (Note this is \*not\* the 61cm mirror)



## The President's Voice

During these first days of February we have seen and heard a great deal about STS - 107. We have all watched in disbelief, mourned and formed our own theories not only about the cause but also the frantic moments the seven astronauts spent trying to maintain control or understand their fate.

There are many tragedies on this earth, every day, every minute and every second. None of these events outweigh another, especially to those directly involved. Due to our more than average

interest and awareness of space and the drive for humans not to conquer but to journey into its vastness, we as astronomers may feel deeper emotions about this unfortunate accident. I know that from here on when I step out under the night sky to watch the STS or ISS pass over us I will be observing a glowing beacon of remembrance to the brave astronauts of all nations that have perished in our quest into the darkness of space.

To the families of all seven astronauts including their extended family at NASA we offer our deepest sympathy and condolences and wish them all a speedy reconciliation of their loss of Feb. 1, 2003.



**Contents of this Issue** available at <http://130.15.144.99/rasc/secure/regulus/reg200302.pdf> include:

- \* Images of Robert Venor
- \* News from the Internet - Mars rover landing sites
- \* IAU Circulars

## Submissions from Members



### National Council Rep Goings-on

The next National Council Meeting is scheduled for Saturday February 22, 2003 in Toronto. If you have any concerns, please contact Peggy Hurley, our NC Representative, via email or at the February 14<sup>th</sup> Regular meeting. [<email edited>](#)

The minutes from the 2002 October 26<sup>th</sup> meeting are now online the national website.



### Webmaster's Corner

by Kevin Kell

**Locally:** Kevin Fetter [<email edited>](#) has taken over the reins for the Kingston Centre Web site effective January 1<sup>st</sup>. Talk to him about fixes for boo-boos, ideas for new pages, redesigns of old ones, etc.

**Nationally:**

Two new observing aids for those hunting Messier and Finest NGC objects. Terry Adrian (Okangan Centre) has created 16 page and 17 page star charts to help track down some of those pesky hard-to-find objects.

You can find them at

<http://www.rasc.ca/observe.htm>

**Editor's Corner**

by Kevin Kell

We have published paper copies and put online, the 2003 editions of our three main brochures:

You can download them from our pdf library website at:

<http://130.15.144.99/rasc/pdf/>

brochure-centre2003-01.pdf 130kb

brochure-lpa2003-01.pdf 439kb

brochure-atm2003-01.pdf 253kb

The Centre and LPA (Light Pollution Abatement) brochures contain membership application forms that can be printed off and handed out if need be.

**Discount for other Centres.**

The Kingston Executive passed a motion extending the 20% discount to members on centre produced items to include other centres as well. This includes mostly educational items that we have published and these are indicated with an asterisk on the order form at the end of the newsletter.

**Kingston Centre Membership Information**

Current Membership Total of the Kingston Centre (as of January 30, 2003 ): 147 (up from 144 last issue)

**Welcome our new members!**

Carol Ann Stephenson- Pentland (Kingston)  
Barbara Percy ( Reg Member) (Perth Road)  
Joseph Percy ( Associate Member ) (Perth Road)  
Martha Sellens (Kingston)  
Bradley Smith (Kingston)  
D Tester (Kingston)

**Contact List**

(send email to [rascexec@cliff.path.queensu.ca](mailto:rascexec@cliff.path.queensu.ca))

**Astronomy Day, Chair: Don Cooke**

**ATM, Chair: Brian Hunter**

**Awards, Chair: Peggy Hurley**

**CCD, Chair: Jan Wisniewski**

**Education, Chair: Laura Gagne**

**Fall'n'Stars, Kingston Co-Chair: Don Cooke**

**LPA, Chair: Kim Hay**

**Publicity Chair: Kim Hay**

**Sky is the Limit Festival, Chair: Don Cooke**

**Banquet, Chair: Susan Gagnon**

**WebMaster: Kevin Fetter**

**Public Obs Chair: Tom Dean**

**Member Obs. Chair: Kevin Fetter**

**Equipment Loan Chair: Tom Dean**

**Observing Group Meetings**

These are regular meets at the home of members who volunteer their locations and homes to us on or near a new moon. Contact Kevin Fetter if you are interested in hosting a session in 2003

**Public Observing Sessions**

These are the public observing sessions, normally held at Murney Tower Park on the Kingston waterfront on King & Barrie Sts. On the first Tuesday after a new moon.



## Equipment Loan Program

Members in good standing are able to sign out Centre equipment, including:

- ☆ 25cm (10") f5.5 Douglas Dobsonian Advanced Users
- ☆ 20cm (8") f7 FitzGerald Dobsonian Intermediate Users
- ☆ 20cm (8") f4.5 Barney Dobsonian Intermediate Users
- ☆ 11cm (4.5") f4.3 Bushnell Voyager Starter Users
- ☆ 11cm (4.5") f7.9 Orbitor 3500 Equatorial Starter Users
- ☆ 5 barndoor tracking platforms 1999 February - Starter Users 5
- ☆ Collimating Tool 2001 August - All Users
- ☆ Binocular Set #1 B&L7x50 1999 April - Starter Users
- ☆ Binocular Set #2 B&L10x50 1999 April - Starter Users
- ☆ Binocular Set #3 Bushnell 7x50 1999 April - Starter Users
- ☆ Binoculars Set #4 Stem 7x50 1995 - Starter Users
- ☆ 19mm Televue Panoptic Eyepiece 2000 March - Intermediate Users
- ☆ Filter Set - ND13, 4 colour, O3 nebula - all 1.25" 2000 September - Intermediate Users
- ☆ Kodak Ektagraphic 35mm slide projector 2000 November

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## RASC Kingston Centre Meetings

The Kingston Centre RASC meets once a month on the **2nd Friday of each month at 7:30 pm (19:30) in Stirling Hall Theatre D** on Queen's University Campus **unless noted otherwise**. We have adopted a policy of moving any meeting that is held on a holiday weekend.

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## 2003 Officers and Executive Council

PO Box 1793, Kingston, On K7L 5J6

Infoline & answering machine: 613-377-6029

Email: [rascexec@cliff.path.queensu.ca](mailto:rascexec@cliff.path.queensu.ca)

We also have an email chat list "rascchat". Send your email address to Kevin Kell to be added to the RASCCHAT list.

**President:** Hank Bartlett

**Vice President:** Doug Angle

**Secretary:** Barb Holt

**Treasurer:** John Hurley

**Librarian:** David Maguire

**Editor:** Kevin Kell

**National Council Rep:** Peggy Hurley

Regulus is published 6 times per year on paper and 6 times per year in adobe acrobat format files. Both are available on our web site. Views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada or its officers and members. Subscriptions: Members of the Kingston Centre receive Regulus as a benefit of membership. Advertisements are free to members of the Centre. Commercial advertising is \$25/quarter, \$50/half page, \$100/ full page and should be in electronic format.

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## The Newsletter of the Kingston Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

**Newsletter Submission Info:** The deadline is usually the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in odd numbered months. The preferred method is E-MAIL, then disk, lastly paper.

E-mail: [kell@cliff.path.queensu.ca](mailto:kell@cliff.path.queensu.ca)

Fax: 1-613-533-2907 (with cover page to Kevin Kell) Post: 76 Colebrook Road RR#1, Yarker Ontario K0K 3N0 Canada

ascii or most major word processors (Corel WP8 for windows preferred) via E-mail or cdrom or 3.5" PC floppy disk

**Resources Available to Members:**

(See bottom of page 10 for passwords)

- **RASC-Kingston Centre Handbook** at:  
<http://U99.N144.queensu.ca/rasc/secure/kingstonmanual20030201.pdf>

- **RASC National manual** at  
<http://www.rasc.ca/private/rascmanual2002jan.pdf>

- **RASC-Kingston Centre Loan Program** at:  
<http://members.kingston.net/rasc/loan.htm>

Since the rovers do not have the luxury of landing on a well-paved runway, JPL geologists and engineers must carefully choose an area without large rocks that could damage the rovers' airbag landing system. Also, an area that is too densely populated with rocks of any size could prevent the rover from moving freely. Winds in the lower atmosphere are also an important consideration, as are the slopes the airbag-clad lander impact against.

Adequate exposure to the sun is vital for the solar-powered rovers. Geologists have chosen sites near the equator where there is sufficient sunlight. The sites are also relatively free of accumulations of iron-oxide dust particles that can coat solar panels and interfere with the rovers' mobility.

**News from the Internet**

[http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/solar\\_system/features/landingsites.cfm](http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/solar_system/features/landingsites.cfm)

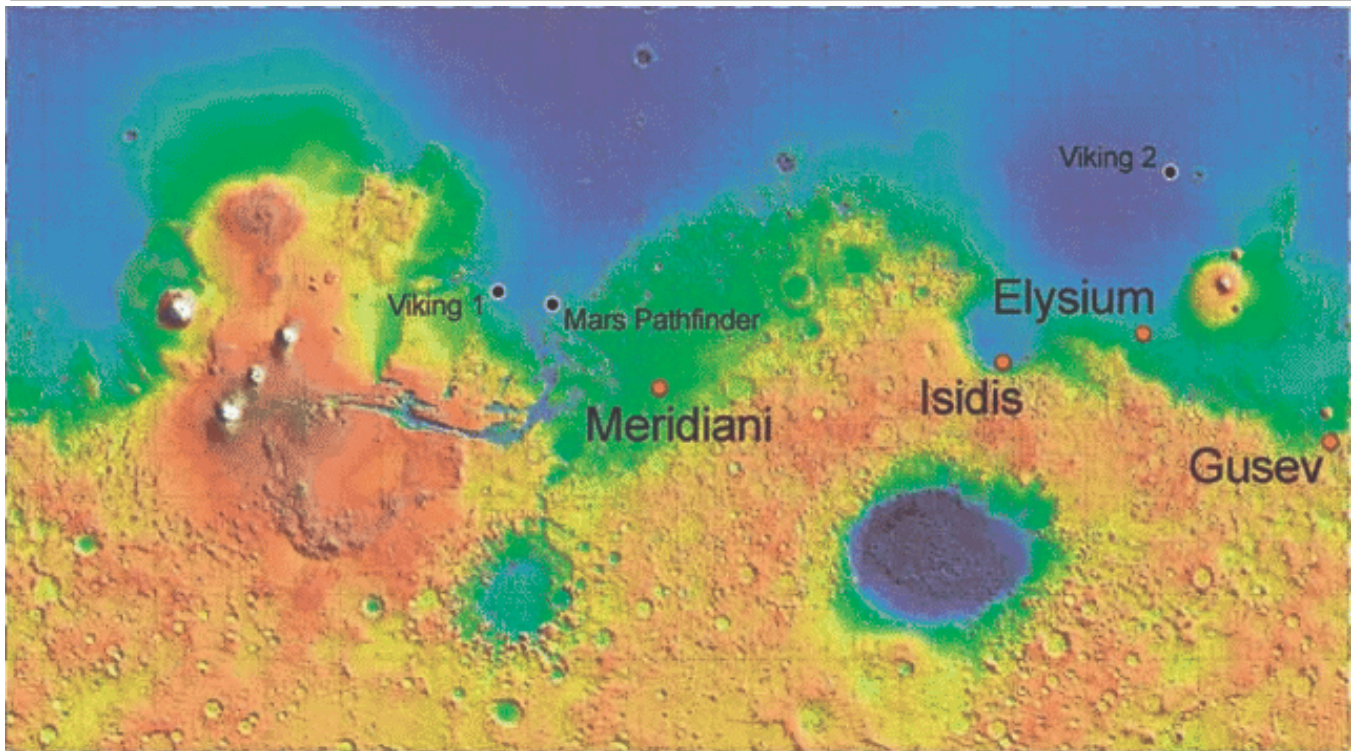
The launch dates for the two Mars Exploration Rovers are getting closer and so is the need to pick a place for them to land.

Adventurous travelers might spin a globe and pick a vacation based on whichever spot their finger finds. But scientists and engineers working on NASA's newest rover mission cannot be as casual about landing site choices for the twin rovers that will launch in May and June of this year.

Last week, team members and others from the scientific community met for a final chance to discuss and fine-tune the pros and cons of each of the four landing site contenders.

Images and data from two other NASA spacecraft currently orbiting the red planet -- Mars Global Surveyor and Mars Odyssey -- have provided invaluable information on possible landing sites.

"This is a unique period where we have orbital missions that can help us make the selection," said Dr. Matt Golombek, JPL landing site scientist. "We want to go to sites with terrains that will challenge our minds but not the safety of the rovers."



The red dots with names are the final four candidate landing spots.

Like the final four in any competition, each of the four Mars candidates is a potential winner.

"Three of the sites, Terra Meridiani, known as the Hematite site, Gusev, and Isidis show evidence for surface processes involving water. These sites appear capable of addressing the science objectives of the rover missions: to determine if water was present on Mars and whether there are conditions favorable to the preservation of evidence for ancient life," said Golombek.

The fourth site, Elysium, appears to contain ancient terrain, which may hold clues to Mars' early climate when conditions may have been wetter.

Over the next several months, geologists and engineers will continue to analyze the viability of each site. The final decision will be made by NASA in April, shortly before the rovers begin their journey to Mars.

January 14, 2003

### Looking for **\*fresh\*** information about recently discovered objects? Check out

<http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/iauc/RecentIAUCs.html>

#### Recent IAUCs

The following list gives the dates of issue and the titles of the items on the twenty most-recent IAUCs. Individual items can be displayed by selecting the relevant title.

A form at the bottom of this page allows access to any specific IAUC.

Recent MPECs are also available.

\* IAUC 8065 (2003 Feb. 4)

- o SUPERNOVA 2003ad
- o SUPERNOVAE 2003X, 2003ab, AND 2003ac
- o COMET C/2003 B1 (SOHO)
- o COMET C/2002 Y1 (JUELS-HOLVORCEM)

\* IAUC 8064 (2003 Feb. 3)

- o SUPERNOVA 2003ab IN UGC 4930
- o SUPERNOVA 2003ac IN IC 3203
- o SUPERNOVA 2003aa IN NGC 3367

o XTE J0119-731

\* IAUC 8063 (2003 Feb. 1)

- o SUPERNOVA 2003aa IN NGC 3367
- o SUPERNOVAE 2003Y AND 2003Z
- o IGR J16318-4848

\* IAUC 8062 (2003 Jan. 30)

- o SUPERNOVAE 2003X, 2003Y, AND 2003Z
- o COMET C/2002 X5 (KUDO-FUJIKAWA)

\* IAUC 8061 (2003 Jan. 29)

- o SUPERNOVA 2003W IN UGC 5234
- o SUPERNOVA 2003U IN NGC 6365A
- o SUPERNOVA 2003L IN NGC 3506

\* IAUC 8060 (2003 Jan. 29)

- o SUPERNOVA 2003V
- o FLARING OBJECT IN ORION CLUSTER
- o SUPERNOVAE 2003P AND 2003T

\* IAUC 8059 (2003 Jan. 28)

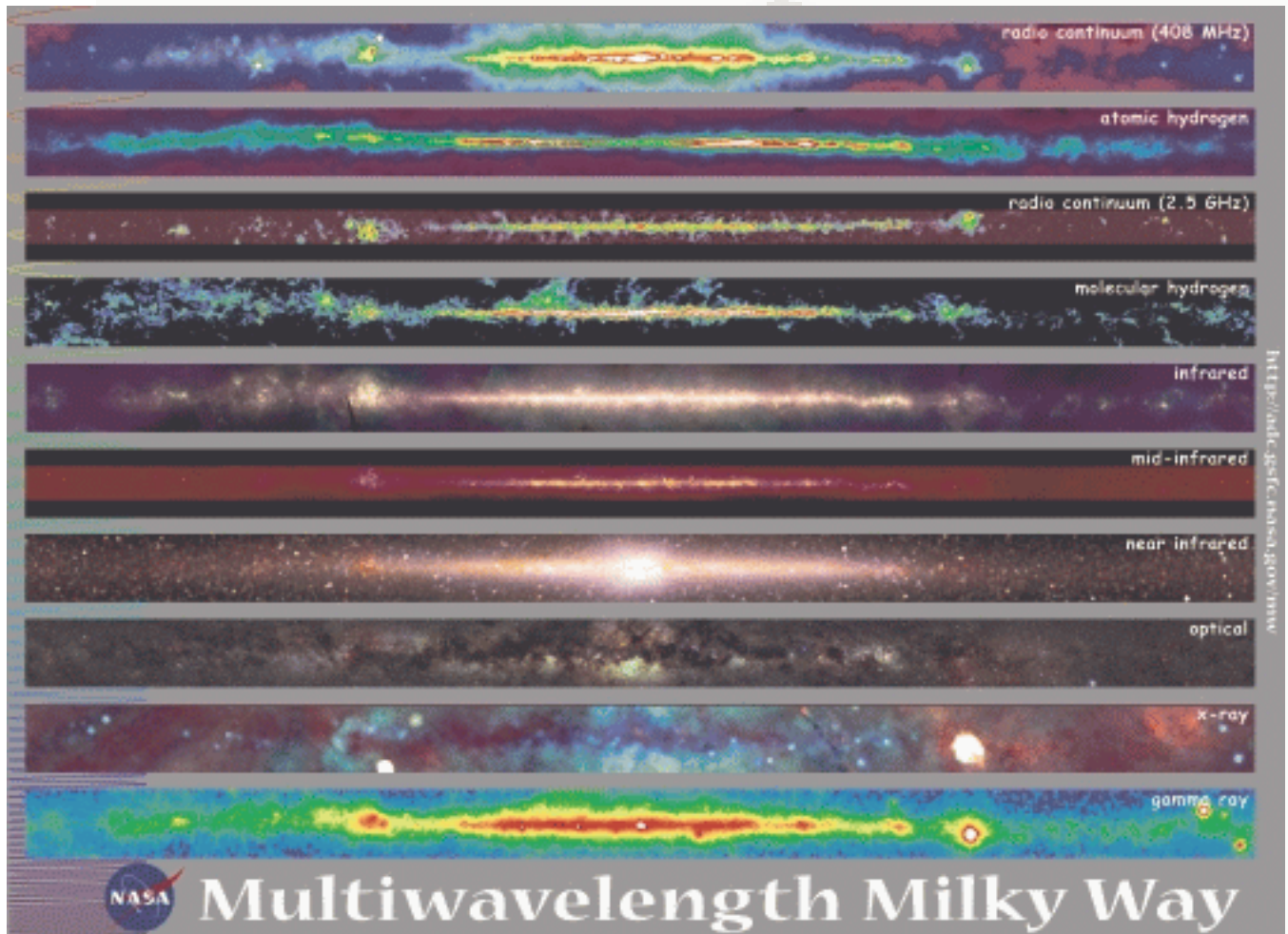
- o SUPERNOVA 2003U IN NGC 6365A
- o SUPERNOVA 2003M IN UGC 7224
- o SUPERNOVA 2002gz

As you can see... the skies are busy!

## 2003 ORDER FORM

Item	Price per unit (Shipping and taxes included) Regular (Member )	Quantity	\$ Total
*Expanding Their Universe 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition - The Teacher's Companion for Secondary School Astronomy 161 pg 2002 <b>NEW!</b>	\$30 (\$24)		
*Worlds to Discover 1 <sup>st</sup> Edition - Astronomy for Elementary School 154 pg 2000	\$15 (\$12)		
*Slide Set #1 companion for Expanding Their Universe 40 slides	\$75 (\$60)		
*Slide Set #2 companion for Expanding Their Universe 40 slides	\$75 (\$60)		
*Slide Set #3 companion for Worlds to Discover 20 slides	\$35 (\$28)		
*Students Guide to Careers in Space, 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition 33 pg 1998	\$5 (\$4)		
*Secondary School <b>Combo 1:</b> ETU book, Slide Set #1 OR #2 (Circle choice), Careers in Space	\$100 (\$80)		
* Secondary School <b>Combo 2:</b> ETU book, Slide Sets #1 AND #2 (Circle Choice), Careers in Space	\$160 (\$125)		
*Elementary School <b>Combo</b> : WTD book, Slide Set #3, Careers in Space	\$50 (\$40)		
Beginner's Observing Guide	\$15		

\* Consider a membership in the RASC. A new benefit (2003 Jan) includes a 20% discount on Centre produced material for all members of the RASC.



a large (2mb) version of this image is available from:  
[http://adc.gsfc.nasa.gov/mw/mwpics/mwmw\\_8x10.jpg](http://adc.gsfc.nasa.gov/mw/mwpics/mwmw_8x10.jpg)

