

RASC–New Brunswick Centre IYA 2009 Project Proposal

‘Mary Lou’s New Telescope’

Introduction: The booklet ‘Mary Lou’s New Telescope’ recounts the story of a young girl captivated by astronomy. Her interest is rewarded with a special birthday present of a new telescope to further her hobby. At first she is disappointed by difficulties encountered with street lights while trying to use her telescope in the city. However, once she sees the night sky at her grandparents’ rural farm, she is exhilarated. Mary Lou is motivated to social action in order to correct the light pollution problem in her city.

Detailed description of the project: ‘Mary Lou’s New Telescope’ is for young people with an interest in astronomy. The target audience is 8-13 year olds. Despite its peripheral gender slant, it provides a positive message of discovery, exploration and empowerment in both boys and girls as well as an awakening awareness of light pollution. The need to abate light pollution is conveyed as paramount, and the use of social action to achieve this goal is shown as attainable. An individual’s voice really can make a difference. ‘Mary Lou’s New Telescope’ weaves a story rooted in the aims and objectives of at least four RASC committees: Education, Light Pollution Abatement, Observing and Publication. A comic book style booklet consisting of 2 sheets of newsprint folded to form 8 pages encased within a gloss cover will tell the story by means of picture boxes in 2 over 2 over 2 or 3 over 3 over 3 formatting. Picture boxes will contain dialogue balloons to convey a portion of the story. Other boxes will include text with dialogue and still other boxes will contain text only. It is possible one or more boxes will be colourless for the purpose of allowing younger readers to colour the box or boxes themselves. The inside cover, front and back, will contain astronomy trivia, anagrams, jokes, riddles and/or word jumbles as space allows. The outside back cover will contain RASC promotions for our RASC Calendar,

Skyways, L'Explorons, The Beginner's Observing Guide or whatever may be deemed important by our RASC. The story line will guide the illustrator in preparing the booklet. Illustration begins in April 2008 and will be completed in September 2008. Printing takes place in October 2008 followed by immediate distribution to RASC centres. The booklet may be used as a handout at astronomy day events, sidewalk astronomy observing sessions, school visitations, special observing presentations such as astronomy badge programs in scouting and/or an astronomy kit component. The purpose of the booklet would be to engage young people in astronomy activities leading them to choose astronomy as a hobby or major source of interest.

Detailed realistic budget:

10 000 copies of booklet -----	\$1500.00
Illustration costs -----	\$2 000.00
Gloss cover -----	\$1 000.00
Text -----	\$0.00
Shipping -----	\$300.00

Total: \$4 800.00

Volunteer hours:

120 hours representing 5 RASC members over 6 years

Project contact person(s):

Don Kelly, Education, national and provincial

Paul Gray, National Observing Committee Chair, RASC – New Brunswick Branch President

Ted Dunphy and Chris Weadick, New Brunswick Light Pollution Abatement Committee

Emma McPhee, RASC – New Brunswick 'Horizon' editor

