Choose Your Eyepiece Case Well

. . . (Because you never know when your wife
will run over all of your eyepieces with the mini-van)

by Sammy

Sometimes, as the universe ticks merrily along, all of the gears and workings click into place just so, and unexpected things happen . . .

It’s science project time, and my 7-year-old daughter Moriah wanted to do something with the planets. “We” decided to observe and record the orbits of Jupiter’s moons, recreating Galileo’s discovery that helped prove the Aristotelian Geocentric universe was wrong. Kinda rich for a 1st grader, but she caught on fast and has been drawing her observations for a week.

One night, Moriah wanted to stay out a little longer and look at other things. We’re using a home built 6-inch Dob for this project which is just her size. The two of us were having a delightful driveway star party when the dinner bell rang, so we packed-up my eyepieces and headed inside. I was hoping my daughter would want to look some more after dinner. I don’t remember laying my eyepiece case on the hood of my wife’s van, but I obviously did. My case contains 7, 1.25” eyepieces, a barlow, and an assortment of filters. After dinner, my wife decided to head out shopping. The driveway lights were still turned-off from earlier and the black eyepiece case on her hood was invisible as she pulled out. She thought that she heard a sliding noise as she stopped at the end of our street, but was really curious a second later when she felt the van run over something. I can only imagine how she felt when she saw my broken eye-piece case laying in the road behind her.

As she pulled back into the driveway, I just figured that she had forgotten something. But my heart sank when she produced the eyepiece-case. It was heavily damaged, but mostly intact. Fortunately, the case had remained closed during the fall. The handle was broken, and the case had an obvious “squashed” look, complete with tire tracks. I held my breath and opened the case . . . no damage to my eyepieces!

Five of my eyepieces were stored on end, which must have protected the barlow and the two that were stored on their sides. A combination of the hard plastic case, and the foam inside protected the ends of the upright pieces. The foam above and below these eyepieces was cut into circles by the weight of the van. One loosely attached filter was crushed onto the bottom of an eyepiece, which was the only damage that I found. All told I feel very lucky. My case is from Orion Telescope and Binoculars, #5951, $19.95.

So . . . Choose your eyepiece case well, and don’t leave them on the hood of your car . . . because you never know when your wife will run over it with the mini-van.
The February 1, 2001 Board of Directors (BoD) meeting of The Albuquerque Astronomical Society (TAAS) was called to order at 7pm by President Eric Bucheit. Other board members present during the meeting were: Steve Snider, Dave Brown, Sammy Lockwood, Ray Collins, Nancy Davis, Pete Eschman, Randy Gauntt, Neil Goldberg, Dan Richey, and Judy Stanley. Observers included Barry Gordon, Carl Frisch, Robert Williams, Kevin McKeown, and Larry Cash.

The meeting agenda was accepted with no additions.

Minutes
Sammy motioned to accept the minutes from the Jan 11 Board meeting as printed and distributed. Dan seconded the motion, which passed.

Treasurer’s Report
Dave Brown distributed the January report. General Funds on deposit are $453.92. GNTO Funds on deposit are $1175.26. Education Funds on deposit are $1599.90.

Unfinished Business
None.

Correspondence
Eric read a letter from the International Darksky Association (IDA) requesting TAAS to renew its group $100 membership. After discussion, Neil motioned to renew with IDA. Steve seconded the motion, which passed.

Eric read a letter from Alison Schuler asking for PR help for TAAS’s Explorer Post. Several ideas were discussed, and the request was given to Sammy.

Eric read a letter from TAAS to the NM Department of Environmental Health, expressing concern over plans for The Cobisa-Rio Power Plant, which is proposed for north of GNTO.

Committee Reports
Membership Committee – Neil described a meeting he held with David Beining of Lodestar, who was receptive to the idea of TAAS using the planetarium facilities for general meetings after 3/31. David will be invited to the next TAAS Board meeting for more discussion. Steve and Neil will begin plans for two TAAS meetings at the planetarium for later this year.

Neil also pointed out that Regener Hall has a good sound system but bad microphones, and TAAS has a bad sound system with good microphones, and suggested the obvious solution to better sound. Steve and Eric will arrange for access to the Regener system.

GNTO – Pete reported that at the last GNTO meeting, the proposed Cobisa power plant and the Saturday night GNTO programs were discussed.

Programs – Steve asked for fresh ideas for general meeting agendas, and asked for volunteers to serve on the programs committee. There are currently no plans for the March TAAS meeting. Kevin suggested an auction, Sammy suggested a Messier program.

Calendar
Carl presented the most current TAAS calendar, and proposed a number of necessary changes. Steve also noted that Coronado Center is not available on 4/28. A number of options were discussed. Sammy motioned to move Astronomy Day to 4/21 at Coronado Center. Dave seconded the motion, which passed. Several other necessary amendments to the TAAS calendar were discussed and proposed: GNTO nights on 4/20 & 4/21 cancelled; Board meeting on 9/27 moved to 9/25; Board meeting moved from 11/22 to 11/29; TAAS Gen. meeting moved from 11/24 to 12/1. Sammy motioned to accept the amended TAAS calendar. Dave seconded the motion, which passed.

Carl also noted that no feedback was received on possible TAAS field trips or extra activities for the year.

Business

Bylaws & Resolutions – Eric noted that because of the nature of resolutions, all previous year’s resolutions are void when a new board starts the year. However, Eric noted that some TAAS operations are still based on these old resolutions, some of which date back to 1989. Eric then read each resolution that was on file, and asked the Board to determine which resolutions should be marked for retention. 30 resolutions were reviewed and discussed. Seven were marked for rewording and possible retention at the next board meeting.

Tech Transfer – Dave reported that TAAS counsel has approved the Air Force contract donating a 10’ dome to TAAS, and motioned for the Board to sanction Eric to sign the document. Neil seconded the motion, which passed.

The Cobisa-Rio Power Plant – Eric described meetings with officials of the NM Department of Environmental Health, which will most likely approve Cobisa’s application. Pete and Dave offered technical information about the plant. A course of action was discussed, which will include keeping TAAS members informed about public hearings and updates.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20.
## TAAS 2001 Calendar

*Updated February 1, 2001. Schools in bold*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>February</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>October</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Thu Board Mtg</td>
<td>2 Sat General mtg</td>
<td>2 Tue School</td>
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<td>3 Sat General Mtg</td>
<td>9 Sat GNTO</td>
<td>6 Sat Oak flat</td>
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<td>16 Fri Astronomy 101</td>
<td>15 Fri GNTO</td>
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<td>20 Tue Sandia Prep</td>
<td>16 Sat Chaco Canyon</td>
<td>18 Thu GNTO mtg</td>
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<td>7 Sat TAAS picnic</td>
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<td>14 Sat GNTO</td>
<td>15 Thu GNTO mtg</td>
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<td>21 Thu GNTO mtg</td>
<td>27 Tue School</td>
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<td>23 Fri GNTO</td>
<td>26 Thu GNTO mtg</td>
<td>29 Thu Board mtg</td>
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<td>24 Sat Messier at GNTO</td>
<td>28 Sat Oak Flat</td>
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<td>24 Sat Equinox Picnic</td>
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<td>29 Thu GNTO mtg</td>
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<td>31 Sat Rio Grande Nat. Ctr.</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>22 Sat Oak flat</td>
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<td>8 Tue Bosque prep.</td>
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<td>31 Thu Board mtg</td>
<td>29 Sat General mtg</td>
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See *The Sidereal Times* for UNM nights, ATM workshops, Post 110 meetings, and Sidewalk Astronomy.
March 2001

Sunrise/Sunset
03/01 06:35/18:04
03/15 06:16/18:16
03/31 05:53/18:29 (MST)

Sunset/Sunrise
03/01 06:35/18:04
03/15 06:16/18:16
03/31 05:53/18:29 (MST)

Planet Rise / Set (03/15/2001)
(Rounded to 15 minutes, MST)

Mercury 05:15/16:00
Venus 06:45/20:00
Mars 00:30/10:15
Jupiter 09:45/23:45
Saturn 09:15/23:00
Uranus 05:00/15:30
Neptune 04:00/14:15
Pluto 23:45/10:45

1
• GNTO Meeting

2
• UNM
• ACSA @ Flying Star Cafe
• First quarter at 19:03

3
• UNM
• GNTO
• Full Moon at 10:23

4
• ATM Workshop 7pm, Valley HS

5

6

7
• ATM Workshop 7pm, Valley HS

8
• Board Meeting (7 pm @ PandA bld.)
• Moon at perigee, 56.4 earth-radii @ 02:00

9
• UNM
• Full Moon at 10:23

10
• TAAS General Meeting, 7pm, Regener Hall
• ACSA (page 6)

11

12

13

14
• The Ides of March

15

16
• UNM
• Last quarter 13:47
• Last day to submit input for newsletter

17
• GNTO
• Astronomy 101
• St. Patrick’s Day

18

19
• Emerson Elem School
• Spring equinox at 06:28
• Moon at apogee, 63.3 earth-radii

20
• ATM Workshop 7pm, Valley HS

21
• ATM Workshop 7pm, Valley HS

22
• UNM
• GNTO

23

24
• Equinox Picnic at GNTO
• Messier Marathon at GNTO

25

26

27

28

29
• GNTO Meeting

30
• UNM

31
• Rio Grande Nature Center

UNM Report
by Jay Harden,

5 Jan Closed.

12 Jan 100% clouds and snow.

19 Jan Sammy Lockwood, Brock Parker, Jay Harden entertained 15 viewers

26 Jan 100% clouds.

2 Feb A clear night with 22 viewers. Docents: B. Parker, Jim Lawrence, Tom Sanders, M. Pendley, G. Pegue, and Phil. (I’ve forgotten his last name.)

9 Feb We had 35 viewers on a clear, not so cold night. Docents: Brock Parker, Kevin McKeown, Gordon Pegue.

The area around the Hose Head Nebula by John Sefick at GNTO. See www.taas.org/download for a large full color version.
April 2001

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Sunrise/Sunset

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<th>Time</th>
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<td>04/15</td>
<td>06:33/19:41</td>
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<td>04/30</td>
<td>06:15/19:53</td>
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Planet Rise / Set (04/15/2001)
(Rounded to 15 minutes, MDT)

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Venus</td>
<td>05:15/17:45</td>
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<td>Mars</td>
<td>00:15/10:00</td>
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<td>Jupiter</td>
<td>09:00/23:15</td>
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<td>Saturn</td>
<td>08:30/22:15</td>
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<td>Uranus</td>
<td>04:00/14:45</td>
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<td>Neptune</td>
<td>03:00/13:15</td>
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<td>Pluto</td>
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Messier Marathon
by Robert Williams

Well it is that time of year again. Where does the time go? Each year TAAS picks one night to hold the Messier Marathon. It is always on a Saturday and it is always one of the most popular TAAS events for serious deep sky observers. This year the Messier Marathon will be held on Saturday, March 24th and all TAAS members are invited. Come out and see how many Messier objects you can see in one evening. Don’t worry if you don’t have a telescope — there are a few loners at GNTO that can be shared.

The Messier list is a list of the 110 best star clusters, galaxies, nebulae seen from this hemisphere. For a few short weeks early each spring all 110 Messier objects can be seen in one night — if you are diligent. There is usually a competition between the serious observers to see who can see the most objects that night.

If you do decide to come out, please come out early and be set up before sunset. Some of the first objects are difficult and can only be seen the first few moments after sunset. If you must arrive late please be prepared to setup without any white light so you do not disturb those who are looking seriously for Messier objects.

If you are interested in attending and want more information or just want to know more please feel free to contact me at 839-2840 or robawil@home.com.

NOTES:

TAAS = The Albuquerque Astronomical Society

GNTO = General Nathan Twining Observatory. Call Gordon Pegue @ 332-2591 to confirm.

UNM = University of New Mexico Observatory. Call the TAAS hotline @ 296-0549, or the UNM hotline @ 277-1446 to confirm.

ACSA = Albuquerque Coffee Shop Astronomers. Contact Sammy for information or visit www.taas.org and select sidewalk astronomy

ATM = Amateur Telescope Making. Call Michael Pendley for information @ 296-0549.

PandA = UNM Physics and Astronomy. Corner of Lomas and Yale.
Coffee Shop Astronomy Continues

by Sammy

“On still, clear nights, members of the Albuquerque Coffee Shop Astronomers may suddenly appear at your favorite bookstore or coffee shop with their telescopes in tow,” says Ollie Reed in a recent article on sidewalk astronomy in the Albuquerque Tribune. That pretty much wraps up what TAAS’s newest special interest group is all about.

The Albuquerque Coffee Shop Astronomers is a group within TAAS that doesn’t let the glare of an unfavorable moon keep us from getting out. We take advantage of bright objects like the moon and planets, and bring them into the heart of the city where people gather after dusk, including coffee shops, bookstores, concert halls, etc.

After the TAAS General Meeting on Saturday, March 10, plan to join us at the Frontier Restaurant across from the UNM Bookstore at Central and Harvard. I’ve done the Frontier myself before, but not with a group of others. Lot’s of “free sprits” down there so it should be fun.

On Saturday, April 21 at 7:30pm, we’ll be at Irysh Mac’s Coffee Shop at Central and Yale for “Poetry Under the Stars”, a joint venture with Albuquerque’s “Dial A Poet” club, which founder Kelly Sterns explains is sort of like a Sidewalk Poetry group. The idea sounded just different enough to give a try. Unfortunately, after Kelly and I set-up this date for “Poetry Under the Stars”, Astronomy Day was moved to the same date, so I plan to do both. So after your day at Coronado, come on down to Irysh Mac’s for relaxing café mocha, and listen to the readings.

Also in the works: The owner of “Not Just Bagels”, a restaurant in Cedar Crest, have asked us to set up on his patio in exchange for food & drink. If it keeps warming-up, plan a March / April date there TBA.

However, the Coffee Shop Astronomers generally don’t follow schedules. Basically, we get together when and where we please, using e-mail and a phone tree to gather fellow “Sidewalkers”. If you would like to be on our e-mail list, then drop me a line at sam@samlockwood.com, and we’ll include you on our last minute plans. You can also check-up on us at the Sidewalk link at www.taas.org

The End of a Dynasty
or
Robert Williams’ Sudden Move to the Bahamas
by Dave Brown

It happens to all of the great ones, the Egyptians, the Aztecs, the Zulus, the Romans even the Chicago Cubs, it seems that all great dynasties sooner or later come to an end. Sadly, (for me anyway) it has now come time to turn the page on one of the most enduring dynasties in our modern times. I speak of course of the tenure of Robert Williams as Treasurer of TAAS. Robert has toiled long and hard these many years somehow managing to make everything membership and money wise add up for TAAS. How he was able to do this and remain as sane, as at least he seems to be, will go down as one of the all time great mysteries of the modern era. Thanks Robert for a long time difficult job superbly done!

Now usually when the baton is passed after such a successful reign the call goes out across the land for the best and the brightest to compete just for the chance of taking over such a renowned appointment. Apparently however, TAAS had a somewhat different method of choosing this succession. As I understand it, someone (who will remain nameless but become obvious as you read this article), of what I think is inarguably, questionable common sense, made the now historic statement “well if you can’t find anyone else who wants to do it” and compounded this with a dubious decision not to show up at the December TAAS General Meeting (when they pick such positions) just because of a little thing called a family vacation and well… as they say, the rest was history. So instead of the best and the brightest we have, through a unique usage of the true chaos principle, arrived at one who is beset and befuddled and I am uniquely that man. (I didn’t even know we had an observatory in the Bahamas until Robert put in for his tickets).

My name is Dave Brown the new (insert favorite deity) help me treasurer for TAAS and I will do my best to carry on with Robert’s fine tradition of excellence, or at least not end up anywhere with bars and big, mean looking roommates.

In case you were wondering, the TAAS Treasurer manages both the society’s funds and the member database. The position processes all new and renewal memberships, member magazine subscriptions to Astronomy and Sky & Telescope magazine, accounts for and deposits all incoming funds and pays or reimburses members for all approved society expenses. Part of the duties include sending out membership renewals, providing the Newsletter Editor with an up to date mailing list each month, and providing the TAAS Board of Directors with monthly membership and financial information.

Currently, TAAS regular memberships are $30 with family memberships an additional $3 per person. An education membership for teachers (50% or more income from teaching) or students is $15. Explorer Post 110 members pay a total of $25 with $15 going to TAAS as a student membership, $3 to Explorer Post 110 and $7 to the Boy Scouts of America. People joining the Dark Skies New Mexico group pay an additional $5. Education, Student and
Family members can’t hold Board or committee chair positions and may not vote in TAAS elections. $5.00 of Regular memberships go to the tax deductible Observatory Fund. A paper copy of the Membership Packet can be obtained for $3.50 or downloaded off the TAAS web site (www.taas.org/download) for free. New magazine subscriptions or renewals are available at reduced rates through TAAS for Sky & Telescope at $29.95 and Astronomy at $29.00. An easy way to take care of everything at once is to include your magazine subscriptions with your membership renewals. There are places on the application / membership renewal form for all the membership information we need and your magazine choices. This form is sent out with membership renewal notifications, can be downloaded off the TAAS web site or I’ll be more than happy to send you one. When sending us money please make out just one check to TAAS to cover the total cost of memberships, donations and magazines, etc. We take care of distributions to the various TAAS groups and send a single TAAS check to the magazines to cover all members subscribing or renewing at any one time. We don’t need your subscription renewal forms as the magazines go by your name on a form we have to fill out. If you are renewing a subscription it’s a good idea to get it to us as early as you can so there’s no interruption of delivery. If your address changes don’t forget to send us your new address so you don’t chance missing even one exciting issue of The Sidereal Times. We will also be more than happy to receive any donations that you care to make to the TAAS General Fund, the Education Fund, the Observatory Fund, the TAAS Treasurer Mental Relief Fund or basically anything you might want to give us money for. These are all tax deductible (just kidding about the treasurer mental relief fund). If you want to start one of those endowment things well then you really get the special treatment, we make an extra effort to spell your name right and everything. People making substantial donations or endowments are also beneficiaries of the new Christmas Caroling From The TAAS Board of Directors Program (regardless of the time of year). This may be a positive or negative benefit depending on the tonal quality of the current board and your relationship with your neighbors.

If you have any questions or comments about any of this kind of stuff or if you want to lay into me because I screwed something up and especially if you have some nice Nagler eyepieces you want to find a good home for, let me hear from you. I’m here to serve (well mostly). You can send me an email at taas-treasurer@home.com, call me at 505-275-9126 or send mail to: That TAAS Treasurer Guy, P.O. Box 50581, Albuquerque, NM 87181-0581. You will also find me now at most general meetings especially the December one. I’ve learned my lesson.

So if you happen to see Robert Williams at some TAAS function and you think he seems to be smiling more than usual or you notice that he might have an extra spring in his step… NOW YOU KNOW THE REST OF THE STORY.

Another Telescope Sees First Light!

by Michael Pendley

On the front page of the December 2000 / January 2001 edition of The Sidereal Times we showed a picture of Eric Olson performing a knife edge test on his 10 inch f/7.5 mirror.

Well, the mirror tested just fine and Eric sent it off to be coated. The mirror was returned in early February and was immediately mated to the tube / rocker-box for final testing at the Telescope Making Workshop (held the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at Valley High School) — where all in attendance declared it a wonderful success.

Note the clever way Eric holds his tube in the rocker box. The tube slips between felt lined slots in the front/back, is held down by a swinging arm, and is kept from sliding out the back by three cleats mounted to the tube. This makes for easy setup and allows the tube to rotate in the rocker box.

Eric started this project at the Fall 1997 Telescope Making class. I say this not to embarrass Eric but to reassure those with unfinished projects that they can still be successful — and to show those that are considering a telescope project that they can work at whatever schedule they feel comfortable with.
March Musings

March! Springtime! Messier Marathon time again! Wow! I can clearly recall past Marathons- after all they are permanently etched in my memory! Especially given the ordeal that they are, and the events associated with at least the late 1990s Marathons. Jeff Bender’s horrific UFO at Gran Quivera (Venus really), 1995. Comet Hyakutake as “M 111” in 1996. Hale-Bopp as “M 111” in 1997. And the tremendous winds that followed that morning, out at a primitive GNTO, as we ate burritos in Carl’s old trailer.

We always think of late March as Messier Marathon time, but did you know that, with a little perseverance, and a really good clear eastern horizon, 109 Messier’s are do-able throughout the entire month of March, with the possibility of claiming all 110 (if Draco galaxy NGC 5866 is counted as M 102) around March 24th? Yeah, it’s true. We could actually schedule successful Messier Marathons any time in March. However, in early March, M 72, and M 73, and M 2 have to be scooped off of the horizon around the time dawn begins, and M 30 is impossible. Even this past February 18-19th I bagged 100 Messiers at GNTO! I could have had six more with out too much extra effort. But M 72, 73, 2, and especially M30 were just not observable then. Anyway, March 24th- this year’s Marathon- is the best day to try for all 110! Good luck!

The Christmas Solar Eclipse:

I was in west Texas, just north of Valentine, and although a major winter storm was forming, skies opened up briefly for me to see the entire event. The observing conditions made this eclipse memorable: while it was warm, winds howled out of the southeast 30 to maybe 45 mph! I had to use my van a windshield! The windchill factor took 58 degree temps and made them feel like 20’s. Aside for a scattered patchy cloud towards the end of the event, it was very clear. I photographed the eclipse with a 1 meter focal length, 50 mm lens. Two good sunspot groups were seen on the Sun. Maximum eclipse occurred at about 10:38 AM CST, where about 23% of the Sun’s diameter was covered. Through my solar filter, even very small “bites” out of the Sun could be seen visually. It was neat.

My relatives had great weather in New York, where the eclipse was nearly 60%. The event was easily visible by projecting the Sun, or viewing through #14 welder’s glass.

Quadrantids, 2001:

Very interesting results for the January 3rd peak occurred: the Quads just never showed up, by and large! I observed from GNTO. This was the worst return of a Quadrantid maximum in 30 years, as I’ve been observing. Very little activity occurred from 11 PM Jan. 2nd, to 4 AM Jan. 3rd. By 4 AM, I knew something was up- there should have been good rates building by then. I started counting from 4:22 to about twilight, and rates never got higher than about 28 per hour. This is terrible, since I fully expected rates easily in the 60 per hour range by then! And the fireballs never showed either! Observations were hindered by intense frosty cold, which left me with foggy glasses from time to time. I wish the foggy glasses could account for the low numbers, but not so.

Observations of January 7th, ’01, and the “UFO”:

We had great weather this evening for two simultaneous events: while a double shadow transit of Galilean moons crossed Jupiter, zeta Tauri was occulted by the Moon. The double transit was underway at 8:15 PM. I used a 60mm f/11 refractor. Although the seeing wasn’t too good, both shadows were easily visible. The more obvious shadow appeared as a deep black dot in the Jovian polar region. The other, larger (I think) shadow followed a major belt. Then I turned to the Moon for the occultation. Zeta shone like a sapphire just off the east terminator of the Moon. It seemed like it took forever for the occultation to occur. About 5 minutes of so minutes before zeta abruptly winked out (at 8:43 PM), a sharp edged, black bead crossed the face of the Moon. This took about 2 seconds, and as I recall, the “UFO” moved north to south. Very strange! The object was definitely not a bird, or a plane- I could definitely see its shape. The only explanation for what I saw was a balloon. Either it was a simple radiosonde weather balloon, or perhaps it was a simple helium balloon, lost by a toddler. However, I did read somewhere that it takes the ISS some 2 seconds to cross the face of the Moon- perhaps it was a lucky transit of ISS or Mir!

GNTO, February 18-19, ’01

Since the scheduled GNTO night of Feb. 17-18 was clouded out, several of us observed this Sunday night. An absolutely perfect night, and warm also! (Where was everyone?- after all, it was a holiday that Monday!). Anyway, Gordon Pegue and Pete Eschman observed Messiers, and galaxies. Gordon completed his “Volume I” of personal deep sky objects- ask him about it. Carl worked on imaging Messiers, and I visually bagged 100, as a “practice” round. Carl also showed us Comet Hartley-McNaught- very nice! Located just below (east of) the Keystone of Hercules, it showed as a nice binocular puffball, and a tiny nucleus was seen in larger scopes. Carl obtained fine images of this comet.
The following information was submitted to the TAAS web master this month. None of the information has been verified. Buyer beware, your mileage may vary.

Skycamping Worldwide is a new e-mail list / web site that is designed to provide readers with all things related to astronomy related travel. Topics include travel reports, star parties around the world, how to fly with a telescope, and more. Visit www.skycamping.com for more information or e-mail Margaret at mags@skycamping.com

Keith Thompson (keith.thompson@geoman.net) of Geoman (www.geoman.net) tells me that www.geoman.net has added an astronomy “wallpaper” section to their web site that already features astronomy and space news, astro picture of the day, and special reports.

Dee Friesend sends word that www.heavens-above.com has information on the de-orbiting of Mir.

Finally, go to http://spaceplace.jpl.nasa.gov to get your own copy of The New Millennium Calendar (PDF format)

For Sale: Meade 16” F4.5 dob telescope, Telrad, Magellan 1 computer with Meade 4000 9.7 and 26mm eye pieces. Excellent deep sky performer!

Only 1 year old. This is a big, heavy scope. Paid $1195 for scope and $295 for computer. Will sell all for $1100. Call Harry @ 286-5491.

For Sale: Celestron 6” achro refractor with CG5 mount. The optics are superb and the lens have never been touched. Stunning planetary and deep sky performance. Comes with an 8X50 finder, 20mm eyepiece, 1.25” diagonal and 2x barlow. Only 5 months old. Selling to finance an Astro-Physics. Harry441@juno.com

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Map to UNM Campus Observatory
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